

Why George Bowering  
can't believe what he  
reads in the press

The short-story glut:  
three new anthologies  
fight it out

Anthony Burgess  
goes George Orwell  
one year better

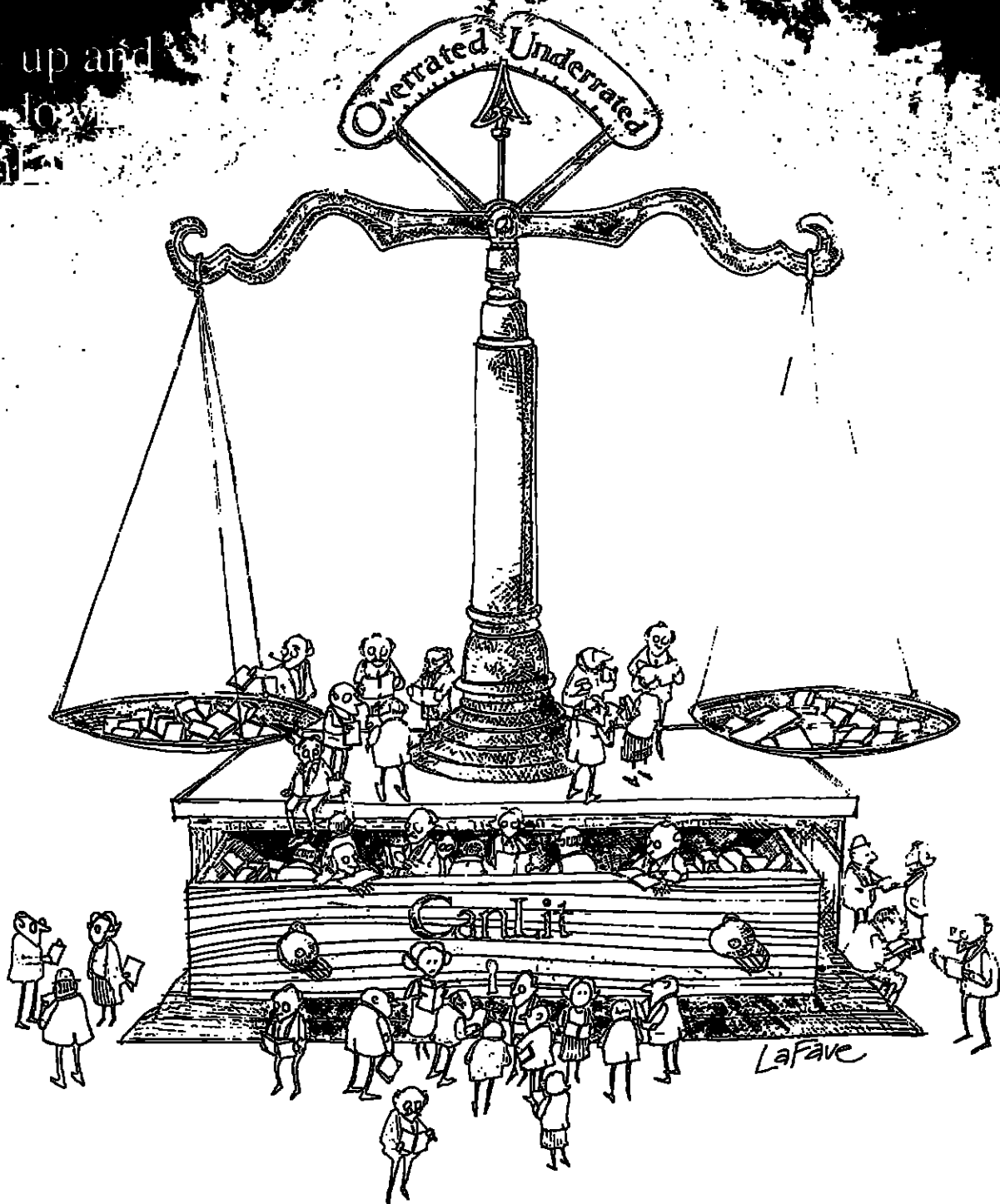
# BOOKS IN CANADA

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# BOOKS IN CANADA

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Cover and drawing on page 5 by Kim La Fave

Drawings by George Ungar 7.8.9

Othw drawings throughout the issue by Ioan Acosta



## CONTRIBUTORS

Toronto freelancer Msrk Abley spent the past three years at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar from Saskatchewan. Joan Acosta is a Vancouver artist. Andrew Allentuck is a Winnipeg economist and critic. George Bowering is a Vancouver poet and guardian of linguistic morality. Jim Christy paused in Toronto recently en route from the Yukon to Florida. Dennis Duffly teaches English at the U of T's Trinity College. Roger Hall teaches history at the University of Western Ontario. Vancouver artist Kim La Fave now has taken up residence in horrors, Toronto. Sandra Martin is the co-editor of *Rupert Brooke in Canada* (PMA), reviewed in our December issue. Marshall Matson teaches English at the University of Guelph. Dave McFadden is a Hamilton, Ont., poet. Frank Moritsugu is an Ontario writer who experienced the wartime treatment of Japanese Canadians. Toronto poet A. Q. Moritz makes his living in advertising. Freelance journalist and critic Michael Smith is based in St. Marys, Oa. Former book-store owner Paul Stuewe is working on a book about literary criticism in Canada. George Ungar is a Toronto artist and film animator. Poet Seen Virgo takes dictation from his Muse in Topsail. Nfld. Morris Wolfe is a teacher, columnist, critic, and constructor of anthologies.

EDITOR: Douglas Marshall. ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Wayne Grady. SMALL-PRESS EDITOR: Pier Giorgio Di Cicco. COPY EDITOR: Marvin Goody. ART DIRECTOR: Mary Lu Toms. GENERAL MANAGER and ADVERTISING MANAGER: Susan Traer. CIRCULATION MANAGER: Susan Aihoshi. CONSULTANTS: Robert Farrelly and Jack Jensen.

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# BALANCING THE BOOKS

An opinion poll records the fall of F. P. Grove (and others) and reveals a growing split in the community of Canadian letters

LAST SUMMER *Books in Canada* asked a number of authors, critics, and academics to name what they think are the most overrated and underrated works of English Canadian fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. Respondents were also invited to add brief comments if they so wished. As our survey material admitted, the idea was filched from Britain's *Times Literary Supplement*, which produced a fascinating opinion poll along similar lines a couple of years ago.

We stressed that we were not seeking a statistical overview. We had no interest in compiling the sort of top-100 list of Canadian novels attempted at the University of Calgary conference last February and we continue to question the meaningfulness of any such exercise. Rather our aim was to present a symposium, a collective assessment of where the ever-changing values of CanLit stand today.

In the event we got both less and more than we bargained for. Less in that a surprising number of respondents declined, sometimes vehemently, to participate in the survey on the grounds that Canadian literature is still too tender a trillium to survive opinionated inspection. More in that the response as a whole reveals the extent to which the CanLit community now is divided into two opposing schools: the first is the aforementioned tender-trillium school, which believes in nationalism, protectionism, kind words, and lavish amounts of fertilizer; the second could be called the stout-maple school, which believes in internationalism, free trade, honest criticism, and letting the chips fall where they may.

*Books in Canada* sides with the stout-maple school — with certain reservations, as we'll explain later. That's why, with this issue, we are modifying a policy adopted at our inception eight years ago of reviewing only Canadian books. From now on a limited number of important foreign titles will be reviewed in our regular pages.

The two schools agree that CanLit has made remarkable progress since the mid-1960s. They differ fundamentally on whether we now are mature enough to take our proper place in the world. "I can't participate in this survey because I don't believe in it for this time and in this place," one distinguished novelist wrote us. "We, as writers, need solidarity, not gossip and spite." The tender-trillium argument was perhaps best expressed by Douglas Hill, an English professor at the U of T and one of our regular contributors. His letter in part:

I don't read *JLS* often so I don't have any idea what the character and tone of their results were. But at this point in the progress of CanLit — with the relatively small (compared to England or the U.S.) quantity of work and number of authors to scabble about in to dii up nominations — I don't think your survey will do good and may do harm.

The world of Canadian letters seems, from what I hear and read, to be inbred and insular enough, without your deliberately stirring up the natives against one another. Everybody presumes to know, or know about, everybody else. What is one to do? Get Godfrey? Save Such? Exalt Engel? It could go on with this game; it's sort of fun.)

With respect to Prof. Hill, we feel that he and his school are missing the point. It is precisely because CanLit, for all its gains, remains so inbred and insular that we must stop coddling ourselves

and graduate to greater things. To suggest that surveys of this sort may be valid in Britain or the U.S. but not here is to condemn us to a perpetual nursery-school of the creative intellect, to return us to the "not bad for Canada" theory of criticism and the mutual ego-masturbation that it breeds.

The stout-maple school is convinced we are made of sterner stuff. Canada's literary culture has grown deep roots in the 12 years since the Centennial pumped in new sap; the tree should be tough enough to weather any international blasts. We are pioneers still in this cold, rich, multicultural corner of the world and our complicated story is far from done. We have unique tales to tell and valuable lessons to teach the rest of mankind. Let's offer them boldly, risking the consequences, like adult men and women, rather than retreating yet again into infantile cultural insecurity.

Since it was founded, *Books in Canada* has made only one critical demand of its contributors: judge Canadian books as they would be judged in New York or London (or Singapore, for that matter). In other words, see our authors in a world context. Last year we began to provide some of that world context in our own pages with a column called "Of Some Import," which dealt briefly with noteworthy foreign titles: it was well-received by both readers and publishers. Now, as a service to our readers, we intend to broaden the context further by publishing full-scale reviews of some of those non-Canadian books that, like it or not, influence our society and shape our intellectual development.

This step is also intended as a long-term service to Canadian

**We have unique tales to tell and valuable lessons to teach the rest of mankind. Let's offer them boldly, risking the consequences, like adult men and women. ...**

writers, although to be sure not all of them will immediately appreciate the gesture. It means we'll be applying tougher criteria in choosing Canadian titles for review books will increasingly be selected on merit — or at least on the expectation of merit. However, we will continue to devote most of our available space to Canadian publications and our various departmental columns will remain Canadian-only domains. We have no intention of abandoning what we take to be our primary mandate, which is to bring good Canadian literature to the attention of Canadian readers.

In one important regard, the tender-trillium school clearly has a case. True, our best writers are good enough to play — and win — in the international leagues. But there are still far too few of them, and the measure of recognition and reward they receive from the Canadian public is still so meagre and grudging as to amount to cultural treason. Thus the Writers' Union, the League of Canadian Poets, and the Periodical Writers Association of Canada most continue their fight for a better deal for creative miters. And governments most continue to invest heavily in CanLit and the commodity-futures market of young talent. The gamble undoubtedly pays off. Without the dauntless investments of the

much-maligned Canada Council and, more recently, the Ontario Arts Council, Canadian literature would probably have gone the way of private TV in this country — over the border and down the drain.

And where is it instead? Certainly thriving well enough, we submit, not to wilt under the beat of our survey. Here are the results, listed alphabetically by respondent and edited for length in some instances:

**PIERRE BERTON**  
Non-fiction

Underrated: *A Nation Unaware*, by Herschel Hardin; *The National Interest*, by Edgar Dosman.

\* \* \*

**GEORGE BOWERING**  
Fiction

Overrated: *The Mountain and the Valley*, by Ernest Buckler.  
Underrated: *Gone Indian*, by Robert Kroetsch.  
Comment: The Canadian professor-critic group tends to value almost anything in a novel more than it does writing. Or imagination.

Non-fiction

Overrated: *Over Prairie Trails*, by F.P. Grove.  
Underrated: *The Legend of John Hornby*, by George Whalley.

Poetry

Overrated: *Toward the Last Spike*, by E.J. Pratt.  
Underrated: *Weeds*, by Frank Dewy. Also the poetry of Roy Kiyooka.

\* \* \*

**FRED COGSWELL**  
Fiction

Overrated: The novels of Hugh MacLennan; the novels of F.P. Grove, except for *The Master of the Mill*.  
Underrated: *The Nymph and the Lamp*, by T.H. Raddall; *The Lost Salt Gift of Blood*, by Alistair MacLeod; *Blood Ties*, by David Adams Richards; the work of Hugh Garner; *Grain*, by R.J.C. Stead.

Non-fiction

Overrated: All the books by Marshall McLuhan: the last chapter, by Northrop Frye, of *The Literary History of Canada*.

Poetry

Overrated: *The Complete Poems of E.J. Pratt*; the poetry of A.J.M. Smith.  
Underrated: *The Dumbfounding*, by Margaret Avison; all the books of poetry by Robert Gibbs; *The Mulgrave Road*, by Charles Bruce; *Living Together*, by Joan Finnigan; *Homecomings* by M. Travis Lane: all the books of poetry by David Cull; all the poets of the Sixties group, particularly Bliss Carman and Sir Charles G.D. Roberts.

\* \* \*

**JOHN ROBERT COLOMBO**  
Fiction

Overrated: There are no overrated authors in this country.  
Underrated: H. Bedford Jones.  
Comment: Jones has not been rated at all. He died in California in 1949, the author of some 70 books and 700 stories, a self-proclaimed millionaire from his writings alone. He was a master of the weird tale, at least as good as H.P. Lovecraft and much more readable.

Non-fiction

Overrated: The *Encyclopedia Canadiana*.  
Underrated: *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography*.  
Comment: Despite its lethal limitations (no general index, for instance), *The Encyclopedia Canadiana* is found in all public and many private libraries in the country. The DCR has set new standards in historical research and even in readability. More treasures may be found in its pages than in the covers of Oak Island.

Poetry

Underrated: F.R. Scott and D.C. Scott.  
Comment: We also deprecate, when we do not ignore, our light versifiers, such bards as R.K. Kernihan ("The Men of the Northern Zone") and that Parson Poet of Old Montreal, W.M. MacKeracher.

\* \* \*

**MATT COHEN**  
Fiction

Underrated: *The Wabeno Feast*, by Wayland Drew; *Lord Nelson's Tavern*, by Ray Smith; *Monodromos*, by Marian Engel; *In the Middle of a Life*, by Richard Wright.

Comment: All are extraordinarily written books but because they are excursions from the "mainstream" of Canadian fiction, they seem to be either misread or unread.

Poetry

Underrated: *The Intervals*, by Stuart Mackinnon.

4 Books in Canada, January, 1979

Comment: A long, brilliant excursion into the mind of a dumb man that finally exudes a unique and glassy calm.

\* \* \*

**MICHAEL S. CROSS**  
Fiction

Overrated: *Surfacing*, by Margaret Atwood.  
Underrated: *Telempath*, by Spider Robinson.  
Comment: Atwood: mean-spirited caricature of human responses. Robinson: science fiction on the grand scale.

Non-fiction

Overrated: *The Cod Fisheries*, by Harold Innis.  
Underrated: *Strange Empire: Louis Riel and the Métis People*, by Joseph Howard.

Comment: No one has actually read Innis; his fixation on the intimate behaviour of fish is unhealthy. Howard's is a moving, enlightening account of the destruction of a people.

Poetry

Overrated: Anything by Irving Layton.  
Underrated: *The Emigrant*, by Alexander McLachlan (1861).  
Comment: Layton's technical capacity doesn't outweigh the boredom of his perpetual adolescence. McLachlan's powerful doggerel was the first voice of the working man.

\* \* \*

**LOUIS DUDBK**  
Fiction

Overrated: Rudy Wiebe.  
Underrated: Hugh Hood.  
Comment: Wiebe is a good man but takes himself very seriously and fails to hold a reader's interest. Result: very dull and long-winded novels. Hood is a truly fine writer who needs to be more widely read.

Non-fiction

Overrated: *Survival*, by Margaret Atwood.  
Underrated: *From There to Here*, by Frank Davey.  
Comment: Atwood's is a foolish thesis that has been swallowed whole by many people (like McLuhanism a decade ago). Davey's book is an essential guide to new writing.

Poetry

Overrated: Irving Layton.  
Underrated: Raymond Filip.  
Comment: Layton has some value, but publishers and journalists have made him into a royal buffoon. Filip has received no mention at all, even from his Montreal cohorts.

\* \* \*

**DENNIS DUFFY**  
Fiction

Overrated: *The Master of the Mill*, by F.P. Grove.  
Underrated: I am not aware that the practice of underrating exists in English Canadian literature.

Non-fiction

Overrated: The theorizing about communications media in the later work of Harold Adams Innis.

\* \* \*

**J.A.S. EVANS**  
Fiction

Overrated: Martin Myers.  
Underrated: *Towards Sodom*, by Mabel Dunham.  
Comment: Dunham, an original novelist from Kitchener, Ont., now is dead and forgotten. *Towards Sodom* is a fine novel that catches the argot of the Canadian Mennonites and the Pennsylvania Dutch.

Non-fiction

Overrated: Pierre Berton.  
Underrated: *The Last Cannon Shot*, by Jacques Monet; *The Taming of the Canadian West*, by Frank Rasky.  
Comment: Although I think Berton's work is very good, Rasky's book on the Canadian West is a splendidly written piece of work that is neglected.

