

How intrepid poet Al Purdy has read in all the best places
The art of writing: Graham Greene gets down to the heart of the matter
The further adventures of Irving Layton and the dreams of Ludwig Zeller

BOOKS IN CANADA

Literary gatherings



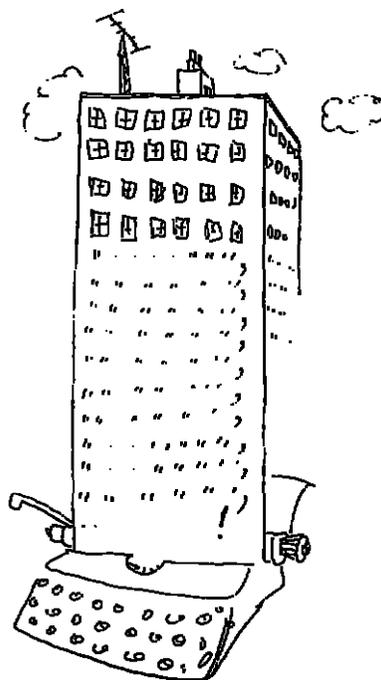
BOOKS IN CANADA

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Why did writers start writing? Who helped them along the way? When do they mix with their peers? Join a cocktail party of top authors as they chat about

CRAFT TITBITS

SOME TIME AGO two Toronto academics sent a short questionnaire to 300 members of the Writers Union of Canada and the League of Canadian Poets. The aim was to gather data for what is thought to be the first large-scale sociological study of anglophone writers in this country. Although such studies are common in Quebec and other cultures. English Canadian literature has seldom been the subject of serious socio-scientific investigation. Until now, for example, nobody seems to have bothered to find out what proportion of our writers come from working-class backgrounds. The answer, it appears, is next to none; almost all are born into the middle class and resolutely stay there.

More than 160 writers took the trouble to fill out the questionnaire. Although given the option of remaining anonymous, most chose to identify themselves. The questions ranged from why they chose writing as a career to pin-pointing the problems facing Canadian authors today. The answers were generally candid and considered. The result is an intriguing collection of insights about the private lives of published people. Some samples:

How did you become interested in writing as a profession?

Joe Rosenblatt: "Daydreams."

Robertson Davies: "Always interested: always wrote."

Margaret Laurence: "I was always interested in story-telling, and began to write when I was about eight years old. I always knew I was a writer but I did not think for many years that I could make it my life's profession, as no one I knew as a child or young woman had ever done so. I simply began submitting stories to various publications when I was in my early 20s, and after the usual array of rejections, my stories finally began to be published. It was many years and some books later that I began to be able to earn a living from my writing, including peripheral types of work such as writing articles and book reviews."

Margaret Atwood: "Very suddenly, when I was 16. I have no idea why."

Marian Engel: "I decided to be a writer when I was 10. Don't know why. Just decided."

Sinclair Ross: "It seems I have 'always' wanted to write but as I have had little success and made little money from it I can hardly speak of 'writing' as my profession."

Anonymous: "I tell several lies about this and I've long since forgotten where the truth might have been. I often say that I became a writer when I found out I couldn't hit a curve ball. And that's we in a way. Like any ambitious youth, I wanted to be famous and therefore sought fame any way I could get it. I also wanted to be an actor and found out that although I was a good actor, I was only good. Then I found out that writers often become famous only in later years, and that seemed a safe bet for my ego, so I set out to be a writer. I worked on small-town newspapers and slept with prostitutes for the experience. In other words, typical. Now, however, I like the writing for its own sake, have all the fame I want, and would prefer in fact to publish everything I write under a pseudonym. It's too late for that, however. I spent too much time building up a reputation."

Al Purdy: "Sheer ego. Wasn't getting enough attention."

Harry Bruce: "I drifted into newspaper reporting and then magazine jobs and, finally, freelance journalism as a result of 'a dreadful facility' with prose."

