

A NATIONAL REVIEW OF BOOKS

BOOKS IN CANADA

June-July 1985 \$1.95



JOHN REEVES: MURDER ON THE RUN

**A passage to Canada:
the North American
odyssey of Clark Blaise**

**Lament for a notion:
George Grant's commentary
on 'liberal justice'**

**And an interview
with Raymond Carver**

CONTENTS

BOOKS IN CANADA

Volume 14 Number 5

FEATURES

- 10 John Reeves in Five Movements. A profile of mystery writing's marathon man. By Fraser Sutherland
15 A Passage to Canada. How an American writer returned to the land of his parents. By Clark Blaise
17 Lament for a Notion. 'Liberal justice,' argues George Grant, contains the seeds of its own destruction. By Paul Wilson
20 Critical Notices. Brief reviews of recent fiction, non-fiction, and poetry

REVIEWS

- 31 Fungo Blues, by Philippe van Rijndt and Patrick Blednick; The Wrong Stuff, by Bill Lee with Dick Lally
31 The Canadians, by Andrew H. Malcolm
33 A Poison Stronger Than Love: The Destruction of an Ojibwa Community, by Anastasia M. Shkilnyk
33 Black Robe, by Brian Moore
34 The Bassett Report: Career Success and Canadian Women, by Isabel Bassett; Newsworthy: The Lives of Media Women, by Susan Crean
36 Onyx John, by Trevor Ferguson

DEPARTMENTS

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|----------------|
| 3 | Field Notes | 41 | Letters |
| 8 | English, Our English, by Bob Blackburn | 41 | CanWit No. 103 |
| 37 | First Novels, by Alberto Manguel | 42 | Recommended |
| 38 | Children's Books, by Mary Ainslie Smith | 42 | Received |
| 39 | Interview with Raymond Carver, by Helen Pereira | | |

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True south

Though their countries have much in common, Australia's writers have come to enjoy several advantages over Canada's

I ONCE MET a Swedish writer, teaching in Texas, who dismissed my question about unbearable heat there with the comment, "It can never get too hot for a Swede." It was in keeping with such lust for heat that I recently spent three months, roving the Antipodes, never complaining, even in the outback when the temperatures rose to 42°C. I also acquired a taste for something called a "black dash" (Aussie draught darkened by a bit of stout) and for Australian literature. Twenty-five books, many of them excellent, returned to Canada with me.

I should not have been surprised at literary excellence. Doris Lessing told a Perth audience in March that we are now living in the golden age of the novel: "When I go abroad to various countries I always tell my publishers or whoever is my host I would like a list of the good writers and I am always given an extremely long list of writers that they say are first-rate. This is absolutely everywhere. You can't keep up with it."

Canadians may not recognize the names of Australian authors such as Peter Carey, Robert Drewe, Thea

Tom Shapcott



Astley, Elizabeth Jolley, David Malouf, Jessica Anderson, or Blanche d'Alpuget. Even if books by these authors were available here (many are, in Penguin), would we feel compelled to buy them? And don't Australians balk at Canadian literature? No to the first, yes to the second, but things seem set to change.

For one thing, the sense of literary community that began with the Canada-Australia exchange in the mid-1970s now means that authors in the two countries are acquiring knowledge of and interest in each other's literature. Tom Shapcott, director of the Australia Council's Literature Board (akin to our Canada Council) returned from one such exchange with 400 Canadian books. Shapcott's apartment and someone resembling him appear in Alice Munro's *The Moons of Jupiter*. Munro and Shapcott swapped abodes, Clinton for Brisbane, in 1983.

Less well-known than the exchange but nonetheless important to both countries is a journal in its third year called *True North/Down Under*, which collects short fiction, poetry, and criticism from both countries. Australian critics review Canadian work and vice versa. "We have decided," the editors say in their first issue, "that Australia and Canada should know each other's writings a lot better than they do. The similarities in heritage and cultural background suggest a reciprocity of experience and a common language." Leon Rooke, Audrey Thomas, George Bowering, and Mary di Michele are among Canadian contributors, and Kevin Roberts the Canadian editor.

Canada and Australia share a ponderous geography and a climate marked by unforgiving temperatures, slim, mostly urban populations (Australia's stands at 15 million), a British colonial past, and similar systems of government. But as Shapcott pointed out when we met in his Sydney office, the Australian national literature has come to enjoy several advantages over the Canadian one. He cited two conditions that have historically kept Aussie authors literally down under.

The first, isolation — or "the tyranny of distance," as someone once put it — has become a virtue. Australians need

only look to Canada, shuddering every time the elephant below the border turns in its sleep, to realize that isolation allowed Australian culture to develop its own voice. Canadian poet Marilyn Bowering, who was in Canberra for the National Word Festival, told me: "There's a certainty here. Maybe the isolation has helped. We in Canada have been navel-gazing for years. We have wasted a lot of time on that very colonial question." Our quest for identity, she said, has become tiresome and tedious. She was impressed by what she called the "cutting edge" Australians have over Canadians in film and design.

The second phenomenon, dubbed "cultural cringe" by Australian social historian Arthur Phillips and meant to describe a long-standing Aussie preference for Foster's ale, barbecues, and horse-racing over any cultural pursuit, no longer applies. According to Shapcott, a survey taken in Sydney recently suggests that most taxpayers want government support of culture increased. The magnificent Sydney opera house, built by lottery money, was initially scoffed at by locals. No longer. Another sign of the cultural times: Shapcott tells the story of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's announcing its plan to scrap a classical music program. Letters poured in by the thousand to demand that it be reinstated — and it was. Massive cuts to the CBC, amounting to cultural suicide according to some, raised hardly a ripple in Canada.

And for several reasons, the world has begun to take notice of Australia, whose people treat such attention with both glee and detachment. "Flavour of the month" is the expression I heard Aussies use to describe the phenomenon: the critical acclaim with which films such as *Gallipoli*, *Breaker Morant*, *The Year of Living Dangerously* and *Don's Party* have been greeted.

But anyone contemplating a love affair with Australia had better get in line, for during the past two decades the nation's eyes have turned adoringly inward. It helps to explain why, despite Australia's smaller population, its publishers fare comparably well. (Authors, however, starve in garrets much as they do here.) A book store

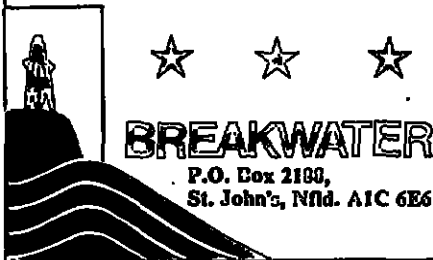
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owner in Cairns, North Queensland, put it to me this way: "We're unusual. We love to read about ourselves. Regional books are astonishingly successful."

In Sydney, Shapcott pointed out that Penguin had introduced a series of original Australian books and have since quadrupled that list. Lawson's, a Sydney book store dealing solely in "Australiana," is three times the size of the Longhouse Book Shop, which performs the equivalent function in Toronto. And unlike CanLit, AussieLit can boast a unique link with the film industry.

Someone at the authors' festival in Canberra pointed out that when the Australian federal government dangled tax incentives in front of film investors, it did more than launch a national film industry. For where do directors look for material? To books. A successful film sends viewers back to the original book, and also means lucrative jobs as screenwriters for authors. Peter Carey, for example, has written the screenplay for *Bliss*, his remarkable book and, I hope, a remarkable film.

Of Canadian literature Shapcott has a great deal to say, much of it complimentary. "I am very impressed by the best of Canadian writers. Timothy Findley, for example, is a writer of enormous stature. [Patrick White, the doyen of Australian authors, once selected *The Wars* as Book of the Year; it has since acquired cult status.] Alice Munro, Margaret Atwood, Mavis Gallant have a great following here. Clark Blaise is seriously undervalued in Canada and elsewhere. Michael Ondaatje," he ended the list, "is a brilliant writer."

Shapcott, whose answers to questions seemed always to take a historical perspective, also offered praise for Canadian experimental poetry: "You do it with great confidence and flair. In Australia we are in a sense away from the explorative edge. Our experimental poetry is self-conscious and derivative."

Wherever one goes in Australia one hears the phrase, "No worries, mate." One sees fashion-conscious women wearing designer T-shirts emblazoned with RELAX, the letters in black and foot-high. Robert Bringhurst, the Canadian poet who, like Bowering, was at the Canberra festival and who had spent several weeks at Darwin in northern Australia, sees a flip side to this: "The cheer scares the hell out of me. I never trust it. They've decided where the boundaries of their history lie," he said, meaning that the white population chooses to ignore the 40,000 years of Aboriginal presence in Australia. The white colonial world, says Bringhurst — and he made the point as well, politely, to an Australian audience at the festival

— has learned nothing from stone-age peoples on how to live with nature.

In Kuranda, Queensland, author Thea Astley was saying over tea and dampers (outback scones) that Australia is "a crummy little country. But I still happen to love it." Astley, 60, and the author of 10 books, is typical perhaps of the sudden emergence of Australian literature into a wider market. Her latest novel, *Beachmasters*, about a failed revolution on a South Pacific island, has caught the fancy of U.S. publishers. Her own publisher, Penguin, is intent on promoting this and other Australian titles in North America and Europe.

Finally, you have to wonder if small isn't better. The Australian Literature Board, formed in 1973, operates with an annual budget of \$2.5 million (one-quarter the corresponding Canada Council budget) and yet has achieved some enviable victories: public lending rights and small literary pensions, called "emeritus fellowships," which go to Australian authors in need of them, in amounts equivalent to three times the old-age pension.

I left Australia impressed. A feeling of buoyant optimism applies not only to the economy and the people but to its literature. Where once there seemed to be only Patrick White there are now a dozen writers to be heard from. "Since 1973," says Shapcott, "there has been in Australia a sudden and significant increase in young writers. It's a very exciting time." — LARRY SCANLAN

House of David

"WE CHOSE THE name Emerson House for our new publishing firm because it sounded old and established. Something Scottish would have been preferable, but the good names were taken — McClelland, Stewart, Macmillan." Editor Jack David, a burly fellow in jeans and a (non-clan) plaid shirt, frowns. "McLeod — no. McLeod was left, but it didn't sound too good."

Emerson House, step-sister of ECW Press, arrived on the literary doorstep last winter, when it was introduced by a series of newspaper ads in Toronto and Montreal. "Looking for a Publisher?" one teased. Another warned: "Publish or Perish!" Would-be authors were invited to write for a brochure. Those who responded received a tasteful leaflet whose established look (it featured the Victorian gables of the Emerson House logo) was designed to dispel any reservations about publishing with a vanity press. And they would be comforted by its reassuring words:

As a writer, you already know about,

and may have experienced, the difficulties of getting your work published. Large publishers take a long time to read your manuscript. . . . Excellent poetry and works on specialized subjects may be declined simply because the

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Emerson House shares space with ECW in a Toronto storefront that from the street could pass for a Christian Science reading room. Inside, Jack David and his earnest colleagues, Ian Chunn and Ross MacKay, seem con-

Balancing the books

Who's on top in the best-seller sweepstakes?
It all depends on whose list you read

TO THE AUTHOR, the best-seller list is Mount Olympus, and to have struggled your way to its heights is to sojourn with the gods of literature. To the public, the list represents investment information for those unsure of their critical taste — a hardcover book may run anywhere from \$19.95 up in price, and the list gives you a guaranteed return if you want coffee-table coverage or impressive book-shelving. To the publisher, however, the list is the focus of an ongoing love-hate relationship with sales figures. Says Ed Carson, vice-president of Stoddart Publishing: "The best-seller list is great when your books are on it, and it's lousy when they're not."

The two best-seller lists that are best-known in Canada are those published weekly by *Maclean's* and the *Toronto Star*. Early each week on the seventh floor of the Maclean Hunter building, Frances McNeely, assistant to *Maclean's* managing editor Robert Lewis, picks up the telephone and begins the first of 30 calls to book stores from Vancouver to St. John's. "Half the stores are chains and half are independents," she says. "I have a regular list of people I call, and I just ask them what's selling this week. It's based strictly on sales."

Heather Gamester has been compiling the *Toronto Star* best-seller list for the last "nine or 10 years." In her telephone marathon, she alternates two lists of 25 or 30 book stores across the country each week. "I call them each Monday morning and remind them," she says, "and some of them have a list of sales figures ready for me. But most of them I have to call back to get the list." She calculates 10 points for each book at the top of a bookseller's list, nine points for the second-place book, and so on. "The one with the most points is number one that week."

Both women say they rely on the booksellers to be honest with their sales figures, and both stress that the

lists are for hardcover books only (although the *Star* has an additional best-seller list of paperbacks). Gamester notes that she is at the mercy of the booksellers — "If they don't give it to me, I can't put it on the list." But she feels that, with the computerization of more and more book stores' inventories, her figures are getting more and more reliable. McNeely says that *Maclean's* takes into account the size of the store and the population of the city it's in when weighing the sales figures to arrive at a top 10 for fiction and non-fiction. She also relies upon her in-person visits to "several of the stores" to maintain a good working relationship.

A cursory look at the best-seller lists for *Maclean's* April 8 issue and the *Sunday Star* for April 7 reveals a few surprises. Both fiction lists are topped by Sidney Sheldon's *If Tomorrow Comes*, published by Macmillan, and both note that it was in the same position the previous week (the *Star* provides the additional information that the book has been on the list for 10 weeks). Both lists also agree on the top non-fiction entry, Chrysler chairman Lee Iacocca's autobiography, published by Bantam.

From those two the lists perform juggling acts with the same books or add a few extra hoops of their own. Stephen King's and Peter Straub's *The Talisman* (Penguin) merits second place on the *Maclean's* list, but only fifth on the *Star's*. Douglas Adams's *So Long and Thanks for All the Fish* (Collins) has stuck at sixth place for the last two weeks, according to the *Star*, and equally stubbornly at ninth place, according to *Maclean's*. Leo Buscaglia's non-fiction work, *Loving Each Other* sits at seventh place on *Maclean's* list (it was sixth the week before) and precisely nowhere on the *Star* list. *Gretzky*, a book about you-know-who by his father and Jim Taylor (McClelland & Stewart), is number

seven on the *Star* list. That's not much different from *Maclean's* number eight. The difference is that the book is noted as having been on the *Star* list for 24 weeks. It has just made the *Maclean's* list.

"If best-seller lists are intended as an accurate reflection of sales," says Ed Carson, "they are very inaccurate." He hastens to add, however, that "the problem is an industry one. The booksellers have to work hard making sure accurate information is available." Publishers can't provide sales figures because of "pure competition. They might inflate their figures or report what has been printed instead of what's been sold." They also have little accurate information on those sales figures until several weeks after the book has been released.

Carson notes that a system known as the Canadian Telebook Agency, which should be in operation in a year or so, may help provide computerized information on sales and prevent inflation or deflation of figures by anyone. He also suggests as a partial solution that Canadian best-seller lists follow the lead of the *New York Times* and diversify their choices according to paperbacks and mass-market books. The *Times* has also set itself up as a critical arbiter of taste — as has *Time* magazine — with an Editors' Choice list.

Canadians already seem to follow the American lead in their choice of books. A best-seller list in an issue of *Time* for April 8 shows that in non-fiction *Maclean's* agrees with four of *Time's* 10 choices, the *Star* with three. The fiction list has *Maclean's* repeating seven of *Time's* choices, the *Star* one fewer. *Time's* list is computed from "more than 1,000 participating book stores" across the powerful land of our neighbour to the south. The Mount Olympus of the best-seller list for Canadian authors seems higher and rockier than it should be.

— BARBARA WADE

stantly to be answering telephones. There are shelves, desks, and a coffee table that holds ECW books by Leon Rooke and John Metcalf. Such company! A visiting would-be author from, say, Haileybury, Ont., could hold his head high.

Is Emerson House a vanity press similar to such U.S. firms as Exposition and Vantage? David bristles. "I prefer the term 'subsidy.' All Canadian publishing is subsidized anyway, either by grants or tax breaks." Among the country's trade publishers, he contends, "most acceptances are made on the basis of whether or not the book will receive a grant." Of course, a frustrated author could hire a printer for himself, but "I don't see why people who want to see their work in print should be overcharged for shoddy production, when Emerson House can turn out nice-looking, affordable books."

How affordable? David estimates that a 300-page hardcover book on high-quality paper would require an author's subsidy of about \$8,000-\$10,000 for 1,000 copies. Emerson House would then set a retail price of \$19.95 per book, with the author receiving a royalty of 40 per cent, the book store (if it accepts self-published books) the standard 40 per cent, and the firm 20 per cent for distribution charges. A family history currently in the works is to be published in a limited edition of 300 at a subsidy of \$2,300.

BOOKS IN CANADA

congratulates

John Goddard

winner of a
National Magazine Award
for "Northern Journey,"
a profile of Edith Iglauer,
which appeared in our
August-September issue

The subsidy is estimated by feeding the author's specifications regarding length, paper quality, number of pages, and the like into a computer. The contract covers the cost of editing, design, and art work. Promotion, if requested, is contracted out at the author's expense. No editorial decisions are made. Emerson House will print anything except libellous, obscene, and hate material.

Recently the firm processed a collection of poetry by members of a high-school creative writing class in Montreal. The poems were received in mid-March for delivery to the school in May of 1,000 finished copies. As David puts it, Emerson House is "the upscale instant-printer" — which reminds a listener of the boast of Exposition editor Edward Uhlan, who once ran off a book in two weeks so that the author (who must have died happy) could have it at his deathbed.

"I'm not ashamed of what we're doing," says David. "It warms my heart to see an author's face whenever I put a first book in his hands."

— HELEN PEREIRA

Ask a foolish question. . .

EXAM-TIME MUSINGS from a correspondent who spent three summers during the mid-1960s marking Grade 13 English finals in Ontario and recently rediscovered some of the answers he had collected:

Macbeth:

"During the banquet Macbeth goes out into the hall and has a soliloquy."

"Macbeth and Banquo were close friends who had been through many a bottle."

"When Macduff heard of the slaughter, he first asked if all were killed. Then he asked about his poultry and wept about 'all his little chickens.'"

Hamlet:

"Laertes acts as a foil to Hamlet. It is with this foil that Hamlet is stabbed."

"At the end Horatio is the only Great Dane left."

"Claudius won't let Hamlet return to Whittenburg-Wittenbrug school."

King Lear:

"Lear reaches his climax after saying, 'Off, off you lendings! Come unbutton here!'"

"Lear realizes that his daughters Regan and Goneril (this sounds like some disease, doesn't it?) are evil."

"Lear's hubris has caused him to commit his hamartia which he will not discover until his anagnorisis in the later part of the play."

"Lear, on the heath, discovers that he is truly an unjust man, especially when it comes to Cordelia. He exclaims, 'I have did her wrong.'"

Murder in the Cathedral:

"A martyr is a person who dies solely for the thing he believes in when there is no other alternative."

The Mayor of Casterbridge:

"Henchard's bartering his wife while drunk shows what a good head for business he has."

Question: Give a good reason why [Matthew] Arnold chose to describe the beach at Dover by night instead of by day, and defend your answer.

Answer: "Arnold describes the beach at Dover by night instead of day and defend your answer because he mentions the beach at night all through the poem. Thus the poem is set in a setting. The setting is night. He couldn't very well change to day after all that night mentioned."

Question: Give two examples of ironic comedy in [the story] "Across the Bridge" and show how each example is effective.

Answer: "Examples of ironic comedy are numerous in 'Across the Bridge.' It just seems that I can't think of any — ironic, isn't it?"

Question:

Read the following poem, and then answer the questions below it.

The Garden

Like a skein of loose silk blown against
a wall

She walks by the railing of a path in
Kensington Gardens

And she is dying piece-meal of a sort of
emotional anemia.*

And round about there is a rabble
Of the filthy, sturdy, unkillable infants
of the very poor.

They shall inherit the earth.

In her is the end of breeding.

Her boredom is exquisite and excessive.

She would like someone to speak to her,

And is almost afraid that I will commit
that indiscretion.

— Ezra Pound

* anemia: a disease of the blood, ordinarily accompanied by weakness; the term is used here metaphorically.

(a) Why is the simile in the first line effective?

(b) Describe two symptoms of the

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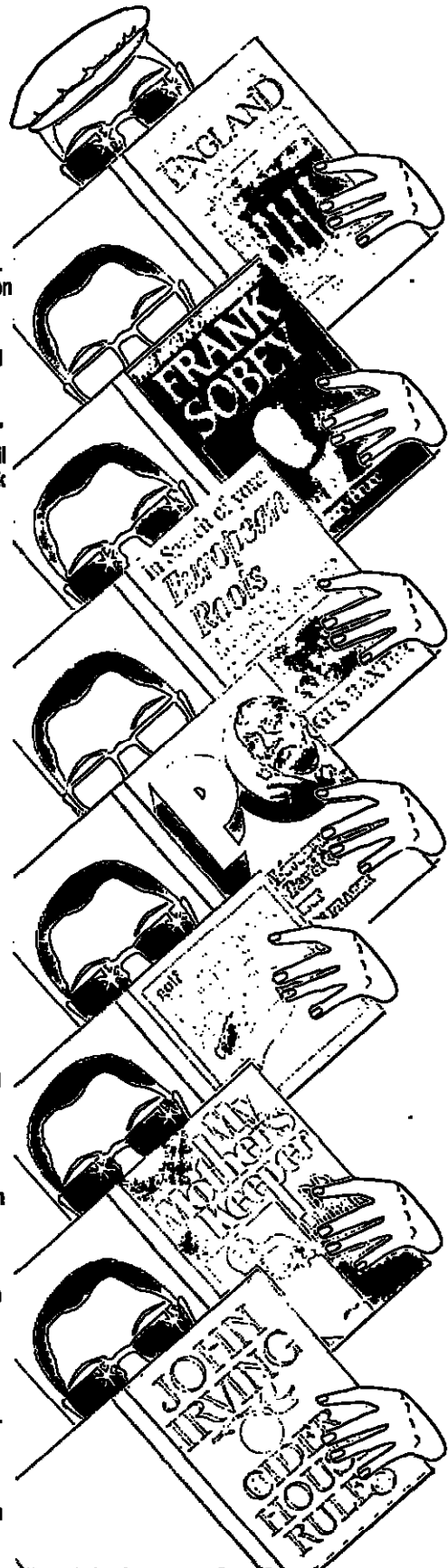
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- woman's "emotional anemia."
 (c) Lines 4-6 twist the Bible's words: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." What was the poet's purpose in making this change?
 (d) Why do you think the poet chose "The Garden" as the title of his poem, instead of a title more closely related to the woman?

Answers:

(a) "The simile is good in the first line because you read it then you wonder — what the hell is he talking about?"

(b) "I think the woman has more wrong with her than 'emotional anemia.' If she walks 'like a skein of loose silk,' she probably is spastic as well."

(c) "The rich get richer and the poor get children."

(d) "He chose the title 'The Garden' because he was some kind of nut. This is shown by the fact that in the first verse he talks of the woman, in the second he talks of the children, and in the third he talks of woman's boredom. There doesn't seem to be much coherence in his thinking."

(d) "Actually I think he chose the title to confuse us. He knows you use confusing sight pieces and he wanted to display his work."

For (a), (b), (c), (d) one student wrote:

*The bloody poet, Ezra Pound,
 Is trying hard to be profound,
 I hope this lousy poem's not seen
 This time next year in Grade 13.*

*This poet has a lot of gall,
 To call this poem a poem at all.
 No worthy thought can I perceive
 So question twelve I think I'll leave.*

— MORRIS WOLFE

ENGLISH, OUR ENGLISH

Tin ear

A newspaper columnist's crusade to correct broadcasters' grammar reveals that his own grasp of the language is not one of iron

By Bob Blackburn

ONE OF THE best-known columnists of Canada's largest newspaper has assumed the role of watchdog over the use of English by Canadian broadcasters.

I share his concern. I also admire his courage, because he has fearlessly undertaken his crusade without regard for the fact that his own grasp of the language is not one of iron.

He certainly was on solid ground when he complained about "those radio station disc jockeys who say, 'The current time right now is . . .?'" (I don't know why there is a question mark there instead of a closing quotation mark. That's the way it was printed. Possibly the writer was not the only one who was nodding that day.)