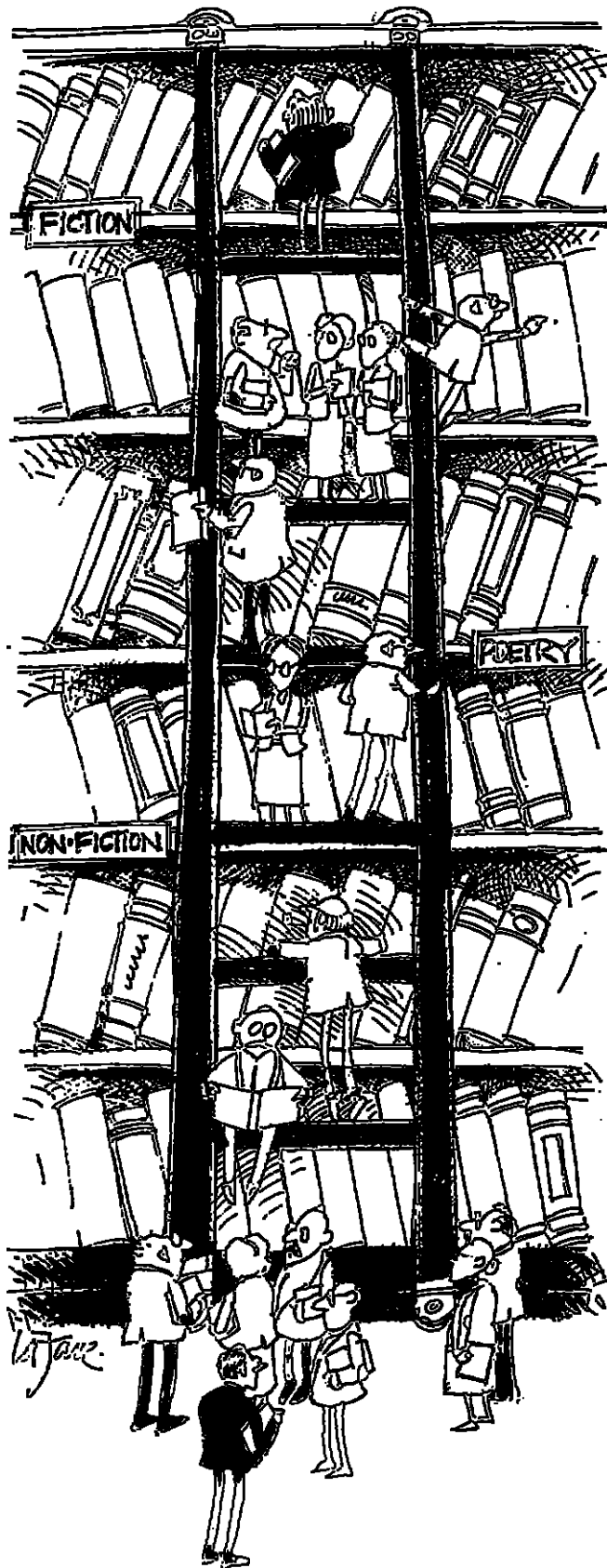
Poetry

Overrated: Irving Layton.  
Underrated: Alden Nowlan.

\* \* \*

**TIMOTHY FINDLEY**  
Fiction

Overrated: *Civic Square*, by Scott Symons.  
Underrated: *The Sacrifice*, by Adele Wiseman.  
Comment: *Civic Square* is an 848-page temper tantrum, unredeemed even by its few moments of genuine rage. *The Sacrifice*, even though it won the Governor General's Award in 1956, has not yet been accorded the



place it deserves as one of the finest pieces of writing ever achieved in this country.

**Non-fiction:**

**Overrated:** *The Medium is the Massage*, by Marshall McLuhan.

**Underrated:** *Essays on the Constitution*, by Rank Scott.

**Comment:** I fear Scott's work will go largely unread due to the public's mistaking it for a purely academic work.

**Poetry**

**Overrated:** The poetry of E.J. Pratt.

**Underrated:** *The Death of Harold Ladoo*, by Dennis Lee; *Letter of the Master of Horse*, by Gary Geddes.

**Comment:** Pratt is sort of like Masefield in English poetry. Not much there. But *there*. Geddes' work has not gained anything in the exposure it d-r. Lee's work is quite simply, a masterpiece, yet I am aware of hardly anyone who knows of its existence.

\*\*\*

**DAVID HELWIG**

**Fiction**

**Overrated:** *The Diviners*, by Margaret Laurence; most of Morley Callaghan's novels.

**Underrated:** *The Coming of Winter* and *Dancers at Night*, by David Adams Richards.

**Comment:** I admire Laurence's books, but I think *The Diviners* is a transitional novel that has been treated as a crowning achievement. Richards is too male and too working-class for those who create reputations. Also too tough-minded. I've tried to like Callaghan's novels but I can't.

**Poetry**

**Overrated:** Most group poets (e.g. West Coast, Black Mountain, Coach House) are overrated by their cm groups.

**Underrated:** Stuart MacKinnon (*Skydeck*, *The Lost Surveyor*, etc.).

\*\*\*

**RICHARD LANDON**

**Fiction**

**Overrated:** *The Clockmaker*, by T.C. Haliburton.

**Underrated:** *The Outcast Prophet*, by B.W. Arthur Sleigh (1847).

**Comment:** R's difficult to understand our historical obsession with Haliburton, who started out badly and got worse. Sleigh's three-volume novel might better be classed as "unrated"; the only known copy appears to belong to the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library at the U of T.

**Non-fiction**

**Underrated:** *Autobiography of a Working Man*, by Alexander Somerville (1848).

**Comment:** Somerville, the last man to be flogged in public by the British Army, wrote one of the most powerful memoirs of the 19th century. He spent the latter part of his life in Canada, edited the *Canadian Illustrated News*, and died in poverty in a shed on York Street, Toronto, in 1885.

**Poetry**

**Underrated:** *Songs and Ballads from Nova Scotia*, collected and edited by Helen Creighton.

**Comment:** Creighton's superb collection of folk songs, and the collections of other scholars, constitute one of the most interesting bodies of "poetry" in Canada — unrecognized as such, of course.

\*\*\*

**TGM MARSHALL**

**Fiction**

**Overrated:** *The Master of the Mill*, by F.P. Grove; *Lady Oracle*, by Margaret Atwood; *The Favourite Game*, by Leonard Cohen.

**Underrated:** *A Passion in Rome*, by Morley Callaghan; *The Deserter*, by Douglas LePan; *The Glass Knight*, by David Helwig; *King of Egypt*, *King of Dreams*, by Gwendolyn MacEwan.

**Comment:** All seven of these books are worth reading, but the latter four deserve more critical attention than they have had.

**Poetry**

**Overrated:** E.J. Pratt (especially the long poems); Archibald Lampman.

**Underrated:** Duncan Campbell Scott; Margaret Avison (by the public at large, anyhow); Douglas LePan; Louis Dudek; Stuart MacKinnon; Wayne Clifford; Tom Marshall.

**Comment:** I'm tempted to say that Leonard Cohen is also overrated, except his best poems are so very good of their kind.

\*\*\*

**BRIAN MOORE**

**Fiction**

**Overrated:** The novels of F.P. Grove.

**Underrated:** *Under the Volcano*, by Malcolm Lowry; *The Weekend Man*, by Richard Wright; *Bear*, by Marian Engel; *By Grand Central Station I Sat Down and Wept*, by Elizabeth Smart.

Comment: Grove is not a novelist or a writer of any merit; it's ludicrous that courses are being taught to Canadians on his "work."

Non-fiction

Underrated: *Canada*, by J.B. Brebner; George Woodcock's essays on Canadian writers; Robert Fulford's criticism; Kildare Dobbs' criticism.

Poetry

Overrated: Most.  
Underrated: None.

MORDECAI RICHLER

Fiction

Overrated: Anything by F.P. Grove, a colossal bore.  
Underrated: Mavis Gallant, Richard Wright, Adele Wiseman.

Poetry

Overrated: Too many to list here.  
Underrated: *Christ of the Ice-Floes*, by David Wevill.

JANE RULE

Comment: I have cancelled my subscription to *Books in Canada* for just this sort of thing. What we don't need in this country is more English school-boy ideas.

CHRIS SCOTT

Poetry

Overrated: E.J. Pr., in *tofo*.  
Underrated: "The Charivari; or Canadian Poetics: A Tale After the Manner of *Beppo*," by Levi Adams (1824).  
Comment: "Oh, what a motley group of bards to war at," said Adams, and I agree.

DONALD SWAINSON

Fiction

Overrated: *The Temptations of Big Bear*, by Rudy Wiebe.  
Underrated: *The Black Bonspiel of Willie MacCrimmon*, by W.O. Mitchell; *The Dog Who Wouldn't Be*, by Farley Mowat.  
Comment: These little books by Mitchell and Mowat are enormously sensitive and great fun. They prove it's possible to read and enjoy Canadian literature without the constant distraction of the author's mission. Wiebe's novel might satisfy a need to have more native content in our literature but it struck this reader as unusually turgid.

Non-fiction

Overrated: *Gabriel Dumont: The Métis Chief and His Lost World*, by George Woodcock.

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MSE IR2



Underrated: *Canadian Federation*, by R.G. Trotter (1924).

Comment: Dumont is hardly plausible as one of our very small handful of Canadian heroes and the data available are too scanty to permit a really good biography. Trotter's usually overlooked study remains our most comprehensive analysis of confederation. In terms of conceptualization and interpretation, we have not really moved beyond his book.

MICHAEL THORPE

Fiction

Overrated: *Such is My Beloved and More Joy in Heaven*, by Morley Callaghan; *The Stone Angel* and *The Diviners*, by Margaret Laurence.

Underrated: *Blood Ties*, by David Adams Richards; the short stories of Audrey Thomas.

Comment: Though most Canadian fiction criticism is vitiated by provincialism, it is ironic that the too-little-appreciated *Blood Ties* is one of those few works (as was *Sons and Lovers*) that, while remaining firmly rooted, transcends the regional.

Non-fiction

Overrated: *Articulating West*, by W.H. New; *Savage Fields*, by Dennis Lee.

Underrated: *E. M. Forster's Other Kingdom*, by Dave Godfrey; *The Crystal Spirit*, by George Woodcock.

Poetry

Overrated: A., innumerable tribe who lend themselves too readily to regional commentary (not criticism); to name any would be invidious.

Underrated: *Turns*, by Richard Outram; Earle Birney.

Comment: Outram cannot be filled into comfortable Canadian categories; neither can Birney, who will not receive his full due until we learn his quality of self-irony and look more, as he does, beyond merely Canadian frontiers.

MIRIAM WADDINGTON

Fiction

Overrated: All of F.P. Grove except *Fruits of the Earth and Settlers of the Marsh*.

Underrated: All of Alice Munro; all of Raymond Knister; all of Emily Carr; *The Betrayal*, by Henry Kreisel; *Swamp Angel*, by Ethel Wilson.

Non-fiction

Overrated: Political and topical journalism of all kinds.

Underrated: All of Emily Carr; *Headwaters of Canadian Literature*, by Archibald MacMechan (1924); *Essays, Controversies, Poems*, by John Sutherland.

Poetry

Overrated: The literary community in Canada is very small and some of its members may turn out to be petty, vindictive and mean-minded. Therefore I won't say which books I think are overrated. But there are many! I have noticed that most overrated writers spend a lot of time politicizing and most often they are the ones who struggle for and obtain power. The, is, they review books, administer grants, produce TV shows, make frequent public statements, sit on committees, and edit magazines and anthologies.

Underrated: *The Collected Poems of A.M. Klein*.

GEORGE WOODCOCK

Fiction

Overrated: *Beautiful Losers*, by Leonard Cohen; all F.P. Grove's novels; *The Incomparable Atuk* and *Cocksure*, by Mordecai Richler.

Underrated: *Self Condemned*, by Wyndham Lewis.

Comment: We usually overrate; it's a hard job to find good novels that are long neglected in Canada; our trouble is that the best books are slow in finding their proper levels.

Non-fiction

Overrated: *Understanding Media* and *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, by Marshall McLuhan.

Underrated: Most good books of essays, including Grove's *Over Prairie Trails* (much better than his novels). Hugh MacLennan's *Thirty and Three* and *Cross Country*, and Roderick Haig-Brown's *Measure of the Year*.

Comment: We have an astonishing number of good essayists; but we rarely read them as they deserve.

Poetry

Overrated: The list of Governor General's Awards in recent years is a study in overrating poetry. Miriam Mandel's *Lions at Her Face* and Milton Acorn's *The Island Means Minago* are examples of mediocre books given undue attention in this way. Among our "classics," I would say that E.J. Bell's heavy-handed pseudo-epics are highly overrated.

Underrated: As in fiction, it is difficult to talk of underrating; we have taken almost every versifier to our hearts. But I would say John Glassco has perhaps not received the attention he deserves. □

# ENGLISH, OUR ENGLISH

Have you heard about the book reviewer who nearly fell off the chesterfield while reading it? Not that funny a story, actually

by George Bowering

WHEN I WAS AN undergraduate student at the University of British Columbia. I used to play a game with my room-mate, in which one of us would read the sports headlines and the other would take them literally. Thus "MOUNTIES STOMP ALL OVER PADRES" suggested shocked response to an obviously close relationship between state and religion. "OTTAWA BOMBS ESKIMOS" was news that made a West Coaster wonder who might be next.

I play a similar game now, trying to take literally what I read in the Canadian press. I am sometimes angered, sometimes confounded, and sometimes left gasping in admiration. Sometimes I am just slightly jarred, as when I read G.S. Reycraft's gardening column in the Winnipeg Free Press. He told us one April: "Fellow homeowners, gardeners, and everyone interested in growing plants, the green world of another summer is almost upon us. I can see spring peeking around the corner." At first I remembered with what quickness the seasons hurry back around to winter in Manitoba, but gave that up when I realized that Reycraft was looking at spring from behind. Of course.

But not everything is that easy to follow. Consider this sports-page calculation from Tom Watt of the Vancouver Province: "Since his sudden arrival on a Stanley Cup contending team, the 6'4", 223-pound Dailey has scored five goals, two more than double his output this National Hockey League season as a Canuck." And if you think it is unusual for a defenceman to score 1½ goals for Vancouver, consider the poor Montreal Canadiens who, according to the Province, were handed the unusual task of playing three games in two days: "It was the Canadiens' second shutout victory of the weekend after blanking New York Rangers 5-0 on Saturday." By the way, that was the Province's second dangling participle of the page after missing the front porch on Monday morning.

We are seeing fewer and fewer literate college students these days. Some people say that this is so because there is more and more television, or because there are more and more kids going to high school. I would like to suggest that it happens because more and more TV-watching high-schoolers are turning into newspaper and magazine writers. In many countries the writers who comment on books are among the most literate and logical citizens. Not so in Canada. Canadian magazines and newspapers are very democratic: anyone can review books. I once worked for the Calgary *Albertan*, where incoming books for review were thrown on a table and anyone who wanted to pick up a few extra dollars could take one or more home to review.

In the "Fall Book Supplement" of a now-defunct magazine called *The Canadian Review*, Jamie Hamilton, who was described as a publisher of poetry, wrote about Ice Age. Dorothy Livesay's book of poems. He said that the author "looks at the state of growing older," a feat no less challenging, one would imagine, than looking at the process of staying unchanged. But Hamilton loves those paradoxes. A few lines later he says of some poems by Brian Johnson that they are "songs without music." Perhaps

he means that they are sung by a person without a voice.

I think that my favourite elliptical reviewer was a young fellow named Brian Brett, who fell upon the scene for a while in the aforesaid Vancouver Province. It was he who once managed to say that George Woodcock's poetry is "only a segment of a well-rounded perspective." One wants to understand that phrase, especially since Brett maintained that Woodcock's poems do not teach for lofty metaphor. A segment, one has long thought, is usually taken to be a portion cut out of something, usually something circular or spheroid. So it is a real challenge to imagine a segment of a perspective, and furthermore probably impossible to think of a perspective, which to the normal mind suggests a viewer's being firmly stationed in one spot and looking in one direction, to be round, much less well-rounded.



Item: "House critic in a nest of poets that stretched across the country."

Brett managed to produce something equally marvelous each week. Once, writing of a poet's posthumous book, he said that to review it would be "a difficult task," but that it "would be more of a transgression to ignore the book." A morally difficult world, where a task is a transgression. In such a world, why does one get up in the morning?

"Some of the passages are so hair-raising that I almost fell off the chesterfield while reading it," we read in Brian Brett's review of *The Butterfly Ward*, a collection of short stories by Margaret Gibson Gilboord. That is what happens to a reviewer who chooses to read a chesterfield when he is supposed to be reading a newly

published book. In the same review we are advised that "it's an engagement and as such you better have a good grip on your own fears." Leaving aside the barbaric "you better," one pays attention to the often-abused phrase, "as such." Here the writer would have us believe that for the first half of the sentence "it" is an engagement, and for the second half "you" are. The shoddiness of thought continues. We are then told that "the tightest story in the collection is the title story and the others aren't far behind." We are to take it, I suppose, that "tight" signifies "ahead." I am



Item: "Elaborate, rococo creations, built like a verbal carpenter."

reminded of the Salvation Army preacher I heard on the TV this morning. At least I heard him until he said, "Some people never learn to cast their anchor on something solid." I switched hi off, shouting, "I will continue to cast my anchor into something liquid!"

But Brett is not finished with Gilboord yet. He goes on to say that the flaws in Gilboord's book are like the novelist Fyodor Dostoyevsky, in that they are beautiful. A Friend of mine, who is always looking for something as readable as *The Idiot* would have preferred a comparison of the two writers' prose. Actually, the review in question is quite short, perhaps seven inches in all, but it is filled with enough gaffes to keep a proofreader (none seems to be hired by the *Province*) busy till retirement. Discover, if you can, the reasons for the word "with" in the final sentence: "Oberon should be congratulated for its Feats in the publication of short stories, not only with W.D. Valgardson, another line author, but also with Gilboord who now, with this first collection, has proven herself to be among the best."

The book of stories in question treats the subject of people who have been declared incompetent and incapable of communicating successfully with the rational world. The editor of the *Province* is perhaps an ironist. Let us suppose so.

Not long ago I was visiting Vancouver City College and picked up the campus newspaper, to find that as usual in such places the head of the student society was carrying on a battle against the editor of the paper. In a letter to the editor, council president Theresa Taylor began this way: "In regards to your editorial on the Langara student council being on sabbatical, we would like to ask you a question." Yes, it was the first time I had heard of sabbaticals for students at junior colleges — in fact I didn't know that students stayed at those places for seven years: But that was not my concern. I was transfixed by this third sentence of the letter: "Although the location of these meetings is subject to change, one can easily discover where it is to be held." I got out of that school as fast as I could walk.