Timothy Findley: "I don't think you do 'become interested.' I think it's something you can't avoid doing. In a sense, it's like this: one day you pick up a pen, or a brush, or you sit down at the piano, or you walk out onto an empty stage and in doing that, you discover you've completed a gesture that has been tormenting you because you didn't know what its conclusion was. Once you've discovered how to complete the gesture, then you have to discipline the process. One day, someone says to you, 'I want that gesture,' and that's when what you do becomes a profession. Gestures are shorthand definitions. If they are subtle, deft, graceful, strong, tactful and forthright, the gesture becomes art. So I don't think you do 'become interested': I think you become obsessed with completing the gesture."

"So I set out to be a writer. I worked on small-town newspapers and slept with prostitutes for the experience. In other words, typical."

Were (or are) any members of your family writers, poets, or artists? If yes, please be specific as to their relationship to you.

June Callwood: "None that I know of, unless you count an uncle who played the violin up until the time he drowned at the age of 11."

Pierre Berton: "My maternal grandfather, Phillips Thomson, was one of the best-known journalists in Canada during the 19th century. He was the author of *The Politics of Labour*, now reprinted and on various university reading courses."

Harold Horwood: "My father has published four books, but he began writing for publication only after I had already achieved success. My family were strongly opposed to my ambitions and did everything in their power to thwart and prevent them."

Jay Macpherson: "A couple of Gaelic poets three or four generations back. One, my great-great grandmother Mary's brother Lachlan Macpherson, in addition to his own writing assisted his cousin James Macpherson, who through his poems under the name of the legendary bard Ossian was read throughout educated Europe from about 1770 to 1900."

John Newlove: "My maternal grandfather was a newspaperman; he ran a weekly newspaper in Manitoba: I was very close to him. A remote relation, in the late 16th or early 17th century — I don't have the reference handy — wrote very bad sonnets. But I didn't know about this till only a few years ago."

Robertson Davies: "For generations they wrote everything: stories, verse, articles, journalism, and works of edification. When

my father's family came to Canada in 1894. they had no money to spend on Christmas gifts; instead, all contributed to a family journal called *The Yuletide Magazine*; we kept it up, sporadically, until 1952."

From whom did you receive support in your efforts to become a writer, poet, or artist?

Len Gasparini: "From many beautiful, patient, and very understanding women."

Joyce Marshall: "My great encourager was H. G. Files, who taught creative writing at McGill when I was there. The fact that a grown person took my writing seriously enough to discuss and criticize it gave me a tremendous boost. My own family thought it fine that I should be a writer — until they saw I really meant it and had no intention of qualifying for some sensible profession such as teaching."

Marian Engel: "My mother had a typewriter and stamps. She pretended, most usefully, to take no interest at all. She told me it would be hard. This created a challenge. My agent in New York was always terrific. He was a man of great discrimination and

"I have never sought or received a grant. . . . I think there are strings attached to such things and those who take them must either follow some more or less approved path or show themselves ingrates."

suggested I go on writing and eventually my talent would mature. Bob Weaver at the CBC. Professors were encouragers too, when I was at university. My husband, until the work cut into the domesticity."

Robertson Davies: "From the public. I have never sought or received a grant. Whatever is said, I think there are strings attached to such things and those who take them must either follow some more or less approved path or show themselves ingrates."

Don Harron: "I once got a senior Canada Council grant to do a musical about the painter Emily Carr. I got the grant in 1967, the musical was produced in 1971. They asked no questions, never pressured me in the meantime. That's the only subsidization I've ever received, but I am grateful for it."

Al Purdy: "Almost anyone I asked, but I didn't ask many."

Robert Kroetsch: "My mother died when I was 13, but she had already persuaded me of the need — had implanted in me the need to lead a 'significant' life. I was never motivated by a desire for material success — and this in a world of successful farmers and small-town businessmen. To risk a religious term, I had from earliest memory a sense of 'calling'. . . . Once my grade 12 teacher gave my verbal energies (and I can remember writing poems in grade 4) a focus. I was highly motivated. I worked by myself, independent of other beginning writers. . . . Finally, and this is confessional, I derive much creative energy from the women in my life. I've not been very successful as a monogamist. My dependence on women is curiously profound — not only for sexual pleasure, but for . . . approval? . . . and for verbal energy."