He then asked: "Why isn't 'the current time now' good enough anymore?" Well, "the current time now" was *never* good enough. And, of course, there is no such word as *anymore*.

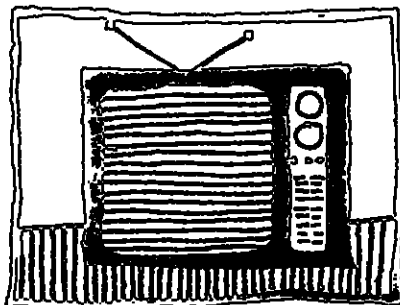
Newspapermen work under great pressure. They are required to write both succinctly and quickly. Sometimes it is difficult to do both at the same time, just as it is difficult to walk and chew gum at the same time, and I can understand how, writing such a hot story with a deadline before him, this writer failed to think of some phrase such as "It's 10 a.m." (Had he done so, however, there is the appalling probability that he would have written "It's 10 a.m. in the morning.")

Consider this paragraph, if you will:

Then there is CBC *Morningside* host Peter Gzowski, whom I recently noted

carefully avoided misusing the language. Wouldn't you know it, a day after my column appeared, he told listeners, "See you after the news." Now he says that regularly. See you? On radio? Can he really *see* those of us in the bath or just staying in bed and playing hookey from work? Hope not!

I can come to no sensible interpretation of the first sentence that would justify the use of *whom* instead of *who*. I think the intended meaning would have been clearly expressed had he written, ". . . who, I noted recently in my



column, carefully avoids misusing. . . ."

Although I don't feel outraged when I hear it, I do agree that *see you* is a colloquialism inappropriate to radio. However, the writer had evidently forgotten having written, just a few paragraphs earlier, ". . . when Dave Broadfoot appears on [a certain radio program] . . ." If this writer chooses to split hairs about *see you*, I choose to split hairs about *appear*.

What does the sentence *Hope not!* mean? Is it an elliptical way of expressing the hope that the answer to these questions is negative? Is it an admoni-

tion to the reader to abandon all hope? Know not!

Here's another excerpt:

Nobody would ever talk the way Clobber does in real life, eh?

Wrong.

Eavesdrop on this actual interview . . . taped from a recent Canadian sports broadcast. . . .

Let us charitably assume that *eh* was used facetiously, and concentrate on the facts that the sentence offers five possible locations for the clear and correct placement of *in real life* and that the writer chose none of them, opting instead for ambiguity.

To eavesdrop is to listen surreptitiously to a private conversation. I don't know how it is possible to *eavesdrop* on a published transcript of a tape recording of a broadcast.

There are many more solecisms in the column, but perhaps I need not continue. The sorry truth is that, by the apparent editorial standards of most of today's major Canadian newspapers, it was not an uncommonly bad piece of writing. The element that made it remarkable was its author's effrontery. I find it difficult to believe that he wished to invite public ridicule, but I find it equally difficult to understand how someone in his position could be so unaware of his own inadequacy that he would blunder in such a grotesque way, and that his editors would permit him to do so.

What is most appalling, of course, is that there are thousands of readers who will assume that he knows what he's talking about. □

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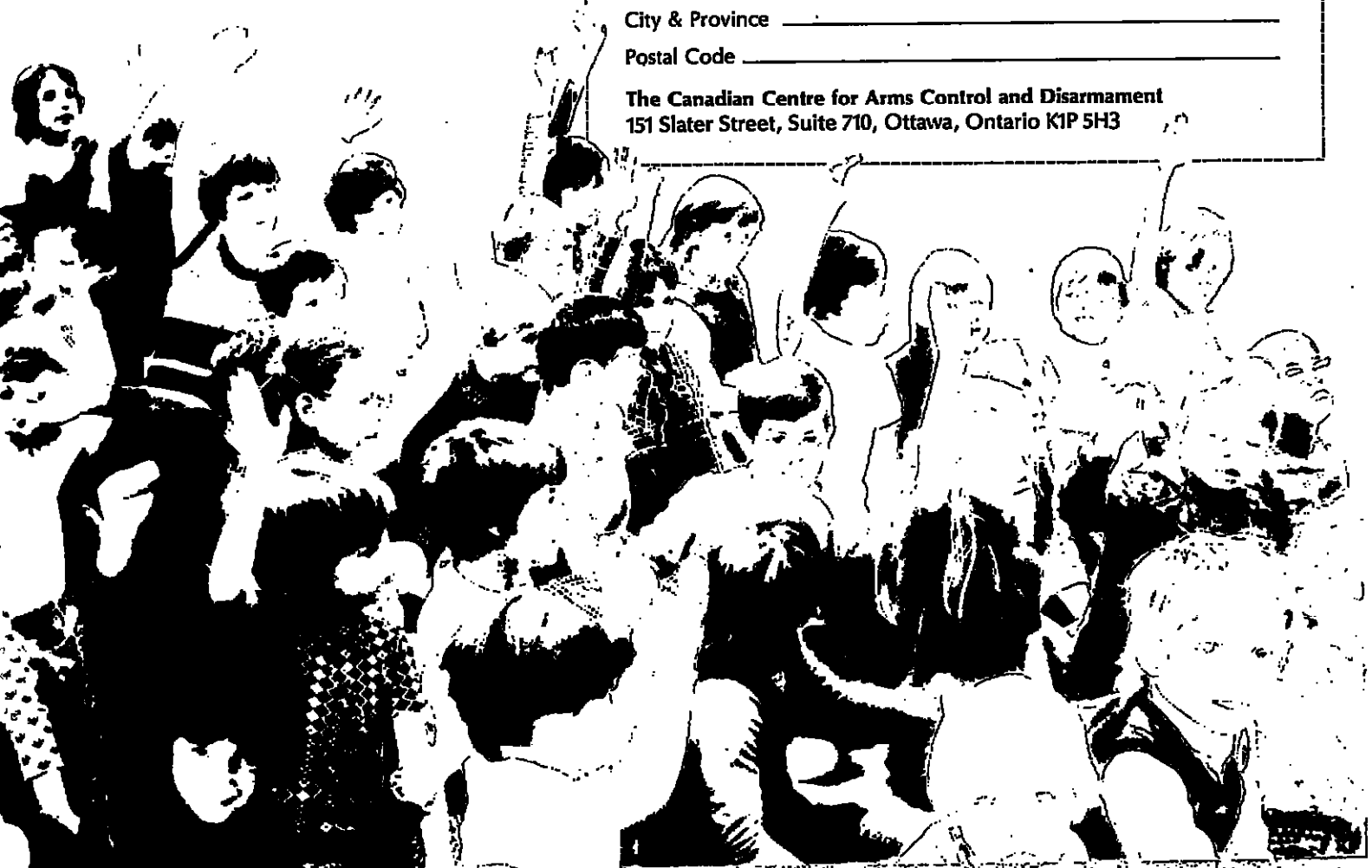
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John Reeves in five movements

'I'm dealing with each of the little worlds I know personally,' says John Reeves, whose talents range from running marathons to writing mysteries

By Fraser Sutherland

RUNNING. John Reeves's 124-pound body is a machine built to run. A race photo shows him pounding toward the finish line of a marathon: teeth bared ferociously, legs pumping, he is leading the pack.

Just now, he is uncharacteristically lounging on a sofa in the uncluttered living-room of his Tudor-style house. The decor is muted, like the grey day. He lives in

Wychwood Park, a gate-posted Toronto enclave with its own private road. Many families here have passed down their homes through several generations, but Reeves has lived in his a mere 25 years. He shares the house with his second wife, a step-daughter who lives in an attic apartment, and five cats, among

John Reeves



them Pooh, a blind Siamese, and a huge lumbering creature named Pickwick. Except for the stereo, radio, and typewriter — all silent at the moment — there is little in this room to suggest Reeves's intensely led activities.

Reeves has just published with Doubleday the third in a five-volume series of mystery novels, and has begun the fourth. For their settings *Murder by Microphone* (1978) has a CBC-Radio building, *Murder Before Matins* (1984) a monastery, *Murder with Muskets* a stage performance of an opera. The fourth will be set in Czechoslovakia, the fifth in a Toronto track and field club.

"What I'm doing, you see, is dealing with each of the little worlds I know personally." He is patient and precise in answering questions about *Murder with Muskets*, which like the others features Toronto homicide detectives Inspector Andrew Coggin and Sergeant Fred Sump, but you can see he'd rather be down at the Hart House track at University of Toronto, working up a sweat. Which is what he does every day after editing tapes in the CBC studios on Jarvis Street, where he has been a radio producer for about 30 years. He runs 16 laps of 400 metres at a faster-than-race, near-sprinting pace, each separated by a 75-second interval of rest.

He is 58 years old.

Reeves wants to go the distance. Interval running training helps him do it, building "the fortitude of the heart and the efficiency of the lungs. If you don't have a natural talent for actual fast running, it will give you an extra kick at the end than if you've never done it. That's never been my problem. Mine is a problem of stamina."

Perhaps. But in 1975 he was training to run the 4,000 miles from Horseshoe Bay, B.C., to North Sydney, N.S., at an average of 60 miles a day. Nine weeks away from the starting gun, he broke a tarsal bone in his right foot and was forced to cancel.

The U. of T. students who'd been using him as a very fast guinea pig for their paper on exercise physiology might well have continued their testing. Eight months after the bone-break, he was running a marathon. At age 52 he ran the 26 miles and 385 yards in two hours, 46 minutes, and 15 seconds. On different occasions he's held the Canadian age-group record for all distances from the half-mile to the 10-mile, and the world record for the two-mile.

He started running when he was 38 ("The previous 17 years I'd spent sitting on my butt") while coaching his son in track and field. If he has looked back since it has only been to check if another runner was gaining ground.

MUSIC. Born in Merritt, B.C., the son of a Newfoundland Anglo-Catholic priest, Reeves went to England with his family when he was in his teens. Having been a boy chorister, he studied classics at Cambridge on a choral scholarship, and took up composing music on graduation. But then he stopped. He later told *Canadian Composer*, "I seemed to be failing at what I was trying to do. . . . I was striving in a rather strained way for originality. And I had a good many problems to do

PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL GLENN

with craftsmanship." It was only after joining the CBC that "the idea of a composition came into my head almost fully fledged. I sat down and wrote it. . . All the craftsmanship problems seemed to have disappeared."

Since then he has written a vast amount of mainly religious music: a *Missa Brevis* (brief mass), several cantatas, *Canons for String Orchestra*, motet cycles, liturgical dramas, and modern polyphanies. Besides the work he's done for *Celebration*, the CBC-Stereo religious program he's produced since 1973, he's had a busy association with the Elmer Iseler Singers, the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir, and the soprano Janet Smith (to whom he dedicated *Murder with Muskets*.) His work has been performed in Australia, Czechoslovakia, England, the United States, and Germany.

Perhaps Reeves's most ambitious musical undertaking was *Salvator Mundi* (*Saviour of the World*), an oratorio tracing Christ from his entry into Jerusalem to the Passion and Resurrection, a 3 1/4-hour epic that involved live and taped choirs. In *Triptych* (CBC Learning Systems, 1972) he composed what was the first large-scale quadriphonic radio drama. Based on the holidays of Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter, it combines medieval and modern prose, and includes music for portable, electric, and pipe organs. In addition to folk tunes from Aboriginal Australia, India, and Israel, it uses a variety of English speech forms.

Linguistic forms are a recurrent interest. At present, he's working on a 35-minute composition for four choirs, two organs, and solo soprano. To be sung by the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir at Roy Thomson Hall next February, ". . . in the first large movement of it I have the soloist sing the narrative of the First Pentecost, which of course contains the Apostles going out into the streets and speaking in tongues." The choirs then sing Psalm 148, "one of the more joyful psalms," in "better than 68 languages" — which "sounds like a ridiculous kind of babble, but it doesn't work out that way."

Only Cantonese — based as it is on pitch — is giving him trouble. Although he has the help of linguists, he can also fall back on his own resources. "I have some knowledge of English, and rather less of Latin, Greek, Czech, German, French, and Italian."

The latest composition is based on an ancient Latin Pentecostal hymn, and Reeves's music has always had a religious underpinning. But this priest's son, whose motet cycle *Introit, Offertory and Alleluia* won the CBC the 1978 international Gabriel Prize for the best religious broadcast — a man who, if his lingfisher crest of hair were replaced by a tonsure, could credibly pass as a medieval monk — is not a practising Christian.

Reeves lost his faith gradually, partly because of a "disillusionment with the institution of the Church." Nevertheless, *Murder Before Matins* is an accurate, sympathetic portrayal of monastic life, and one affecting sub-plot concerns the return to faith of Constable Nancy Pringle, the policewoman who helps Sump and Coggin solve their case. "Religion when I was a practising Christian was a very important part of my life, and the fact that I am no longer one has not reduced its emotional impact upon me. I think that to have a strong faith and then lose it leaves a particular hole in your life that cannot be replaced by anything else."

If God moves in mysterious ways, perhaps the most comic illustration of divine grace occurred when Reeves once staged for radio the 15th-century mystery play, *The Deluge*. Recreating the story of Noah and the Ark, he put a troupe of Middle-English-speaking student actors aboard a horse-drawn wagon. Reciting a psalm to mark the passage of 40 days, the arkload awaits the arrival of a dove bearing a twig in its mouth.

"At that point there came into view flying from the horizon

a single Canada goose. Not one of a flock 5,000 feet up in the air. A *single Canada goose* flying at 50 feet *heading straight for the wagon*. And as the dialogue quoted the bird it came straight overhead flapping its wings very audibly. I looked up at the cast on the wagon and they were hugging themselves with laughter. I thought, *Please, let not this bird make another sound*. Thank God nobody cracked. We got it perfectly on the tape."

BROADCASTING. After Cambridge, Reeves did a short spell in the British Army, was keeper for a colony of rhesus monkeys, then spent a year in British Intelligence. Of the last, he says,

After Cambridge, Reeves was keeper for a colony of rhesus monkeys, then spent a year in British intelligence. Of the last, he says, 'It would be easy to glamorize it'

"It would be easy to glamorize it." Glamorous or not, he will not discuss the period, because many matters he dealt with are still secret.

He returned to Canada to teach Latin at the University of British Columbia. "Teaching was never a vocation for me. It was something I was able to do while deciding what to do with my life." After two years he quit to work in a candy factory and do some freelance work for the CBC. He was offered a job as an apprentice producer specializing in classical music. "I grabbed it."

From Vancouver he moved to Toronto and was soon heavily involved in radio music, drama, and documentaries. He experimented with stereophonic and quadriphonic sound, pressure-zone microphones, and for a series called *The Best Seat in the House*, the *kunstkopf* (artificial head).

Sculpted of hard black rubber, the head had human facial features, including ears and auditory canals that led into chambers where two miniature condenser microphones were mounted, as eardrums would be in a human head. Designed to be used with tight-fitting earphones, the *kunstkopf* received sounds from all sides.

Around the CBC the *kunstkopf* was known as "Arthur Tait." Arthur currently "sits in an equipment storage room, occasionally dusted off to record experimental music." It's a matter of regret. "There were one or two technical problems with it, which I now understand have been solved. I would be very keen to do some more *kunstkopf* work because ideally those broadcasts should be heard with earphones, and nowadays you have an enormous potential audience of people going around with Sony Walkmans."

Sound effects have always fascinated Reeves. He fondly remembers a "quite disgusting" simulated execution of Sir Walter Raleigh, the key elements of which consisted of an anvil, an axe, two cabbages (one of them partly split), and a pitcher of unspecified liquid.

Reeves produced such shows for the CBC as *Anthology*, *Playhouse*, *Stage*, *Tuesday Night* (later *Wednesday Night*), *The Bush and the Salon*. One summer series was *Four's Company*, starring the "Toronto Drama Quartet." "Andrew Allan asked me if I would like to do a weekly half-hour drama series. I thought it would be kind of neat to get four really gifted actors and do a variety of stuff in which they would always appear or star in the shows." The "really gifted actors" were Diana Maddox, Ruth Springford, Mavor Moore, and John Drainie.

Many consider the 1950s and '60s to have been the CBC's

best days and nights. Remembering them, Reeves dedicated *Triptych* to Jack McNaught (radio name "James Bannerman") of *CBC Wednesday Night*, "whose generosity to Canadian writers was for many years an invaluable encouragement," and *Murder by Microphone* to John Drainie, "the foremost radio artist of our time."

Although a certain continuity prevails, in that one of *Celebration's* on-air hosts is Drainie's daughter Bronwyn, it would be difficult to imagine an innovative production like *Four's Company* at the CBC today. Indeed, *Celebration* will

Whatever Reeves may think of any CBC move toward pap and pop, he remains the loyal employee. He does not consider himself an elitist — 'at least not in the pejorative sense. I'm not interested in reaching knowledgeable people as such, but rather those who simply are attentive'

be cancelled at the end of 1985, to be replaced by what Reeves terms "some kind of religious magazine."

Whatever Reeves may think of any CBC move toward pap and pop, he remains the loyal employee, declining comment on specific programming changes. But he does make some general observations: "To say that radio is a popular medium tends to suggest that there is a mass audience of diverse interests, tastes, and backgrounds listening to a given program. I think that the success of the CBC or of any public broadcasting medium should rest on the assumption that the public consists of several different audiences — for jazz, classical music, certain types of drama. Many people may belong to several audiences, depending on how wide their tastes are. But each individual program will achieve the best result if it's aimed at those with a specific interest in it. Of course, you will have millions with one specialized audience after another. Don't try to dilute it for an imaginary audience of millions who have some vague interest or who turn it on for background music."

Yet Reeves does not consider himself an elitist — "at least not in the pejorative sense. I'm not interested in reaching knowledgeable people as such, but rather those who simply are attentive."

CZECHOSLOVAKIA. One area in which Reeves has held an attentive ear to the ground and air since 1968 is that of Czechoslovakian politics. "Like most citizens, I've always had some interest in politics. But that particular aspect became very interesting to me when I started following news stories that were coming out of Czechoslovakia in the period leading up to and the period of the Prague Spring. A particular professional interest was that one of the major outlets during the time of freedom of expression there was the Czech radio drama department. I was in CBC radio drama at the time and wasted no time in going to visit my Czech colleagues. By the time I got there the [Soviet] invasion had taken place."

The struggle for liberty of expression in Czechoslovakia — and in Poland — is "far from over," Reeves says. He's closely observed the signatories of Charter 77, Czechs who "assert

that everything they do, say, and ask for is within the law. They are continually saying, please, give us our rights. We want nothing more than is laid down in the constitution." He is on the board of the Toronto-based 68 Publishers ("the most important Czech publishing house in the world") operated by Zdena Salivarova, and "helps" with the Jan Hus Fund, which assists "academics and artists within Czechoslovakia who are out of favour with the regime."

Reeves regards Czech Premier Alexander Dubcek's attempts to create "socialism with a human face" in the late 1960s as "an idealistic and rather naive attempt to synthesize some of the best things in the East and West." Reeves's first response came in late 1968, when he began writing *Czechoslovakia '68*, "a series of formally unorthodox sonnets," later broadcast as a tribute to Czechoslovakia and its great long-distance runner Emil Zatopek. He prepared *Parallel '68* for CBC-TV, which compared the Soviet invasion with invasion of Melos by Athens in 416 B.C.

In 1975 he privately published *The Arithmetic of Love* in a bilingual edition, with the Czech version translated by Jiri Vaclav. The verse play, staged in Czech in Toronto and later broadcast in English, is dedicated to those who "abide by the truth and suffer for it," and puts Dubcek in the tradition of Czech saints, martyrs, and reformers like St. Wenceslas, Jan Hus, and Tomas Masaryk. It also contains examples of characteristically mordant Czech wit. A commentator says, "When you go on a visit to Prague today and stay at a government hotel, don't complain of the service: you can't expect secret policemen to make good waiters."

While visiting Prague in 1976, Reeves met the Canadian writer and translator Paul Wilson, then living there. Wilson later rendered into Czech *The Hradecek Passion*, a version of the Easter story arranged and recorded by the Plastic People of the Universe, a rock band blacklisted in its homeland. The smuggled tape was aired on *Celebration* in 1980. Wilson, who translates Josef Skvorecky and other Czech writers, also contributed to *Celebration* "Notes from Behind Bars," a feature about the suppression of Czech religious orders. Yet another *Celebration* program, "In the Name of the Republic," concerned the state persecution of Christians from the 1950s to the '80s. The program's writer-director and two cast members were not named because reprisals against their families were feared.

Reeves hopes to be able to revisit Czechoslovakia soon — this time not as a political observer, but as a track and field competitor.

WRITING. Although he began writing seriously only after he started at the CBC, Reeves has made up for lost time. Except for a group of poems released as a Hallmark LP in 1954, most of the work he did — like *Triptych*, *The Arithmetic of Love*, and two verse plays about the Trojan war — turned up on the CBC. From a literary point of view, perhaps the best writing prior to the *Murder* series was *A Beach of Strangers* (Oxford, 1961), which won the Prix D'Italia for the world's best radio play in 1959 and was re-broadcast in North America and abroad in translations ranging from German to Japanese.

Structured in three sections, mostly in rhythmic prose, it is "framed by a prologue, two interludes, and an epilogue, all in verse. Each act portrays one day, from morning to night; and all three acts deal with the same day, as seen through different characters. The setting is a holiday beach, in summer. The time is the present." As in a musical composition, the dialogue is arranged in solos, duets, trios, and quartets. Sometimes characters refer to themselves in the third person: after Mr. Pycroft introduces himself, his wife identifies herself as "Lilly Pycroft, his wedded knife."

Outside the closet, verse drama has never thrived artistically in Canada: one thinks of James Reaney and stops. *A Beach of*

Strangers is an exception, and although its style and tone derive from Christopher Fry and Dylan Thomas, it is saner, less excessive:

*Love stands on the beach of strangers; its face
Pitted and lined, but in its heart the thin
Wind of endurance blows and on the shore
Of man, who scans that arrowed look to trace
The secret way where he may learn to win
Mastery of himself and end his war*

Apart from the verbal inventiveness the play shares with the *Murder* series, there is another premonition in the boy Charlie Minto's day-dreams:

When duty calls, Detective-Inspector Minto is always at the ready. It was, I recall, a raw November evening when it all began: the fog pressed against the window like a gloomy shroud, but inside the scene was jolly and snug; a warm fire blazed in the grate, and I had just finished my first after-dinner pipe, well content with the world. Alas, these are the times which seem fated never to last. I was just on the point of remarking that at least on a night like this we were secure from interruption for surely not even the most foolhardy would venture out in so inclement an air, when an imperious ring at the door-bell pierced the domestic calm and arrested my remark, so to speak, in the throes of birth.

Charlie Minto grew up to become Andrew Coggin.

Given that Reeves's fellow CBC employees include such crime writers as Howard Engel (*The Suicide Murders*, Irwin, 1960) and George Jonas (*Final Decree*, Macmillan, 1981) it might be supposed that *Murder by Microphone* began in the CBC cafeteria. Not so. Both Reeves and his creation, Sergeant Sump, admire Engel's Benny Cooperman series, and Reeves likes and respects Jonas as a broadcaster. But the trio didn't discuss their work. "Of the three of us, I suspect I may have been the first."

The idea came to him "while I was doing some tape editing. The technology suggested a device for the first murder." Although he had not intended to write a series, it soon became one. Reeves composes the novels in longhand, as he would a piece of music: "I painfully write each sentence three or four times before going on." The result is two polite, well-read, and mutually respectful Toronto detectives. If Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson are respectively brilliant and dim, Andrew Coggin and Fred Sump shed light on crime about equally, less like a priest and acolyte than a happily married couple. Coggin is good at sifting details and making deductions; Sump is intuitive, disarming, a shrewd judge of character.

In the three novels so far, Reeves has progressively purged sometimes-obtrusive satirical or preachy elements. In the process, the treatment of locales has become more assured, and the puzzles better constructed. Some characteristics are constant: Reeves loves to slip in lists, diagrams, puns — and crossword puzzles, one to a novel. The solution to the murder centres on some technical or mechanical gimmick with which the killer committed his crime, or concealed it.