All right, I told myself, she is just the head of the "student"

body at one college on the West Coast. Go back to the Vancouver *Province*. Ah, they have a new reviewer named Allan Safarik. But I swiftly discovered that this was either an assumed name for the aforementioned Brett, or his fellow-alumnus from the Langara campus of Vancouver City College. In a review of a book about editor Alan Crowley, Safarik wrote that the man was "house critic in a nest of poets that stretched across the country." There was a house that fairly cried out for criticism. Or consider the problems of Vancouver Island novelist Jack Hodgins. An anonymous review in his hometown Nanaimo newspaper reported that his second book, *The Invention of the World*, "is, in my mind, a modern classic which will signal the growing frame of a Vancouver Island writer." I suppose that a newly published novel, in order to become a classic, has to take on that role in an anonymous mind, but can it from there really signal the author's frame? And is Jack really getting taller at his age? In the next sentence we are told that "Mr. Hodgins' writing is his own, despite attempts by other reviewers to make a parallel." Good for you, Jack, resist that bunch's parallel! "He is like them only because he writes beautifully." we are advised immediately, "but like them he has done it his own way." One raced from the mom, hollering, "I can't think this post-modern way! Help me!"

Well, "The book almost screams to be read aloud," this same unknown reviewer said later, and I thought back fondly to the nice polite books that used to wait silently for a more shy reader. I read on, gritting my teeth. "Not a page exists in the book that cannot be opened at random," I found, and I spend an hour trying in vain to open a page, even with the greatest determination of purpose.

We are told a number of other wonderful things during the course of this review, and it would take as much space as the review did to relate them all. But it is impossible to resist the compulsion to commemorate this sentence: "The reader recognizes some of the people — and he is right, eve" though that person may not be the one Mr. Hodgins had in mind." I honestly believe that it would take a college sophomore to understand that sentence.

Lest the reader think that such problems occur only to small-town book reviewers, let him be introduced to a review I found in the Toronto *Star*. It was concerned with John Toland's biography of Hitler, and was written by Michael Crabb, who "teaches history at Appleby College." Mr. Crabb's every second sentence is a prodigy, so I pick only a few of his peculiar notions. "In the beam of Hitler's searing vision were caught not only the millions of Jews whom he shot, burned and gassed, but whole nations whose destinies were permanently transformed." I always thought those eyes were a little more than just hypnotizing. Mr. Crabb is interested in other physical attributes, too. Apparently he was surprised that a fat man could mite so well: "Despite outwardly formidable proportions, Toland has written an absorbing and highly readable account of Hitler's life and times." And he seems to have presented a plausible non-human creature by keeping the Fuehrer's hands free: "Instead of a tied and sealed maniac, Toland depicts a startling realistic demon."

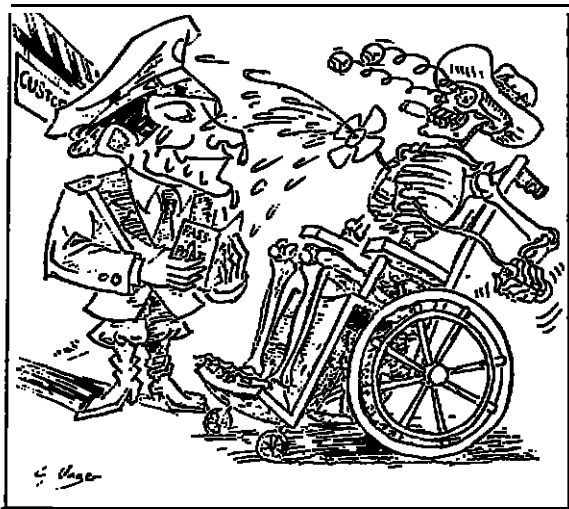
Or let us (what the heck!) revisit Allan Safarik, this time writing in *Books in Canada* about the posthumous poems of an immigrant professor at Simon Fraser University. Here the metaphors stumble from the lip of the stage, their fingers grasping their own throats. "Cooperman," says the reviewer, for that was the professor's name, "celebrates and castigates with an obsessive, impatient series of startling poems [have you noticed how often reviewers are startled?] that crackle from the scalding edge of the sabre tongue." Boy, you wouldn't want to be celebrated by that guy, would you? And what about the poems? Well, they start out as toothy things with whips, and end up as pills: "These poems of strung-out-anguish that lash, bite, and accuse can only be taken in small doses lest the reader arm himself with a bottle of aspirin." Maybe the poems don't actually become aspirins. The sentence could be taken to mean that having read too many of the poems the reader may go berserk and seize a pill bottle, under the delusion that it is a sword, perhaps with a scalding edge. It could be worse; he might wind up as a stooped waiter like the poet, who spent his time "dishing up incredible invective and ridicule from his own posture of the difficult, different man." On second



thought, if that posture signifies what I think it does, I'll just have a cup of coffee.

One of my favourite finds was a review by C.P. Stacey of *The Crown in Canada* by Frank MacKinnon (Books in Canada again). He starts with a painful remark: "The Crown has bee" much in the public eye in North America in 1976." Ouch! But the be makes an assertion that I most refute: "Most of us think of Queen and Crown as one and indivisible." Aw, come on, C.P.. I bet she takes it off when she goes to bed at night.

However, when it comes to finding hooahaws in print, I always go with greatest anticipation to the page whereupon I might find a column written by Allan Fotheringham. Fotheringham writes for the *Vancouver Sun*, and recently for *Maclean's*. After one has take" blue pencil to one of his pieces (something that his regular editors seem unwilling to do) that piece looks like a "exercise in underlining. I" a *Sun* column about the House of Commons. Fotheringham described that place as a "playpen." A sentence later it was a "bearpit." Soon in that unlikely place, Joe Clark "wiped the floor" with Pierre Trudeau. A moment later the bearpit had turned into a "merciless arena" (as if there were merciful ones), where Joe Clark was not a torero, but "the boss." All at once this was a place where there was not a new bullfight, but "a new ball game." One hopes that the bears and the bulls and the children knew the rules. Now Trudeau, in this whatever, was "running scared" while being unable to face the folks "across the aisle." My, this is a difficult place to fix in one's mind's eye! Pretty soon we hear that James Richardson was there doing a "half-gainer" (into sand or cinders or water?) while he "opened with spears." (Gad, no wonder the dollar is falling and inflation is soaring!) But not to despair — Joe Clark "grabbed the initiative" in (what?) "the spontaneous barbs." Leaving aside the question of how anyone does anything in a barb, spontaneous or otherwise, we proceed to the moment when "the Tory benches erupted with desk-splintering surprise et seeing the king of the arena shot down." I'll bet that even the listening chandeliers were popping. They didn't eve" know that arenas had kings. But wait, now the shot-down king is "operating from his usual lofty height." Then he is being compared with Charles Bronson in what is described as a "turn-of-the-century" movie whiih nevertheless depmds upon a lot of car-chases in 1931 Fords. But "ever mind. The bearpit



Item: The creeping paralysis of the funny-bone will stumble across the border."

bullfight spearfight diving pool ball park has bee" again transformed, so that now the Parliament of Canada resembles "furtive cockfights." But hold: a half-sentence later it is a "mano-a-mano battle" again and, in a trice, the "shootout et the OK corral" where, not realizing that the other desperados are carrying Colts, perhaps, Joe Clerk "slashes away." A moment later. Lb&-

ing that he is in a mere card game, "he passes." Nevertheless he is s&" by Fotheringham even now es a "nervous rookie going to the plate." But what is this? What we have been seeing is a boxing match, eve" though the sword-carrying rookie is wearing a baseball outfit, for this has bee" "only one round." when "the champ wee bested" and bed "left the ring bloodied." But that's okay. I am certain that the parliamentary charladies will get it clean again for tomorrow's track-meet.

But Fotheringham has problems with more than just the over-stirred metaphor. Consider a column that appeared in *Maclean's* for Nov. 15, 1976. There we are told that poor Joe Clark's best (verbal) lines "are elaborate, rococo creations, built like a verbal carpenter." I find it difficult to conceive of a verbal carpenter. I didn't eve" know that carpenters were built, much less built rococo.

That was a column to conjure with. The magic started with this interesting bit of sentence logic: "As a reporter who took a mercifully short dip into the Presidential bore, it was apparent that the 1976 campaign ..." Or if dangling modifiers are not your favourite" trick consider this bit of logic that occurs a few paragraphs later: "All one asks is some small evidence that we haven't deserted our British parliamentary heritage entirely and have bee" swallowed by the American gun-shy trend." These are, one would think, two rather unpairable wishes. Maybe Fotheringham has thus expressed Canada's strange political schizophrenia.

That column is replete, believe me, with similar travesties of the language. Let me just exhibit a couple of Fotheringham handed metaphors. Try to picture this: "The creeping paralysis of the funny-bone will stumble across the border — if it already hasn't overwhelmed us." I am not kidding. You could look it op. A bit earlier the columnist writes that General George Brown "was forced to grovel by the nervous White House." I know that if I saw such an edifice up close, I would rather run away es fast es I could. My point is that Fotheringham is sort of a minor star in the sky of Canadian journalism — not a beloved one, but a well-know" one nonetheless. I think that et the very least his editors, unless they have signed a contract forbidding such an act, should hide his most outrageous errors from the eyes of teenage would-be scribes.

Mixed metaphors can, of course, be entertaining. I" a poorly edited West Coast literary magazine called *Revue Notes*, one Peter Crowell once wrote, "I doubt if this one is going to conquer soy milestones in literary history." You will have noticed that Crowell is "or very strong on English usage, either, and he proves that a little later when he says, "It's exciting when one of the larger publishers actually show enough literary taste to publish someone like this."

I keep telling myself that while we can feel scorn for journalists who commit mayhem with figurative language, we can also be entertained by it. Once in a while even a" illogical sentence will make us smile for a moment, es when a CBC hockey announcer said lest April. "The Leafs were very lackadaisical in and around Mike Palmateer." Eve" bed syntax will get a rueful grin. A recent Vancouver headline proclaimed: "Taxi driver shot by passenger in critical condition." But one is not amused when one sees that every year the standards of English usage in the popular press decline. It used to be that youths could look to the daily paper or the monthly magazine to see how English should be written. Now one too often looks-to the papers and magazines to see how badly taught are the youths who seem to move from an unsuccessful year in grade 10 composilio" to a reporter's desk et the *Bugle*.

It is not amusing to read: "Police identified the man as Frank Daniel DeCorleto, 34, of East Hartford and that he had fired et least 35 shots."

It does not strike one es funny to read: "Panelology is a term that means one who collects comic books which I imagine makes David Grannis a panelologist."

Perhaps most alarming of all is that the freshmen's peculiar misuse of the apostrophe has now appeared on the front page. Just a while ago we were permitted to read: "Ashman, a California newsmen who has written biography's of Henry Kissinger.."

It is enough to make ones knee's quake! □

# Bigger brotherhood

With 1984 only five years off, Burgess turns literary revisionist and sticks it to the unions

by Wayne Grady

1985, by Anthony Burgess. Little, Brown & Co.. 172 pages. \$11.25 cloth (ISBN 0 316 116513).

THE FIRST HALF of Burgess's book is a discursive examination of George Orwell's *1984*, in which Burgess conducts a symphony of social history. Bakuninist, anarchic, Pelagian heresy, and Hebraic-Hellenic-Christian humanism to prove that Orwell's work was not a prophetic nightmare but rather a comic satire of England in 1948, the year the novel was written. Post-War England was "dirty streets, decaying buildings, sickening food in factory canteens, the government slogans on the walls..." A Labour Party victory had just ousted Churchill, the welfare state was settling in, and the past was irrevocably past. Burgess rightly points out that 1984 "is an allegory of the eternal conflict of any individual and any collective." Whereas Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) gave us a society in which the Beta-minuses were controlled through chemical happiness, Orwell's Inner Party kept its proles in line through Fear. Huxley, like Karl Marx, learned his socialism in the British Museum; Orwell's models were Spain and Russia.

But Burgess's heart somehow isn't in it. There are several instances of sloppy thinking transliterated into sloppy writing. "Orwell," he writes, "believed that the media, especially the new ones like television, would be in the hands of the State, that here was an apt instrument for propaganda, harangues, lordly directives. It hasn't worked out that way at all." No? Isn't television used daily to teach us all to be good consumers, to go out and buy gadgets we don't need with money we don't have? Don't doublethink. Newspeaking personalities deliver confusing half-truths and "news" flashes ("Six persons died today in a hotel fire in Chile") and "docu-dramas" that are neither documentary nor drama? And how could the author of *Enderby* and

*Napoleon Symphony* allow this string of epigrams to sneak by disguised as a paragraph:

Men and women must practise the technique of love in the real world and not seal themselves off into communes or convents. The existence of the State is acknowledged, but it is accepted that it has little to do with the real purpose of living. Caesar has his own affairs, which he considers serious but are really frivolous. The practice of love has nothing to do with politics. Laughter is permitted, indeed encouraged. Man was put together by God, though it took him a long time.

But Burgess is a novelist, and cannot be criticized for not being Arthur Koestler or Cyril Connelly. The second part of the book is a novel, called 198.5 for copyright reasons, and is Burgess's gentle correction of the errors in Orwell's social vision. Burgess's version of Orwell's English Socialism (Ingsoc) is Britain's Trades Union Congress (TUC) grown monstrous, a neo-Wobbly amalgam of every union from cake decorators to the army, with compulsory membership. The TUC's political executive has formed the new Labour Party, which has been voted into power by the union members it represents — that is, everyone. The unions then have absolute control: Union equals State. All industries are nationalized, so the State is both employer and employee. The resulting syndicalist paradise, however, has a few snakes. Inflation has soared because all wage demands are immediately met. Job satisfaction and incentive has plummeted because all workers are civil servants. The

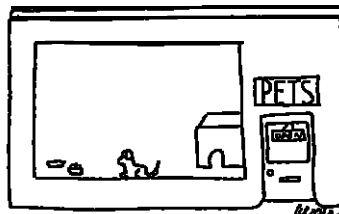
world, to quote Sean O'Casey's Boyle, is in "a terrible state of chassis."

Even in the novel, however, there is evidence of a certain lack of élan, a faint suggestion that Burgess would rather have been writing something else, or is somewhat impatiently spelling out lessons he thought he had given in *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Clockwork Testament*. If, as George Woodcock has suggested, 1984 represents the apex of Orwell's 20 years as a writer, 1985 may be seen as tired recapitulation in the middle movement of Burgess's symphonic career. In an early scene, Bev Jones is telling his retarded daughter Bessie that her mother has been killed in a hospital fire during a firemen's strike (the chapter is called "A Yuletide Fire"):

"Who'll cook Christmas dinner for us then?" It was a beginning; she was contemplating a future from which certain familiar amenities had been moved.

"I'll learn, we'll learn together. It's you and me together now. Bess girl."

Despite this unpromising beginning the novel picks up quickly, and as it holds our interest and Burgess's it becomes apparent that Burgess isn't writing about 1985 any more than he says Orwell was writing about 1984. Many of Burgess's prophecies are self-fulfilling: others have already taken place. His gangs of "kumina" youths, highly educated street toughs who brutally rob union members to get money to pay non-union teachers to teach them Latin poetry and church history, may be likened to, say, the FLQ. And there is at least one possible anachronism: Burgess's consumers still pay for their overpriced products in cash rather than with credit cards. Best and most ironic of all, however, is the section in which one of Jones's Fellow outcasts picks up a copy of *The Times*. In fact *The Times* suspended publication last month, an unpredictable disaster even in Burgess's nightmare present. The reason for the hiatus in *The Times*: labour trouble. □



## Short orders, tall bills

Canadian Short Stories: Third Series, edited by Robert Weaver, Oxford University Press, 364 pages, \$5.95 paper (ISBN 0 19540291 x).

78: Best Canadian Stories, edited by John Metcalf and Clark Blaise, Oberon Press, 176 pages, \$15.00 cloth (ISBN 0 33750 277 6) and \$6.95 paper (ISBN 0 33750 278 4).

The Best Modern Canadian Short Stories, edited by Ivon Owen and Morris Wolfe, Hurtig Publishers, 320 pages, \$12.95 cloth (ISBN 0 83830 154 5):

By MARK ABLEY

EACH OF THESE anthologies contains a story that stands out from the others, that undermines the others by intimating qualities they lack. In Robert Weaver's latest anthology, filled with fictional reminiscences of out-of-the-way localities, Mavis Gallant's "Irina" opens onto a world apart, a world of imagination and history and the cruelty of time. The Oberon collection, 78: Best Canadian Stories, whose writers mostly stay very close to home, includes "Night-

Side" by Joyce Carol Oates, an interrogation of life and a speculation about death set in 19th-century Massachusetts and dealing with spiritualism. The Ivon Owen/Morris Wolfe anthology features a crisp translation of Jacques Ferron's "Mélie and the Bull": this witty and insouciant fantasy; lurking near the end of a large volume, only emphasizes the solidly empirical nature of most of its neighbours.

There are only two writers who are, so to speak, common to all three books: Alice Munro and Clark Blaise. Munro has a superb new story, "The Beggar Maid," in the Oberon volume, and her older "Material" turns up in both the Weaver and the Owen/Wolfe collections. (Two other stories find their way into both books: Margaret Atwood's "Polarities" and W. D. Valgardson's "Bloodflowers.") The Oberon anthology has no such overlaps.) Blaise, by whom different stories appear in the Weaver and the Owen/Wolfe anthologies, is the co-editor of Oberon's collection. The virtues of Munro's and Blake's fiction also tend to be the virtues of these three books: a strong sense of place and of the past, a detached but loving attitude to others and to earlier selves, an acceptance of the responsibilities of imagination. Such qualities are not to be dismissed or sneered at. But occasionally you want something different, something more.