How often, and under what circumstances, do you meet other writers, poets or artists?

George Woodcock: "When I was young — and up to the age of about 43 — I tended to seek the company of other writers, especially in London up to my departure in 1949, and even in my early days in Canada. More recently, having realized where I want to go in terms of writing, I find the constant contact with other writers is no longer necessary. Even the writers to whom I feel personally close I do not see often, though we keep in touch by correspondence, and my closest personal friends tend to be painters and — more rarely — musicians."

John Robert Colombo: "Socially, very little; professionally, somewhat more. To quantify this: socially, once every two weeks; professionally, twice a week. Socially involves parties; professionally involves readings, talks, discussions, etc., in classrooms and other quasi-educational groups, plus business offices. Frankly,

since I turned 35 I have wanted to associate with titers, poets and artists less and less."

Sinclair Ross: "Out of the swim completely."

Jack Hodgins: "Very seldom. Once a year my creative writing class sponsors a writers' workshop for Vancouver Island high schools and we invite four or five writers as resource people. Once or twice a year I seem to find myself at functions like Canada Day in Hamilton, Ont., where there are plenty of other writers. I see no other writers on a casual day-to-day basis."

John Newlove: "Nearly every day: socially, professionally, and what might be called politically."

John Metcalf: "Most of my friends are writers and poets and we meet purely socially. The literary world in Canada is minuscule and sooner or later one meets nearly everyone who has ever set pen to paper."

Max Braithwaite: "In my daily life I rarely see another writer for months on end. . . . As for getting together with other writers and drinking and talking about editors, publishers, income tax, a good place to live, and women, I enjoy it very much. But not too often. When writers get together I've found they rarely talk about the art of writing. Maybe some shout the business of writing, but not too much of that either. Mostly about the other things I've mentioned. Writers are terrible gossips. Like lawyers or doctors or architects or whatever, they tend to run down and gossip about the members not present. There is naturally a great deal of competition among writers. We are egotistical, self-centred, bigoted, just like everybody else. Actually there is little to be gained in the way of material — and writers are always gathering material, mostly subconsciously — from other writers. Who wants to write a book about a writer? Or read one? No, the most interesting people are salesmen. I'm fascinated by salesmen."

What, in your opinion, are the greatest problems facing Canadian writers, poets, or artists today?

Miriam Waddington: "A lack of genuine criticism; no outspoken original critics; a Philistine culture; a narrow low-church Baptist Christianity; artistic cliquishness. Too much power resides in the kings and queens of the media. Too many intellectual cowards everywhere."

George Woodcock: "Too much official support and too little recognition by the people. We are in danger of becoming a drone class, dependent on state support with its attendant demands."

Al Purdy: "Writing."

Alice Munro: "Producing something even reasonably good is always a writer's main problem. There is a special Canadian problem — avoiding the peculiar attention you get in this country."

Kent Thompson: "The greatest problem is that the publishers are amateurs, as are all the people at the CBC. They don't know how



to sell their product, they don't work at it, and they are generally a stupid, lazy lot."

Raymond Fraser: "The greatest problem facing a Canadian writer is earning enough to live on while being able to write full-time. Another problem is finding a publisher who knows something about selling books. Another problem is alcoholism. Another problem, related to the second one, is getting the Canadian public to know that your books exist. That's also related to the first problem, and possibly the third, though I'm not sure about that. It's April 25 today, and it's snowing; it's been snowing here ever since early October. I would call that a problem."