Murder By Microphone is really two novels: one a satisfying, conventional mystery, the other a sometimes-savage send-up of the CBC administration. A quite fictitious CBC, Reeves elaborately points out in the book. "I do not suggest . . . that the CBC, as portrayed here, resembles the CBC as it is in real life: it would be foolish to contend that all CBC officers are inept or villainous; I have merely drawn an imaginary portrait of what the CBC might be like if that were the case."

Despite this caveat, it's difficult to escape the conclusion that Reeves is writing editorials in some of the many footnotes that pepper the novel:

Critics, during this period, were not convinced that the CBC was right in its quest for easy popularity. They contended that its proper task was the pursuit of excellence; and excellence could not be achieved by catering to the lowest common denominator

of public taste, for the sake of high ratings. On television this program policy took the form of importing the shallowest American productions, or imitating them. On radio two tactics were used: on the one hand, all work of substance was banished to the ghetto of FM; on the other hand, AM concentrated on soap operas, Muzak, and gossip. The paradoxical result was that the CBC almost entirely lost the base of popular support it needed: its only remaining defenders seemed to be those Canadians who lived within reach of FM radio, plus a few more who wished they did.

(Reeves has come to recognize the dangers of such authorial

If Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson are respectively brilliant and dim, Andrew Coggin and Fred Sump shed light on crime about equally, less like a priest and acolyte than a happily married couple. Coggin is good at sifting details and making deductions; Sump is intuitive, disarming, a shrewd judge of character

intervention, and is "using it less," attributing opinions to characters and "only when it is relevant to their characterization.")

Sometimes the footnotes abruptly change tone to become the crudest of wisecracks:

[There were] five recruits, all female, hired in the Religious Department since the appointment of Amanda Clinch. Natural attrition (deaths, retirements, transfers) had by this time left only one male on the department payroll, a Zen Buddhist from Amsterdam called Wim Vanderknokke, formerly known on the grapevine as the Dutch Treat, but now more commonly referred to as the Finger in the Dykes.

Delightful program schedules mark the progress of Sump's and Coggin's day of detection:

AM SERVICE

4:30 "Yours Truly" continues. Guests in the second half-hour will be folksinger Wireguts Rafferty, who opens tonight at The Baked Potato; Orville Snook, founder of the Gull Watchers Association in Spit Harbour, New Brunswick; and visiting British novelist Violet French-Wyndough, who has just completed ten weeks at the top of the bestsellers list with her latest book *Through a Glass Darkly*.

FM SERVICE

4:30 *Wreckage*, a radiophonic poem by H.E. Teperman: the text is aleatoric, and consists of syllables improvised by Method students from the Drama Workshop at the Community College for Performing Arts and Constructive Play, in Climax, B.C.; and the incidental score consists of Found Music, mainly metallic, recorded in the Rusty Skidoo junkyard at Dorsal Inlet, Northwest Territories. Producer, Jane Fragment.

Much of the (enjoyable) self-indulgence is banished from *Murder Before Matins*, with only a minor regression to it in the character of one Constable Doist, who is depicted as a cross between mad inventor and Mrs. Malaprop. Also helping the crime-solving team are the college-educated Nancy Pringle and the monks themselves — Reeves has used to good advantage his knowledge of Gregorian chant and Benedictine monasteries.

The Prior of Tathwell Abbey, located just outside Toronto near the Humber River, tumbles from the top of a bell-tower

100 feet to his death. In telling us whodunit, the book has an architectural (there are even floor plans), historical, and sociological solidity one connects with the mysteries of P.D. James, though many readers will be reminded of Umberto Eco's intricate, scholarly, and best-selling *The Name of the Rose*, which also concerns monastic huffer-mugger. But it was published after Reeves wrote his own detective story.

With only the occasional strain on belief (Coggin and Sump are a trifle too erudite, befitting Scotland Yard gents more than the plebians of the Metropolitan Toronto Police) *Murder with Muskets* is Reeves's best-organized book. Even the caricatures and musical in-jokes ("Murray Schafer's recent Six-Day Symphony for football crowd, telephone exchange, and multi-track dictaphone") are handled with decent restraint, and the embarrassing Constable Doist has been exiled to New Brunswick, where he now operates a hardware store.

The murder in question occurs during a performance of Puccini's opera, *Tosca*. Playing the hero, Cavaradossi, the Jewish leading man faces an execution squad — and death from a real bullet. The book comes with another of the warnings we expect from Reeves: "Crime fiction exaggerates the world's failings, and I would not wish to suggest that real opera companies are always hospitable to egomaniacs and poltroons; the average is probably no higher in opera than in any other profession — including the writing of detective fiction."

The cast of egomaniacs and poltroons includes the company's artistic director Leo Lictorius (*not* based on the actual Canadian Opera Company's Lotfi Mansouri, Reeves emphasizes); a nymphomaniac soprano; a ravingly homosexual set-designer; and a lecherous Palestinian who plays *Tosca*'s villainous Scarpia.

In one way the book neatly suggests the Czechoslovakian

setting of the next novel, for both the soprano and the murder victim have Czech as their mother tongue. Larger social and political concerns are also intimated, for a historical note tells us that:

Reference is made to a performance of the Verdi *Requiem* in the concentration camp at Terezin, and to the subsequent murder, by the Nazis, of nearly all the participants in that performance. To invent any such incident would be to dishonour the memory of the victims of the Holocaust: their history contains ample real cases of atrocity; to invent an imaginary one would be somehow to suggest that the real cases are insufficiently appalling. It is therefore necessary to state, here, that the Terezin incident, referred to in this book, actually occurred.

If *Murder with Muskets* looks back to a historical tragedy, so does another undertaking that Reeves plans for the CBC — "the research, writing, and production of a giant project on Czech political history to be aired in 1988, of the same size as that of the big Orwell one at the beginning of 1984."

Reeves will retire from the CBC in seven years, though how meaningful a term retirement will be in his case is problematic. When he does, he'll write a stage play about Sir Walter Raleigh, requiring "an enormous amount of research." He also wants to record Canadian speech patterns coast to coast, and take "a good strong look at medieval literature, drama, and music" through courses at the University of Toronto's School of Medieval Studies.

"I've never wanted to or been able to single out one specialization, and cast the others aside or reduce their importance. I don't think my life is terribly well organized, but it certainly is very full. Although it's crowded, I find that for me it's healthy. It's got a kind of balance between the parts of one's life that are involved: the intellect and the body." □



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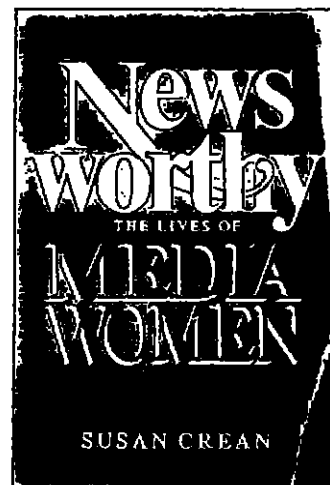
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POWER



A passage to Canada

How an American writer heeded the 'daily buttering' of the CBC to return to the land of his parents

By Clark Blaise

I REMEMBER NIGHTS in Milwaukee, that winter of 1964-65, parked in my new VW van, radio on, waiting for Bharati [Blaise's wife, Bharati Mukherjee] to finish her lectures at Marquette. One station came through loud and clear, from a thousand miles away. It was the CBC station in Winnipeg, and I could hear my cousin Lynn conducting the arts interviews, and I could hear that exhaustive 10-minute province-wide weather report, utterly unchanged from my childhood and visits over the years, beginning with highs and lows that could chill the open hearths of Pittsburgh, wind and snow conditions first for "Winnipeg, Carmen, and Gimli" (which could be horrendous enough, in January), but leading to figures that were barely credible outside of

laboratory conditions as the report marched ever northward. And still that silken voice, that dauntless wave of electronic imperturbability (could anyone imagine an American announcer not breaking in with a "Get out them longjohns, Churchill, she's hitting 50 below tonight!") led on to areas of perma-dark, where herds of muskoxen shouldered the wind: Moose Factory, Norway House, Pickerel Lake, and finally, "the Territories." Fifty-five below. Sixty below.

As always in my life, there was something behind me to help establish perspective. Milwaukee could be cold, wet, and uncomfortable. But I came from the stock of heroic skaters on both sides (even if I failed them). My mother had walked to school one day in North Battleford, Sask., at 63 below. Down in musty Florida, she'd told me the story of walking on crusty snow that sounded like avalanches, of flinching from footsteps two blocks away, of tasting blood down her throat as capillaries exploded. I had stood at recess in my first Canadian winter, the boy just arrived from Florida, watching my classmates play broom hockey, at 40 below. Bright, confident, assertive, informed people, like my cousin and her parents, like my mother. And dark, self-destructive, violent sociopaths like my father, to give my character a tinge of treachery, glamour, irresponsibility. Half in love with both tendencies, fearing that I was totally the child of Winnipeg, I prayed for deliverance from the direction of Quebec.

And as I sat in our first car, waiting for Bharati's Marquette lectures to end, I turned on the CBC to another voice. A professor in Montreal by the name of Sidney Lamb at Sir George Williams University was delivering a series of lectures on Shakespeare. They were the annual CBC Lectures: nothing too specialized; on the other hand, nothing too compromised either. Given my ignorance of literature prior to about 1950, I was probably the general audience he had in mind.

For those susceptible to it, no greater flattery exists on this continent than the daily buttering by the CBC. It presumes an audience of educated, liberally-inclined, culturally-informed, world-conscious, locally-curious, chatty, and *deeply Canadian* (in the all-embracing and all-restrictive sense of Anglo-or-Franco-Canadian) listeners. In short: me, my mother, and everyone like us. Our projection of an idealized self-image, however it makes us wince, however we may wish to parody it. I have lived my Canadian life in Montreal, Toronto, and Winnipeg, among CBC types. The projection is true and false, expansive and restrictive, in just about equal doses. I was a rootless, deprived Canadian listening in Milwaukee to Sidney Lamb recording from studios on Dorchester Street in Montreal, relayed over my old hometown station, CBW, the only counterweight to KDKA in my life. I could hear Montreal and Winnipeg and Culture in his voice. All Canadians seemed to have that effortless Lorne Greene radio voice, a race of announcers, facile articulators.

The year before, back in Iowa, I had read Dave Godfrey's review copy of Hugh Hood's first book of Montreal stories, *Flying a Red Kite*. It had all been so cozy, so Canadian. Dave, a workshop student, was already represented in the standard

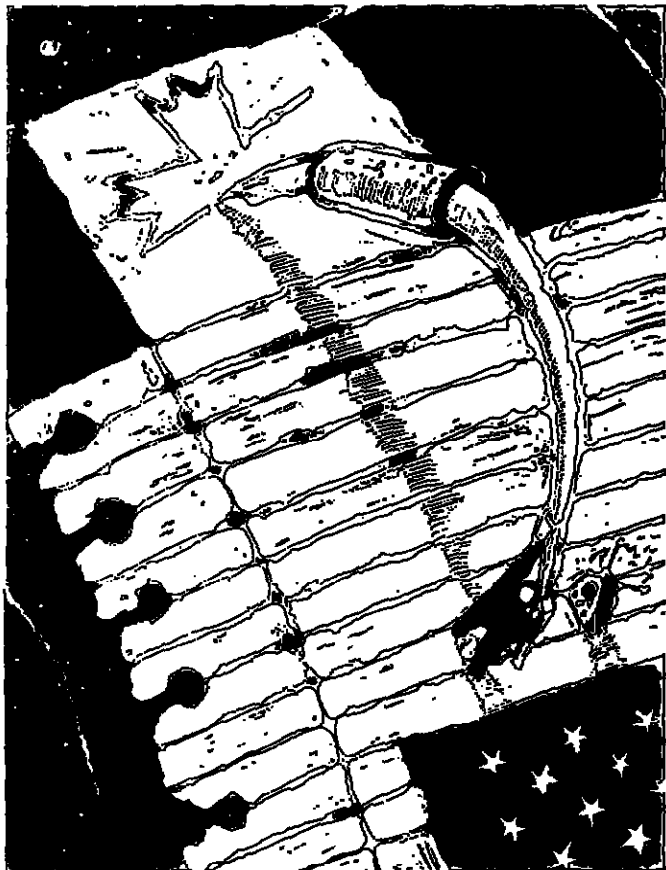


ILLUSTRATION BY ALEX DEVERE

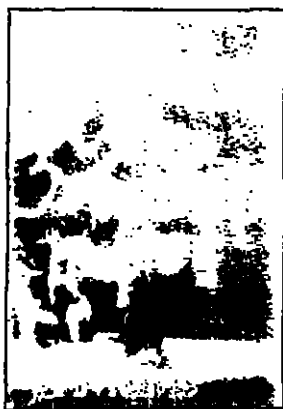
Canadian anthologies. He'd already been published in Martha Foley's collections. In Canada he was already a classic, and an authority, while we Americans howled like coyotes in the cold and dark. I used to read all the Canadian quarterlies, back on evening prowls through the Iowa library, convincing myself that a kinship existed. And I would read with amazement the various prize-winning stories in *Prism*, *Tamarack* and *Fiddlehead*, jealous that in Canada every published story had a chance to survive, to be honoured as "the best." Well, Dave had been reviewing Hood's book for *Canadian Forum*. Hood's Montreal, so palpable it leapt off the page, had merged with the older Montreal in my parents' life, and with the Montreal I'd hitch-hiked through on my way to Quebec City. I wanted it. I wanted it now.

I longed for those broadcasts. Sitting in 'the cold van in Milwaukee, I ingested the subtext of Sid Lamb's talk: somewhere, it said, this kind of stuff isn't even considered terribly high-brow. The CBC smugly assumes that enough cultural fragments still exist out there to justify such a commission. Somewhere in the corporate bosom lingers a cherished image of loggers, lawyers, fishermen and shopkeepers, students and housewives, pensioners — all clustered around a radio, in 1964! Saying *by cracky!* to a learned professor's chats on Shakespeare. Well, it moved me. It spoke (as Canada always spoke to me) of continuity, assured values, a unified voice.

I had to have Montreal. Milwaukee was a nightmare. The anti-Vietnam teach-ins persisted. I wrote very little — too busy reading my Marx, my Marcuse, Brown and Goodman; my *I. F. Stone's Weekly* and *Nation* and *New Republic*, my *Dissent* and the then-respectable *Commentary*. I wrote to McGill and to Sir George Williams University, where the chairman of English, Neil Compton, was *Commentary's* television critic. They weren't interested.

We returned to Iowa for a year so that Bharati could finish

John Reeves MURDER WITH MUSKETS



"Mr. Reeves (does) the trick."

New York Times review of
Murder Before Matins

\$17.95 Doubleday Canada Limited

her Ph.D. course work and take her comps. Why not me? *I would write.* I had no interest in any literature earlier than 1900; Dreiser and *Buddenbrooks* were the zero-points. We moved into Finkbine Park, the married students' Quonset village (its totality, from its name to its compressed, squashed love and sexuality, had not been lost on Philip Roth in his Iowa novel, *Letting Go*). Bharati's day started early, ended late. I wrote, and taught a section of Core Literature. Bharati stayed in the Writers' Workshop, studying with John Clellon Holmes. She published a story in *Massachusetts Review*, the first story she'd ever sent out. It got a letter from Houghton Mifflin, asking about a novel. Seven years later, they would bring out *The Tiger's Daughter*. I worked with José Donoso, the Henry James, or perhaps the Proust, of Chilean letters. The other writers were Nelson Algren and Kurt Vonnegut, one bitter and acerbic, the other just surfacing from the underworld of science fiction and slick magazines. Probably more than anyone, Vonnegut would pull the Workshop up, or down, to new commercial standards.

That was 1965, the year for young academics of the expanding universal marketplace. By that time I had published six stories in obscure quarterlies, the point at which I had arbitrarily promised myself to get an agent, carry myself as a writer and unapologetically describe myself as one. Universities were knocking on our Quonset hut. But Bharati and I had our applications out to Montreal. My imperialism, totally. She was happy in America, anywhere in America except the South would have done. But she was also a wife and mother: Indian wife, and mother — she submitted to my dream, or to my pitch. I was offered jobs by letter and by phone call, in Washington, Oregon, and half the new campuses in California. But I was an east-coaster; people out there — how did they live? I'd only been once west of Omaha. I'd had it with America, its politics, its shallowness, its reaction; its disarray. But again McGill rejected me. Neil Compton, writing a second year for Sir George Williams, said "maybe." *Tamarack Review*, where Dave Godfrey published his stories, took my first quasi-Canadian story. *Prism*, out in Vancouver, took another. I was coming North.

McGill leaped at Bharati, and so it was settled. She would teach and I would write, teaching English as a second language for McGill extension at night. The jobs I had turned down on the West Coast were for assistant professorships at \$8,000-\$9,000 a year, three sections, two of them writing. Bharati would be earning the equivalent of \$5,000 for four sections of freshman English, as a lecturer.

In June, 1966, my son and I entered at Windsor with a vanful of furniture. Bharati stayed back to take her comps. I remember it as a glorious summer day, the fulfilment of my life to that time. I was admitted to the country of my parents' citizenship as a temporary worker on the basis of my McGill evening job, not on Bharati's appointment. Married women had no files of their own. I drove that 13 hours to Montreal without a break, pumped by a new adrenalin.

Here, I believed, I would find my voice. Farewell, those swampy Southern stories of my remote accidental past! Here, French and English as I was — here, remembering my brief Winnipeg childhood, my summers in Quebec, and two adolescent summers in Brockville — here, I would take my place. This is where all my instincts had come from, where the agony of my life was merely a national allegory; where psychologically I was at home. By some Herculean effort and by some Odyssean restraint, I had managed to realign my life, lift myself back on the tracks I'd been derailed from 25 years earlier. Never had a thing seemed so right. Never had I behaved so passionately. I had the feeling that my American life was over; nothing from it counted. It would be like Québec City all over again, but in English, with French all around us in the background. □

Lament for a notion

The liberal idea of justice, argues George Grant, contains within it the seeds of its own destruction

By Paul Wilson

English-Speaking Justice, by George Grant, House of Anansi, 104 pages, \$5.95 paper (ISBN 0 88784 141 4).

Canadian Political Thought, edited by H. D. Forbes, Oxford, 472 pages, \$12.95 paper (ISBN 0 19 540457 2).

MOST LITERATE, educated Canadians will be familiar with George Grant and with his brief classic *Lament for a Nation*, which argued that with the defeat of Diefenbaker's government in 1963 the notion of Canada as a polity distinct from the United States was dealt a final *coup de grâce*. When it was first published in 1965, the book struck a chord that resounded in sympathy on both ends of the political spectrum and it became a best-seller, an unusual fate at the best of times for a book of political philosophy.

Set against the excellent context provided by H.D. Forbes's anthology of Canadian political thought, Grant's thesis about the failure of Canada seems right in the Canadian grain. A great many of our political philosophers have worried aloud about our ability to survive next door to the United States, and that worry has animated Canadian history ever since the U.S. declared its independence. If Grant had written no more than *Lament for a Nation* (which Forbes does not include), he would still deserve a firm place in the anthologist's pantheon.

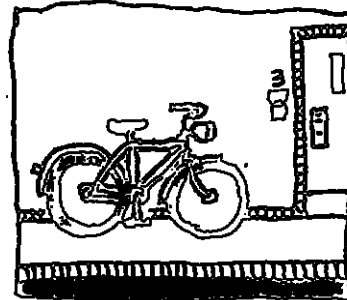
Fortunately, he has written more. I say fortunately because, in a sense, the rootedness of *Lament* in specific political events and its strong anti-American bias helped to obscure the deeper levels of argument in the book. Now, 20 years later, it is easier to see that Grant's doubts were less about the impossibility of Canada, and more about the impossibility of sustaining, or even of entertaining, conservatism in an age dominated by a liberal faith in progress and technology.

English-Speaking Justice, (published simultaneously in the United States by the University of Notre Dame Press, thus making it a continental co-publication and marking what may be the first real introduction of Grant the

anti-continentalist to U.S. readers) was originally a series of lectures delivered at Mount Allison University in 1974. In it, Grant argues that the liberal notion of justice contains within it the seeds of its own destruction.

His argument is dense, eloquent, and rich in detail and metaphor, proceeding not so much by logic as by a series of related "enucleations." "Enucleate" is a word Grant is fond of using — appropriately so, for in addition to its more general meaning of explanation it also means removing the kernel or core of something without damaging the entity from which it is removed, a metaphor that accurately describes Grant's anti-analytical approach to thinking, which he defines as an activity of the mind that pays "steadfast attention to the whole."

Though he claims to be out of tune with the assumptions and the language



of liberalism, Grant nevertheless admits now that the core of liberalism — its insistence on political liberty — is the only sane basis for political discourse in the West. "There can be sane argument concerning how far political liberty can be achieved in particular times and places, but not concerning whether it is a central human good." The problem, however, is that the propositions of liberalism and the consequences of technology are now running in opposite directions. Technology, once identified as the agent (or the result, depending on your point of view) of human freedom, now is being used more and more to extend man's mastery over human beings themselves. "Technology," Grant writes,

organizes a system which requires a massive apparatus of artisans concerned

with the control of human beings. Such work as behaviour modification, genetic engineering, population control by abortion are extreme examples. . . . The practical question is whether a society in which technology must be oriented to cybernetics can maintain the institutions of free politics and the protection by law of the rights of the individual.

To help answer this question, Grant examines liberalism in detail. Starting with the modern American version represented in John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* — which offers the classic, contemporary liberal definition of society as an association of free, calculating individuals whose rights constitute a supreme good — Grant draws back to examine earlier versions of liberalism, principally in the writings of John Locke, and to contrast the modern view with earlier Greek and Christian definitions of justice as "an overriding order which we do not measure and define, but in terms of which we are measured and defined."

Grant claims there is a "political vacuum" at the heart of liberalism that remained hidden for generations thanks to the survival of Protestantism as a system of public beliefs, and also thanks to the healthy reluctance of English-speaking political philosophers to stray too far from a practical, workaday examination of their beliefs. One example of the problems that arise is this: once individual rights are posited as a supreme good, then "comfortable self-preservation" (that is, the avoidance of violent death) becomes the *sine qua non* of those rights. But then, says Grant,

why should anyone make sacrifices for the common good that entail that possibility? Why should anyone choose to be a soldier or a policeman, if Lockian contractualism is the truth about justice? Yet such professions are necessary if any approximation to justice and consent are to be maintained.

But the problem is far deeper than a conflict between individual rights and social responsibility. It appears in its most painful clarity in the issue of abortion on demand. For Grant, the watershed for western liberalism was the U.S. Supreme Court decision *Roe v. Wade*,


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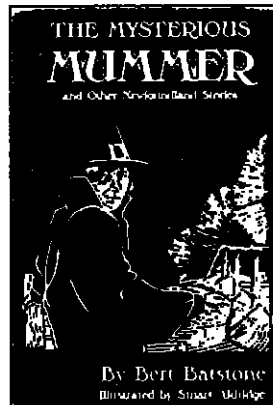
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which ruled that no state has the right to pass legislation outlawing abortion. The judge, who saw himself as an adjudicator between the rights of the legislatures and those of the mother, asserted the prior right of the mother to control her body for six months after conception. In doing so, he had to exclude the fetus from the litigation by declaring it a non-person, an idea Grant finds absurd and repugnant. ("Pregnant women do not give birth to cats," he snaps.)

Thus, although the decision may have seemed like a victory for the rights of the individual over the demands of the state, it in fact "raises a cup of poison to the lips of liberalism," because it "unavoidably opens up the whole question of what our species is. What is it about any members of our species which makes the liberal rights of justice their due?"

In other words, where do you draw the line? If the "convenience" of individuals becomes the basis for justice, what is to prevent injustice from consuming all those who are too weak to defend themselves, "the imprisoned, the mentally unstable, the unborn, the aged, the defeated and sometimes even the morally unconfirming?" Even more fundamentally, why do any of us deserve justice in the first place? "The inability of contractual liberals (or indeed Marxists) to answer these questions," says Grant, "is the terrifying darkness that has fallen upon modern justice."