I am not, let me hasten to say, berating Munro or Blaise. I only wish that the editors of these anthologies had been a little more

daring in their choices. These are good, safe books. Owen and Wolfe, at the end of a substantial introduction, draw attention to their own bias: "Apart from 'Mélie and the Bull' all the stories in this book are traditional in form; then is nothing that can be called experimental. We didn't plan it that way, but whether it reflects a fact of contemporary Canadian writing or the conservatism of the editors' taste we cannot say." Surely the answer is clear. Contemporary Canadian writing includes not only the realistic stories so well represented here, but also the work of Matt Cohen, Ray Smith, Michael Yates and Leon Rooke, among others. Simply to name names is invidious, but there are Canadian alternatives to the familiar fictions which, for the most part, occupy the pages of these books. In the polemical words of Canadian Fiction Magazine editor Geoff Hancock, "the realistic writers of the '70s have not created a new perception of reality which 're-imagines' or 'recreates' the world with a new artistic response to it." It would be good to have a collection that mediated between the purely "progressive" fictions, of, say, The Story So Far and the mainly traditional stories Weaver is renowned for assembling.

Not that the works in these anthologies are dreary, unimaginative, or inwmpctent. In particular, Robert Weaver's collection, complete with biographical notes and full-page photographs of the authors, is excellent value. The volume forms a coherent


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end logical successor to Weaver's two earlier collections, and I expect it will become equally "classic." A clear majority of its writers were born in the 1930s; no one younger than 34 gets a look in. All the regions of Canada except for the Arctic are represented — this applies also to the Blaise/Metcalf and the Owen/Wolfe anthologies. Among English-speaking Canadians, only native people and Newfoundlanders could have any reason to complain.

*The Best Modern Canadian Short Stories* costs seven dollars more than the Weaver selection. It contains six more stories than *Canadian Short Stories: Third Series* and it lacks the photos. I make these mundane points simply because in terms of content the two are remarkably similar. Eight authors are shared by both, and several more of the Owen/Wolfe crew (Margaret Laurence, Mordecai Richler, and Dave Godfrey, for instance) have appeared in Weaver's earlier collections. Wolfe and Owen do include three stories translated from the French — an old Weaver practice that we don't find in his *Third Series*. The trio of French Canadian authors — Gabrielle Roy, Anne Hébert, and Jacques Ferron — are all over 55; Wolfe and Owen claim with some justice that in Quebec "the short story is not a major literary form," but surely they could have included one or two stories by middle-aged or young Quebec writers: Michel Tremblay or Jean-Guy Carrier, for instance. The matter deserves mention because the age-range of the other Wolfe/Owen authors is extremely close to that of Weaver's new gang; of the 21 English Canadians in *The Best Modern Canadian Short Stories*, 15 were born between 1926 and 1941. Only one, Margaret Gibson, is under 35. The editors have chosen with a cautious grace.

The Oberon collection is a different matter. The latest in a sequence of annual anthologies, it's also the only one of these three volumes to include previously unpublished work and to bring new writers to light. Whereas the other two anthologies maintain a fairly level quality, even a fairly level tone, Metcalf and Blaise take a few risks. I think that two of the 10 stories fail; but five or six are excellent. Those by Oates, Munro, Hugh Hood, and Kent Thompson are as good as we'd expect; "In Montreal," the first published work of Peter Behrens, is imaginative and controlled; and Brian Bartlett's "So" is terrific, delicate but incisive. By far the most interesting story of Bartlett's I've read. 78: *Best Canadian Stories* deserves as wide a readership as the other two collections, though it probably won't get it. While it lacks their weight, it has just as much imaginative life.

Taken together, these 49 stories are more concerned with substance than style, more full of worries than laughter, imbued with more regrets than hopes. A faithful reflection of the country? □



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## Maritime pro without the con

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Double Exposure, by Alden Nowlan.  
Brunswick Press, 166 pages, \$5.95 paper.  
(ISBN 0 88790 096 8).

By SEAN VIRGO

WHENEVER THERE WAS a title fight in America. Radio Eireann used to come back on the air at 2:00 a.m. I'd bed we'd hear the voice of Eamonn Andrews from the set in the kitchen and every fight was a gladiatorial glory of violence, skill, and chivalry. But eventually the film clips would turn up in the theatres and there would be Ezzard Charles stumblebumming around the ring, or Marciano butting and crouching his way to another crown. Andrews's commentaries were pure fiction. I sometimes wonder if he wasn't actually lounging in a Dublin studio, improvising.

The first piece of journalism I ever read by Alden Nowlan was the 1972 *Macleans* piece on Stompin' Tom Connors. It was a wonderfully adroit piece of myth-making — low key, observant, slightly sceptical — and I believed it. It wasn't for another two years, till I saw Connors's stupefying lack of talent for myself, that I knew I'd been conned again.

Well, poets are myth-makers and Nowlan is a good one, and though dubious about anyone collecting his journalistic work so soon I was looking forward to seeing through his cons in *Double Exposure* and treating them as pod-natured jokes. Instead I'm a convert, convinced that a 3,000-word piece by Nowlan is likely to carry more information and insight than 10 *Macleans* full of meretricious pep. For one thing Nowlan's ego doesn't get in the way of his subject. When he writes about himself (and his childhood especially is the stuff of Maritime myth) he does so openly and with relevance. There is no concealed self-applause and absolutely no flamboyance of expression: he writes cleanly and functionally and gets on with the job. If the Stompin' Tom article was misleading it was (I now see) because Nowlan was far more concerned with understanding Connors's audience than with sitting in judgment. To me that's a kind of humility that is rare, to say the least, among columnists in this country.

He's a benign writer too. He wants to lie people and have them lie him, without surrendering either his objectivity or his self-respect. And in this, of course, he's lying his readers, or most of us anyway. The interviews are the backbone of this collection, and almost every one of them ends with the seal not so much of approval as affection. He concludes that Stompin' Tom

is not phoney, that "Gabby" Regan "isn't such a bed bugger," and that in prejudging Bruno Bobak he "ought to have known better." When he's not sure whether the man's a phoney (as with Cruse the tent preacher), he says as much and lets us judge for ourselves. He never takes cheap shots.

One reason for these virtues is Nowlan's humble origins. He doesn't flaunt these but they have left him with a feeling for common sense, common decency, and the frailty of comfort. His regionalism is important too. He has a natural, rooted stance as he watches the world, and because he's the real thing there's no hint of the professional hating-choker who is the plague these days of the Maritimes and Newfoundland.

But he's a sophisticated man for all that. His language doesn't arc with Wolfshin incandescence, but he has an un-failing fend of homely analogies sprinkled among quotations from Chesterton. He can let loose good one-liners, too ("The space flights have had immeasurably less effect on man's inner world than the invention of the button"), and though he's more of an observer than a thinker his analysis of rural factory workers as me" whose fatalism springs not from ignorance but from knowledge seems to me profound and far-reaching: "If the smoke of the factory pollutes the atmosphere, well, that's like an infestation of army worms or a" unseasonable hailstorm."

Then's some trivia here in the shorter weekly pieces, clearly hustled up for a deadline. end Brunswick Press should look fore compositor who knows whet a margin is. But I've gained a lot from this book and it will stay on my shelf. To end on a Nowlanesque note: I keep thinking whet a gentle guy he must be. Hope I'm not conning myself. □

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## Yoked by violence

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Two-Headed Poems, by Margaret Atwood, Oxford University Press, 112 pages, \$3.95 paper, (ISBN 0 19 546292 8).

By MARSHALL MATSON

THESE ARE POEMS of disappointment: political and personal. The "two-headed poems" are specifically the political ones in the middle of the book where the heads speak for two political bodies joined like Siamese twins who dream of separation. Because the bodies are joined at the head, separation is especially risky. And because the heads speak two different languages, words are especially misleading.

Who does our leader speak for?  
How can you use two languages  
and mean what you say in both?

In the personal poems that begin and end the book the two-mindedness of the heads is found in the hands: the right with a knife, male and wolfish, and the left who dances, female and victimized, but savagely vegetative. At the beginning there is also the two-mindedness of encaging isolation on the one hand, and desolation *à deux* on the other — or in the faulty heart that says "I want" one moment and "I don't want" the next. In the poems that end the book, however, the woman makes peace with her heart. The immobilizing isolation in resolved into the maternal bond with earth, the desolation by starting a daughter on her way, a way that will come back to the beginning.

In the earlier poems life on the land is a struggle with weeds. The poetic ability to name them cannot, alas, control them. The picnic table is a wreck; where there aren't weeds there's junk, bones, and stones. But the poet's clear eye can see beyond the road two miles away to the house by the ocean, 1000 miles distant, when a grandmother dies. It ironically considers the superior reality of a postcard view of mountains to the real thing, and it contemplates the life of a man who mops up the torture chamber. Finally, in four exquisite elegies, it brings into perspective the deadly dispossession of people in Lower Canada in 1838 and the mournful life of landowners in Ontario today.

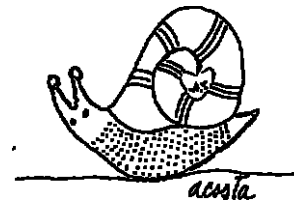
After the wintry middle poems of our political discontent, we may look in the

later poems for the progress of seasons to bring new life. But we get just a glimpse of muddy spring, followed by a winter solstice poem. Then, after Easter, it's January again. In other words, the poems reflect no progress of seasons; there is only repetition. Easter is not a matter of rebirth but of dissolution and re-formation in the "acid sea" of mother earth when "all waves are one/wave; there is no other."

The years since *You Are Happy* (1974) have had their effect: these are sadder poems. Elegy marks the passing of time, and it marks these times. It tells of life on the land, and of this land. In the gloom the poet's quick edge still flashes, however, and sometimes cuts too easily. The long prose poem "Marrying the Hangman" proceeds from the true story of a servant woman in colonial Quebec condemned to hang for stealing clothes from "the wife of her employer." Since the post of hangman was vacant and a woman could escape hanging by marrying a hangman, she persuades a fellow prisoner to become the hangman and to marry her. Margaret Atwood inventively unfolds the implications of this story, but her quickness flirts with fatuity when she explains that the woman stole clothes because she wanted to be more beautiful, and adds: "This desire in servants was not legal." This empty *non sequitur* does lead to something later when the tense is changed and illegality becomes practically universal. What a wife gives her husband, we are advised, "can best be had

by marrying a woman who has been condemned to death by other men for wishing to be beautiful. There is a wide choice." We are led to understand that women create and cohabit with hangmen because men hang them for being women.

The metaphors in these poems are characteristically sharp. The images are often biological, blending disgust and relish. There is that bravura violence: an eye is "crushed by pliers," the heart is a pincushion, a knitting needle's stuck in the abdomen; there's a "hole in the belly where you were nailed/to the earth forever." The heart has "its skin of suef, / its skin of gristle" it's an "unshelled / turtle, this one lungful of blood, / no happy plateful." Blood and bleeding are so frequent they may come to seem gratuitous, as when apples are regarded as dumps of blood. When, however, the bleeding apple tree is further conceived as showing compassion



in the creation of something out of nothing, the apples condensing like dew as well as dripping like blood, we realize the grace of the gratuity. □

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## Lost glories, found clichés

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**The Ghosts Call You Poor.** by Andrew Suknaski, Macmillan. 117 pages. 55.95 paper (ISBN 0 7705 1656 4).

**Ikons of the Hunt.** by Theresa Kishkan, Sono Nis Press, 97 pages, \$4.95 paper (ISBN 0 91946262 6).

**Once When I Was Drowning,** by Al Pittman, Breakwater Books. 79 pages, \$0.00 cloth (ISBN 0 919948 49 9) and \$0.00 paper (ISBN 0 919948 48 0).

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By A. F. MORITZ

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EACH OF THESE books comes from a different area of the country: the Prairies, the West Coast, the Maritimes. But only one, Suknaski's, is "regional," and it alone achieves poetic authenticity. The other two have nothing to offer as interesting and relevant as Suknaski's sense of place.

*The Ghosts Call You Poor* widens and deepens the vein Suknaski first explored for a large public in *Wood Mountain Poems* (Macmillan, 1976). The hallmark of this poetry is a reverent contemplation of facts: facts about Canada, the Prairies, Wood Mountain, its inhabitants and their predecessors. In his opening poem Suknaski subtly presents his mission as poet under two master images. First, he remembers a friend who returned from Toronto to Wood Mountain, where his father had once told him. "This place will only die if we let it." Second, Suknaski dances with the widow of another friend: and he remembers that he had promised himself to befriend this woman, but had failed to do so until that moment. This sense of returning to a widowed, bereaved people and landscape, in danger of dying owing to neglect, dominates Suknaski's work.

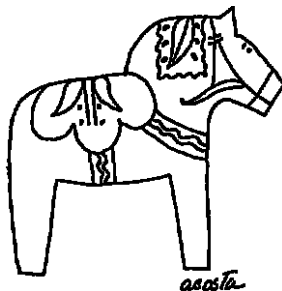
For all his evocation of the hardihood of the plains-dwellers and their tough, resinous speech, Suknaski deals mainly in ruins, in the reminiscences the aged and semi-derelect indulge in about the mighty pioneer images of their forefathers, and in the dim presence of the shattered, dispersed Indian. For him these are the fugitive remains of a tradition that held an infinite promise. His Wood Mountain is a place visited, destroyed, and abandoned by progress, eaten and spit out by man's confused double quest for wealth and for the severe, terrifying, vague beatitude expressed in the word "North." The best poem here is "Dreaming of the Northwest Passage," a meditation on this quest in the concise, rhythmic, charged language that Suknaski too seldom achieves.

His poetry is often prolix and prosaic, apparently without sufficient care for (or interest in) words. In form, style, and

diction many of the poems are only magazine verse of an unadventurous kind. This fault largely vanishes if one is prepared to give full marks to a poetry that seems designed for oral presentation to the largest possible audience. Still, the contrast between the Prairie speech Suknaski quotes and the frequent colourlessness and cliché of his own voice is not to his credit. Basically, Suknaski uses simple themes as receptacles into which detail after realistic detail is poured, hoping their sheer weight and presence will spark in the reader an intuition of the reality the poet confronts. When Suknaski departs from this method to think and comment he is not successful. In several poems he attacks the white man's guilt, and his fell kinship with history and place is lost in the *mea culpa* of the knee-jerk liberal. *The Ghosts Call You Poor* lives in its poetic summoning of the spirit of Wood Mountain - rich in dreams, proud, wounded, and unfulfilled.

Kishkan's *Ikons of the Hunt* should be judged by the shameless puffery of the publisher's blurb on the cover. She presents, we are told, "a universe dominated by age-old dreams and passions." In the book we find the stock-in-trade of today's most boring and ubiquitous magazine verse: a flat voice, facile myth-making, a lot of moons and stones and bones and sea weed and dream-fish, an easy emphasis on death, cold, moisture, womb, mot, and silence. Kishkan supposedly reveals "an extraordinary range of themes and styles." The book is depressingly unvaried, with scarcely ever a change in tone, vocabulary or any other aspect of style. There may be several themes, but all are reduced to monotonous vague keening, a sad-eyed gaze, and a soft romanticism. What of the "impressive variety of forms, from short-lined lyrics to prose poems"? She has several ways of arranging poems on the page, but the differences are wholly superficial. These poems are fundamentally identical in phrasing, cadence, diction, and mood.

As for the "powerful and vivid vision" of "one of the most original and impressive poets to emerge in recent times," the book supports these claims with a sort of anthology of expected gestures. We find a mélange of unfocused poems repeating the



altitudes of Theodor Roethke, Susan Musgrave, and others. Kishkan shows a certain aplomb in her imitations, and may write well when she begins to think for herself. But what is achieved here is only the blue-

stocking poetry of the blue-jeans era. A few years ago the world's Kishkan's were regaling us with "nacreous," "alabaster," and "diaphane."

*Once When I Was Drowning* contains few poems of interest. Most treat hackneyed subjects without imagination and in slovenly, flat language. A quotation will indicate the level of writing here:

He was quietly proud  
of his postcard collection  
and took quiet pains to point out  
that no two of them  
were exactly alike

Why bother? □

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## Of newts and natural Gold

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*Some of the Cat Poems.* by Artie Gold, CrossCountry Press, unpaginated, \$2 paper (ISBN 0 916696 08 1).

*The Assumption of Private Lives,* by Robert Allen, New Delta, 58 pages, \$2.50 paper (ISBN 0 919162 48 7).

*Prisoner.* by Linda Pyke, Macmillan. 87 pages, \$6.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7705 1715 3).

*A Burning Patience,* by Pier Giorgio Di Cicco, Borealis Press, 82 pages, \$3.95 paper (ISBN 0 919594 96 4).

*Dancing in the House of Cards.* by Pier Giorgio Di Cicco, Three Trees Press, 63 pages, \$3.95 paper (ISBN 0 88823 003 6).

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By DAVE MCFADDEN

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THE PICK OF this little litter of, new poetry books would have to be Artie Gold's *Some of the Cat Poems*. What is it about Gold that is so endearing? If he lacks occasional bursts of obvious brilliance, he also manages to avoid the long arid passages we're so familiar with in lesser poets. He's not a poetry-tiling machine; in fact each line is heavy with humanity and a feeling he is standing perpetually on the edge of some fabulous vista and can see more than he can say. He's a neo-Chaucer who is incapable of erring on the page, and you "ever have to give him the benefit of the doubt. He is a natural who should be treated with extreme kindness, even if you're indisposed towards his extremely unself-conscious spontaneity, for only very special writing animals can get away with this kind of absolute naturalness. He is quiet, tender, and intelligent as hell as when, for example, he tells his cat: "I would never frighten you by leaving a suit in my closet. . . ."

A poet of bafflingly delightful originality, Gold quietly selects random moments to prove the holiness of life, and he is clever enough to do it without talking about it explicitly. He has no antecedents in Canada, and without denying his authenticity one might say he has a better and clearer

mind than Allen Ginsberg, a less intimidating seriousness than Jack Spicer, and less devotion to pure art concepts than Frank O'Hara.