The darkness Grant refers to is not something beyond imagination. Our century has already provided plenty of gory evidence of what happens when that line is drawn elsewhere, among races, religions, or social classes, for example. So far, most of us who live in the heartlands of liberalism, at least, have

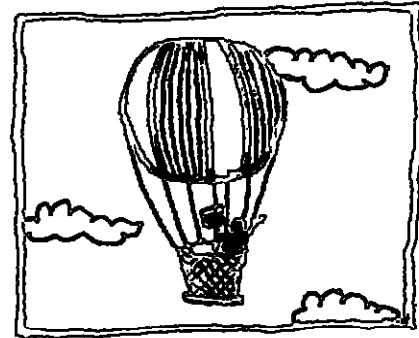
been protected from the worst consequences of such shifty principles. Yet even if one disagrees with Grant's conclusion that English-speaking justice is in its twilight, his warning that the worm is not some alien dragon, but rather a domestic creature gnawing away within the very apple we hold in our hands, has to be confronted.

Two more points, one a criticism, the other an observation. One of Grant's constant themes is the impossibility of true discourse in a society united and dominated by a single ideology — in this case liberalism. Yet everything he writes, in a sense, is a denial of that impossibility. No doubt he often feels like a lonely outsider, a prophet in the wilderness, given hearty liberal pats on the back for his brilliance, then wilfully ignored or misunderstood. But what else are those liberal freedoms for, if not to allow people to express themselves as fully as possible, without regard for the dictates of fashion or ideology, in the belief that only what people give freely of themselves can become the seeds of a living future? Grant has given us much, but I can't help feeling that the vigour of his work — its potential to become the starting point of something new — is sapped by his apparent belief that he writes in vain.

Second, cached away in Grant's writings are many autobiographical hints and suggestions. If one were to sift through them, one could probably uncover the skeleton of a very interesting intellectual history of one man, dissatisfied and out of place in the age he was born into, yet fascinated by it, ranging backward through the whole history of ideas and events for evidence of fatal turning points and roads not taken. One hopes that some day soon, Grant may be

persuaded to make his own story explicit.

As for Forbes's *Canadian Political Thought*, a great deal could be said — some of it nit-picking (such as the



unaccountable absence of an index, and the fact that it is printed on paper little better than newsprint), but most of it positive. It is clearly intended as a university primer, but I can recommend it heartily to the general reader. Its entries range all the way from Mgr. Joseph-Octave Plessis's homily, dated Jan. 10, 1799, on Nelson's victory over Napoleon at Aboukir (arguing that the British conquest of Quebec may well have been a good thing) to George Grant's most recent (1979) ruminations on Nietzsche.

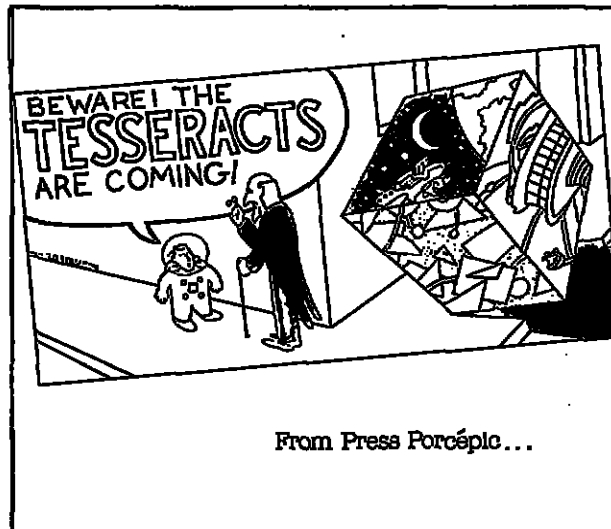
Most of the pieces are interesting in their own right, and they have obviously been chosen, with great care, to illustrate not just the ideas that have shaped our intellectual history, but also the quality of mind that has informed it. One way to read the book would be as a colloquium of living spirits, and I eagerly await a playwright and a theatre courageous enough to put *Canadian Political Thought* on stage. □

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From Press Forcépic...

CRITICAL NOTICES

ARTS & CRAFTS

Acrobatics: A Tale of Fantasy and Reality in Words and Sculpture, by Victor Tolgesy, Edahl Productions, illustrated, 75 pages, \$57.50 cloth (ISBN 0 9691205 3 2).

By Dennis Mills

FOR A BRIEF and memorable while, I re-entered my childhood thanks to the late Victor Tolgesy and the efforts of editor Naomi Jackson Groves. Tolgesy's combination of sculptures and words results in a wonderful fable — a simple and unassuming tale of an acrobat — a story that quickly layers itself into dreams and memories, and a life of creating.

The Hungarian-born Ottawa artist died in 1980, but Tolgesy wrote about this work, "If a hint as to the meaning of it all were needed, I would want to say that art, or if you wish, acrobatics, is more than just a daring performance. It can be an experience of the heart."

Acrobatics combines the text and images with care. The sculptures, simply photographed, are shown against black or muted coloured spaces, and the eye is invited to explore and delight. The whimsical, childlike qualities revealed remind me of Walter Trier's illustrations, and the figures of New Brunswick sculptor John Hooper. I would have preferred slightly more air between the lines of type, and the placement of the three "We Are All Acrobats" sculptures is a bit confusing. Better, I think, to have separated them more from the story, since Tolgesy did not complete the text that would have integrated them. The tale is a gem by itself. A limited edition of 500 was printed. This and the price will keep the story and the book from the circulation they deserve. □

Daffodils in Winter: The Life and Letters of Pegi Nicol MacLeod, 1904-1949, edited by Joan Murray, Penumbra Press, 354 pages, \$27.50 cloth (ISBN 0 920806 48 1).

By David Burnett

A FRIEND of MacLeod's wrote, after her tragically early death, "Owning a work by Pegi Nicol is like smelling daffodils in mid-winter." That stands also to describe the artist's determination and desire, despite personal difficulties and the depressingly limited and unresponsive condition of art in Canada through

the decades of the 1930s and 1940s.

MacLeod was not a great painter, but she was one whose passion, enthusiasm, and activism touched those around her; fellow artists, curators, her students at the Observatory Art Centre, which she established at the University of New Brunswick. It is that quality of engagement that marks her work — immediate, vital pictures crammed with activity — and that is expressed in her letters. There is the joy in friendships, in her art and in her daughter; there is the need to be involved in the struggle against the limitations of range and reception in Canadian art; and there are the professional disappointments: a difficult marriage, and the circumstances of lying in New York for the last 10 years of her life when her interests and concerns as a person and an artist were directed toward Canada.

She wrote extensively, but all has been destroyed with the exception of a few published articles and the letters. Her letters give us less the sense of what she might have achieved as a writer than the liveliness of conversation. Their value — beyond the historical details they reveal — lies not so much in what precisely is said than in the way they reflect the dynamics of a vital and engaged woman. □

BALANCE SHEETS

Fighting Back: Tax Evasion and the Great Canadian Tax Revolt, by Paul Malvern and George Vandenberg, Methuen, 152 pages, \$9.95 paper (ISBN 0 458 98480 9).

By Kevin Barker

THE TROUBLE with *Fighting Back* is that it alienates the hordes of honest rank-and-file taxpayers who may benefit from it. Both Malvern and Vandenberg are financial and tax experts, and their hope is plainly that the book will sell nicely to libraries, corporations, and Revenue Canada. But as a subjective rather than practical guide to the Canadian tax system, it offers little more than sympathy for us common folk.

Though it answers several interesting questions — such as who cheats on their income tax and why — a potentially bet-

ter question is: what are the acceptable limits of cheating and how can I achieve them? Malvern and Vandenberg could well have offered a how-to approach instead of an academic one. But we do get advice of a sort. For example, Malvern suggests that the most common form of evasion is simply not to file a return. As evasion schemes go, he suggests, this one is just plain stupid. True enough.

There is also merit in knowing the difference between evasion — perfectly legal, though as impolite in tax circles as breaking wind is in church — and outright fraud, which is grounds for swift and terrible retribution. The idea that total taxes lost in 1980 could have wiped out the national deficit of \$12.7 billion is another profound thought, but it makes you wonder whose side the authors are on: yours or the taxman's. □

CITIES

Stampede City: Power and Politics in the West, edited by Chuck Reasons, Between the Lines, 216 pages, \$12.95 paper (ISBN 0 919946 47 X).

By Richard Sherbaniuk

"ALBERTANS DON'T elect governments, they anoint regimes," a journalist once wrote. The current regime controls 75 of the 79 seats in the Legislature and is headed by a lawyer from Calgary. That city has figured large in the province, with whose resource-based fortunes it has always been linked. *Stampede City* contains articles by Calgary community activists documenting the changes that occurred in the city during the boom years and examining the significance of both the boom and the bust. "We want to present a picture . . . stripped of the clichés and myths," say the authors.

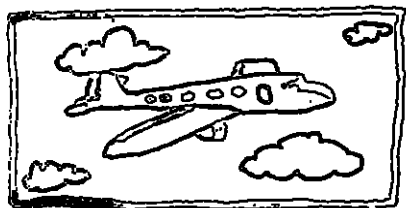
They've succeeded. This vastly entertaining book has the flavour of a particularly intricate and absorbing episode of *Dallas* — all that hubris and hustle, all that money. Even for an Albertan it's an eye-opener, because the province's journalists tend not to be among the world's most probing or incisive, as contributor Michael Shapcott documents so well in his piece on Calgary's newspapers, "The Media: Corporate Cheerleaders." For those who are baffled by the aggressive resentment of many westerners, this book will be a revelation, explaining everything from western separatism to Dome's collapse. Although the authors have a very

NOTE

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

definite leftist ideological bias, they are engagingly frank in admitting it, and they thrash their chosen targets with commendable vigour.

Why do Calgary's oilmen see themselves as the last of the rugged free-enterprisers while seizing every opportunity to feed greedily at the public trough? Why does Calgary have the most unlivable downtown of any North



American city with the possible exception of Denver, and who is responsible? Why was Mount Allan, which has snow about as often as Alberta has a change of government, chosen as the site for the 1988 Winter Olympics, and who profits hugely from that decision? For the answers to these questions and more, buy this book. ★

FICTION: LONG & SHORT

Elly Eotzweiler's Last Dance and Other Stories, by Lesley Choyce, blewointment press, 96 pages, \$7.95 paper (ISBN 0 88971 099 6).

By Daniel David Moses

THESE EIGHT stories by Lesley Choyce let us know how confusing being one of the boys can be. Each story focuses on the emotions of a boy or young man faced with problems in the form of a school bully, a sexually bored housewife, a delinquent friend, or in such unsatisfying situations as a boring job or singleness or adultery. The settings are in Halifax and its environs but could be in any town with bars and nursing homes, *Penthouse* magazine, Chevs, and booze. Five of the stories are told in the first person, and all of them have a colloquial style and cynical voice that add energy and humour. ("We all started doing terrible in school and our social standing improved dramatically.") At its best, this is precise and funny. When a married couple quarrel after an exhausting day and go to sleep angry, "It's like sleeping in a quarry." These good moments, however, are scarce. More often the narrative degenerates into sloppy description ("Denise was dusting a few objects on the dresser, slowly, methodically, with care"), and the voice turns merely weary ("He could have dumped the stuff [cheap wine] in the river that night where it would have been

right at home with all the other pollutants meandering down to the sea") or whiney ("An enriching bouquet," he mimicked. . . . He took another gulp. It tasted like shit"). "The Paper Route," the best story in the collection, shows Choyce can deliver solid work in his chosen style and voice. If only he were more reliable. □

Capital Tales, by Brian Fawcett, Talonbooks, 203 pages, \$8.95 paper (ISBN 0 88922 221 5).

By Veronica Ross

AT THE END of Fawcett's new collection, a philosopher philosophically summarizes and tells of his affair with Queen Victoria. At the beginning "pigs wallow in the mud and goats feast on the garbage some say the invisible tigers have left behind." Between these two extremes one finds oneself in the jungle of Fawcett's visions of the modern world. Absurd slaughters take place. Most work is senseless. Love is almost incidental and reality often incomprehensible. The people who inhabit these 19 stories include a "successful research manager" with dreadful nightmares, young guys partying and fighting, a store owner hiding in his basement, a berserk hunter, a union worker, a driver-salesman for a soft-drink firm, several young writers, amateur hit-men, and Thomas Carlyle.

The author is present in the first person, talking in a laconic, easy, sympathetic, and often humorous voice. It's a deceptive voice. All is not well. The button may be pushed. The world may end. But strangely, these tales leave me with hope, not despair. Sometimes a little more clarity might be desired in *Capital Tales*; sometimes Fawcett's use of allegory is not as skilful as it might be, but this interesting collection is worth reading for its commentary on the poor little lives that are lived on our planet. □

Fables of Brunswick Avenue, by Katherine Govier, Penguin, 253 pages, \$7.95 paper (ISBN 0 007578 X).

By Judy Margolis

"SHORT STORIES or novels are not — or should not be — prearranged to suit the literary shoppers. . . . I did not know you were coming," explains Govier in the introduction to this first collection.

It's hard not to feel slightly offended, a little bit put off — as an unwanted guest might — by the high-handed tone, the uncompromising stance of a hostess prepared to offer us not the smallest of creature comforts and no gracious way

out. These "fables" are no refuge for those who want to snuggle up with a nice fat pillow and read themselves into a smug, sweet sleep. The lessons they point to are invariably dark, welling up out of a seemingly bottomless pool of deep anger, frustration, guilt, jealousy, ambition, and lust; grim reminders of what a sorry emotional state the human condition is in, particularly women's half of it.

And there's definitely something inhospitable, ungracious, about the manner in which the stories are told. Govier obviously prefers to keep her readers at arm's length; she uses the third-person voice for all but one of them, "Eternal Snow." As a result, our involvement with the unexamined lives her characters stumble or slip through is only half-felt.

Certainly these often callous creatures (just bare bones, most of them) are all alike: frantic for a toehold, something external, to keep them upright — be it an old friend, a man, a marriage, a mirror, a memory, or some place on the map like the title story's Brunswick Avenue. And all make the same mistake. They lose sight of who they are by fixating on those elements of their lives they think need straightening out.

There are few rewards for the reader moved even momentarily to empathize or commiserate with any of Govier's unregenerate characters. Should we catch the merest glimpse of light flickering uncertainly, down crashes the shade and we're back out on the street again. If the words of Hannah, the besotted feminist poet in "The Night-tender," are any consolation, "You must expect nothing, then you will never be bitter." □

Foreigners, by Barbara Sapergia, Coteau Books, 302 pages, \$4.95 paper (ISBN 0 919926 35 5).

By Sherie Posesorski

IN YOUTH, our lives are fairy tales, filled with magical promise, and the belief that somehow our lives will transcend the inexorable mortal pattern. In adulthood, our lives become folk tales, grounding us in the inescapable collective experiences of existence.

The fairy-tale new world promise of Canada has drawn thousands of immigrants. Sapergia in her first novel relates the story of a family of Romanian immigrants living in Coteau, Sask. in 1912-1914. The promise of the new world is broken, as the family is slapped back to reality with their failure at farming, the death of a son, and their estrangement from a community that condemns them for being foreign.

Even after the parents, Stefan and

Sofie Dominescu, have lost their land, for their two teenage children, Nicu and Luba, Canada remains a magical realm of possibility. Nicu (soon to be anglicized into Nick) falls in love with their landlord's daughter, Margaret Chisholm, and Luba with a Métis youth. Sapergia's story follows their descent into adult realities.

In "The Death Of Ivan Ilych," Tolstoy writes: "Ivan Ilych's life had been most simple and most ordinary, and therefore most terrible." Sapergia's story is the North American archetype, appearing in countless Canadian and American stories. In the manner of a folk tale, she details what is most simple and ordinary about the Dominescus' lives.

What is most terrible about the simple and the ordinary is that they are unique and individual to each person who experiences them. However, by not giving us strong, individual characters, or a sense of their cultural community or the community of Coteau, the novel becomes a non-name product. The terrible dramas in their lives don't touch us, for the Dominescus have the dimensions of woodcut folk-art figures. □

The Individual Heart, by William Callaghan, Jr., Quarry Press, 76 pages, \$6.95 paper (ISBN 0 919627 26 9).

By Daniel David Moses

THIS SMALL book is a selection of four short stories and 26 poems from the work of a young man who died of chronic asthma in 1974. It is introduced by a memoir that pictures Bill Callaghan as a student prone to statements such as "The outcome of any symbolic feeling is to shut off feelings." The stories and poems are similarly intense, indefinite, and awkward. The best of them, "The Zoo," details the awkward beginnings of love between a spinster and an ogre, a Miss Taylor and a Mr. Latch, a combination of characters that evokes both pathos and comedy. But the characters are undermined by descriptions that serve not them but pretension: "She turned toward the river and watched as the turquoise crystal of the river's surface shattered against the rapids, forming a small white wound." This self-conscious grotesqueness also undermines the poems: in "The Bat," "The circus of transvestite shadows on each/Glint of the slender meat hooks"; in "The Caribou," "They came/taking their time/like patterns of bleeding/staining like wounds/ in the lungs of a wheezing/fast screwing squaw." Callaghan's was an immature talent. This post mortem display does not serve his memory. □

Shoes & Shit: Stories for Pedestrians, edited by Geoff Hancock and Rikki Ducornet, Aya Press, 164 pages, \$16.00 paper (ISBN 0 920544 35 5).

By Gary Draper

FOR MY MONEY, Steven Kovacs's wry fable "The Manure Inspector" and Aimee Garn's "Magic Shoes" are among the best of the pieces collected in this anthology. And bp Nichol's "The Anus" is a delightful mix of slapstick, wit, and dark comedy. But these and a handful of others are the exceptions. Some of the rest are merely sensational. (Consider, for instance, this closing line: "Like hot popcorn, his brains exploded out into the dung.") Some contained excellent ideas betrayed by poor writing. A surprising number are simply dull.

Why do I find so little to like here? Maybe there aren't enough first-rate stories about shoes or shit to choose from. Maybe a mediocre story about shoes or shit is inevitably worse than a mediocre story about, say, love or death. Maybe my taste is faulty.

In some ways, the key to the anthology is the final entry, the "Heel-Piece," "Stories for Pedestrians: A Musing" by editor Geoff Hancock. It contains some genuine insights and some extremely well-chosen borrowings from other writers. But it lacks substance and coherence, and it wildly overrates the importance of the enterprise. It is badly overwritten, occasionally cloying, and often ungrammatical. ("The alliteration of these simple see-saw rhythms are. . ."; "a serious examination of shoe advertisements show. . ."; "Literature is comprised of. . .") It is careless (the noted biologist is Lewis Thomas, not Thomas Lewis) and is riddled with what one hopes are typographical errors ("defication," "humourous," "existence"). Before you buy, read the "Heel-Piece": if you like it, you'll like the book. □

The Sound of Wings, by Spencer Dunmore, Heinemann (General), 280 pages, \$16.95 cloth (ISBN 434 21669 0).

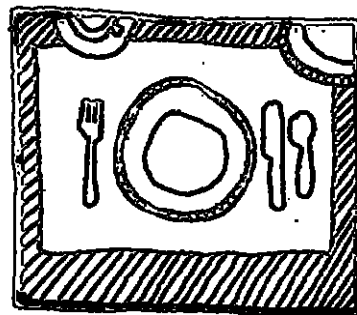
By Douglas Malcolm

EVER SINCE the Wright brothers (even before, if you count Jules Verne and H.G. Wells) the public has ravenously devoured adventure stories set in the glamorous world of aviation. Arthur Hailey capitalized on the craving for airborne excitement in *Airport*, and it is currently being sated by writers like Craig Thomas, Brian Lecomber, and Spencer Dunmore. Dunmore's new novel is an entertaining concoction combining facts galore about flying with tantalizing ingredients of mystery,

romance, and the occult.

Adam Beale, the first-person narrator, is a co-pilot for Anglo-World, a large British airline. On a New York-London trip Beale almost crashes the 1011 jet when he sights a mysterious red monoplane invisible to everyone else. He traces it to Mae Nolan, an American flier, who much to his amazement vanished in a 1927 attempt to be the first woman to fly the Atlantic. While the ghostly aviatrix clamours for his attention, Beale experiences marital problems that culminate in his wife's departure. His search for Mae leads him finally to upstate New York, where he falls for a winsome librarian and solves the mystery of Mae's disappearance.

Dunmore's characters are a notch above the usual stock type, and he creates a convincing background through a lavish, if occasionally overwhelming use of aeronautical detail. If *The Sound of Wings* was written with one eye on the best-seller lists, it is also a modest, well-written story that holds the reader's attention right to its neatly orchestrated conclusion. □



The Tenth Man, by Graham Greene, Lester & Orpen Dennys, 180 pages, \$14.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88619 084 3).

By Fraser Sutherland

THIS IS the novel — novella, actually — that Greene wrote for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in 1944 and forgot about for 40 years. Disinterred from the MGM archives, it now appears in print with two outlines for films that were never made, *Jim Braddon and the War Criminal* and *Nobody to Blame*. Both are cleverly conceived but of only peripheral interest compared with *The Tenth Man*, a theological thriller.

The Nazis hold a Paris lawyer, Jean-Louis Chavel, and 29 others in a prison cell in occupied France. In retaliation for a Resistance raid, the Nazis decide to execute one of every 10 prisoners. The men draw lots, and Chavel is a loser. But before he goes to the firing-squad, he bargains with an impoverished young man named Janvier: he will deed his country house to Janvier in return for Janvier's taking his place. Having willed

his new property to his mother, Janvier is shot. The war ends and, starving, calling himself Charlot, Chavel returns to his home in which live two strangers, Janvier's mother and sister. . . .

What happens then is the burden of Greene's beautifully patterned ironies and paradoxes. The contrived plot does not dispel the parable's moral force, nor does the occasional stylistic peccadillo: ". . . his own strength was matched against the crippled boy's wounding tongue which bore the bedsores of a long sickness." Such lapses notwithstanding, the novella is a perfectly judged meditation on the qualities of time and memory, justice and mercy. ☆

FOOD & DRINK

Air Fare: The Entertainers Entertain, by Allan Gould, CBC Enterprises, 160 pages, illustrated, \$12.95 paper (ISBN 0 83794 157 5).

By Volker Strunk

THIS GLOSSY book invites you into the homes, lives and — is nothing sacred? — the kitchens of 41 entertainers associated at one time or another with the CBC. Like Dr. Betty Kennedy, Hon. LL.D. (York University, 1982), who's got a big freezer and entertains a lot. Then there's Clyde Gilmour ("I'm a great can-opener"), who confirms his desire to authenticate his reputation as the verbal Liberace of the North with a recipe for "Pear Pie Pavarotti." No slouch on plovies he, Gilmour explains that "Pear Pie Pavarotti" "has pears in it" (thank God for small mercies), that "Pav," no doubt a pal of Clyde (pearish the thought that this is a case of conspicuous presumption), "emits pear-shaped notes, and he himself is pear-shaped."

Unlike Gilmour — and Sandy Cushon, who offers a recipe for "Field Mouse Casserole" — the majority of the contributors to Gould's anthology of media gossip, larded with such instructions as how to kill a rabbit (douse it with a 10-oz. can of celery soup), resolutely refuse to be cute. Or even entertaining — and that's the trouble with these entertainers baring their larders. It's one thing to be unable to tell a culinary hawk: from a handsaw; it's another to be cursed with dullness when searching for one's sole in the deep-freeze. Perusing the list of contributors, one notes the omission of that most entertaining devil of the national network, Don Harron, who either refused to climb into a fowl mood or else wasn't invited to the party. Gould's menagingly mindless collection of celebrity claptrap demonstrates, that necrolepsy is not innate: it can be induced.

The man officially in charge of "Wine Tips" is Tony Aspler, who does his best to suit plonk to circumstance, and who pretends with a straight face that the book's troubles are only a bar away. □

The Harrowsmith Pasta Cookbook, edited by Pamela Cross, Camden House, 151 pages, \$12.95 paper (ISBN 0 920656 31 5).