In *The Assumption of Private Lives*, Robert Allen's cultural assumptions occasionally get in the way of his poetry: "Swing on, Assiniboine/you're no Mississippi, no Nile, but..." This handicap is inexplicable in a poet of the post-Jungian, post-Einsteinian em. Yet this book, a collection of small, well-crafted, cautious lyrics, takes on an impressive range of concerns. The opener is a totally un-Blakean, un-Lawrentian lament For a newt and For its assumed lack of consciousness of pain, pleasure, and passing time. Allen tends to torture syntax for no apparent reason, calls "Liberty" a "torch singer," and becomes more interesting as his line lengthens and toughens.

The poems in Linda Pyke's *Prisoner* possess a refreshing clarity. Mosaic-like, they fill in parts of a stupendous story: the author publishes a poem in a magazine, the poem is read by a convict at Joyceville, a correspondence develops and love blossoms. Taking brief breaks from caring for her cancer-ridden mother, the poet visits the prison obsessively and some of the best poems tell of sad meetings under officialdom's metallic eye. The poetry is still a little highschoolish, though, and hasn't developed to the point where it can

deal with so powerful a theme. Theme and form are uncomfortable in each other's arms. Yet the book inspires confidence in Pyke's potential, and she's obviously a special person, one in touch with great immediacies. Check the last few lines in "Touching."

Which leaves two books by Pier Giorgio Di Cicco, a poet with the knack of inventing enthralling images, easily, one after the other. But this is 1979, and such images have by and large lost the power to enthrall us. We no longer need poetry to provide what Di Cicco's "doubted talents provide." His Forerunners did their work so well this language now belongs to pop stars and ad men. Di Cicco has little else to offer us and tends to get bogged down in Formulae of dubious origin. There is no submerged monster squirming for release, no awesome purity longing to be born. If something is learned in poem A, it's forgotten by poem B. The poems in *A Burning Patience and Dancing in the House of Cards* could be shuffled and dealt in any way. A curious case, bard to diagnose. Perhaps Di Cicco is too spiritually complacent to be of consuming interest. His current Forte is probably occasional groups of poems in magazines rather than large collections that seem paralytic and redundant. The opposite of Linda Pyke in a way, he is probably the best poet you'll ever be unable to read. The engine is roaring beautifully, but the clutch is not engaged. □

## Full of sound and Fuehrer

The *Trial of Adolf Hitler*, by Philippe van Rjndt, Lester & Orpen, 334 pages, \$10.95 cloth (ISBN 0 919630 04 9).

By ANDREW ALLENTUCK

**HITLER SELLS.** With this premise in mind, Philippe van Rjndt has married the "Hitler lives" myth to the grab-bag of arguments that were used by the defendants at Nuremberg. The result, a contrived opportunity to test Hider as general and criminal, comes to the less-than-astounding conclusion that Hitler was, indeed, guilty of crimes against humanity.

Van Rjndt begins his story with a revision of what happened in the Fuehrerbunker as the Red Army smashed into Berlin. Rather than dispatching himself with a bullet—the view of the Allied armies, their historians, and the Nuremberg proceedings—Hitler is merely grazed, his aim having been deflected by the falling body of Eva Braun. A loyal SS man carries his Fuehrer away in a handy ambulance, substituting on the pyre another body in Hitler's uniform.

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The ambulance speeds to the small town of Emmaus. There the SS man seeks out a doctor who tends to the unknown wounded patient. The doctor, though, is no friend of the SS and kills the ambulance driver without hesitation. So Hitler's last link to his past identity is broken. His moustache shaved off, he looks like any other German burgher. Now called Werner Busse, Hitler starts a tree nursery, becomes quite prosperous, and assumes the role of town father and benefactor.

Yet Hitler has his historic destiny to fulfil. He decides to surrender to a state prosecutor and stand trial for war crimes. The trial is held at the United Nations and the judges represent the major Allied victors and Israel.

The focus of the book and the arguments presented in the trial deal, as they must, with whether Hitler committed crimes against humanity. The prosecution contends that Hitler ordered several massacres of soldiers and civilians, planned the death camps, and indeed conducted his state at critical moments for nothing more than the destruction of the maximum number of lives. The defence argues that Hitler was the legitimate expression of the will of the German people and that the unpleasantnesses of Dachau, Auschwitz, Treblinka, and so on were minor details seen to by Himmler and beneath the Fuehrer's global concerns.

In the end the tribunal finds Hitler guilty

on all counts. The sentence of death is given to Israel to carry out, and Hitler is finally put to death.

My problem in reading this book was to assess the author's intention and how he handled the profound issues of war guilt. I think the treatment is thin, the opportunity to explore the issues largely wasted. This book may fascinate those who know little of the war and of the Nuremberg proceedings. For those who remember, it smacks of opportunism. □

## Politics and dogmatics

Canadian Poetry 1 and 2 (Fall/Winter, 1977; Spring/ Summer, 1978), edited by Michael Gnarowski and D.M.R. Bentley, University of Western Ontario. \$6 per year.

Book Forum: Spring, 1978 ("Canada Emergent." a special issue), edited by James Carley, Hudson River Press (38 East 76th St., New York 10021). \$2.50.

By DENNIS DUFFY

GNAROWSKI AND Bentley's *Canadian Poetry*, a twice-yearly periodical subsidized by the University of Western Ontario, appeals to the reader in both content and format. Clean, clear type-face, prominent page-numberings, an informative contents page: these, despite the absence of running titles, impress the reader before he even begins to look at what is written.

Each issue contains studies, documents, and reviews, with that middle section generating particular interest. Obviously the editors seek to include not only material buried in library stacks, but also transcriptions of bygone radio and TV interviews with poets. Students at all levels will welcome this archival material the magazine seeks to play.

Since it is an academic journal rather than a "little magazine," its contents remain predictable, though far from dull. Articles range from narrow and detailed studies of individual works and their backgrounds to the wide-ranging, splendid, and solid demolition of Layton's philosophical (and other) pretensions carried out by Peter Hunt in the first issue.

The prospect of another journal in the CanLit field failed to enthrall me, but scanning the magazine changed my mind. It holds a clear sense of the kind of work it is looking for, brings forward among its contributors some new names we will probably hear more of, and provides in its documents section a much-needed resting place for fugitive items. In time, the editors may be forced to send back the umpteenth article on Duncan Campbell Scott, but a number of poets remain. In the meantime, best wishes!

The "Canada Emergent" issue of *Book Forum* (a quarterly out of New York) tells a little bit about a lot of things that ought to leave any American reader thoroughly confused. Aside from the obligatory pieces on the Canadian writers Americans already read — Laurence, Atwood, and Davies — and another recognizing that Bear has made Marian Engel's name known to American readers, the issue introduces only one writer they may not already have heard of: Jack Hodgins. The rest seems largely a collection of book reviews whose authors attempt to present the odd piece of information or dogma about Canada that might make our scene intelligible to the people southwards.

One imagines these (largely) Canadian writers, torn between writing knowledgeable reviews and explanatory ones, turning out pieces that fall somewhere uncomfortably between the two. This happens with regularity, though comic relief is provided by a selection of black-and-white reproductions of Canadian paintings. They were apparently selected on the principle of which Yorkville gallery, not too far around the corner from the last one, could come up with a slide or two.

I suspect it does less harm to our image abroad than the movie version of *Two Solitudes*. As a booster of our national rating, I'd rank it somewhere between the dollar and Margaret Trudeau. □

## Sermon on the mounts

Making Arrangements, by Robert Harlow. McClelland & Stewart, 319 pages, \$12.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7710-4004-0).

By WAYNE GRADY

YOU DON'T NEED to have read Harlow's previous three novels to read this one properly. You don't even need to know a lot about horse racing. But both would help. The former, especially *Scann* (Sono Nis, 1972), would already have convinced you that Harlow is one of the finest novelists in the country; the latter would prepare you for Harlow's view that a horse race is never just a horse race, which he describes as "10 cripples crawling around an oval," but is a self-contained religious experience, a thick slice of the reverential life of which modern man — certainly modern central characters — seems to feel the lack. For the Bible there is the *Daily Racing Form*, for priests there are bookmakers and handicappers, for prayers there are the shouts of punters as their nag makes the turn for home ahead by a neck, and heaven is a winning combination in the Trifecta. Underlying the whole intricate, delicate apparatus is the certain knowledge that the race is fixed, that all of life is a cheat, and that no one ever wins:

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George was suddenly on his feet. "Cheat," he shouted. "Cheat cheat cheat!"

"Sit down, George," Dave said. "That was an honest race. The best horse won."

"I know," George said. "And that's the cheat."

George and Dave are two of 10 horsemen — Harlow's 10 entries in the human race — whose lives revolve around Granville Downs, attack loosely modelled on Vancouver's Exhibition Park (formerly called Lansdowne, and still owned by the legendary Jack Diamond). All 10 are cripples, literally or figuratively, and crawl around in circles: "What we do mostly," says Emil Lime, who narrates the novel from his wheelchair, "is read the *Daily Racing Form* and bet on the races at the track. And make arrangements for the necessary cash flow." Hence the tide, and the plot.

The favourite is Harry Watkins, a broken-down hotel detective with a prostate gland the size of a lacrosse ball and a mom full of worthless tote tickets. One day Harry receives the tip of his life, and the rest of the novel is Harry trying to work up the cash flow needed to make a lifetime of preparation pay off. Harry ends up as poor as ever (though by a fictional device that could "ever happen at a real track), but he grows in stature and dignity. He is a modern Willie Loman (or an older, urban Scann), saved from Loman's pathetic solution by wit and a sort of existential fluke, which is after all the saving truth behind all business ventures, bookmaking included.

Tony Ciulla, the career fixer who, according to a recent *Sports Illustrated* article, rigged hundreds of races and made millions of dollars, has a saying: You can't make a horse win, but you sure can make him lose." Ciulla now is giving his life story to the FBI in exchange for a light sentence and police protection. If the FBI ever decides to make a book out of it, I hope they hire Harlow to write it. □

## The camera and the wrong

*A Dream of Riches: The Japanese Canadians 1877-1977*, by the Japanese Centennial Project (Box 69747, Station K, Vancouver), 190 pages, \$13 paper (ISBN 09690708 0 2).

By FRANK MORITSUGU

PHOTO ALBUMS ARE for fond relatives and close friends and, eventually, for social historians. This book set out to be a print record of a photographic history exhibit that toured the country during 1977 as part of the Japanese Canadian Centennial Year pro-

gram. It ended up looking like a faded photo album.

The exhibit had a certain verve; the presentation made the most of many of the photographs depicting highlights of the first 100 years in this country of the Japanese Canadian people. In book form, produced by the same Vancouver team of young Japanese Canadians who did the exhibit, the entire project is diminished by the stolid layout, the reduction of the photos to snapshot size, and the pallid inking. It has some captions, section headings, and a running text in three languages — English, French, and Japanese (and what can be more multicultural Canadian than that?). But it is still just a" album.

Most Japanese Canadians are of two minds about this book. They are pleased a published collection of photographs evoking their history has come along, but disappointed that the final work doesn't match the high professionalism of other recent contributions to Canadian literature on Japanese Canadians — Ken Adachi's thoughtful popular history, Shizuye Takashima's touching memoir, or Barry

Broadfoot's engaging collection of taped memories from hundreds who went through the Japanese Canadian experience.

One basic fault of *A Dream of Riches* is its tunnel vision. The earnest and humourless text that glues the book together only concentrates on the bad things that have befallen to this group of Canadians. The words are a" extended diatribe — so much newly arrived-at concern about past injustices, so much indignation at terrible times past, so much selective reading of history.

There is hardly any reflection on the gutsiness shown by the immigrants and their Canadian-born descendants to survive and overcome the racial discrimination and official mistreatment this particular group underwent during the first 50 years of this century. And there is no suggestion that many other Canadians rallied in the later 1940s to help correct some of the civil injustices inflicted by officialdom on the West Coast and in Ottawa.

If this book were the only one you read — and for younger people particularly, the picture format and the simplistic messages would make it the most accessible — the

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conclusion might well be that the people shown and quoted were and still are enervated masochists, hapless victims of outside outrages, unable to fight back.

Too bad. It could have been so much better. Nevertheless, *A Dream of Riches* is an interesting if idiosyncratic addition to the growing bookshelf of Japanese Canadians. Some year soon, one hopes, there will come a more balanced and, therefore, more satisfying and exciting book of photographs to put alongside. The unique Japanese Canadian story deserves that at least. □

## No black mischief here

Go Do Some Great Thing, by Crawford Kilian. Douglas & McIntyre. 188 pages, \$12.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88894 180 3).

By JIM CHRISTY

IF YOU ARE going to write about any aspect of this country's past, it seems you had better make it dull. A cardinal rule, extending even to popular history. (The two exceptions are George Woodcock and Jack Gray.) It doesn't matter how strange, incongruous, or downright weird the story

may be. Apply the leeches of the national subconscious. The most obvious examples in recent years have been books concerning Canadian outlaws, Canadians in White Russia, and a Canadian force that went down the Nile to help General Gordon out at Khartoum. These books have all the drama and sweep of the prose in *Robert's Rules of Order*. It is curious, however, as well as hypocritical, that the jacket copy on some of these books might have been written by Colonel Tom Parker, or to keep it Canadian. Tony Unitas, another ex-carnie turned boxing publicist who once exhibited a 16-year-old albino as the world's oldest man.

Even the Colonel or Tony would be hard pressed to come up with any purple prose to describe this one except in the negative — and invective is incompatible with the boring.

Kilian concentrates mainly on the blacks in Victoria, B.C., who arrived in 1858. These people were a nucleus of the San Francisco black community in flight from persecution and armed with an invitation from Sir James Douglas, the first governor of British Columbia. Canada did not prove to be a haven of tolerance, but their fight against racial prejudice is more a story of stoically bearing day-to-day white pettiness than a saga of oppression and resistance. I cannot refrain from noting that the only interesting chapter is the first, in which the author describes the incidents in California that lead up to the pilgrimage.

In his introduction Kilian declares: "Fools, knaves and madmen have given their names to British Columbia's streets and towns; the only monument to the Blacks is a drinking fountain dedicated to . . . the lifeguard of English Bay. . . ."

There are no black fools, knaves, or madmen mentioned here, although anyone with even a superficial acquaintance with B.C. history knows they were here. Actually, Kilian does mention one, treats him like a nuisance, gets the facts wrong, and tries to claim he died an Uncle Tom. This was Daniel Williams, who Kilian states was born in Ontario. Williams, in Kilian's version, shot at a Hudson's Bay Company trader, was tried, and released. This is the extent of the book's, shall I say, colour. Lest it set our hearts a-flutter, Kilian stresses William's true fine mettle; he "was the first to grow wheat in the Peace River country."

In fact, Williams was born a slave in Prince George County, Virginia, rode the underground railroad, and eventually arrived in the Peace where he was a trapper, prospector, and everything else Kilian claims as well as being a religious fanatic.



Briefly, he killed an RCMP officer, took to the woods, was befriended by Beaver Indians, married one, eluded capture for

### DARWIN'S FORGOTTEN WORLD

Introduction by Roger Lewin

Special photography by Sally Anne Thompson

The Galapagos Islands have remained nearly as isolated and uninhabited as when Charles Darwin first saw them almost a century and a half ago.

The extraordinary creatures that inhabit the Islands can be found nowhere else in the world, and were the basis for Darwin's classic work, *The Origin of Species*.

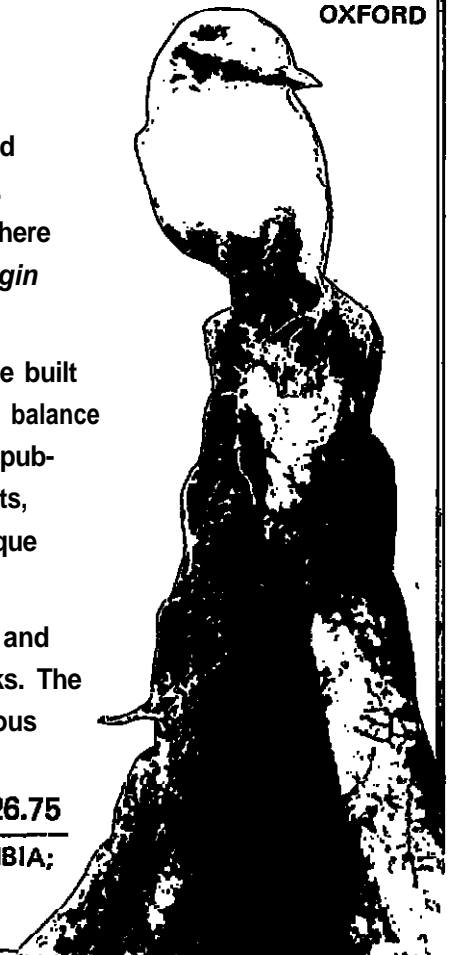
The Galapagos are now threatened by the likelihood of an airport to be built on the largest of the Islands. Should this occur, the delicate ecological balance of the Islands will disappear. In a stunning collection of previously unpublished colour photographs, accompanied by Darwin's original comments, *Darwin's Forgotten World* will remain as a living document of this unique world, which will soon cease to be.

The end pages of the book will be a map of *The Voyage of the Beagle*, and the appendix is an annotated bibliography of Darwin's published works. The introduction is written by Roger Lewin who has collaborated on previous books with noted anthropologist Richard Leakey.

176 pp., 220 colour illustrations

\$26.75

Coming the Summer of '79 in full colour: ALBERTA SOUTH; BRITISH COLUMBIA; ICINGS LANDING; LOUISBOURG; MONTREAL AND ENVIRONS; NOVA SCOTIA; SAINTE MARIE AMONG THE HURONS



years and finally killed two Mounties in an ambush. He was hanged at Fort St. John on March 15, 1885.

This book actually is an account of certain black people — preachers, clerks, farmers, and storekeepers — who settled in B.C. It is not the account it claims to be — that is, of black pioneers in British Columbia. Just as there are no rascallions and outlaw neither do these pages introduce us to anyone who did anything heroic or particularly out of the ordinary. The book is also annoying in its stereotyped white liberal attitudes. Kilian stresses that his subjects were sober, serious, hardworking credits to their race. No shucking and jiving here. Nossuh! And what is that but racism's other face?