By Volker Strunk

THIS COMPILATION of pasta recipes is brought to you courtesy of the editors and readers of *Harrowsmith*, which somewhat ambiguously bills itself as "Canada's Award Winning Magazine of Country Living and Alternatives." But don't be put off by "Alternatives": you won't expire from tasting any of the recipes.

The straightforward presentation moves from a pictorial essay on classic pastas to a "How-To" section, and thence to appetizers, soups, salads, casseroles, stove-tops, and desserts. The "How-To" section is prefaced with the sensible remark that "You have to know the rules before you break them," but promptly fails to tell you what the rules are. You'll be glad to know that "many kinds of flour can be used," but will you thank the editor the next time you wonder whether to buy pastry flour or all-purpose? The editor is as non-committal on this as she is on other subjects. Should one add a tablespoon of oil when cooking pasta? "Some cooks are convinced that oil helps retard foaming. . . ." It does indeed, as anyone who's tried it will testify, though the editor seems to think it's a matter of dispute.

The recipes themselves are quite good, and some are exciting. If you're happy with such abominations as "2 1/3 cups of flour," you won't mind that there are no metric equivalents. It's disappointing that only eight dishes are represented pictorially while much space is wasted with dull black-and-white photographs of such step-by-step procedures as putting an egg into the Cuisinart and closing the lid. Editorial interference with the contributors' recipes appears to have been minimal; consequently you'll get a recipe like Cappelletti in Brodo that insists on *fresh* thyme, oregano, sage and parsley — and then tells you without blushing to use garlic powder. It's enough to make one want to form a real *ail* movement.

The book also dabbles in lore. My favourite is the aforementioned Cappelletti recipe, which reveals that cappelletti means little hats in Italian, and that the dish is so named because the filled pasta triangles resemble the three-

cornered hats popular at the time of Napoleon. So far so good, but did you know that "They are also known as 'the navel of Venus' "? Come, come now, isn't this taking "alternatives" a little too far? □

HEALTH & WELFARE

Children of Lazarus: The Story of the Lazaretto at Tracadie, by M.J. Losier and C. Pinet, Fiddlehead/Goose Lane Editions, 176 pages, \$12.95 paper (ISBN 0 86492 043 1).

By Betty and Perry Keller

TO MOST Canadians, leprosy is a disease for tropical climes — for Africa and India — but beginning around the year 1815 this affliction became a very real part of Canada's history. In that year two women in New Brunswick were discovered to have the disease, and from them it spread through a chain of family members and friends. Doctors knew so little about it that they could do nothing to help the sufferers, so families simply hid their afflicted members until the disease progressed to its inevitable end. In time, the government interceded, and the lepers were incarcerated in the Lazaretto of Tracadie.

Children of Lazarus tells the story of the sufferers and their benefactors, caught in a mesh of bureaucracy and hampered by the public's fears and misunderstanding. But the authors have not written a depressing book. Instead they tell of doctors who devoted themselves to the amelioration of the patients' suffering even though they could not cure them, and of the gallant sisters who came to care for the sick and dying. Much of the book's success is due to the intermingling of narrative and documentary evidence, and to the "fictionalized voice" of Marguerite Robichaud of Tracadie who lived with leprosy for nearly 60 years. The careful research and dispassionate language makes this an excellent Canadian historical source. ☆

The Real Pushers: A Critical Analysis of the Canadian Drug Industry, by Joel Lexchin, New Star Books, 272 pages, \$14.95 cloth (ISBN 0 919573 26 6) and \$8.95 paper (ISBN 0 919573 27 4).

By Claire Brownscombe

IN HIS VERY informative book, Lexchin analyses the roles of drug companies, doctors, and the government in contributing to the high cost and misuse of prescription drugs in a society that pushes these products.

Treating the stress and anxiety of

everyday life with drugs such as tranquillizers expands the market for pharmaceutical companies, but inhibits attempts to remedy social problems underlying the malaise. Foreign domination and lack of competition are two factors maintaining the high cost of prescription drugs for an extremely profitable industry. Private industry directs its research funds toward the development of drugs against widespread illnesses rather than against rarer ones whose sufferers would provide a smaller market. Some of this money might be spent more beneficially in areas such as nutrition and preventive medicine. A cosy relationship between doctors and the pharmaceutical industry begins in medical school, where students are offered benefits such as summer jobs in drug companies and free lunches. Later busy doctors may rely too heavily on information from an industry that isn't always completely candid about its products. Hesitant to spend money, and fearing the multinationals, governments are inept at controlling the industry.

A final chapter suggests reforms, including independent, non-profit research centres and a crown corporation to manufacture the most beneficial drugs. Ultimately, Lexchin believes we should replace capitalism with a system that engenders a new view of health and disease, different medical education and motives for producing drugs.

Although some readers may find the abundant detail tedious, Lexchin has written a provocative book, with much material for further debate. Drug pushing is a costly business. The consumer may pay not only with money but also with her health. □

good" — even when human rights violations are concerned.

Enshrined in this mythology is a world of nameless donors who hide under umbrella multinationals and international and national agencies. Criticism focuses on the denial of responsibility once funds are given, the lack of feasibility evaluation, and the donors' own commercial interests. No case presented indicates that the intended recipients, such as the poor, participate in project decisions or evaluations, which are normally made beneath a "shroud of secrecy." Questioned also is the very premise that foreign aid is beneficial.

Examples centre on the failures of energy projects, particularly hydroelectric dams, where "in the last three decades, no capital projects have received more funding, or caused more grief." Consequences include uprooting tribal peoples in order to flood their lands for dams, subsequent overcrowding, food shortages, environmental destruction, violence, and the dams' own eventual failure.

With its emotional rhetoric, this book's numerous recommendations offer more a Utopian vision governed by strict (and enforceable?) legislation than an immediately attainable goal. Moreover, myths aside, there does exist an opposing school of thought, which pragmatically advocates aid to oppressive regimes in hopes that some of it will eventually reach the intended poor, as well as working within the context of multi- or bilateral aid.

Clearly, when discussing an issue such as aid, something begun in the spirit of charity, there are no clear-cut good guys and bad guys. This book, however, is not a mere propaganda tool for environmentalists or human rights activists. It raises valid questions and provides damning, well-researched evidence that undermines the glory of a "25 billion dollars-a-year business." □

the book, as it turns out. Next, the title-page adds to the subtitle the enormous reservation 1900-1930. It's not till page 104 that a footnote announces another limitation: "Québécois gardens. . . are unfortunately outside the scope of this work." It doesn't say why. Perhaps Quebec gardening stopped in 1899, or didn't start till 1931.

So this isn't a history of Canadian gardening. However, the author has done a lot of work, and her very full bibliography will be invaluable to any writer who undertakes a real history of the subject.

The most interesting parts of the book are its sidelights on social history. There's a good account of the railway-station gardens started by the CPR to impress immigrants with the fertility of the country; about 1960 they began to be replaced by parking lots. And I like the chapter on the school garden, part of the reform movement around the turn of the century that aimed to improve society, not by changing political institutions but by raising the moral character of the lower orders. The equation of horticulture with virtue is persistent (John Gerard in his *Herbal*, 1597, said that "gardens . . . admonish and stir up a man to that which is comely and honest") though unsupported by Scripture — the first two gardeners recorded in Genesis are Adam and his son Cain.

The careers of the notable plant-breeders are summarized, but there is little specific information about the varieties they bred. There is a similar lack of information about the varieties grown in the gardens mentioned. Particularly with the present upsurge of interest in the older varieties of rose, for instance, this is the kind of thing the gardening reader wants to know. □

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

In the Name of Progress: The Under-side of Foreign Aid, by Patricia Adams and Lawrence Solomon, Energy Probe Research Foundation (Doubleday), 230 pages, \$12.95 paper (ISBN 0 919849 04 0).

By Linda Fung

ESPECIALLY FOR those unfamiliar with the dynamics of foreign aid — save for its media image of shipping goods to the starving — this book will not only enlighten, but disturb.

Adams and Solomon identify a dismal inefficiency in foreign aid and blame it on certain flourishing myths: "tied aid can be both humanitarian and help [Canadian] business; environmental degradation is a sign of progress; the Third World, with its billions, is straining the world's resources; [and] a few must suffer for the greater national

LEISURE & PLEASURE

Rhetoric and Roses: A History of Canadian Gardening, 1900-1930, by Edwinna von Baeyer, Fitzhenry & Whiteside, illustrated, 201 pages, \$29.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88902 983 0).

By I.M. Owen

THE JACKET'S encouraging: a beautiful full-colour reproduction of a painting of a cottage and its garden, evidently dating from the early part of the mid-19th century.

The first letdown comes with the frontispiece, a black-and-white photograph fuzzily reproduced in grey and grey — like all the other photographs in

ON STAGE

Emma Albani: Victorian Diva, by Cheryl MacDonald, Dundurn Press, 256 pages, \$19.95 cloth (ISBN 0 919670 75 X) and \$9.95 paper (ISBN 0 919670 74 1).

By Betty and Perry Keller

UNEARTHING the story of Emma Albani was obviously a labour of love for Cheryl MacDonald, whose diligent research has added one more remarkable personality to the pantheon of Canadian theatrical and musical stars. Albani's early years are set against a background of Catholic Quebec in the middle of the 19th century, when girls were expected either to marry or to enter the religious life. But Albani did neither because the good Sisters of the Sacred Heart Convent in Montreal, where she had been

sent to study, recognized her potential as a singer, and she went on to perform on the stages of the Met, Albert Hall, Covent Garden, La Scala, and the finest opera halls of Europe. Her extensive tours made her a favourite of opera lovers in Europe, the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Hawaii. Kaiser Wilhelm I bestowed on her the title of royal court singer, the King of Hawaii gave her the Royal Order of Kapiolani, and Queen Victoria showered her with expensive presents.

The author was fortunate in having access to the Albani autobiography published in 1911 after the star's retirement, but the real strength of this biography is in the background of vivid characters and events from the world of 19th-century opera and theatre. The pages are filled with the backstage battles and gossip that surrounded the diva, the friendships, romances, and intrigues, the successes and failures of operas and singers, the behind-the-scenes tragedies and disappointments. Regrettably, the only things this book lacks are a good strong editorial hand and some thorough proofreading; a good story and good research deserve better treatment. □

THE PAST

Tug of War: The Canadian Victory That Opened Antwerp, by W. Denis Whitaker and Shelagh Whitaker, Stoddart, 461 pages, \$24.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7736 2024 0).

By Steve Lukits

WHEN BRITISH troops entered Antwerp on Sept. 4, 1944, many Allied leaders thought that the war would end by Christmas. Evidence for optimism was abundant. The German army was in disarrayed retreat and faced the possibility of entrapment in Holland. The docks at Antwerp would soon be overflowing with the supplies that would ensure final victory. But a lapse of aggressive concentration, as well as political expediency and bickering over strategy, halted the Allied chase at Antwerp. The battered German armies escaped. Hitler ordered their rearguard in Holland to fight to the death in defence of the Scheldt Estuary, the waterway leading to the port.

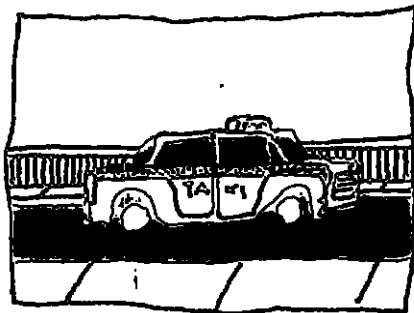
Canadian soldiers bore the brunt of two months of wet and miserable combat to clear a determined enemy from the flooded polder lands. W. Denis Whitaker commanded the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry during Battle of the Scheldt. His book — co-written with his wife Shelagh — draws on his personal experiences, scholarly research, and his

interviews with over 150 participants, Allied and German, military and civilian. Guy Simonds, the most brilliant of Canada's wartime generals, is the commanding presence in the book. But it is Whitaker's passionate involvement in the story, whether expressed as affection for comrades, respect for the enemy, frank prejudice about certain commanders, disdain for bureaucratic officers, and contempt for some wartime Canadian politicians, that raises *Tug of War* above ordinary military history. □

A. Vast and Magnificent Land: An Illustrated History of Northern Ontario, edited by Matt Bray and Ernie Epp, Lakehead University Press (ISBN 0 88663 001 0) and Laurentian University Press (ISBN 0 88667 002 0), 205 pages, \$14.95 cloth.

By Brad Adams

TO SOUTHERNERS, Northern Ontario conjures up images of bush pilots and prospectors, blackflies and acid rain; northerners feel forgotten by Queen's Park and exploited by Bay Street. This book, sponsored by the Ministry of Northern Affairs as a contribution to Ontario's bicentennial birthday party, aims to dispel these myths and kindle Laurentian pride. In this pictorial and prose essay, boosterism is serious business. A number of historians and geographers, some of them old pros, supply historical overviews of the fur trade, transportation, pulp and paper, mining, agriculture, industry, and urbanization. These essays touch all the bases in a small space; they sometimes dip to the level of textbook truism often found in quick, commissioned projects. Ironically, while hymning the North as a



mature, historically rich, and diverse community, the authors show just how precarious is the base and future of its economy — observations that do not always sit well with the intent of this celebration. Two final chapters on culture and sport strain, sometimes awkwardly, against the limited resources at

hand, despite a passing reference to amphibian Alex Baumann.

Photographs and illustrations are grouped around these themes, and it is only in picture that the book comes to life. Indeed, photos deal with interesting and often controversial subjects — such as working conditions, labour unions, and the plight of native peoples — all but glossed over in the text. This lavish production is well worth its highly subsidized price of admission. But it is a pity that the themes that form the backbone of the book are so predictable and unimaginative, and that text and accompanying pictures do not conspire more successfully. □

When Rum Was King: The Prohibition Era in New Brunswick, by B.J. Grant, Fiddlehead/Goose Lane Editions, 244 pages, \$9.95 paper (ISBN 0 86492 046 6).

By Laurel Boone

BETWEEN 1920 and 1933, the entire United States was, nominally at least, dry, whereas New Brunswick voted itself dry in 1920 and remained so for only seven years. Until 1923, it was not an offence in New Brunswick to possess liquor or to store it to sell outside the province, and it was never illegal to have or to deal in denatured alcohol. For generations, too, people in northwestern Maine and eastern New Brunswick had been visiting, marrying, and smuggling back and forth across a border that even customs officials contrived to ignore as much as possible. These circumstances made the long, wild border a picnic-ground for local liquor smugglers, bootleggers, and moonshiners. Grant shows that Prohibition enabled a lot of people to make a lot of money doing what they had always done, and he narrates in thrilling detail the escapades and stratagems of the rum-running tradesmen.

But this tale and its context are only part of *When Rum Was King*. Grant also includes an outline of drinking habits in lumber camps, histories of the various teetotaler factions, a blow-by-blow political account of repeal, a chapter on the Depression, and catalogues of crime in several communities. Wherever he isn't telling a story, his text languishes under its burden of quotations and examples. The notes and appendices will show the way to future scholars, but the system of numbered endnotes and asterisked footnotes surely carries a worthy objective too far. Grant is a scintillating story-writer and a meticulous scholar who could integrate his talents and digest his research more thoroughly. □

Feeling the Worlds, by Dorothy Livesay, Fiddlehead/Goose Lane Editions, 76 pages, \$7.95 paper (ISBN 0 86492 045 8).

By Marika Olah

PUBLISHED FOR the poet's 75th birthday, this book is a collection of Livesay's thoughts on her life. She writes of relationships and events she remembers that have haunted or inspired her. She feels the worlds around her as a tetralogy, and almost as if to say things long left unsaid.

The collection opens with a section entitled "Family Tree: A Suite" and the poem "Photograph." Reminiscing, she writes of the importance her Gran gave to truth. Down-hearted she writes:

*Oh my Gran
life would be simple
for my children and grandchildren
if lies — black or white —
were the only barriers*

One poem that stands out is "Inheritors," in which the poet speaks about being caught in memories — and their potential to possess. In the second section, "Voices of Women," she sets women in a would-be martyrdom of identity and cause. There is little hope for them — they seem to have only themselves. The epitome of this sense of dejection is caught in "The Rejected," with phrases like "The women we women have reared/ now caught behind bars"; "not knowing who they are"; and "we put our own kind/ in a zoo."

What the first two sections catch of the poet's intense evocation, the last two seem to lack. They are less personal.

The last poem in the collection, "Epitaph," ends:

*I am all worn now
honed to the bone
by centuries shifted
and smoothed into stone.*

If there is fault to be found with Livesay's collection, it is in the continuous pessimistic voice and the disappointing lack of surprise. □

The Man Who Broke Out of the Letter X, by Robert Priest, Coach House Press, \$6.95 paper (ISBN 0 88910 275 9).

By Gideon Forman

BOTH THE PRIVATE and the political are given expression in Robert Priest's new collection. We witness a poet struggling to describe the whole person. Priest the lover is never far from Priest the social critic, and it is the combination of these sensibilities that makes the book inspiring. Some lines implore: "Bring down

your miraculous mouth over mine/ and make me green to the throat"; some ask: "How long after a slaughter before you can drink the wine of a land?" The poet is a man of passion.

The political poems are of two sorts — the poignant, upsetting pieces and the satirical ones. In "Questions about the Starved People," Priest shatters our comfortable belief that the suffering hordes are somehow different from us, somehow adapted to torment. The satirical pieces are often written as fables or parables. "The Escaped Cock," a telling comment on the violence of patriarchy, relates the adventures of the male organ parading as a welfare worker and army general. "The Grizzums" describes a military man who has his "mouth and other eating apparatus where we/ locate the rectum."

The love poems are of mixed quality. The strongest ones, pieces such as "Proposal" and "Chance," are innocent and gentle, and pay careful attention to the sounds of words. The weaker ones, such as "The Clock Has Gone Mad" and "Go, Gather Up the Love," deliver clichés and dull language. The "zooming past of cars" and the "deep kisses" could well be left out.

Several of the pieces would benefit from shortening — especially the John Lennon epitaph, "Dec. 8, 1980" and "Adventures of My Hand." Overall, though, the collection is an exciting one. Priest's numerous concerns — amorous, sexual, political, and religious — work together to produce a single fiery volume. □

The New York Book of the Dead & Other Poems, by Dwight Gardiner, Talonbooks, 48 pages, \$6.95 paper (ISBN 0 88922 222 3).

By Sparling Mills

EASTER SUNDAY is the dominant image in Gardiner's book. In the aftermath of a New York mugging, the victim wakes as if resurrected. He gets "up off the street, pick[s] up/glasses, spare change and/knife" and wryly observes that he is partly to blame for what happened since "you gotta be careful/on the street" or you end up "in a six foot box." There seems to be no bitterness. Resilient with hope, he has the cab driver deliver him from "the combat/zone. . . to another day." Even when the poet is describing the litter of bottles and misfits, he uses end-rhymes and/or repetitions that lighten the mood to almost children's storybook quality.

This mood is even more apparent in his baseball poems. Mike Norris's one-hitter takes on the power of myth, and the direct quotations offer immediacy

and humour. Another memory is tapped and smiled at with a mention that "They stopped the ballgame" for the broadcast from the moon. There is some question about which should have been interrupted for what.

Gardiner sustains this humour, not on every page, but enough to leave the reader on an upbeat. One technique that contributes to this fun is his use of long, complicated words such as "australopithecus africanus." Or he comments that "carcinogenic is a lovely word,/ noun or adjective, the heart of poetry." All this is wrapped up in a bright blue cover with splashes of yellow and green — centred is a picture of a garbage can and a bum jauntily lounging in the sun. Another Easter Sunday? □

Selected Poems 1960-1980, by Richard Outram, Exile Editions, 106 pages, \$9.95 paper (ISBN 0 920428 85 1).

By Paul Roberts

A CURSORY GLANCE at two decades of Outram's poetry establishes two things with diamond clarity: Outram is a major poet at the height of his powers; his work has been shamefully neglected in this country.

*Tears, that hold the light
Like broken diamonds,
Mark for all time
The ground whereon they fall.*

With these almost prophetic lines (from *Exultate, Jubilare*, 1966) Outram neatly defines the nature and fate of his work. The poems, with the language they are written in, possess a crystalline brilliance — perfect yet so fragile some can scarcely be read aloud — a brilliance that flares and dies behind the eye.

A closer reading summons up shades of Blake and Hopkins — not as influences so much as compatriots: in this country all roads lead to God. All metaphor, all device, the world itself, are a means of perceiving Him. The poem "Language" glows with a sense of possibilities and sudden proximity to the source. And behind the stanzas, a pervading sense of pure intelligence, an inviolable superstructure in which the poems are suspended like constellations.

He has been called a Christian poet, but what I see is a spiritual intensity that, far from needing, is *needed* by religion. This unbounded fission of the spirit fashions into words the inarticulate speech of the heart. It is the voice of a deep joy.

Of these poems, Outram says: "They were written for the love of God, of man, of a woman, of the world in its inexhaustible singular creaturehood." They emerge from a place that has definition. Beyond the customary

themes of sorrow, of loss, of insecurity, of pain — and these are handled with wit and intelligence — is a sense of wonder. As the poet insists, he is "... a celebrant or he is nothing." Part of his celebration is the experience, present in almost every poem, of a mind at work that constantly shapes the abstract, battles entropy, searching for a more acute meaning, and for the light that illumines these words. One hopes that Outram, left out of Margaret Atwood's Oxford anthology, will not be so disgracefully overlooked in the future. ★

Territories, by Elizabeth Allen, Coteau Books, 70 pages, \$14.00 cloth (ISBN 0 919926 37 1) and \$6.00 paper (ISBN 0 919926 36 3).

By Paul McNally

WITH NORTH AMERICAN farmers in such a fix that even Hollywood is taking notice, it is timely to read a thoroughly intelligent book of poems by a farm woman. Allen is a New Zealander who has found Saskatchewan soil fertile for more than wheat, and her second collection comes four years after the award-winning *A Shored Up House*. It is a harvest of image and anecdote with the kind of flavour and freshness you get from new-dug potatoes or carrots pulled a little too soon. These are poems not quite mature, not plumped, ripe, and formal, but all the better for that. They see deeply into the severity of farm existence, and into the indifferent assault of a forbidding climate. But they are poems of fecundity, of candid sexiness and unvarnished life and death. They are short on abstractions, long on verbs; full of pith and sinew, drained of conclusive argumentation.

Territories doesn't romanticize the landscape or the life that clings to it; it is dusty and hot, full of dry cold and vistas that have no pattern when you're inside them. But like Lorna Russell's black-and-white illustrations, they're a faithfully indigenous union of sharp, close detail and limitless horizon. They show Saskatchewan existing only in extreme close-ups and in extreme long shot. Its immensity swallows little patterns into one grand design of earth and huge sky. Angled against it small things like human lives jump into heightened reality.

Throughout *Territories* the vastness of the landscape broods; the poems are shards of humanity set against it. Their structure is brisk, chopped hard across the grain in short lines and quick strokes of thought. They are random and incidental, ranging from personal lyrics to reportage touched with irony. But together they make a cohesive book be-

cause Allen, like the people she describes, pays homage to the land she works. It isn't always lovable, but it's there, bigger than all of us and stronger. □

POLITICS & POLITICOS

The Politics of Energy: The Development and Implementation of the NEP, by G. Bruce Doern and Glen Toner, Methuen, 480 pages, \$16.95 paper (ISBN 0 458 98920 7).

By Guy Stanley

THIS IS the most comprehensive account of the national energy program to date. Superseding the earlier account in Peter Foster's *The Sorcerer's Apprentices* (Collins, 1982), the authors shed more light on the inputs of cabinet as well as the relations between levels of government and industry. In contrast to Foster, their approach, like Flaubert's ideal for the novel, is *pas de monstres, et pas de héros*.

Consequently, the book's style is academic, replete with complex diagrams of policy machinery. Doern has made some of the points before, notably in his annual contributions to *How Ottawa Spends* (Lorimer, 1982, 1983). Glen Toner recently completed a Ph.D. dissertation for Carleton University on the NEP. To judge from the notes, every source has been sifted and no data were left unconsulted (except, strangely in a study of politics, public opinion surveys).

The authors aim at a systematic description of the link between politics and hydrocarbon energy policy since the Second World War and consider that the NEP (1) equalized the balance between government and private interests; (2) was not "radical" in relation to its objectives and effects; and (3) ends with mixed results, neither as bad as its critics charge nor as good as its defenders claim.

Unfortunately, the account lacks an analytical balance sheet. The NEP announcement alone knocked 40 points off the share price of U.S.-owned oil giants with Canadian interests, raised grave questions about Canada's reliability as a host to foreign investment, and triggered a massive overflow of scarce domestic capital to the United States. Over the course of the policy, the Canadianization provisions of the NEP soaked up additional amounts of scarce capital without adding a drop to our oil supplies and transferred millions of public dollars to unproductive northern exploration. The NEP thus transferred or wiped out billions of dollars of wealth without compensatory public benefits, but the authors' descriptive approach to

policy analysis cannot address this crucial side to the NEP. Those interested must continue to rely on Edward A. Carmichael and James K. Stewart's *Lessons from the National Energy Program*, (C.D. Howe Institute, May, 1983).

Doern and Toner's work is an excellent public policy case-study full of corroborative details illustrating management problems. But as with all good classroom case studies, conclusions must be sought elsewhere. □

SACRED & SECULAR

Gentlemen-Bishops and Faction Fighters: The Letters of Bishops O Donel, Lambert, Scallan and Other Irish Missionaries, edited by Cyril J. Byrne, Jespersion Press, 376 pages, \$16.95 paper (ISBN 0 920502 27 X).

By Anne Roche

WHEN JAMES O Donel, the Irish Franciscan who was to become the first Bishop of Newfoundland, arrived in 1784, the Penal Laws against Catholics and the proscription of permanent settlement were both in full force. The wretched inhabitants lived in hiding "like animals," having "scarcely any knowledge of the Deity, with the exception of the children of the Irish who have retained some glimmer, inextinguishable up to this point, of religion from the tradition of their ancestors." This collection of the letters of O Donel and his two successors illuminates the awesomely difficult early period, 1784-1829, of the formal establishment of the Catholic Church in Newfoundland.

"This cold corner of the New World" was perhaps the least attractive posting in the Church. The climate was frightful, the political situation dangerous. The wild Irish flock, much given to violent faction-fighting, was uncongenial to its middle-class, European-educated shepherds. O Donel, Lambert, and Scallan were accused by their successors of subservience to the British rulers. Certainly they were fervently loyal to the Crown, in part because of their hatred of the anti-religious, revolutionary French. O Donel boasted that his peace-keeping efforts earned Governor Sir Richard King's encomium "that the Catholics were the best subjects his Majesty had."

They did their best in tough times, never compromising the Faith. O Donel was physically assaulted and wounded by the Governor, Prince William Henry (afterwards William IV). All three bishops willingly exhausted their nerves and broke their health in the service of the arduous Newfoundland mission. □

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SCIENCE & NATURE

Islands at the Edge: Preserving the Queen Charlotte Islands Wilderness, by the Islands Protection Society, Douglas & McIntyre and University of Washington Press, 160 pages, \$29.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88894 425 X).

By John Goddard

TO A LOGGER on the Queen Charlotte Islands off northwestern British Columbia, a single spruce tree can be worth \$75,000. To nature lovers and naturalists, the same tree is worth. . . well, it's hard to say.

For 11 years a group of scientists, artists, fishermen, and photographers calling itself the Islands Protection Society has tried to have commercial logging ended in the southern half of the Charlottes, and have the area protected as a wilderness park. The ineffable merits of the cause have so far been lost on the B.C. cabinets, so society members are taking their case to the public with this smartly designed, lavishly illustrated, stunningly beautiful coffee-table book.

Phrases like "natural heritage," and "our planet earth" are overused in the book, but the contributing writers — many of them scientists — also present cogent arguments for protecting the islands from logging. Their main point is that the islands' delicately balanced ecology supports animals, birds, plants, and insects unique to the world — including oversized black bears, modified saw-whet owls, two species of sphagnum moss, and a type of sea flea known as *Paramoera carlottensis*. The scientists have questions about the evolution of these species; the islands likely have the answers; and the loggers, at least for now, have the right-of-way. ☆

Lost Islands: The Story of Islands That Have Vanished From Nautical Charts, by Henry Stommel, University of British Columbia Press, illustrated, 186 pages, \$37.50 cloth (ISBN 0 77488 0210 3).

By André McConnachie

ILSLOMANES, romantics, hydrographers, cartographers, and sea-goers should find some rare treasures in this historical account. Many humorous tales relate the state of discovery, navigation and cartographic sciences in the 19th and 20th centuries. Amid tales of seafaring characters and their innocent and not so innocent attempts to chart unknown islands, are modern explanations of the whereabouts of some 200 islands and enriched narratives about their

discoveries. However, the two Admiralty charts included as a separate fold-out are disappointing because they are reproduced on either side of a single sheet, rather than on separate sheets.

Chapter two deals with the origin of longitudinal navigation techniques. The shortage of sketches, however, leaves too much to the imagination. The vast distances are not conceptualized clearly, thereby giving the impression that very little has been discovered.

For the geology buff, one chapter deals with islands that rise and fall as a result of volcanic and seismic disturbances. But tales of lost inhabitants and discredited mariners bode ill for the would-be seeker. Even modern techniques, such as satellite observation, are not above question. Interestingly, airlines and travel agencies are singled out for the apparent availability of fares to non-existent places. For example, a ticket to Ganges Island, off Japan, would find you stepping lightly over unfettered swells. □

Northern Ecology Resource Management, edited by Rod Olson, Frank Geddes, and Ross Hastings, University of Alberta Press, illustrated, 438 pages, \$30.00 cloth (ISBN 0 88864 047 1).

By Rose Kilnkenberg

IN THIS tribute to Don Gill — an outstanding researcher on Canada's North — the editors have pulled together a fine series of technical papers that provide a broad overview of the ecological components of resource management in northern climates. The papers discuss climate, soils, and snow cover, as well as vegetation and fauna of the North. The final papers focus on land-use patterns, energy conservation, and tourism.

An introduction to ecological relationships, and man's role and impact in the North, would have benefited the text. As a drawback, though, this lack of an introduction is minor. The quality of the work presented in the papers, by such eminent researchers as Stan Rowe, more than clearly illustrates the fragile balance and sensitive relationships of the North. □

Second Nature: The Animal Rights Controversy, by Alan Herscovici, CBC Enterprises, 254 pages, illustrated, \$12.95 paper (ISBN 0 88794 149 4).

By Betty and Perry Keller

THIS BOOK is a by-product of the CBC-Radio *Ideas* series, "Men and Animals: Building a New Relationship with Nature," which examined the "real costs" to the ecological balance of

man's industrial and technological expansion. The book gives a short account of the historical foundations of the modern animal-rights movement, then plunges into the arguments for and against the use of animals for medical research, the production of meat-animals in factory farms, the anti-sealing campaign, and the ethics of trapping and hunting.

The author is definitely biased against animal-rights activists like Greenpeace because of the danger that they will drive away the people who make their living by hunting and fishing, making way for the "damers, the ditchers, and the developers" who will destroy the animal population far more quickly and efficiently than the hunters and trappers ever could. Animal-rights groups, says Herculovic, want man to withdraw entirely from his relationship with the natural world. But in spite of his tremendous scientific and technological advances, man cannot divorce himself from nature, because every breath he takes is dependent on the environment's continuity. The challenge facing society today, he says, is to find a balance between real human needs and the overall welfare of the biosphere. And although animal-rights groups may not agree with the author's evaluation of their worth, they will be hard put to quarrel with his recommendation. □

Will the Bounty End: The Uncertain Future of Canada's Food Supply, by Garry Lawrence Fairbairn, Western Producer Prairie Books, 160 pages, \$13.95 paper (ISBN 0 88833 142 8).

By John Harvie

FAIRBAIRN'S ACCOUNT of Agriculture in Canada is both shocking and sobering in its implications for our future. The reader will quickly realize that the stage is set for a disaster of monumental proportions unless we recognize that our agricultural resources are not inexhaustible. The combination of an insidious urban sprawl, wind and water erosion, and general mismanagement practices make for a deplorable situation.

Under our system it is easy to see a Canada where agriculture is not a viable industry; where the Prairies see a replay of the dustbowl days; where we become net importers of food; and where our global influence and reputation is reduced to near nothing. There are no villains in this book. All topics are addressed in a fair manner. Those parlour critics of everything chemical and modern will find no ammunition to vilify the agricultural community. Conversely, those farmers and agriculturalists who speak condescendingly of any-

thing urban will be surprised at the interdependence that exists.

The unfortunate aspect is that this book will probably not be read by those who would benefit most. It is of particular importance that those not involved in agriculture read it. As the author states "Agriculture is too important an issue to be left in the hands of the agriculturalists." ☆

SOCIETY

Not An Easy Choice: A Feminist Re-examines Abortion, by Kathleen McDonnell, Women's Press, 160 pages, \$8.95 paper (ISBN 0 88961 089 4).

By Libby Scheler

EVERY SO OFTEN I read a book that I begin pressing on my friends. This thought-provoking book is one of those. McDonnell goes deeply into her subject and singles out philosophical, moral, and psychological questions that are at the heart of the debate.

The most interesting chapter, "Controlling Reproduction," connects the abortion issue to the new reproductive technologies. She convincingly argues that the strongest proponents of various artificial birthing techniques (aimed at getting the baby out of that messy, mistake-prone womb) are men fed by their distaste for women's bodies and biology. They want to take the great power of birth away from women, she says, and put it safely within the realm of male-dominated medicine and technology.

On the political side, McDonnell points out that the right-to-life movement is by no means homogeneous. Mostly it is right-wing, socially conservative, and male-supremacist, but it also contains a significant progressive wing that connects its anti-abortion stance to a general concern that current society is discarding the weak and powerless: the elderly, handicapped, retarded, and unborn. McDonnell takes the pro-choice movement to task for not dealing with the latter group's concerns.

Two quibbles: In the last chapter the author touches on questions of self-healing, creative visualization, and other kinds of "magic," and departs from her commonsensical, intellectual tone. The subject needs a lot more space and serious exploration, or it should be left alone. Second, one part of the book talks about the feelings toward abortion of women who are mothers, as contrasted to those who are not. Rather than dealing with separate groups, it would have been enlightening to find out if the feelings of the same women changed before and after motherhood.

After all this, McDonnell comes out strongly — and convincingly — for women's right to choose abortion and to control the circumstances under which it takes place. It is a sign, perhaps, of a more confident feminism, when differences within the women's movement are aired as they are in this intelligent, provocative book. □

Step-families: Making Them Work, by Erna Paris, Avon, 228 pages, \$3.75 paper (ISBN 0 380 89670 2).

By Elizabeth Lai

DURING THE 1970s the divorce rate in Canada increased by 100 per cent, in Britain 155 per cent, and in the United States by 53 per cent. The majority of the divorcees will remarry, "but almost half of these remarriages will fail." The title of Paris's book is suggestive. Can step-families work? The book focuses on questions such as: What illusions surround remarriages? What should be expected? What problems are typical? How do children react? And how can remarriage be successful?

Many useful ideas are presented, but clearly emphasized is the importance of patience, flexibility, and the acceptance of a new family unit. This new arrangement has new rules and new parents who cannot substitute for previous ones. The new couple should therefore prepare for the situation by discussing the arrangement with their children and a counsellor.

Paris's style is readable and lively, and her advice is based on authoritative research. Her work is fascinating, informative, practical, and most hopeful to the many who face this problem. ☆

TECHNOLOGY

The Graphic PC DOS Book, by Richard Maran, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 26 pages, \$12.95 paper (ISBN 0 03 928876 5).

By Gord Graham

THIS BOOK is a double breakthrough: a remarkable innovation in computer-book publishing that was created in Canada, where most hi-tech books are imported. The unique visual approach of its packager, Richard Maran, works superbly to simplify the otherwise intimidating process of learning PC DOS, the operating system for the IBM Personal Computer and compatible machines. PC DOS (along with its generic version, MS DOS) is perhaps the most popular operating system on the planet, certainly the one that most new business software is written for.

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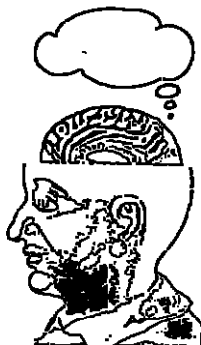
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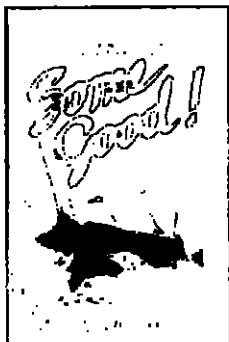
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An operating system is like a "master control program" inside a computer that co-ordinates all its different parts: keyboard, screen, disk drives, and so on. Learning to use an operating system is traditionally a painful process, but not so with Maran's book. Each page features crisp illustrations and masterful use of colour lines and shadow bars that gently, but inexorably, guide the eye through a particular sequence of operations. Each PC DOS command is linked to a witty, arresting image. For instance, "chldsk," a command used to check a diskette's surface, is represented by a person peering closely at a diskette through a magnifying glass. These images work throughout the book to communicate in an instant, forceful way that mere text cannot match.

Don't let its slim size fool you — in 26 pages, the Graphic PC DOS Book presents the distilled essence of volumes many times its size. This is the best introduction to PC DOS now on the bookshelves, accessible to anyone, and guaranteed to turn an intimidating process into a delight. Those who buy a PC DOS machine and this book should save themselves weeks of frustration. ☆

REVIEW

Diamonds in the rough

By Jack Batten

Fungo Blues, by Philippe van Rjndt and Patrick Blednick, Seal Books, 220 pages, \$3.95 paper (ISBN 0 7704 2047 8).

The Wrong Stuff, by Bill Lee with Dick Lally, Penguin, 242 pages, \$4.95 paper (ISBN 0 14 007941 6).

WHEN IT COMES to books about baseball, the situation has got out of hand. There are too many of them, and what was once a tidy little shelf of literate and lively volumes on the subject has turned into a library glutted with hastily written histories and exploitative autobiographies that tell you more than you wish to know about the grand old pastime. Roger Angell's elegant commentaries on a season's play and the two books of insider chronicling by Jim Brosnan, the pitcher and author from the St. Louis Cardinals and Cincinnati Reds of the early 1960s, remain models of their kind. But their kind is hard to come by these days.

The downward curve in these books probably touched bottom in the early 1980s. Consider, for example, Billy

Martin's autobiography, a whiney account that managed to put the blame for his many griefs on everyone from George Steinbrenner to a marshmallow salesman from Minnesota. Or recall another autobiography, Joe Pepitone's, a book so nasty and low-life that it might have been the tale of a Mafia sub-lieutenant. Did these books and dozens like them say anything fresh or enlightening about baseball? Uh uh. And things haven't improved much lately, not when such trashy tomes as the collections of reminiscences by Ron Luciano, the loud-mouth ex-umpire, have made their way on to the best-seller lists.

With *Fungo Blues* and *The Wrong Stuff*, there is little hint of an upswing in baseball writing. The former is, according to its cover billing, "an uncontrolled look at the Toronto Blue Jays," and the latter is the story of the strange life and times of Bill Lee, the outspoken fellow who pitched not-bad ball for the Boston Red Sox and Montreal Expos from 1969 to 1982. Each book has a certain appeal — the Lee autobiography is clearly the winner of the two — but neither exactly represents a challenge to the works of Angell and Brosnan.

Fungo Blues takes the lazy route. It was put together this way: line up interviews with a couple of dozen players, managers, and executives in the Blue Jay organization. Tape the interviews. Transcribe the tapes. Throw in a few Blue Jay stats. Spice things up with a few snarky remarks about the interviewees and add data on the drinks consumed by the authors during the interviews. Presto, a baseball book.

It's built for skip-reading, and most of the pleasures come from the odd nugget of mildly intriguing information that pops up along the way. For instance: when the Yankees come to Exhibition Stadium, one Blue Jay executive says, the games "bring out the rottenness in people." We learn that George Bell is the least cooperative player with the media, that John Robertson and Jim Hunt of the Toronto *Sun* are the jerks of the press box and that Tony Kubek is a champion at rumour-mongering. Not much maybe, but it's all that a couple of authors in a hurry could dish up.

The Wrong Stuff is a more thorough book. It traces Lee's life from his slightly unorthodox childhood in California to his definitely off-beat career in the big leagues where management regarded him as the last word in rebels. In fact, Lee comes across as a generous-spirited man who got in trouble only when he chose to stick up for his friends. When Bernie Carbo, his buddy, was traded away from the Red

Sox, Lee pointed out to the front office the error of its ways. The same thing happened at Montreal when the Expos unloaded Rodney Scott. Both outbursts cost Lee his own job. You have to admire a man like that.

And you have to like some aspects of his book. The relentless flow of material on drinking, drugs, and groupies in the majors grows mildly tedious. But the flow of inside stuff — Don Zimmer and Jim Fanning, as you may have suspected, were both lousy managers — keeps things reasonably interesting. The book doesn't represent an especially important addition to baseball literature, but it's at least honest and sensitive to a number of issues in the sport, which is more than you can say about most recent books in the field. □

REVIEW

To see ourselves

By Neil Bissoondath

The Canadians, by Andrew H. Malcolm, Fitzhenry & Whiteside, illustrated, 385 pages, \$24.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88902 984 9).

SEVERAL YEARS ago, seeking information on how to get published, I came across two bits of advice in two different magazines. The first, Canadian, began by putting me in my place: I was unknown, it said, a nobody, reputationless, seeking a spot in a tight industry; why set myself up for inevitable disappointment? Start small, go to the little magazines, to the one-desk publishers. It urged a certain timidity. The other, American, while also putting me in my place, offered a startling viewpoint: being a nobody, it said, I had nothing to lose by going straight to the top and working my way down. It encouraged a certain brashness.

It was, it seemed to me, a question of spirit, and the self-confidence that feeds enthusiasm. This same spirit (American, dare I say?) fuels *The Canadians*, former New York Times Toronto bureau chief Andrew H. Malcolm's paean to this country.

Malcolm spent four years here, based in Toronto, but apparently more often traversing the land by any means available: car, plane, dogsled, canoe. He approached Canada the way young Canadians approach Europe, with wide-eyed enthusiasm and, at times, almost

breathless excitement. And, for this "new" Canadian at any rate, his book comes as a refreshing burst of adrenalin, an antidote to the disheartening experience of frequently having to defend one's adopted country against the numerous, often ill-informed criticism of those native to it. Why, the newcomer often wonders, won't Canadians, living in a land rich with possibility and with comparatively few serious problems, admit to themselves that, despite their propensity for petty squabbling, theirs is a country of near-Utopian fantasy?

This, in a way, is the central question Malcolm faces in his book. Offering several explanations (historical, geographical), he builds a powerful case in praise of this country that we, collectively as Canadians, refuse to admire. *The Canadians* is, in fact, a major attack, informed by enthusiasm and compassion, on the Canadian inferiority complex. Ever mindful of the flaws, it nevertheless presents the Canadian as hero. It will, for this reason, probably embarrass a good many Canadians.

An astute observer, interested in everything from landscape to language, from people to pizza, Malcolm offers five chapter headings deceptive in their banality. "Geography," for example, might have been more aptly titled "Landscape as Drama," so energetically

does he convey a sense of the astounding size and physical beauty of the country:

One summer midnight I stood alone on the Eagle Plains and watched in the east an immense thunderstorm, full of rolling blue-gray clouds silently hurling Y-shaped bolts of yellow lightning at some distant nameless peak. Then I turned to the west to see simultaneously a spectacular sunset bursting with moving fingers of clouds and pastels that changed tones every second.

"The People" offers accounts of his encounters with Canadians, some ordinary, some less so. Nicely drawn sketches, they make interesting if light reading. A section of this chapter, however, stands out as a major weakness in the book: Malcolm's treatment of culture. Long on enumerative enthusiasm and short on analysis, it falls at one point into the kind of breathless self-indulgence one so often runs into at parties, the Did-you-know-that-Lorne-Greene-is-Canadian type. Is there really any point, one wonders, to knowing that NFL commissioner Pete Rozelle is married to a Canadian? It becomes, at this point, practically an exercise in unintended satire.

His journalistic powers of analysis are reserved for the longest chapter, "The Economy." Vigorously written, it is here, in his tales of corporate power-

plays and of massive Canadian investment in the U.S., that Malcolm tries his hardest to prove just how exciting we really are. Although he goes on a bit — I found myself skimming certain pages — he makes his point well. Flaws and weaknesses do not escape him, but he puts them in the context of a new and growing Canadian business confidence, of "swashbuckling investors" (!) from Toronto new to the international fray. Naturally, the Canada-U.S. relationship receives his full attention, both here and in "The United States and Canada." His ardent wish — as an American of Canadian family background — is for the two countries to work more closely together while respecting each other's differences, a goal he sees as achievable, even inevitable, not only because of geography but also because of the similarity of language and culture.

Yet, as a man of split sensibilities, he understands the Canadian caution. In "My Canada," a nostalgic turn through memories of summer visits to his grandparents in Ontario, he writes of himself as having "a special perspective on both lands, a part of each but not all of one." There is much truth in this statement, a truth reflected in the warmth and critical understanding he brings to Canada.

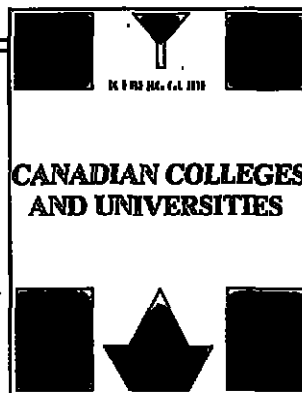
There is, inevitably, much in this book that one could quibble about, but in the

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end, through his vigorous, accessible writing, Malcolm performs a valuable service. He offers us a positive vision of ourselves. He confirms that we are as geographically massive as we vaguely suspect we are; as ethnically diverse as we know we are; more culturally vibrant than we care that we are; more economically aggressive than we recognize we are; and, most important of all, that we are, as a country and as a people, more exciting and vital than we like to believe we are.

The Canadians is, one suspects, a book that could not have been written by a Canadian; or, had it been, would have been largely ignored. The excitement of Canada is already known to most recent immigrants and to sympathetic outsiders; it remains veiled mostly to those born and raised here. It might be a good idea to distribute this book to schools for, in turning to this American's vision of Canada, future generations might begin to get a fuller sense of themselves and of their country. And, considering Malcolm's background, the irony of this is less severe than it might first seem. □

REVIEW

Charter of wrongs

By Lenore Keeshig-Tobias

A Poison Stronger Than Love: The Destruction of an Ojibwa Community, by Anastasia M. Shkilnyk, Yale University Press, illustrated, 275 pages, \$30.00 cloth (ISBN 0 300 2997 7) and \$9.95 paper (ISBN 0 300 03325 7).

COMPASSION, SORROW, anger, and futility — these are the emotions aroused in reading this detailed and well-documented analysis of the conditions that have brought the Northern Ontario reserve of Grassy Narrows to the brink of destruction. Yet it is with a sense of relief that one can now learn the whole story without the confusion of sensational headlines and the indifference and evasive responses of the federal and provincial governments.

Most important, the mercury contamination of the English-Wabigoon river system is put into perspective: Shkilnyk points out that the mercury spill was not a primary factor in the human breakdown at Grassy Narrows. It was responsible for catapulting Grassy Narrows into national attention, but by then the

disintegration had already begun.

Shkilnyk carefully picks up the harrowing facts, supported with charts and graphs: "Record of Death at Grassy Narrows, 1975-1978"; "Attempted Suicide at Grassy Narrows, 1975-1978"; "Alcohol Use at Grassy Narrows by Sex, 1977-1978"; "Alcohol Use by Age and Sex, 1978"; "Record of the Ontario Provincial Police at Grassy Narrows"; and "School Dropout Rate at Grassy Narrows, 1977-1978."

The edge is honed finer with diary excerpts and narratives of the tumultuous years after the band's relocation. There is tension in this part of the book, for the sorrow and hurt is not articulated by the people themselves. They appear as figures on charts, lines on graphs, and phantoms that drift in and out of the various narratives given by non-native observers and helpers.