Block settlers were inspired by the exhortation: "Go do some greet thing" But if one were to believe Kilian, it might well have been: Go do some dull thing. Kilian did. He wrote this book. □

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## The gleanings of Toronto

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Lost Toronto, by William Dendy, Oxford. illustrated, 206 pages, \$19.50 cloth (ISBN 0 19 540294 4).

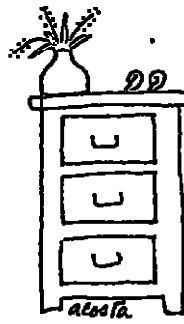
Yesterday's Toronto, 1870-1910, edited by Linda Shapiro, Coles Publishing, illustrated, 149 pages, \$8.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7740 2678 2).

By ROGER HALL

"BUT TORONTO — Toronto is the subject" wrote poet Rupert Brooke during a whirlwind visit 65 years ago. "One must say something — what meat one say about Toronto?" A great deal evidently. Every year publishers push out more and more Toronto and, amazingly, most of it is obligingly snapped up by the well-heeled Torontese. (Who else would buy the stuff? It's seldom cheap and the rest of the country prides itself on hating Hogtown.) The two books in question represent both the best and the worst of this season's crop.

William Dendy's *Lost Toronto* is a good book that, with a little more care, could have been excellent. The fault is not with Dendy, who writes with a fine balance of intelligence and measured commitment about his city: rather it is with his publishers and editors who have imposed a rigid design that simply does not work for this material.

In basic layout and conception the book is similar to Oxford's successful *Lost Montreal*, which came out three seasons ago. That book divided into predictable sections: domestic architecture, church architecture, green spaces, and so on. *Lost Toronto* is more ambitious and invites the reader to move through whole districts of the city, encouraging him to glance at a 19th-century



map and bird's-eye plan to give a sense of place and coherence. It's a good idea, but my copy was so over-inked that I could scarcely decipher names and places on either map. And the contemporary photographs, inserted to give a "then and now" immediacy, were so tiny (and of such poor quality) that one scarcely knew where one was in today's Toronto, let alone the lost city. As for the editing, one example will suffice: it is difficult to imagine that Oxford University Press, which proudly proclaims its half-millennium of existence on the book's spine, would let slip a clanger like "miniscule" (page 7). But there it is and there are plenty of others to keep it company.

All of this undercuts Dendy's achievement and that is not fair. Dendy effectively overcomes the limitations of his publishers and chronicles the glories and sad fates of nearly 100 early and not-so-early buildings. His remarks are informative and scholarly, and he recreates perfectly for us the "clean shaven, pink-faced, respectfully dressed, fairly energetic, unintellectual, passably sociable, well-to-do, public-school-and-'varsity sort of city" that Rupert Brooke featured in 1913. When Dendy writes of that city's destruction he becomes angered and impassioned. He lashes out, for exam-

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## first impressions

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by Sandra Martin

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## Don't bother ringing the multinational corporations. They're already ringing us

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THERE IS NOTHING seductive or decorative about Michael Dorland's prose in *The Double-Cross Circuit* (Lester & Orpen, 222 pages, 010.95). His sentences are bald factual statements punched out in staccato bursts. Dorland uses periods the way other writers use commas and conjunctions and he assumes verbs have enough energy to carry the reader from one sentence through the next. For example:

The man's body was laid out in one of the examining rooms in the sub-basement. A white-tiled room in whose centre was a waist-high marble block that bore a slight resemblance to Napoleon's Tomb in *Les Invalides*. By the head of the block was a sink. A tangle of thin hoses was connected to the taps.

ple, et the "corporate vandalism" of the Toronto Dominion Bank in polling down the fine old Renaissance bank building at Bay and King when the old structure could have been stylishly incorporated with a modern backdrop, and he attacks the University of Toronto's "philistinism" for levelling Sir Edmund Walker's grand St. George Street mansion to make a parking lot for the gargantuan Roberts Library. Dendy has the rare ability to engage our sensibilities and our intellects at the same time. His book will be a strong contender for next year's City of Toronto Book Award and is a worthy complement (and a necessary one) to Brie Arthur's classic *Toronto: No Mean City*.

Let us now condemn unworthy books. It's difficult to know when to begin listing the limitations of *Yesterday's Toronto*. The book purports to be a rounded photographic account of the old city from 1870 to 1910. Of 150-odd photographs, I counted fully 110 from the decade 1900-1910. Besides there is no analysis and scant information, although a good deal of information is passed on. You don't have to be a mathematician to calculate Queen Victoria's reign as 60 years in 1897, not 50. Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe didn't build Gibraltar Point lighthouse in 1808, unless he was even more remarkable than he himself thought; the man left the province in 1796; moreover, he was dead in 1806. The "typical" sweatshop depicted on page 66 appears in fact to be a model of efficiency for its time. And so on.

This book is purely a commercial venture, a hasty, ill-conceived attempt to cash in on the trend toward popular urban histories. It is a marketing calculation — no more, no less — and priced for gift-giving, not reading. □

The effect is at first discordant, even annoying, but Dorland quickly establishes his style and his rhythm as obvious and correct choices. They work first because the stark anonymity complements his sophisticated international plot and second because (or so it seems to me) Dorland wants nothing pretty or easy to interfere with the brutal material he is presenting.

Dorland is a journalist who works for the Montreal *Star*. Before that he was an editor with Bell Canada and Globe Communications Corp., two excellent places in which to absorb the requisite background for a thriller about communications and multinational corporations. In *The Double-Cross Circuit* Nicholas Ross is the head of

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CGNSERV and on the board of directors of its parent. Global Telephone & Telegraph, a multinational that seems to be a clone of IT&T. CONSERV has designed UNICOM, a communications system for NATO and now Ross proposes to sell the U.S.S.R. not only the same system, but the means to intercept and decode NATO communications as well. Ross's aims are altruistic, or so he claims. He wants to ensure world peace by subsuming all governments under the communications aegis of GT&T. But just before Ross can clinch the deal with the Russians. Vardney, his chief designer and the man who carries the secrets of UNICOM, vanishes. Has Vardney defected? Ross must find Vardney and get him back fast or he will lose the Russian connection for good.

Meanwhile Vardney NM up in the Paris morgue as a particularly messy suicide. There is absolutely no clue as to his identity other than a piece of paper with the word UNICOM written on it. A French intelligence analyst is assigned the task of identifying the body and deciphering the message. Thus a new sleuth is invented and the plot is established for a first-class tale, one that combines plenty of references to contemporary political situations and a surfeit of gore and violence with a contemporary bogeyman — the threat that one day multinationals will control the world. Dorland manipulates the several threads of his story nimbly and incorporates a believable and fascinating dossier on GTT's rise from a humble telephone company to a multinational so powerful that it transcends all

normal legal, business, and political boundaries. Scary, isn't it?

\* \* \*

QUEENSTON HOUSE in Winnipeg has a most erratic editorial policy. Last year they published *A Small Informal Dance*, Helen Levi's delightful and polished Austen-like tale about the intricacies of genteel society in Plum Bluff. Now the same publisher has brought us *The Wooing of a Lady* by Steven Benstead (Queenston House, 149 pages, \$10.95 cloth and \$4.95 paper), the amateurish ramblings of a drunken young man's search for success and love. Frankly, I prefer tea in the drawing room to rye in the bedroom.

\* \* \*

*Woman With Seascape* by Terrill E. Stewart (Septimus, 43 Taunton Road East, Suite 44, Oshawa, Ontario, L1G 3T6, 157 pages, \$6.95) is not only a first novel, it is also the first and, so far, only book from Septimus, the company headed by publishing consultant Angela Rebeiro. The book is about two sisters, Laura and Nell, and is told in a series of impressions that have the old-fashioned quality of black-and-white slides suddenly being flashed on a screen. Each chapter is headed by a year, but because Stewart has written the book in a series of flashbacks and flashforwards, the effect is of looking at a series of slides whose order has been scrambled. The pace is jerky and there is a certain static quality to the prose, but once the mind adjusts to each new set of images, the effect is powerful. It's as though Stewart has written a series of still-lives rather than a novel. □

entries concern one of my literary heroes — Samuel Johnson. I remembered that Horace Walpole described Boswell's *Life of Johnson* as "the story of a mountebank and his zany." But I'd forgotten that eve." Johnson himself wearied of his *Life*. "Sir," he be snarled at Boswell at one point. "you have but two topics, yourself and me. I am sick of both."

\* \* \*

I WAS SURPRISED recently to find a copy of the paperback, Joe Davidson (reviewed in *BiC* last month) on a newsstand rack in a Montreal hotel. Not only because it's an interesting book, but because it was there at all. When I returned to Toronto I phoned James Lorimer & Co. to find out how they'd succeeded in getting their paperbacks distributed. After all, it has been almost impossible for small publishers to do so. It turns out that the Davidson book was there as an experiment; unfortunately, the distributor hadn't found it profitable enough to continue. That's too bad, because I have in front of me three new Lorimer paperbacks: *Industry In Decline* by Richard Starks (123 pages), *Rising Prices* by Ii. Lukin Robinson (127 pages), and *Regional Disparities* by Paul Phillips (135 pages). Each sells at 52.50. The books, which are part of an "Economy in Crisis" series, are written in clear, lively prose, accessible to economic semi-literates like myself. There has been nothing quite like them that I know of in Canadian publishing. Cathy Keachie of Lorimer & Co. tells me these paperbacks will get newsstand distribution but only in Toronto (through Metro News). Elsewhere one has to look for them in bookstores.

\* \* \*

THE SAME HOUSE's Bethune: The Montreal Years, by Wendell MacLeod, Libbie Park, and Stanley Ryerson (167 pages, \$12.50 cloth) strikes me as a bit overpriced. The typeface is large; there's lots of white space; and the reminiscences included here of the years 1928 to 1936 seem thin. The book is perhaps more important for what it tells us about Montreal during these years than for what it tells us about Bethune.

\* \* \*

EVEN IF YOU don't buy it, take a look at *Greetings From Canada* by Allan Anderson and Betty Tomlinson (Macmillan, 188 pages, \$14.95 paper). The book is about Canadian postcards of the Edwardian period (1900-1916) and reproduces a couple of hundred cards and their messages. I know only one person who keeps a postcard album now, but in those days it was common practice to keep one, and to display it in the parlour. Postcards offered their recipients (and guests) otherwise unavailable photographs — many of them beautifully hand-tinted. The messages on the cards offer us fascinating bits of social history. We'll provide our ancestors with no equivalent record since most of our chit-chat is by telephone. (Although that could be a side benefit of the RCMP taping our phone calls.) □

## the browser

by Morris Wolfe

### How a book of lists had hearing problems with its list of books

IT TOOK ME far too long to understand that if it weren't far all the books on the market for people who don't like books, those of us who do like them would be much more poorly served. There'd be even fewer good novels, collections of poetry, and serious works of social criticism on book-store shelves. Nonetheless, sometimes a non-book comes along that so offends me that I want to scream. Such is the case with Jeremy Brown and David Ondaatje's *The First Original Unexpurgated Authentic Canadian Book of Lists* (Pagurian, 384 pages, 55.95). The People's Almanac *Book of Lists* on which it's modelled was at least mildly interesting because it covered the world, not just the U.S. We got things like "15 Famous Events That Happened in the Bathtub" and "20 Famous Insomniacs." But so hard up are the editors of the *Canadian Book of Lists* that pages of it are filled rith such lists as "The 10 Most

20 Books In Canada, January, 1979

Populous Provinces in Canada" and "The 10 Most Common Locations for Rape." Worst non-book of 1978.

Incidentally, Timothy Findley has not written a book called *Divorce*, despite the appearance of that title on "Beth Appeldoorn's 10 Most Enjoyable Canadian Novels" list. Ms. Appeldoorn is a Dutch-born Toronto bookseller who speaks English with a slight accent. What she telephoned in was (listen now) *The Wars*. Belongs in Brown's next edition, high up on a new list titled "Dumb Mistakes by Canadian Editors."

\* \* \*

A MUCH BETTER non-book is Nancy McPhee's *The Book of Insults* (Van Nostrand, 160 pages, \$5.95). Happily, McPhee doesn't confine herself to Canadian insults; the result is that the Canadian insults that are there are all the more fun. My favourite

## No man is an island, true, but there can be a Circean catch to regionalism

THE CONCEPT OF regionalism in Canada has brought with it the notion of regional forms of poetry. This is a sweet and bitter fruit. The young poet, usually isolated, is attracted by conventions that would seem to localize his or her experience. Natural as this may be, the danger is in neglecting a personal voice, the first traces of which lie in non-communal experience. In the effort to belong, one may end up belonging to everything but oneself, which is anathema for poets.

In this context it is good to see that Lorne Daniel has taken great care to preserve his own persona. Towards a New Compass (Thistle-down, 58 pages, \$4.50) is his second book of poems. He writes of Alberta and his forms are based on such models as Sulkowski, Mandel, and Kroetsch. Daniel reacts to his environment: he doesn't try so much to define himself by it. Consequently one feels he could be placed in any ambience and, regardless of external referents, the emotional energy would remain. The

voice is searching, hopeful, and sometimes angry. The reader feels there is something at stake.

Lorna Uher has her own vitality which is atypical of the current understatement in Prairie poetry. Crow's Black Joy (Thistle-down, 67 pages, \$5.95) is reminiscent of Atwood's Power Politics in its dealings with relationships. The language is spare and incisive. The tone is uncompromising when Uher speaks of the fairness or unfairness of needs. There is nothing descriptive about her poetry; when she "sea landscape it is essential to her poems.

Thistle-down Press should be congratulated for bringing out, at long last, John Hicks' first collection of poems. Now Is a Far Country (Thistle-down, 113 pages, \$5) clearly shows Hicks to be one of the most accomplished poets in Canada; one can't fault him on craft. His emotional range is limited, but the generosity in his perceptions turns that into a matter of taste. Certainly, people looking for the celebrat-

ory in Canadian poetry should pick up this volume. In fact, this is the charm of Hicks poetry; it has the joyousness of Roethke and a structural sense barking back to the New Criticism. As for production, this is one of the most elegant books of verse to come from a Prairie publisher.

The last of this Prairie group is Charles Noble, brought to us by Press Porcépique. Haywire Rainbow (80 pages, \$4.95) is too much wrapped up with the quotidian. The poems are anecdotal and insubstantial. They talk of farming, of Alberta, of small towns and neighbours and there is no sentiment that transcends any of these. Noble fails to make a universal out of a particular. This is the usual social-historical chronicling that passes for regional poetry. The book jacket tells us that the poems have a "direct Western sense of humour." That's the trick: invent the concept and leave it to others to make sense of it. It's called creating a regional market.

Robert Sward's Honey Bear (Soft Press, 47 pages, \$3.50) succeeds where Noble's book fails. It is a small and gracious chapbook depicting the characters and mood of life "aboard a floating house on Lasqueti Island, B.C." the lyrics are evocative and affectionate. Day-to-day observations are limned without pretension. What is celebrated here are the moments when people can be kind to each other, innocent without being naive.

E. J. Carson's poems are very elegant. The lines are controlled and there are

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elements of surprise and clear perception. I have a sense of a man cogitating, and plagued with the idea of it. There is a metaphysical concern in scenes (Porcupine's Quill, 64 pages, \$4.95) and when the sensual occurs it appears as a condescension, as if the poet were painfully aware that ideas are best made palatable by the concrete. This schism produces an ease in the reader.

**Play on Water** by Doug Beardsley (Press Porcépic, unpaginated, \$4.95) is a book of homage to artist Paul Klee; 24 of Klee's drawings are commented on by 27 of Beardsley's poems. we find out what Beardsley feels about the drawings and what he thinks the drawings meant in Klee's life. Neither is enough to capture the imagination, and there's no reason why the comments couldn't have been in prose.

George Swede is another author whose first collection has been long overdue. **Tell-Tale Feathers** (Fiddlehead, 55 pages, \$4) shows Swede as a minimalist, painstakingly concerned with matching the form to the perception. He is also an Imagist in the true sense, scrupulous about his line endings and careful about the resonance between images. This is a well-paced book; the voice is not forceful, but one comes away with a definite sense of a persona behind the poems. The book is marred only by the Alice Van Wart design, a common hazard with Fiddlehead books. □

## on the racks

by Paul Stuewe

### Clarke's dark excursion, Torgov's murky depth, and the bright laughter of Leacock

THE UNNAMED Caribbean country that provided the setting of Austin Clarke's *The Rime Minister* (PaperJacks, \$2.25) is in many respects more interesting than the novel's colourless protagonist, a North Americanized black who after many years absence returns to take up a government post in his native land. The rich cultural background and sad exiling political intrigue Clarke invents do translate into substantial reading pleasure, but the vacuity of his central character deprives us of the deeper satisfactions of identification and empathy. The textures of human frailty so splendidly revealed in Clarke's previous work just aren't present here, and as a result *The Rime Minister* lacks the sustained dramatic tension that would make us care about what happens to any of its inhabitants. Based on the standards Clarke has already established, it's a definite disappointment.

Morley Torgov's *The Abramsky Variations* (Penguin, \$1.95) is much less well-

crafted, and only the author's basic gift for narrative kept me taming the pages. The book is an ambitious attempt to interrelate the lives of three generations of men in a Jewish family, but Torgov has his characters philosophizing before they've begun to come alive for as, sad as a consequence I never felt that their thoughts were grounded in anything resembling a complex human personality. The story is, nonetheless, an interesting sad fart-paced fictional tour of the major cultural conflicts of the past 50 years, and falters only when the author attempts to make his characters reveal themselves in dialogue. At the risk of seeming to patronize, I think that a bit more surface Rash and a bit less plumbing of psychological depths would have made a mediocre novel into a pretty good one.