Thank goodness, the tale of self-mutilation and death is then left to rest and Shkilnyk goes on in search of underlying causes. In the seven chapters of Part II lies the book's heart: Shkilnyk reconstructs the history of Grassy Narrows before relocation, analyses the traditional Ojibwa family and communal order, and takes a strong, hard look at the cultures in conflict. In an attempt to show the finer weave, the "glue" that holds together the native way of life, she examines almost every aspect of Grassy Narrows (Ojibwa) society, from diet to philosophy, taboos, and the resulting changes brought about by relocation.

As well, perhaps for the first time, we find indications of *forced* relocation and a hidden agenda. Given the past history of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and the Hudson's Bay Company, coercion and secret dealings seem believable. However, Shkilnyk admits that a lack of evidence obscures the truth about the decision to relocate. In an exhaustive search of departmental files for the early 1960s, no reference concerning relocation was found. Why not?

Following relocation and the development of a band-level bureaucracy we see "the beginnings of the marking of who's making it and who isn't making it, the beginning of rich and poor." We see a community totally dependent on government programs, a shift in communal ethics, and new health problems typical of more affluent societies. In short, in one generation the people of Grassy Narrows go from being active participants to being passive consumers.

Buried deep within the heart of this book are four pages devoted to the role of women: "More than three-quarters of the women between the ages of thirty and fifty are very heavy drinkers. Only

four of the thirty-three women in this age group are employed. The greatest incidence of child abandonment, neglect, and child abuse is found among the families of women in their middle years." I am reminded here of a Cheyenne proverb: "No people goes down until its women are weak and dishonoured or lying dead."

Finally, Shkilnyk addresses "the Western way of thinking" and stresses the need to understand that not everyone perceives the material things of Western civilization — technological advances and industrial production — as good, as necessary for "the full, free, and nondiscriminatory participation of Indian people in Canadian society." Nor should they be made to. Sadly, native people have been saying this for centuries. □

REVIEW

Tribal injustice

By M.T. Kelly

Black Robe, by Brian Moore, McClelland & Stewart, 256 pages, \$20.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 6449 7).

THIS IS a sad, dispiriting, disquieting novel. In telling the story of Father Laforgue, a 17th-century Jesuit priest, and of his journey from Quebec to the Huron missions, Brian Moore has drawn heavily upon the Jesuit *Relations*. In fact many incidents in the book — Indians eating lice to avenge themselves on the lice, Indians sharing warm mittens with a cold priest — come directly from the letters of Paul Le Jeune, who spent the winter of 1633-1634 with a group of Montagnais, people similar in culture to Moore's Algonkians. But where Le Jeune was sensitive to native people (for all his bias) Moore's characterizations make central casting seem like guardians of anthropological verisimilitude. Tonto is a positive Oscar Wilde compared to the foul mouthed native boors in *Black Robe*.

Moore has placed the four-letter words in the mouths of his "savages" for a purpose: to demonstrate cultural differences. It is true that Le Jeune was unnerved by the loud, jocular, sometimes lewd discourse of both men and women in the Montagnais, but what impressed him, as it did so many people who first came in contact with the Indians, was their eloquence. "All the authority of their chief is in his tongue's

end," said Le Jeune, "for he is powerful so far as he is eloquent." There's none of that in *Black Robe*. Here's how we're introduced to some natives. They are looking at a clock, and like good primitives are astonished when "Captain Clock" makes sounds.

"You see, it's just as I fucking well told you. The Captain is alive. The Captain spoke. I told you. He spoke."

The Savages smiled and exchanged glances of pleasure. An old woman laughed. "Shit," she said. "What did he say?"

Evidence like this of Moore's ethnocentricity roars from every page. In one instance he writes from the point of view of Neehatin, a native man, who thinks his "people treated their wives as they did their dogs." This is more like Samuel Hearne looking at the Chipe-wyans, who really did seem to be hard on their women, than it is an Algonkian husband. Yes, some observers did see women as drudges, but the independence of women was considered a problem to the Jesuits, who hectoring the native men about "allowing" their women sexual and other freedoms.

The Jesuit *Relations* say women had "great power . . . in nearly every instance of having the choice of plans, or undertakings, of journeys, of wintering." Moore's reaction to the material he read seems to have been superficial, and he certainly doesn't get into Neehatin's mind. How unlike the Jesuits (zealots that they were) he is, or Hearne, or even an explorer like David Thompson, full of prejudices of his own, who could write "the natives in their manners are mild and decent, treat each other with kindness and respect." Neehatin treats his wife the way Don Rickles insults the wife of a conventioner in a Las Vegas nightclub.

In his introduction Moore acknowledges that he has "taken a novelist's licence in the question of Algonkian understanding of Iroquoian speech." Well, the languages are as different as Hungarian and French, but a reader would allow the licence if it had a point, if the two different languages demonstrated a different way of looking at the world. The trouble in *Black Robe* is that the Iroquois talk the same kind of rote as do the Algonkians. In the introduction Moore also mentions Prof. Bruce Trigger, though he doesn't name Trigger's seminal study of the Huron, an Iroquoian people, *The Children of Aataentsic*. One wonders if Moore read that work. He seems totally unaware of the Iroquoian convention of metaphor and rhetoric, something nearly all observers commented on.

It would be easy for a knowledgeable reader to find other factual fault with

Black Robe, but it wouldn't be fair to deny that the book does contain something powerful, a current of real feeling. In spite of ending the novel's first section like Thomas B. Costain at his worst ("Framed in a window was the face of Champlain"), Moore does have a powerful story to tell. There is no sense of wonder in the book, and again Moore's view is welded to that of Laforgue, "travelling through landscapes which, hour after hour, day after day, never seem to change." But Moore does have a sense of the primal horde, of discomfort, of bad weather, that conveys itself effectively.

Some of the strength in this narrative comes from the haunting material Moore deals with, and a record of a journey is always compelling, although Laforgue's adventures in Huronia, when he finally reaches it, seem truncated. Moore seems tired of his tale on the shores of Georgian Bay, and is over-anxious to get to the heart of the story, which is fear. On the way up to Georgian Bay, Laforgue is heartened when he sees an eagle soar, a twist on the "my heart soars like a hawk" native cliché. No obvious symbols, for good or ill, happen in Huronia. Here the Jesuit begins to doubt, dealing with the prosaic task of burying a fellow priest, but the stench and doubt don't stop him from acting the good colonizing Catholic. Moore understands ambivalence, but he is never ambivalent about his vision of fear. This fear of life has an authenticity that can't be denied.

Any reader familiar with Moore's other novels will find much that is familiar here. What is repugnant and evil generally comes wrapped in a diminutive body. The "sorcerer" Mestigoit could be a walk-on for the dwarfish Connor in Moore's *The Mangian Inheritance*.

There is also a distrust of sexuality in *Black Robe*, even when Moore isn't illustrating 17th-century ideas. Two of the most sympathetic characters in the book are the Algonkian girl Annuka and her white lover Daniel. In spite of their attractiveness, Moore makes sure you know how women can often be attracted to what is evil and brutal, the dark god of sex. Annuka, it is made clear from the beginning, can't be trusted. She makes love to, is attracted to, the violent *coureur de bois*, Mercier. This situation could be a rewriting of the situation in Moore's novel *An Answer From Limbo*, in which women are invariably mesmerized by the pimp-like Vito. It doesn't pay to love or trust them.

After reading *Black Robe* one has the sense of having come in contact with compelling, mythic material, but of its being diminished. The book presents a

clear vision of the world, but one that only extends so far. The splendid culture of the Huron, even suffering disarray, disintegration, and disease, seems of no interest to Moore. The book gives a claustrophobic sense of a soul's journey, but nothing of the end of that journey. The wind and light and landscape of Georgian Bay are given short shrift; a huge country is made small.

The crisis of faith, perhaps the most powerful theme in the book, has a pat solution. Laforgue will baptize the dying, in spite of his doubts. He will live with the "savages," he will proselytize. Reading Le Jeune, or Brébeuf's instructions to Jesuits going to Huronia (which are also drawn on in the book), one does have the feeling of having been in the presence of something large, however fanatical the Jesuit point of view may have been. It's the same feeling one gets from reading literature. *Black Robe* leaves the reader with the feeling of having been in the presence of something tiny. The book is like a hymn to that childish word, "scared." □

REVIEW

Women at work

By Susan Goldenberg

The Bassett Report: Career Success and Canadian Women, by Isabel Bassett, Collins, 300 pages, \$24.95 cloth (ISBN 0 00 217394 8).

Newsworthy: The Lives of Media Women, by Susan Crean, Stoddart, illustrated, 352 pages, \$23.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7737 0081 1).

WOMEN ACTIVISTS may still not be happy with their lot in life, but one thing about which they cannot complain is lack of attention to their cause. Their views are aired these days in feminist magazines, newspaper columns, and a steady stream of books. Of these two latest women's issues books, Isabel Bassett's is the more substantial, although much of its substance is derived from a poll she commissioned on women's attitudes, rather than from her own work. Susan Crean's project is less ambitious, as she has confined herself to only one group of career women — Canadian print and television journalists from the late 1800s to the present. Bassett may feel badly that she was excluded from Crean's list of achievers. Both books share the chip-on-

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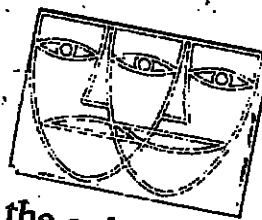
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the-shoulder theme that women still are treated unequally and unfairly, with the two writers maintaining that fossilized attitudes about women's role in life still prevail. Also, both Crean and Bassett have the same goal: more women in senior management and the boardroom.

Bassett defines the career woman as earning, or aspiring to earn, at least \$25,000, a cutoff point that seems rather high. The book is heavy going, depending largely on the results of a poll of women's attitudes toward how they are treated and behave at work, as well as pressures on their health and family life. The survey was conducted by Canada's ubiquitous pollster, Martin Goldfarb, who makes it clear in his foreword that he is not a chauvinist. ("Women are the super sex and the super stars; men preen while women do it.") Nevertheless, it is interesting that despite women participating today in many previously male-only careers, there was apparently no eminent female pollster Bassett could employ.

In an effort to enliven her book, she has both interviewed career women and contributed her own personal observations. For example, she attempted to change her young daughter's goal to become a nurse to that of joining the rank of female doctors by switching her

from a male to female physician. It remains to be seen whether the child chooses what her mother holds more highly. Other observations: Women are always saying "I'm sorry," even when there is no reason to apologize, and even her editor (she doesn't say whether it was a man or a woman) disagreed with her view that power interests women, refusing to use the word "power" in the title of her book.

Bassett's conclusions are contradictory. On the one hand, she says the 25-to-34 age group, which comprises one-fourth of Canada's adult population, are "far more liberal" in their attitudes about women than the rest of the population and "more likely to reject traditional male/female stereotypes." Yet a page earlier, she writes that many men between the ages of 25 and 50 have been found to "feel insecure about the future" because of the changes in women's role.

Both Bassett and Crean interviewed Barbara Frum of CBC-TV's *The Journal*, but Bassett has done a better job of eliciting Frum's views on equality in the workplace, a subject Frum apparently chose to skirt in her talk with Crean. Crean, a freelance magazine and broadcast journalist, has profiled several dozen of Canada's best-known living English and French Canadian women journalists, including Betty Kennedy, June Callwood, and Doris Anderson. Also depicted are a handful of the pioneers and a few of the bright lights in the current generation. Foremost among the trail-blazers is Cora Hind, a colourful turn-of-the-century agricultural reporter whose crop harvest predictions were eagerly awaited by farmers and government experts. Crean has co-dedicated the book to her.

Perhaps because Crean was determined to profile as many women journalists as possible, her sketches tend to be on the skimpy side, revealing little that has not already been written. The women tend to fall into two camps — the "if you work hard, show initiative and have talent, you will get ahead" school and the often profane and vulgar camp of "I got ahead despite those awful, lecherous, chauvinistic men."

It would have been enlightening for students considering a journalism career if Crean had included some perspective on the number of women in journalism today as compared to the bad old days, as well as some analysis on opportunities at the wire services versus the newspaper chains, independently owned papers, and the networks. Moreover, she fails to explain why the women she describes chose journalism over another career. Certainly, the obstacles encountered in journalism are no worse than in other

professions. Intriguingly, many of these women got their big career break from a male colleague, often one whose views they regarded as distressingly chauvinistic. How much these women have assisted other women is not dealt with much.

Now that women are leading lights in the newsroom and on radio and TV, Crean is convinced they must next turn their sights on the executive suite and boards of directors, where they have so far made relatively few inroads. Still, women have come a long way from the 1940s when, Crean writes, the CBC refused to hire women on a permanent basis even though they worked full-time. That meant they neither qualified for sick leave payments nor for pensions. Nevertheless, love of journalism kept them going and, in a fitting touch, many are senior CBC executives — especially at CBC-Radio — today. □

REVIEW

Romancing the stone

By Marilyn Powell

Onyx John, by Trevor Ferguson, McClelland & Stewart, 355 pages, \$19.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 3126 2).

WHO IS ONYX John? Well, man, he's this crazy guy who grows up in the '60s only to find himself adrift in the '70s and '80s. His father is an alchemist — can you dig it? — and his mother has been a rodeo rider, barely up from barbarian. His mother names her son after a gem (a family tradition); his father's contribution — John — is inspired by the toilet ("I did not wish for you to grow up thinking too much of yourself"). What does Onyx John want? Why has he given up diamond-smuggling in Amsterdam and dope-peddling in Montreal and detoured to a dead end in Cavendish, Maine? What can he possibly have to say to any of us?

For 100 pages of this picaresque (for want of a better word) novel, I couldn't have cared less. It all smacked to me of U.S. writer Tom Robbins, pop and cool, surreal. Sex and seafood on Penobscot Bay any which way round. But then, when the past of our hero began to absorb more and more of the present, I got interested.

It could be that there's some of the writer's past involved in his fiction. I must say it's tempting to think so when both man and his creation have a clergy-

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man in the family. *Ad hominem*, I know, but only those who have suffered understand what getting up and going to church perforce on Sundays, doing good and being seen to do good, is really like. As his first teenage act of charity, Onyx John carries a paraplegic upstairs to her apartment and has an affair with her at her command. Daddy says: "you will carry these people and do as you are told, and that is that."

I should explain that Onyx John's father is an alchemist who fronts as a parson; the pulpit supports his true habit, the search for the philosopher's stone. Anyway, the point is that the relationship between father and son carries emotion, conviction, some weight. Onyx John is caught up in his own latter-day version of the prodigal son, made up of equal parts of guilt and rebellion.

So when the son goes back to Montreal to rescue his father from the clutches of a grasping Hungarian arch-criminal named Zoltan Tinodi, who wants the philosopher's stone for his own nefarious ends, his filial piety is believable. It may even be love that

spurs him to give up his comfortable hide-out in Maine and his mistress, a galloping whore with the sobriquet Oreo. (Let your street smarts and your libido tell you why.) You see, his other attempts at love, particularly with women, from his mother on down, literally down to his sisters, are not believable. He hops in and out of bed wherever he goes without much direction, tenderness, or insight.

If you ask me, I think I'd say he is on the proverbial quest for identity. A boy can't be a man until he comes to terms with his father in himself. Until that happens, if it ever happens, he is simply amorphous, floating like a jelly fish, without centre or identity. Or like a substance in the alchemist's fire, raw, inchoate and volatile. The whole of the novel is a journal kept by Onyx John, in the attempt to discover himself somehow. He longs to be transformed, a better man through spiritual chemistry. "Out of lethargy, into duty. Drawn toward action."

This is Trevor Ferguson's second novel. His first, *High Water Chants*,

came out eight years ago and was about love, death, revenge, and the copper resources on an imaginary island off the British Columbia coast. There's no repetition here in theme and style; on the other hand, there is no distinct authorial presence either, nothing that marks this off from an experiment of the imagination. Too-much is *tour de force*, clever, worked, settling sometimes for the obvious — the ingredients of a literary trip, not an internal journey.

Perhaps the device of first-person narrative, everything filtering through the particular and partial sensibility of the central character, limits Ferguson. Because Onyx John's musings grow downright tedious. Perhaps you have to be a boy who longs to be a man to appreciate his bumptious *rite de passage*. Perhaps you have to be male at any age to enjoy his humour, his sexual fantasies, his moments of triumph and defeat. Perhaps, after all, the above has to be returned to the mind and heart of the writer — with the message: the metaphor of alchemy is profound and powerful; see what you can do with it again. □

FIRST NOVELS

Method in her madness

As a literary device, psychoanalysis is too tidy: it fills gaps the author has failed to fill through characterization

By Alberto Manguel

The Glass Mountain, by S.L. Sparling, Doubleday, 245 pages, \$17.95 cloth (ISBN 0 385 23060 5).

A FEMALE "I," disguised as the third-person singular, tells the story of Chloe, an anguished pianist who, from the vantage point of a mental sanatorium, looks back on her life in order to find the roots of her condition. Chloe resents the presence of others: in the first chapter she pushes a harmless patient off the piano bench, calling her an "offensive old cow," because the patient has intruded upon her reality, her piano playing, her inner thoughts.

Chloe's present mental state is portrayed as the far end of a spiral plot that traces through a series of flashbacks a life crowded with emotional incidents. First Chloe — at the age of 10 — discovers that she has been adopted; then, that her father has hidden from her letters written by a "grandmother" and "uncle" in New York (Chloe lives in Montreal). In the hidden letters is cash; Chloe takes it and looks up her lost

family in the big city. She is dazzled by the extravagance of their life-style, by her grandmother's concern with fashion and fine eating, her uncle's outlandish manners. Then Chloe's father arrives and the party is over: he takes the child back to Montreal and forbids her to contact the New York relatives. Chloe disobeys.

After a painful adolescence, Chloe begins to experience difficulties in building up relationships with men. Her love affairs grow, then crumble, and even after the birth of her son Chloe finds herself unable to form a couple. Like Snow White, Chloe the pianist lies in her glass coffin, a princess waiting to be awakened.

Glass coffin, tomb, pyramid, mound, mountain: the image serves not only to

point at Chloe buried alive but also to indicate that access to her is impossible. No one can climb the glass slopes that protect her from the outside world, no one who cares for her can reach her — neither her son nor her husband nor any of the people she meets and abandons. Chloe has created her own transparent isolation.

Psychoanalysis is the instrument that shatters Chloe's protection, revealing at the core of her life her discovered "uncle," a whimsical, campy Noel Coward character. Revelation follows revelation — her uncle is gay; she loved no man except him; the world came to an end when he died of cancer; and finally, the *coup-de-théâtre*: her uncle was really her brother.

Psychoanalysis is the *deus ex machina* in a great deal of contemporary fiction: it replaces the *confidante* scenes of drawing-room drama; it brings back the dreaded "meaning" in a story; it gives motives for the characters' actions without having to resort to development or growth. The right answers are given



to carefully laid-out questions, filling the gaps the author has not been able to fill through characterization. The scenes involving psychoanalysis are usually equivalent to the "library assembly" in detective fiction, when the suspects are rounded up and the investigator exposes the previously concealed (and otherwise unmentionable) mechanics of the plot.

In the case of *The Glass Mountain* psychoanalysis (as a device) is too obvious: it churns out secrets, cross-references, loose ends that are quickly tied up. It even intrudes on the remembered actions. For instance, when Chloe first meets her grandmother and is invited to stay to lunch, the third person ego responds: "Belonging. Being taken

for granted. And a nickname. Was it possible to die from pleasure?" Even excusing the cliché of the last sentence, these facts are told to the reader as if they were not obvious (and they *are* obvious) in the novel itself. Psychoanalysis in literature protests too much.

Because so much is interpreted in these psychoanalysis scenes, there is little left to find in the rest of the novel. The emotions, changes, fears, anguish of Chloe are larger than her fictional life, mainly because the reader is told about them rather than being allowed to discover them on his own. The reader's feelings are guided into a vision of Chloe that is ultimately banal. The psychoanalytical interpretation replaces the

core of the story, the reason for the story's existence, that without which a novel is nothing but a collection of gossip.

In the novels of D.H. Lawrence, the third person comments on the characters' actions and thoughts, interprets, sifts through, criticizes, but above all is many times mistaken. This adds richness to the story, and levels of meaning. Not so in Sparling's *The Glass Mountain*. The action is accompanied by an explanation that lends only a conventional credibility to the antics of Chloe's psyche. But this is nothing but a varnish: behind it, the story is contrived and one-dimensional, and the character's plight lacks urgency and pathos. □

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Biting words

Beyond offering colourful illustrations and a stimulating text, books for toddlers must also withstand the rigours of teething

By Mary Ainslie Smith

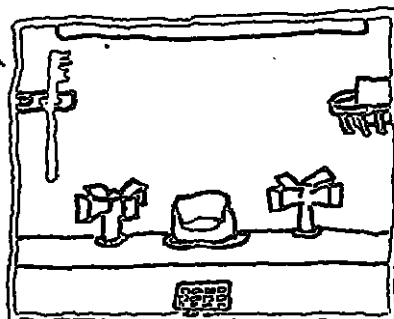
ADULTS LIKE TO give books to children. Perhaps the donors feel that equipping even diaper-clad babies with books helps to guarantee academic, occupational, and moral success in life. In fact, one of two things usually happens when very small children receive such gifts: their parents set them aside until the children are "old enough to appreciate them" (I was about 25 when I found a copy of *Alice in Wonderland* that had been given to me on my third birthday); or the children consider the books to be part of their toy collection and treat them as such, often as teething aids.

But occasionally, and happily, books can be found that even the youngest toddlers can enjoy in the manner intended and share with the adults in their lives. Tundra Books has successfully produced the *Babee* series, by Dayal Kaur Khalsa — books with no text, but with representational illustrations in bright colours on various themes familiar to small children, such as Christmas, a birthday, a trip.

Lorimer also has two series of books designed for children between the ages of one and four, both published originally in French by Ovale of Sillery, Que. Tot-Books is a set of four small story-books by Sylvie Assathiany and Louise Pelletier, 16 stiff, laminated pages, \$3.95 each. They deal with different aspects of growing up: *I Love My Babysitter*, *Don't Cut My Hair*, *Little Bear Can't*

Sleep, and — universally topical — *Peepee in the Potty*. With fewer than 100 words of text in each story, the themes are, of necessity, simply presented. The treatment is honest and free from condescension or cuteness. The witty illustrations by Philippe Béha contribute a great deal to the appeal of these books.

Little Big Books, a second series of four books from Lorimer, have similar laminated pages that open up accordion-fashion into eight-panel friezes. *The Train*, by Mireille Levert, stretches out horizontally so that we can see a cross-



section of the length of a train as it travels through the countryside. On the right is the locomotive, the engineer leaning out the window to enjoy the wind in his long hair. Then comes a dining car, a passenger car, and at the end a baggage compartment carrying card-playing mice, a plump pig, two dogs, various suitcases, and a snake that is trying to escape through a hatchway onto

the roof of the train. There is a lot more to see and enjoy on these eight panels. One of the passengers is a magician, pulling rabbits out of a hat and hiding them throughout the car; a bird is flying a kite on top of the train; a lady in the dining car seems to be having difficulty swallowing her spaghetti.

The other three books are packed with similar details. *My Street*, by Marie-Josée Côté, also opens horizontally to show the length of a busy street. *The Tree*, by Philippe Béha, and *My House*, by Stéphane Anastasiu, open vertically showing occupants and activities from tree-top to roots and from attic to basement. On the reverse side of the picture panels is a vocabulary list, 12 words for each book illustrated by details from the main picture. The books in this series are \$3.95 each. That's more expensive than the old cloth books for babies, but the product is much more attractive and durable, and probably tastes better too.

A Horse Called Farmer is an attractive, gentle story for pre-schoolers and early readers by Peter Cumming (Ragweed Press, 40 pages, \$5.95 paper). Farmer begins his life on Entry Island, part of the Magdalen Islands group. When he is sold to a farm on the opposite end of the islands, he finds his way back home again in the tradition of *The Incredible Journey* or *Lassie Come Home*. Black-and-white illustrations by P. John Burden show Farmer's lonely trip over the wind-swept islands and his

close call in the ocean currents as he makes a desperate swim across the last channel to his home.

Another animal story for pre-readers is *Jill and the Big Cat*, by Etho Rothstein (Black Moss, 40 pages, \$5.95 paper), this time set on the West Coast. Jill, a beautiful black dog, leads a happy and uneventful life in her own backyard on Capilano Road until she encounters a cougar and unexpectedly becomes a hero. Illustrations by Maureen Paxton accompany this slight story.

Something completely different is *The Dinner Party*, by sean o huigin, also illustrated, with gruesome relish, by Maureen Paxton (Black Moss, 24 pages,

\$4.95 paper). Fans of o huigin will know what to expect, but for the uninitiated, here is an excerpt — and not the most graphic, by any means:

*the meal began
with bits of
skin
the type you'd
find a
rat within
it wasn't cooked
oh heavens
no
its rawness made
your whiskers
grow*

Perhaps it is unfortunate to juxtapose it with *The Dinner Party*, but Fun In the

Kitchen, by Angela Clubb, illustrated by Paddy Benham (Irwin, 136 pages, \$12.95 paper), is an excellent cookbook for parents to share with their children. The recipes are for food that everyone in the family should like — snacks, cookies and bars, holiday treats. They emphasize wholesome ingredients and a relaxed approach to cooking and baking. Suggestions follow each recipe for how even very small children can help in the preparation. This is good for adults like myself who get so cranky when they cook that they forget how much little kids like to break eggs. So what if a bit of shell drops in? That just makes the food crunchier. □

INTERVIEW

Raymond Carver

'Every writer should be a reader, but there was a time when I felt I couldn't write until I had read everything. Too many writers feel that way'

By Helen Pereira

BORN IN Clatskanie, Oregon, in 1939 and raised in Yakima, Washington, Raymond Carver is the author of three books of poetry and three collections of short stories, the most recent of which is *Cathedral* (Knopf). His story "A Small Good Thing" won the O. Henry Prize in 1983, and last year he received the Mildred and Harold Strauss Award. He and the poet Tess Gallagher, with whom he lives, now divide their time between Syracuse, New York, and Port Angeles, Washington. While a guest at Toronto's Harbourfront International

Raymond Carver



Festival of Authors he was interviewed by Helen Pereira:

Books in Canada: *You've written that although writers need an audience they really write for their own favourite writers — living or dead. Chekhov is a favourite of yours. What would you like him to say about your work?*

Carver: I'd like him to say of me that "he is precise, he is honest, he appreciates and has concern for ordinary people — people for whom life is hard, whose lives aren't so great, but who do the best they can."

BiC: *In Fires, you arranged your poems according to your "obsessions" and you list "things ordinary and domestic" as obsessions. These are certainly in your stories — work, meals, coffee-making.*

Carver: I suppose it's because my own life was filled with these things. The people in my background were concerned with simply working, taking care of their families. It seemed hard at the time. But looking back, it doesn't seem so bad.

BiC: *Are your obsessions different when you're in New York from when you're in Washington?*

Carver: In New York we have a lot of friends. We go out; people come for dinner. And Tess teaches, so there's lots of traffic. Her students are around. In Port Angeles, we're very isolated. We don't even have a phone. I went there last year to work on a large piece of fiction, and ended up writing poetry — 100 poems in 65 days! The West Coast is different,

more conducive to writing. And I've become a passionate salmon fisherman. Fishing is an obsession.

BiC: *How much did "A Small Good Thing" differ from the first version. . . .*

Carver: "The Bath," yes. When I wrote "The Bath" it worked, as a story: the abrupt, ambiguous ending. But later I felt uncomfortable. It kept nudging at me. I knew I had to do it again, that there was so much missing. Now I see them as two different stories, really.

BiC: *There's much more compassion in the later version — for the characters and the reader.*

Carver: I hope so. You see, I'd had a long time between these versions to think, to look at myself. I saw life differently. I became more accepting, I guess. And I knew I had to get at this story again.

BiC: *Do people often comment on the religious aspect of "A Small Good Thing" — the death of the son, the grief and pain, then comfort and strength after the breaking of bread?*

Carver: They do, yes. But I didn't think of this when I was writing. I just knew I had to add something to make it feel right. There was already the baker and the bread. I hesitate to use words like "symbolism." But I suppose if symbols work in life they appear in stories. It just felt right, at the time.

BiC: *You said that writing another story, "Cathedrals," was a breakthrough for you.*

Carver: For about six months after

publication of *What We Talk About When We Talk About Love*, which had a very large critical success as well as a popular success, I didn't write anything. I did a lot of thinking. Not about stories, just thinking. And when I sat down to write again, the first story was "Cathedral." It came in a rush. The first draft was written in a day. Then I hurried to get it into shape. Probably in the fourth or fifth draft of the story I knew what I was doing and I liked it. Indeed, it was an opening up for me, because with all the other stories, I was paring them down. The *Cathedral* stories are all much longer and fuller, but they were written within 18 months.

BiC: In "Cathedral," the blind man asks the narrator to let him experience the cathedral by feeling his hands as he draws the outlines of one. It's analogous to the way you write — you don't use much description, you lead your readers along, let them feel their way, and hope their imagination completes the whole. Were you aware of that?

Carver: Some critics talked about that story in terms of a metaphor for the making of art itself, but I must say I didn't feel that when I was working on it. I think maybe writers, composers, and painters are sailing with some kind of compass that gets them where they're

going in a way not always visible to them at the time. It is a little like driving at night on a dark, foggy road — the headlamps lighting the way. You don't quite know what's beyond the reach of your headlamps, but you're going to get there. With that story the headlights illuminated just enough of the road so that I could see to the next curve. Gosh, here I am making metaphors!

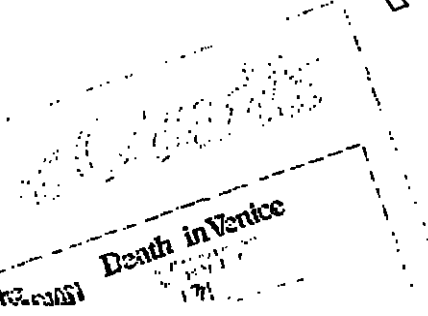
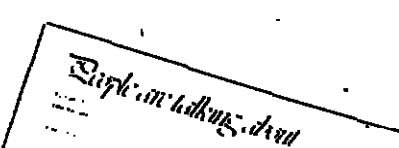
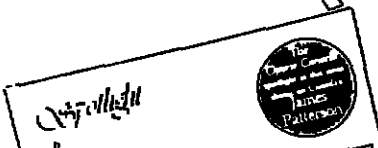
BiC: In your essay "On Writing," you wrote that you worry when people talk about "formal innovation" and "experimentation for its own sake." In Canada, some literary quarterlies have thematic issues — "magic realism," "post-modernism." What do you think this does to beginning writers who first publish in these periodicals?

Carver: Well, if they're publishing a story just to fit the theme of the magazine, then maybe they'll stay that way. In boxes, as it were. But if they are any good at all, they'll go their own way. I think it's perfectly fine for a young writer to try different things with different groups and take what can be used from the movement or teacher or whatever. I don't like "schools" and "themes" as such. But I think that publication is necessary for young writers. They need that encouragement. Literary magazines as well as big glossy

magazines are really important to young writers and older writers. Without those little magazines, the United States or Canada couldn't support a literary population the size of Puerto Rico's. I would wager that 98 per cent of the poetry in the United States and Canada is published in little magazines and quarterlies. If some of them devote themselves to special themes and issues, that's O.K. It's not bad in itself. Every writer by the time he reaches my advanced years, has some notion of what he likes and what is healthy and good for him. I don't think certain movements or interests are very fruitful. But good writers will always find their own way.

BiC: Do you read many Canadians?
Carver: Clark Blaise, Margaret Atwood, Alice Munro — she's marvellous. And there's John Metcalf, who is a distinguished and intelligent critic and anthology editor, who also writes fine short stories. And Leon Rooke. And Robin Skelton who used to edit a splendid magazine, *The Malahat Review*. I admire Robertson Davies enormously. He strikes me as a force like the weather. Canada can be justly proud of him. But I feel abysmally ignorant of Canadian literature. Also about literature in my own country. I think every writer should be a reader, but there was a time when I

TAKE A LOOK



Yes: I want to take a look!

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felt I couldn't write until I had read everything. Too many writers feel that way. How can they begin to write until they've read all the greats? But then I had to decide whether to be a reader or a writer. No one likes to read more than I do. There has to be a division of labour and love. Time for pleasure. □

LETTERS

Boiling over Frye

BOOKS IN CANADA may be free, but it needn't be cheap. Cheap it will be if you print more of the likes of Marcia Kahan's "field notes." (April) Does the world really need another literary gossip column?

Yes, Frye's work is being debated, but it is a serious debate. (Would you actually publish a serious debate?) Please help Kahan find out that name dropping, trendy — and, hence, stale — gossip, cute news from the Old Country, and the repetition of BBC scripts are not adequate ways to deal with books in Canada.

Perhaps she could expiate her confessed guilt by going back to her school notes and trying to find out what Frye was (is) talking about. Who knows, she might even rise to the level of cleverness.

Ben Jones
Ottawa

A FOND FAREWELL

TIMOTHY FINDLEY'S tribute to Marian Engel (April) is a sensitive, thoughtful, and rewarding piece of writing. It not only reviews Marian Engel's life and her

considerable literary output, but reminds the reader of the long struggle experienced by Canadian writers, the significance of the founding of the Writers' Union, and Engel's contribution to that important voice.

Jim Streeter
Seneca College
North York, Ont.

FLYING LOW

ALWAYS HAVING been one to stay in the forefront of literary trends, I feel it behooves me to congratulate you on your new format. That done, I should like to make a few remarks on Steve Lukits's review of John Condit's *Wings Over the West* (April) or more properly, Steve Lukits's biography of Russ Baker.

As interesting as this biography may have been, it told me virtually nothing about the quality of Condit's book, which I have always believed — however

CANWIT NO. 103

*An old maid who came from
Vancouver
Won a man with this adroit
manoeuvre:
She jumped on his knee
With a paean of glee
And now nothing on earth can
remove her*

WRITING RECENTLY in the *Globe and Mail*, Douglas R. Weston of Westmount, Que., complained that his perusal of some 3,000 limericks had turned up only 14 that dealt with places or matters Canadian (of which the one quoted above is an example). Our challenge is to redress the balance. We'll pay \$25 for the best limericks composed by our readers in which a Canadian place-name appears. Deadline: September 1. Address: CanWit No. 103, *Books in Canada*, 366 Adelaide Street East, Toronto M5A 3X9.

Results of CanWit No. 101

NOT EVERYONE who contributed nonets on well-known Canadians adhered to the strictures of this demanding verse-form, but those who did provided a wealth of puckish wit. The winner is Shani Whitehouse of Toronto for the following lines:

*Wayne Gretzky, the newest of
heroes,
Is not known for shooting zeroes.
Though his contract's outrageous,
Fans find him contagious,
So give him a puck,
With any luck,
For a buck*

*He'll score
More.*

Honourable mentions:

*Arthur Meighen's intellectual
Leadership, ineffectual
At the polls, was ill-fated.
He wasn't mandated
But elevated
For a brief shot
At top spot
Through King-
Byng.*

— Victoria Ellison, Clondeboye, Ont.

*Louis Riel, t'was not très poll
To upset ol' John A. Mc. D.
O'er whose was what on the Red,
An' shooting nice folks dead.
But it's plain to see,
French and R.C.
'Tis the reas'n
It's treas'n
M'ouil*

— Michel Montcombroux
Winnipeg

*The novels of Margaret Laurence
Provoke the zealous abhorrence
Of conservative preachers
Who fear children's teachers
Will plant in their head
Lewd thoughts of bed
And instead
Of sects,
Sex.*

— D.G. Bullock, Vancouver

*Praise Newfoundland Joey
Smallwood,
Not another man at all could
Claim he fathered the nation
Through Confederation;*

*Whose relentless word
May seem absurd,
Yet when heard
Promotes
Votes.*

— Alex McEwen, Ottawa

*Turner, the Liberal, first name
John
Never been known to try to con
Voters before the big day.
It is not what he'd say
But what he would do
Looking at you
Eyes so blue
And thought
Nought.*

— Robert N. Wall, Sydney, N.S.

*When King, William Lyon
Mackenzie
Felt driven to his wit's ends, he
Sought his late mama's wisdom
In rapt mysticism;
Crystal ball gazing
Didn't faze King.
Amazing?
Let's say
Fey.*

— Susan Rodocanachi, Ottawa

*The Canadian Kipling is not
Earle Birney, Hugh Hood, or
Frank Scott.*

*He will forever turn out
To be Service, no doubt:
In the far North-West
Doing his best
With much zest
And rough
Stuff.*

— David Lawson, Westmount, Que.

naively — to be the purpose of a review. Apart from a few passing references to the book in the last paragraph, I felt as though I were reading a book report rather than a book review, something more befitting a high school student than a reviewer in a magazine.

Perhaps in a future issue someone would care to give this book another chance? or is it so banal, so "much. . . without colour, contradiction, or character" that Lukits felt it unworthy of any serious attention? And if this be the case, why was the review even included in the magazine? If the answer is "Canadian Content," I think I shall do a slow roll at my desk.

Kevin Capstick
London, Ont.

BOWERING'S INFERNO

I ENJOYED George Bowering's wry variations on the "medium is the message" in your April issue.

The real artists are always the craftsmen who are governed by such mundane considerations as the paper supply while the phonies drivel interviews on their own profundity.

Dante ends the Purgatorio:

*ma perchè piene son tutte le carte
ordite a questa cantica seconda,
non mi lascia più ir lo fren dell'arte.*

"But because all the paper set aside for the second canticle is full, the rein of craft will not let me go on."

Bowering is in excellent company.

Rita Ubriaco
Thunder Bay

RECOMMENDED

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

CLASSIFIED

Classified rates: \$8 per line (40 characters to the line). Deadline: first of the month for issue dated following month. Address: Books in Canada Classified, 366 Adelaide Street East, Toronto M5A 3X9. Phone: (416) 363-5426.

OLD AND RARE BOOKS. Canadiana catalogues. Heritage Books, 866 Palmerston Ave., Toronto, Ontario M6G 2S2

USED LAW BOOKS. 30 day free examination. Write J.L. Heath, 66 Isabella St. #105, Toronto M4X 1N3. 922-0849.

necessarily reflect the reviews:

FICTION

Digging Up the Mountains, by Neil Bissoondath, Macmillan. Bissoondath's striking turns of phrase and exciting, many-fingered images produce stories so alive that you race through them, scarcely noticing their technical virtuosity.

POETRY

Directives of Autumn, by Ralph Gustafson, McClelland & Stewart. Gustafson's grasp of cultural history enables him to pick bright vignettes from all continents and centuries, yet he can also engage us closely, without erudite allusions, in the here and now of a winter's day in the country or a walk in the mountains.

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:

Aerospace Defence: Canada's Future Role?, by R.B. Byers et al., Canadian Institute of International Affairs.
The Almond Tree, by Allan Brown, Quarry Press.
Anyone Skating on that Middle Ground, by Robyn Sarah, Véhicule Press.
An Arbitrary Dictionary, by John Pass, Coach House Press.
Ask Again, by George Johnston, Pentamira Press.
Biting the Great Lakes Islands, by Kathleen and Lawrence Abrams, Entwood Publishing (U.S.).
The Book of Marecha, by Paulette Turcotte, Split Quotation.
Bottled Roses, by Darlene Madott, Oberon.
A Breed Apart, by Tony Germain, M & S.
Canada's Energy: International Aspects, CIA Working Group Report, Canadian Institute of International Affairs.
The Canadian City, edited by Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F.J. Artibise, Carleton University Press.
Canadian Fiddlers, by Bill Guest, Lancelot Press.
Canadian Political Behaviour, edited by Sylvia B. Bashevkin, Methuen.
The Canadian Writing Workbook (Second edition), by Ronald Conrad, McGraw-Hill Ryerson.
Celebrity All-Occasion Cookings, Scudder.
Chasing Her Own Tail, by Nora Keeling, Oberon.
The Child Care Crisis, by Freddie Maynard, Viking.
Cocktails at the Mausoleum, by Susan Musgrave, M & S.
Common Magic, by Bronwen Wallace, Oberon.
The Crime of Ovide Plouffe, by Roger Lemelin, translated by Alan Brown, M & S.
Dancing Feathers, by Christel Kleitsch and Paul Stephens, Annick Press.
Eighteen Men: The Prime Ministers of Canada, by Gordon Donaldson, Doubleday.
An Elected Senate for Canada?, by Donald Smiley, Institute of Intergovernmental Relations.
Energy Probe's Statistical Handbook, by David Poch, Doubleday.
Explorations in Canadian Folklore, by Edith Fowke and Carole H. Carpenter, M & S.
Ending the Nuclear Age: Parents and Children Together, compiled by Susan Goldberg, Annick Press.
Fatal Recurrences: New English Fiction From Montreal, edited by Hugh Hood and Peter O'Brien, Véhicule Press.
Finding Canadian Facts Fast, by Stephen Overbury, Methuen.
Flight of the Roller-Coaster, by Raymond Souster, Oberon.
434 Squadron History, The Hangar Bookshelf.
Frederic Haultain: Frontier Statesman of the Canadian Northwest, by Grant MacEwan, Western Producer Prairie Books.
Genealogy in Ontario: Searching the Records, by Brenda Dougal Merritt, Ontario Genealogical Society.
The Green Velvet Elephant, by Anne Ferguson, published by the author.
The Grey Islands: A Journey, by John Steffler, M & S.
Hidden Profits in Your Mortgage, by Alan Silverstein, Stoddart.
How to Campaign for Municipal Elected Office, by Michael J. Smither and Wilma B. Bolton, Municipal World.
How to Find Information on Canadian Natural Resources, by Gabriel Pat, Canadian Library Association.
How to Speak in Public, by Alex Muir, Hurtig.
In the Mezzanine, by Elizabeth Smart, Deneau.
Index to Canadian Library Supplies, Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture.
The Individual Heart, by William Callaghan Jr., Quarry Press.
Inuit, by Ulli Seltzer, Douglas & McIntyre.

It's Never Too Early, by Sidney Kling and Joseph Levy, Stoddart.
Just a Taste! Pastas, Pizzas, Sandwiches & Eggs, by Brian H. Kane, Jonathan Christopher Books.
Klabouklades, by Klabs Klabauke, Optis Publications.
A Kosoy Travel Guide to Canada (6th edition), by Ted Kosoy, Kosoy Travel Guides.
A Kosoy Travel Guide (4th edition), by Ted Kosoy, Kosoy Travel Guides.
The Lady Who Didn't Believe in Dinosaurs and Other Stories, by Frederic C. Ford, Childs Thursday.
Laughter-Silvered Wings, by J. Douglas Harvey, M & S.
Learning Strategies and Examination Preparation, by Joe J. Danyluk, Guidance Centre, Faculty of Education, U of T.
Let It Go, by Marilyn Halvorson, Irwin.
Let us Rise! An Illustrated History of the Manitoba Labour Movement, by Doug Smith, New Star Books.
Life of the Party, by Gerard Fortin & Boyce Richardson, Véhicule Press.
Live Salt, by Ted Wood, Collier Macmillan.
Love in Flight, by Gregory M. Cook, Ragweed.
Love is a Long Shot, by Ted Allan, Avon.
Loyalist Lists, by E. Keith Fitzgerald, Ontario Genealogical Society.
Lucky Lot: Hell Driver, by Dean Robinson, Boston Mills Press.
The Making of a Peacemaker: The Memoirs of George Ignatieff, U of T Press.
Messdeck News: Collected Verse of Messdeck Anne Halifax, 1939-1945, Ragweed Press.
Metis, by Julia D. Harrison, Douglas & McIntyre.
Michelin Canada Tourist Guide, Michelin Tires.
Mistress Amelia, by Dorothy Gilmeister, Childs Thursday.
Modern Canadian Plays, edited by Jerry Wasserman, Talonbooks.
Money and Exchange in Canada to 1900, by A.B. McCullough, Dundurn Press.
Mostly in Rodneys, by Cle Newhook, Harry Cuff Publications.
Murder with Muskets, by John Reeves, Doubleday.
Mushroom Salad, by Robin Green, Childs Thursday.
Nancy Knight's Canadian Herb Cookbook, James Lorimer.
North Atlantic Run, by Marc Milner, U of T Press.
Notes to My Children, by William E. Caswell, Emerson House.
Objectivity & Human Perception, by M.D. Faber, University of Alberta.
Party Secrets for Super Mom!, by Jackie Knazan, A Giggle Production.
Poems: New and Selected, by Frederick Candelaria, Fiddlehead.
Power from the North, by Robert Bourassa, Prentice-Hall Canada.
Raspberry Vinegar, by Joan Fern Shaw, Oberon.
The Riverside Anthology of Children's Literature, edited by Judith Salzman, Houghton Mifflin.
Robertson Davies, Playwright, by Susan Stone-Blackburn, UBC Press.
Rodeo Cowboys: The Last Heroes, text by Ted Barris, photography by Robert Semeluk, Western Producer Prairie Books.
Romeo and Juliet, by William Shakespeare, CBC Enterprises.
Room at the Top, by Ruth Markel, Penguin.
The Salamander's Laughter and Other Poems, by Anne Corbett, Natural Heritage/Natural History.
The Scents, by John Kenneth Galbraith, Macmillan.
So Still Horses, by Michael O. Nowlan, Lancelot Press.
Smith and Other Events: Tales of the Châteaui, by Paul St. Pierre, Douglas & McIntyre.
The Sound of the Drum: The Sacred Art of the Anishnabes, by Mary E. Southcott, Boston Mills.
Soviet But Not Russian, by William M. Mandel, University of Alberta Press.
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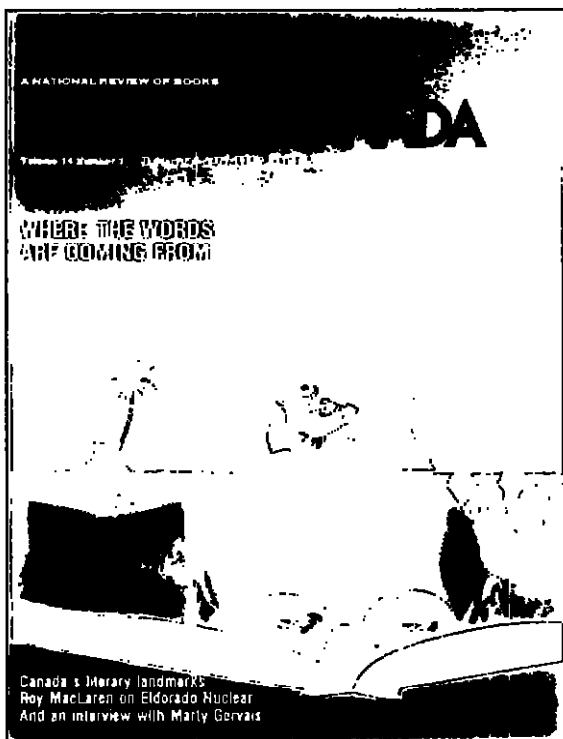
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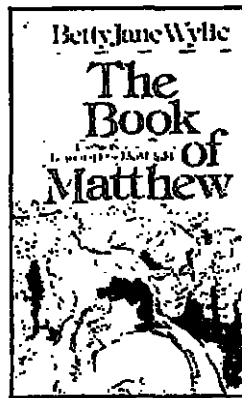
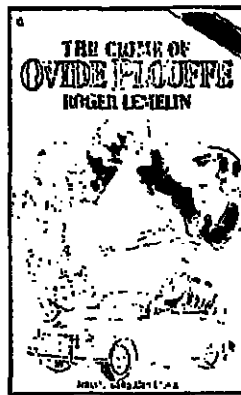
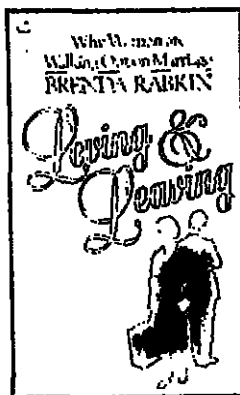
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