One of our most respected small presses, James Lorimer and Co., is competing for the mass-market dollar with Cy Gonick's *Oat of Work* (\$2.50). Gonick is one of the few political economists around who can put complicated arguments into readable English, and his new book covers such topics as "stagflation" (stagnant economy plus inflation), the causes of unemployment, and the effects of government intervention in clear and convincing fashion. Like the rest of us, he doesn't possess magic solutions for our national economic difficulties, but he talks more sense in less space than any other contemporary commentator. Recommended for economic small fry and bii back-emw alike.

Morley Callaghan by Patricia Morley (\$2.95) and Robertson Davies by Judith Skelton Grant (\$1.95) are the two latest titles in the New Canadian Library's "Canadian Writers" series, each of which provides a short (50 to 75 pages) introduction to the work of its respective subject. Morley provides lots of information, but never finds an easy balance between critical and biographical material; Gnat is much better organized, and succeeds in conveying a sense of enthusiasm about Davies's writing. Neither is particularly insightful in terms of getting underneath the print on the page, but since books in this series are clearly intended as introductions rather than last words, this is probably an irrelevant criticism. If you're looking for something about midway between Cole's Notes and an exhaustive academic treatise, the "Canadian Writers" series might just fill the bill.

A fine example of a serious scholarly study is provided by David M. Legate's *Stephen Leacock* (Laurentian Library, \$5.95). Copious research, careful scene-setting and an impeccable prose style dis-

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tinguish this delightful book, which is just as spirited as its prolific and popular subject. The resulting portrait is a complex, nicely shaded one that respects the contradictions inherent in the life of any mature personality: it was Leacock himself, after all, who wrote: "If a man has a genuine sense of humour he is apt to take a somewhat melancholy, or at least a disillusioned view of life. Humour and disillusionment are twin sisters." Take that to heart and give this one to yourself as a reward for surviving the holiday madness.

Also in paperback:

#### FICTION

**The Card Player**, by Tom McVey (PaperJacks, \$2.50). An enjoyable quickie about a cardsharp's education, with lots of inside stuff for those of us who persist in drawing to inside straights.

**I Miss You, Hugs 'nd Kisses**, by William Crichton (PaperJacks, \$2.50). A novelization of the screenplay of the Murray Markowitz film, which is itself a thin veiled exploitation of the Peter Demeter case. When you're that far removed from reality, anything can happen, and does: "They made love for more than two hours, stopping only when they heard the

sound of a vacuum cleaner in the hallway outside the suite." You'll stop long before that.

#### NON-FICTION

**May Your First Love Be Your Last**, by Gregory Clark (Totem, \$2.25). A collection of Clark's *Weekend Magazine* pieces, augmented by numerous photographs and a biographical sketch by Frank Lowe.

**The Missing Seven Hours**, by David Haisell (PaperJacks, \$2.50). A Canadian family close-encounters UFOs and other occult phenomena, as narrated by a writer who accepts their story without having first engaged in anything resembling serious research. Unconvincing, if mildly diverting for all the wrong reasons.

**The Mouth of the Wolf**, by John Windsor (Totem, \$2.50). The Second World War adventures of George Paterson, a behind-enemy-lines hero who never stopped bedevilling his adversaries, well and efficiently told by author Windsor.

**Pm Hockey NHL 78/79**, by Jim Proudfoot (PaperJacks, 53.95). Lots of stats, pics, and deathless prose of the "All we need is a hard-rock defenceman and a center who can score and we'll be there at the finish" variety. □

started with Hugh Hood's *Flying a Red Kite*. There's been an explosion of good writing since then, but how many critics are capable of recognizing it, I really don't know.

**BiC:** Sometimes MC gets the impression there's too much being published.

**Metcalf:** From what I've discovered in England and the United States, it's far easier to get a collection published in Canada. England will touch very, very few first collections of short stories. They'll throw a collection in to sweeten a writer who has a reputation as a novelist. But collections by young British writers or young American writers — it's the kiss of death.

**BiC:** Whereas in Canada there are people like W. D. Valgardson, like Alice Munro, and to an extent like yourself, who can specialize in short fiction and be acceptable writers.

**Metcalf:** Acceptable to a small group of other writers and an even smaller group of people who read short stories. It's not a financial possibility.

**BiC:** Something I've admired in your writing, especially your novellas, is the economy with which you stage things. Could it be because you're really a novelist writing novels of terrific economy?

**Metcalf:** No. I don't think so. I think that the short story and the novella are related forms. By that I mean that their impulse is a basically poetic one; it is one of compression. A novel can be a fine novel, yet an utterly disjointed, rambling affair. You can chuck into a novel a section of a telephone directory if you feel like it, and people will still read on and on. One of the reasons why short stories are unpopular with so many readers is that they require an intensity of reading—the same intensity of reading that poetry requires. I think that the good short-story writers are moving more and more rapidly into the same position that poets hold now.

**BiC:** You've said elsewhere that writing has to be an aristocratic activity. I read recently in one of your books a reference to Canada being a country where green Coke bottles are considered antiques. I wonder if to be a short-story writer or a novella writer you have to write from a snobbish point of view.

**Metcalf:** I don't find anything snobbish in intelligence. I find that the kind of remark, if you'll excuse me, that ill-educated people make about things that they don't understand. How many people read *War and Peace* as opposed to *Valley of the Dolls*? They're different productions, and they're for different audiences. If I set out to write deliberately to entertain hundreds of thousands of people I would by definition have to write rubbish. Reading — reading well — is a supremely intellectual activity, and very few people can read very well. In Canada fewer people can read well than in most other countries.

## interview

by Michael Smith

# John Metcalf finds the Canadian climate for short stories is warm but exclusive

JOHN METCALF, a prolific editor and meticulous writer, has become increasingly influential in Canadian short fiction. Born in Carlisle, England, in 1938, he emigrated soon after graduating from the University of Bristol, and now lives at Delta, Ont. In addition to teaching English, he has edited a number of texts, notably two books about short stories, *The Narrative Voice* and *Sixteen by Twelve*. For several years he has co-edited Oberon Press's annual collection, *Best Canadian Stories*, and with Clark Blaise he recently edited the anthology, *Here and Now*. He has written a novel, *Going Down Slow*, and two books of

stories, *The Lady Who Sold Furniture* and *The Teeth of My Father*. Earlier this year Oberon published two of his novellas under the title *Girl in Gingham*. Michael Smith talked to him in Toronto about the fate of short fiction today:

**Books in Canada:** Five or six years ago, in an essay in *The Narrative Voice*, you paraphrased Allen Ginsberg's comment that most critics couldn't recognize good poetry even if it came up and buggered them. You said then that you felt the same way about Canadian short stories, and I wonder if you've changed your opinion at all.

**Metcalf:** I think the even more deadly thing has occurred in the intervening period of time. When I edited *Sixteen by Twelve* and *The Narrative Voice* they were sort of missionary endeavours to get kids in high school and university to read the writers who were living in this country and writing presumably about things that should concern them. What's happened now is that the whole movement has been defeated by its own success. The academics have taken the matter over, and we're busily excavating terrible 19th-century Canadian literature that should have been left dead and forgotten. I hold rather strongly to the opinion that there really was not much good Canadian literature until round about 1950. As far as short stories are concerned, I think it



John Metcalf



**BIC:** In your novella, *Private Parts*, the narrator seems similar in many ways to yourself, and yet his view of the way he's performed in the literary world is that he's a minor writer of "loneliness and self-discovery." Do the feelings you've just expressed include your own feelings about success or failure?

**Metcalf:** Well, fiat of all I would draw an extreme line between any identification between John Metcalf and the narrator of *Private Parts*. In fact, in *Private Parts* the narrator is given a name that is not mine. However, yes, certainly I see myself as a minor writer for the simple reason that I compare myself, as I think every good writer should, with Shakespeare, Tolstoy, Dickens - and when you compare yourself with people like that, nearly all of us are pretty miserable efforts.

**BIC:** Would you consider yourself a more comic writer than you used to be?

**Metcalf:** Yes, yes, I want to move into a blacker kind of humour, a more farcical kind of humour, because I think the times are demanding it. Stylistically speaking, my favourite writer in the world is Evelyn Waugh.

**BIC:** Yours and Mordecai Richler's.

**Metcalf:** Yeah. I want to try and write, if I am spared, a few sentences, a few scenes as viciously funny as those that Evelyn Waugh wrote. I also happen to think, of course, that funny books are the most serious ones that there are. □

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## Letters to the Editor

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### STORMY MAYNE

Sir:

What kind of reviewers do you select to review my books of poetry? First I was the gasping Gasparini (August, 1975) and now the supercilious Moritz (October, 1978). This is the second time I've been singled out by the inanities of a *Books in Canada* reviewer. It has become a regular badge of some unambiguous literary distinction.

Let's see how I've won my second badge or prize. Given my latest book, *Diasporas*, your reviewer, A.F. Moritz barely manages four sentences of insipid irrelevancies and generalities. (Good, good — brevity of citation.) Note how sanguine he is in his dismissal of the best poems in *Diasporas* and the earlier collections I have published. Then note how emboldened the reviewer becomes by his ignorance — even how proud of it he is. (There's no mistaking it, I'm to be awarded not just a second honourable mention but a full-fledged *Books in Canada* bad-review badge for 1978!)

Now what am I to tell the growing number of anthologists in Canada, the U.S., England, and Israel, who have chosen my poems for inclusion

in their respective anthologies? That I am waiting for my next book to be reviewed in *Books in Canada* in anticipation of a literary ha, trick? Or will I be unlucky and receive, God forbid, a favourable review in your magazine? Oy, that has an ominous ring to it, and may even spell some kind of literary doom or disaster. May I be spared such bad luck and may my good fortune continue. .

Seymour Mayne  
Ottawa

**Editor's note:** It seems to us Mr. Mayne has cunningly just given himself a thii review in *Books in Canada* — and it's a rave.

### UNPALATABLE STUEWE

Sir:

The article in your October edition, "Better Dead Than Read?" by Paul Stuewe, disturbed me. I am a teacher in Huron County, one of the organizers of the public meeting last year at Clinton High School with members of the Writers' Union and I guess, one of those whom Mr. Stuewe identifies as placing the children of the community in imminent "danger of corruption" instead of setting them "a sound moral example."

The issue is quite complex, at least for me. Community involvement in all aspects of school life is fundamental in the Hall-Dennis Report. Any teacher committed to the philosophy expressed in *Living and Learning*, as I am, must be concerned to encourage dais. However, this simple principle becomes complicated when a small but vocal group in a community demands changes that most professional educators agree to be anti-educational. What happens in schools may be seen on a continuum with indoctrination at one end, real education at the other. Red education depends on free and open rational enquiry. The more you restrict this open enquiry, the more you inhibit genuine dialogue, the further down the continuum toward indoctrination you move. Any teacher who stated in Mr. Umbach's words: "What I am saying is a declaration of truth, and I am not interested in discussing or dialoguing with you." would not survive very long, and this is as it should be. Such a statement reveals a terrible, stifling arrogance and an ignorance of the nature of genuine education. And to say this is not to nil against the Bible. Milton, a Puritan, and one of the greatest religious writers in our culture, wrote some 300 years ago an eloquent and convincing argument for unrestricted reading as a necessary basis for a strong Christian, moral society. In *Areopagitica*, he stated, "I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue."

I am further alarmed that anyone as literate as Mr. Stuewe would appear to be could so wildly misread Margaret Laurence as to implicitly agree that she advocates "the practice of free love." And it is simply absurd to blame her for any supposed increase in the rate of venereal infection in and around Lucknow. It would be interesting to see the results of a study comparing the rate of venereal disease amongst Margaret Laurence readers to the rate amongst those who have not read her books. I remain, on this point, simply aghast. .

Mr. Stuewe is certainly right that books affect people, occasionally profoundly, however no, always in the direction one might expect. A favourite example, the Bible, has not only inspired people to perform selfless acts, and to live good lives, but also has inspired the vicious bloodletting of the Crusades and the Spanish Inquisition, has often provided the justification

for the repression of knowledge and scientific exploration, and is used by both sides to justify the continuing butchery in Ireland. Yet to argue for banning this book on such grounds would be absurd. The point that should be obvious is not that books do no, affect behaviour, but that the actions of specific characters in books need not serve as models of behaviour and certainly are not taught as such.

We live in a complex and varied society. It is increasingly difficult to cloister young people in their home communities, away from all outside influence. I am vitally interested that students develop, first, the sensitivity to treat others, who may be not as, all like themselves, with charity and allow them the dignity that human beings deserve; and develop second, the ability to make their own decisions based on solid evidence and sound reasoning. For the first aim, it is necessary to understand why people are the way they are and why they may do the things they do. Books such as the three that Mr. Umbach and Mr. Barth would remove play an important role in such an aim. They need not emulate the characters in the books; I should be very much surprised if anyone should wish to, but they may come to understand them and be less inclined to condemn the less attractive ones out of hand. For the second aim, "discussing" and "dialoguing" are crucial.

Mr. Stuewe states that no "outside agitators" were involved. This is simply not true. Renaissance, a group based in Halton County with branches in the West and in the Maritimes was actively involved. I spoke with members several times on the telephone. This is no, an isolated incident in Huron County, but a carefully organized, apparently well-financed campaign. This issue has been raised recently not only in Huron County, but also in Halton and Essex Counties, in Peterborough and also in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

The most serious objection that I have to Mr. Stuewe's article is the glaring omission of any reference to public opinion on the other side of the debate. There was a large group of parents who met, with the Huron County Board several times to express their concerns over having the education of their children restricted by a pressure group. They enlisted the aid of Dr. T. Collins, head of English I, the University of Western Ontario, who spoke on their behalf at a board meeting. I chaired the public meeting in Clinton, and it was by no means one-sided. Mr. Stuewe would leave the impression that it was the people of Huron County versus a stubborn, condescending educational establishment. Such was far from the case.

Mr. Stuewe would like to trivialize the issue. Mr. Campbell, a member of Renaissance who lives in Halton County, but who became involved in the Huron County debate, told me in a telephone conversation that he favours a return to bowdlerized editions of Shakespeare. Mr. Barth has been quoted in the press as stating that the Bible is the only book that need be taught. We may quickly find our educational institutions moving in such a direction should Mr. Stuewe get his way.

I have stated that the issue is complex, and I have no, had an easy time of it in my own mind. I do not want parents to believe that I am trying to destroy the values of the home in my classroom, for I am not. At the same time, I would be less than dedicated if I were to acquiesce in providing anything but genuine education. We have a policy in this county that allows students who do not wish to read a certain book to be provided with an alternative. This also guarantees the rights of students who



believe, or whose parents may believe, that the study of such books is of some importance, and there are many such. After much "discussing" and "dialoguing," I still believe, for now, this solution to be fair.

Colin Lowndes  
English Teacher,  
Huron County, Or.

Sir:

I must confess this is the second version of this letter. The first was most intemperate and suffered from the moral myopia which Paul Stuewe has described after his visit to Huron County. Stuewe makes some important points which deserve comment and counter-argument.

I believe it is a mistake to use the blunt instrument of the criminal law to control obscenity, partly because the legal definition of obscenity is so vague and also because criminal law and punishment have proved to be ineffective methods of controlling immoral behaviour. One only has to think of the laws relating to the prohibition of alcohol, marijuana, prostitution, adult homosexuality, and adultery as examples of inept and ineffectual laws.

Similarly, the weapon of censorship by Concerned Citizens or school boards is also too strong. If some members of the community in Huron County do not want their children to read *The Diviners* or *Catcher in the Rye* then, by all means, they should have the right to say that their children will not be assigned those books. Outright censorship means that no children can read the books and that is clearly unacceptable.

How long should parents be able to control the reading habits of children? Elmer Umbach gives the impression that his friends in Huron County want control until 21. Surely this is unworkable and unacceptable. I find it strange that Stuewe does not seem to have talked to the recipients of this paternalistic largess. How do high-school students feel?

There is also the practical problem that if the Huron County citizens make a fuss over these books, surely they are fostering the forbidden-fruit syndrome. Students who may have done the usual thing and not read the set books in grade 11 or 12 English will now have their curiosity properly aroused.

If the parents are so all-fired concerned about their children's well-being, isn't it a confession of failure that a few passages in a few books might undermine all the fine examples they are setting their children?

Stuewe also seems to buy the argument that a little explicit description of sex is one of the most effective influences on the children of Huron County. Are the parents there censoring the advertising which their children read in magazines or the television programs they watch? These other forms of media are no doubt giving Elms Umbach's customers the impression, express or implied, that if you wear X lipstick or Y jeans or drink Z beer, you will be sexier, more attractive to your date or more macho. Do the citizens of Huron County ever show concern over the pornography of violence or the deadly sin of greed?

Stuewe says he would be tempted to proscribe the reading of his children if they were confronted with books on the glorification of war or the exploitation of the weak by the strong. What would this include? *The Communist Manifesto*? *Senator McCarthy's memoirs*? *Nixon's memoirs*? *A history of Nazi Germany*? *A biography of the Rockefellers* or *Andrew Carnegie*? *A history of a multinational corporation*?

At the end of his article, Stuewe makes the following *non sequitur* statement: "If some of

our national political and cultural leaders possessed the son of moral conviction exemplified by Lloyd Barth and Elmer Umbach, they'd be righteously upset about [the War Measures Act, centralized power]." Did Stuewe ask Elmer and Lloyd how they felt about the Mounties' behaviour? If the citizens of Huron County are like most Canadians, they probably approve it and I doubt whether there is a thriving chapter of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association in the county.

I find it difficult to understand how Stuewe can sympathize with the parents of Huron County and then complain about the amendments to the obscenity laws which would adjudge obscene any serious work of literature. Who does he think decides to lay a charge? Otto Lang? No, it will be the crown attorney or the police chief who goes bowling with Elmer on Thursdays and shares a pew with Lloyd on Sundays.

Graham Parker  
Osgoode Hell Law School  
York University  
Downsview, Ont.

Mr. Stuewe replies:

Mr. Lowndes's views as a professional educator are interesting, but he seems to have some difficulty in distinguishing between description and advocacy. I did not implicitly agree that Margaret Laurence advocates free love, and I did not blame her for any increase in venereal infection; I quoted a person who did so, and made no editorial comments of any kind. He affirms that Renaissance Canada was involved, a correction I accept, but again with the observa-

tion that it is Huron County residents who are influencing school trustees and mobilizing local community support. And his attempt to place me in the pro-censorship ranks suggests that he did not read the last four paragraphs of the article, wherein I describe briefly my personal feelings regarding censorship and my fears that we are not sufficiently concerned about censorship by the federal government.

Mr. Parker's letter begins sensibly with arguments I considered in the article, but then descends into *ad hominem* innuendo of the most puerile variety. If I seem to "buy the argument that a little explicit description of sex is one of the most effective influences..." etc., this is because I have argued that people are indeed affected by what they read, and Mr. Parker's suggestion that there are other forms of influence simply begs the question. I wrote that I would be tempted to proscribe personally objectionable school reading, not that I would in fact do so, and thus his speculations as to what I might be are as gratuitous as they are laboriously unfunny. And for someone affiliated with a law school, Mr. Parker is awfully quick to holler "*non sequitur!*" The sentence in question uses "moral conviction" in the sense of moral fervour, not moral precepts, a nuance he may catch if he gives the article one careful reading. His final comments regarding a supposed contradiction between my opinion of some Huron County residents and the proposed amendments to the obscenity laws also indicate that he did not read the article very carefully, since it was precisely about the complexities of the issues involved and the ambivalences of one concerned observer.

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## CanWit No. 39

AN ARTICLE BY Andrew Norman in that *enthraling language* quarterly, *Verbatim*, points out that English seems to have abandoned one of its *most colourful* and expressive techniques for forming nouns. Norman calls such nouns "tossspots." They are composed of a transitive verb followed by its direct object and denote the implicit subject of the verb. Thus we have been endowed with a host of energetic (and usually pejorative) "tossspots": *rakehell*, *scapegoat*, *cutthroat*, *lickspittle*, *sperm-thrift*, *skinflint*, *sawbones*, *swashbuckler*, *dreadnaught*, and even *breakfast*. The dictionaries are full of "tossspots" but since they have been out of fashion for a century or so most have an archaic ring. It's time we coined new ones. How about *pounddesk* a flattercap in Parliament or *hogscreen* (as seen on TV)? We'll pay \$25 for the best collection of five fresh "tossspots," together with their definitions. Address: CanWit No. 39. *Books in Canada*, 366 Adelaide Street East, Toronto M5A 1N4. The deadline is Jan. 31.

### RESULTS OF CANWIT NO. 37

THE SECOND COMING failed to inspire the multitude. Our request for parodies of how the event might be repotted by various media produced only a handful of entries. But those we did receive were generally excellent. Ken Duffin of Guelph, Ont., receives \$25 for this rock-radio bulletin:

"... Man, here's some heavy cream to feed your head! Ready? 'Know, dig it:

"Seems the College of Cardinals has released documented (and I stress *documented*, dudes) evidence of The Second Coming. A child born to itinerant farmers somewhere in Italy has been heralded as the New Messiah.

"Wow! I... get hack to you on that one. Now, let's hear from Billy Joel, and *Only The Good Die Young*."

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26 Books in Canada, January, 1979

### Honourable mentions:

#### The National

[Shot of two grain elevators and a telephone pole]

ANNOUNCER: And in Thumb, Saskatchewan, today, a baby boy said to be Jesus Christ [smile] by local residents was taken to a nearby church in order to be baptized. Don McGalliard reports.

DON MCGALLIARD: [Standing in front of a sign saying THUMB, pop. 671 This windswept, snowbound farm community seems an inappropriate setting for the purported Second Coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ. A town of only 100 inhabitants, where the local activities are playing hockey and drinking beer at the Corona Hotel, it seems an unlikely place for . [Here interject standard CBC footage of aged, prairie rustics, eyes saddened by years of successive crop failures, faces lined by incessant wind and run — for reference see any Canadian prairie novel — and move to the Corona bar for some ungrammatical hut pithy local speculation. Cut to pin elevators and telephone pole.]

ANNOUNCER: [smile] And that's the news. Goodnight.

—Roderick W. Harvey, Medicine Hat

\* \* \*

Here is the CBC News: The Commons reacted angrily today as the Rime Minister disclosed government plans in support of Mayor Drapeau's efforts to have Christ's Second Coming awarded to Montreal. Calling the announcement "irresponsible," Mr. Clark charged the government with insincerity in its policies of restraint and cutbacks. Mr. Broadbent said the Coming Event would have "adverse effects on the employment picture." With details here is our Ottawa correspondent.

—Alan Richards, Chauvin, Alta.

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## The editors recommend

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

### FICTION

**The Musk Ox Passion**, by Thomas York. Doubleday. A satirical view of the tundra as a hairy hunting ground.

**What the Crow Said**, by Robert Kroetsch, General Publishing. That old devil entropy creates cosmo-comic chaos on the Alberta-Saskatchewan border.

**Letters from Lilac, 1965-1973**, by Clem Watkins, Jr., edited by George Bain, Macmillan. As the local sachems say as they chew the fat in the Round Table Room of Lilac's Commercial Hotel: "To take one word away from this would be gelding the lily."

### NON-FICTION

**Bronfman Dynasty: The Rothschilds of the New World**, by Peter C. Newman, McClelland & Stewart. Uneasily lay the head that made Crown Royal.

**Lester Pearson and the Dream of Unity**, by Pete, Stursberg, Doubleday. Mike as his friends and enemies saw him.

**Rupert Brooke in Canada**, edited by Sandra Martin and Roger Hall, Peter Martin Associates. Writing home from this corner of a foreign field. Brooke produced prose a lot more deathless than his poetry.

**Doors and Windows**, by Val Clery, Macmillan. Two illustrated eulogies to architectural orifices.

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## Books received

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

**The Wars**, by Timothy Findley, Peagun.  
**The Conserver Solution**, by Lawrence Solomon, Doubleday.  
**The Inks and The Pencils and The Looking Back**, by Sean O'Huigin, Coach House.  
**White Silk and Cobras**, by John T. Kellnhauser, published by the author.

**The Developers**, by James Lorimer, James Lorimer & Co. **Yorkville in Pictures 1883-1883**, by Stephanie Hatcheson, Toronto Public Library Board.

**The Double-Cross Circuit**, by Michael Dorland, Lester & Orpen.

**Life Among the Qallunaat**, by Minnie Aodla Freeman, Hunting.

**Immigrant**, by Stephen Gill, Vesta Publications.

**The Mouth of the Wolf**, by John Windsor, Totem Books.

**Men in White Aprons**, by Harry Vjekoslav Herman, PMA.

**The Métis of Manitoba**, by Joe Samchok, PMA.

**Le fou et ses doubles**, by Pierre Gobin, Les presses de l'université de Montréal.

**Rottenbury**, by Terry Reksien, Sono Nis Press.

**New Brunswick**, by Anthony Hocking, McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

**What's a Friend?**, by Satu Repo, James Lorimer & Co.

**About Nellie and Me**, by Seonida and Barry Dickson, James Lorimer & Co.

**The Golden Hawks**, by Satu Repo, James Lorimer & Co.

**Marco and Michela**, by Satu Repo, James Lorimer & Co.

**Cedric and the North End Kids**, by Bill Freeman, James Lorimer & Co.

**Rock Painter**, by R.E. Rishley, Turnstone Press.

**The Cranberry Tree**, by Enid Delgatty Rutland, Turnstone Press.

**The Dalhousie Journals**, edited by Marjory Whitelaw, Oberon.

**The Human Elements**, edited by David Helwig, Oberon.

**The Canadian Woman's Almanac**, by Ruth Fremes, Methuen.

**Colombo's Book of Canada**, edited by John Robert Colombo, Hurtig.

**Ned Hanlan**, by Frank Cosentino, Fitzhenry & Whiteside.

**The Suicide Battalion**, by James L. McWilliams and R. James Sichel, Hurtig.

**The Lumberjacks**, by Donald MacKay, McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

**Madame Benoit Cooks at Home**, by Mme. Jehane Benoit, McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

**Profit Hungry: The Food Industry in Canada**, by John W. Wornock, New Star Books.

**The Salmon Country**, by Greg Gatenby, Black Moss Press.

**Adam Beck**, by James Sturgis, Fitzhenry & Whiteside.

**The Art of Cooking: Volume II**, by Pol Martin, Pol Martin Ltd.

**Ask Me Why**, by Geoffrey Hoyle and Janice Robertson, Clarke Irwin.

**Big Timber, Big Men**, by Carol J. Lind, Hancock House.

**Bobby Clarke**, by Fred McFadden, Fitzhenry & Whiteside.

**Canada's Hospitality Law**, by Ernest J. Amicault and Maurice Archer, Macmillan.

**Canadian Frontier Annual 3**, edited by Gordon Stewart and Brian Antonson, Antonson Publishing.

**Catherine Schubert**, by Vicky Metcalf, Fitzhenry & Whiteside.

**Chicken Fox**, by Genetic Anfouse, NC Press.

**Competition Policy**, edited by J. W. Rowley and W. T. Stanbury, Institute for Research on Public Policy.

**Cuba: A Travel Guide**, by Julius Chappottin and Lawrence Altrous, Clarke Irwin.

**A Day in the Woods**, text by Val Clery, photographs by Noel Keenan, Greco de Pencier Books.

**Doctor Anunconda's Solar Fun Club**, by Joe Rosenblatt, Press Porcupine.

**Les écrits d'Alme Cesaire**, par Thomas A. Hale, Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal.

**Every Day a Feast**, by Muriel Breckenridge, McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

**The Evil That Men Do**, by R. Lance Hill, Fitzhenry & Whiteside.

**Falkstode**, by Lesley McAllister, illustrated by Vera Fischer Kagan, Émancipation Press.

**Fear of Frying**, by James Barber, Douglas & McIntyre.

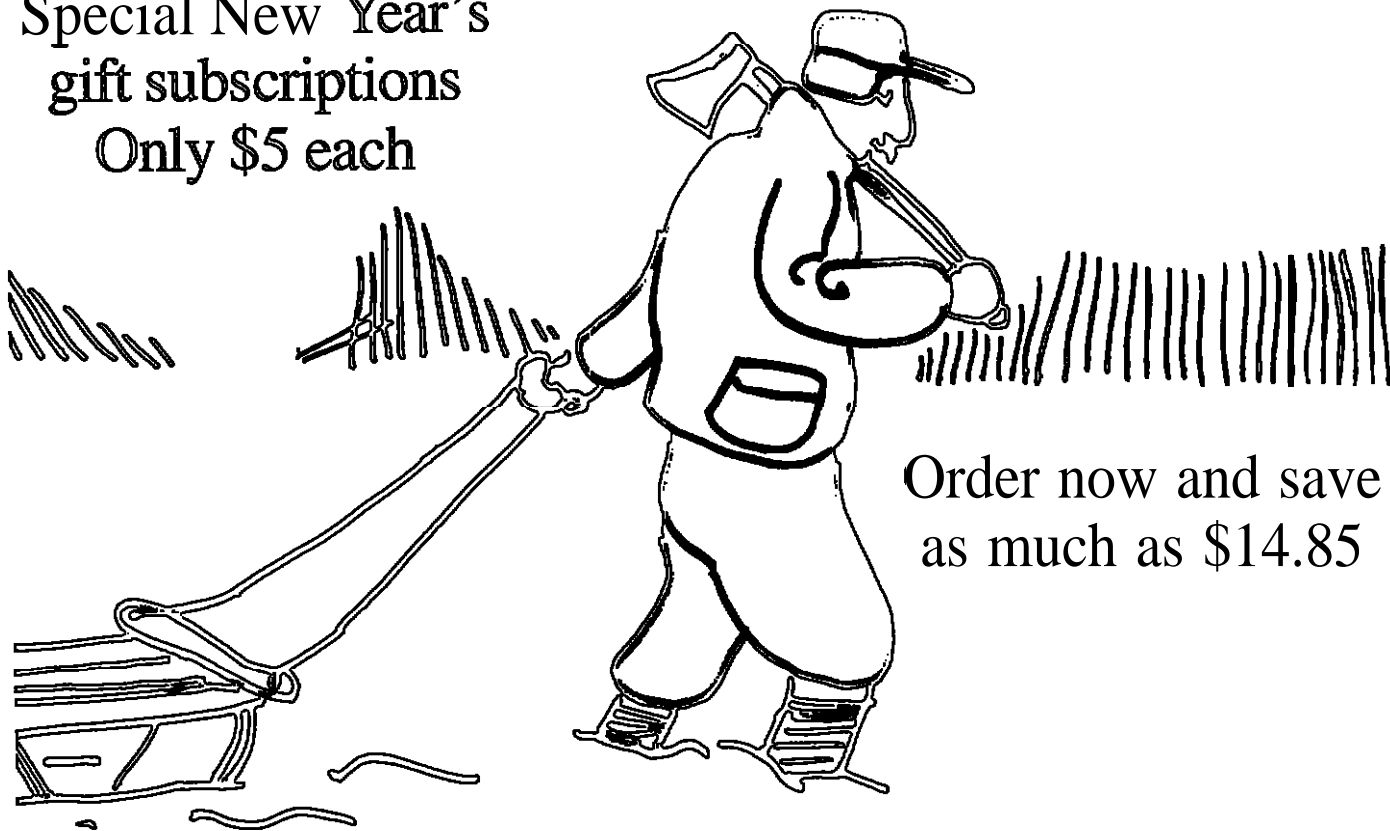
**The Fight**, by Genetic Anfouse, NC Press.

**Film Canadiana 1977-78**, by Marg Clarkson, Canadian Film Institute.

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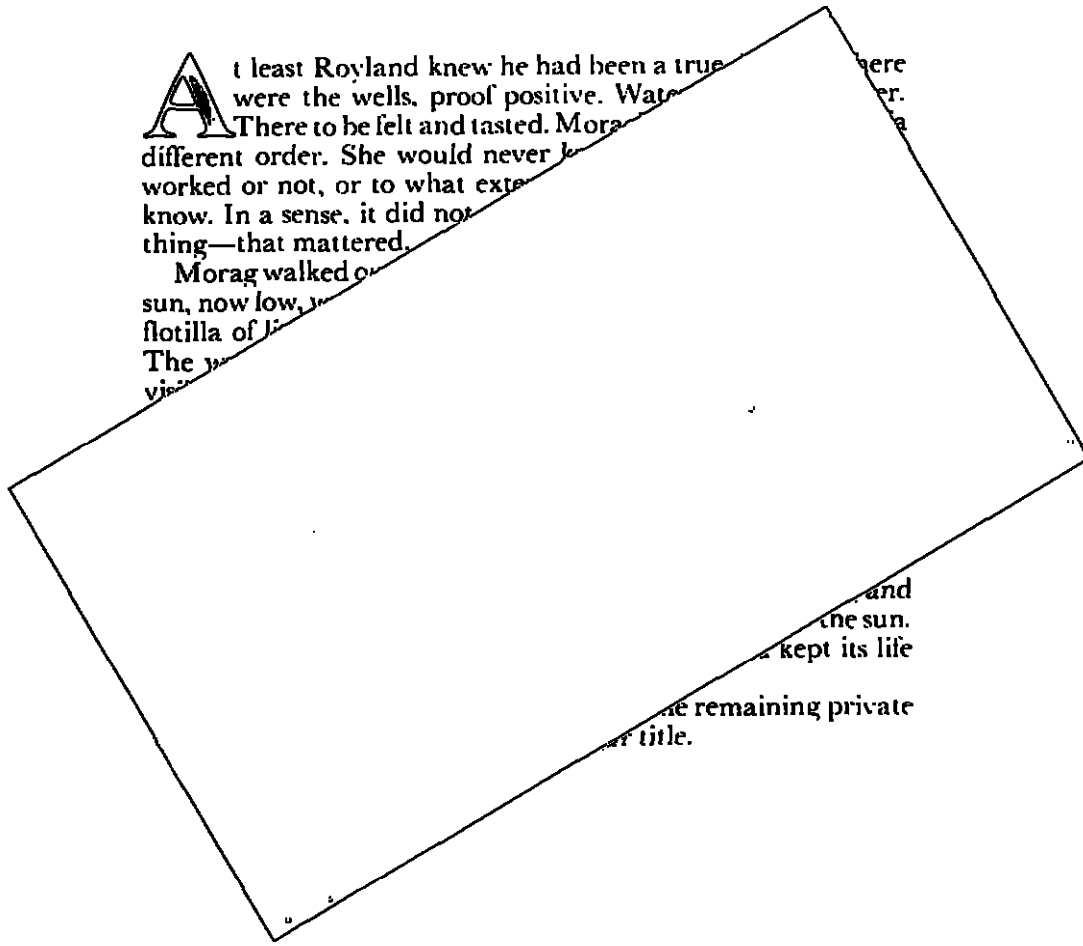
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# C\*ns\*rsh\*p:

stopping the 'book banners'

**A**t least Royland knew he had been a true... were the wells, proof positive. Water... er.  
There to be felt and tasted. Morag... a  
different order. She would never...  
worked or not, or to what extent...  
know. In a sense, it did not...  
thing—that mattered.

Morag walked on...  
sun, now low, in...  
flotilla of li...  
The w...  
vis...



and  
the sun.  
kept its life  
the remaining private  
title.

**A** manual for use by teachers, libraries, parents, school boards and others who wish to protect books from banners will be available after January 11, 1979. It has been prepared by The Writers' Union of Canada for the Book and Periodical Development Council and includes essays, letters, statements, poems, quotations and a strategy. Eight thousand will be mailed free of charge to schools, librarians, education *administrators* and BPDC *members*. Additional copies of the book, called FOE [Freedom of Expression], will be available for \$1.00 through the BPDC, suite 210, 86 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1M5.