Harold Horwood: The greatest problem is getting published. Many of the best books being written are not being published at all because they do not fall into the mainline or main stream which all publishers in Canada—even the small publishers—demand. The best two books I have ever written remain unpublished, and there is no guarantee that they ever will be published, unless I publish them myself. The next-greatest problem is getting read. Distribution is bad, and Canadian readers generally seem to concentrate on a few writers who are media stars rather than seeking out for themselves the books that are pleasing to them. There is no connection between media stardom and the quality of a person's writing. Some of our media stars are among the best writers we have, and some are among the worst."

Ernest Budder: "Financial, of course. And, more subtly, a too self-conscious Canadianism. The greatest writers may be regionalists, but they must face the world-wide competition. I think that Canadian writers have never had it better than they have now. They can sell just about everything they write, if it's good."

Anonymous: "I think that one of the most serious problems of the times is the notion that only poets or fiction writers are creative writers. For example, all the courses in creative writing being offered concentrate on fiction, all the chairs of writers in residence are filled by fictioneers and poets. But the best writing as writing in Canada is being done by non-fiction writers. For example, nothing that Davies, Atwood, Richler, Laurence, etc., have written that I have seen approached the quality of the prose you will find in Bruce Hutchison's *Unknown Country*, in James M. Minifie's *The Homesteader*, in Ralph Allen's *Ordeal by Fire*, in Chester Duncan's *Wanta Fight, Kid?*, in George Stanley's *Louis Riel*, George Woodcock's *Gabriel Dumont*."

Margaret Atwood: "The imminent breakup of the country."

What, in your opinion, distinguishes Canadian fiction, poetry or art from that of other countries?

Pierre Eerton: "Canadian writers rarely attempt big themes; the large canvas evades them. Most Canadian novels deal with minor themes."

Ralph Gustafson: "Certainly, not 'survival'; all countries 'survive.' Negatively, a certain village-pumpism, a provincialism that thinks itself the centre of the world, and which is sustained by an incredible amount of log-rolling. Positively, a dynamism and freshness and detached selectivism born into Canada's mists because Canada is north, with four sharp seasons, a 'fourfold land, a hard-headedness that can observe the world from the north and choose to belong or not to belong, not being sucked into the central vortex. The danger is arrogance, both spiritually and technically."

Sinclair Ross: "The Canadian scene. In style and sophistication I would say that modern Canadians such as Davies, Atwood, and Laurence hold their own with writers of other countries, even though they may not rank among the most outstanding."

Joan Finnigan: "1. A tight line to the landscape. 2. A lack of joy. 3. A hard sense of realism that utterly antagonizes the larger part of the Canadian audience, which was long ago Americanized. 4. Prudery, puritanism. 5. A lack of complexity in both language and material."

Joyce Marshall: "This isn't a thing I concern myself with very much. Writing is finally either bad or good, themes are universal, and geography doesn't affect human nature or its expression very much."

Frank Scott: "I couldn't name it."

Alice Munro: "Not my business as a writer to figure out this kind of thing." □

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stage, where a classical pianist had performed the night before. I thought: What a great place to keep my beer cold. I shoved my large bottle of Black Label in the jug, the" watched with horror as the jug overflowed, spilling a quart of water over the expensive grand piano. It was of those times when you're paralyzed; you see it happening and don't quite believe. Everything happens very

After reading eight times in three days to audiences near Sudbury, Ont., a large moose appeared at the window whenever I spoke.

slowly. while you debate mentally whether to run for the nearest exit or stay and pretend it didn't happen. Of course, the security guard in attendance supplied a towel and wiped up the mess. The" he just stood there, looking at me with a peculiar expression. I pretended it didn't happen. But I can never go back to North Bay.

And then there's Harbourfront on Queen's Quay in Toronto, where Greg Gatenby holds forth. A benefit for Marty Gervais's Black Moss Press was held there last year. P. K. Page had edited a book of short poems called *To Say the Least*, and everyone included in the book read for five minutes. They read alphabetically, first Milton Acorn and last Robert Zend. Anyway, that's the way they said things were planned. But as the Ps passed by without anyone mentioning my name, I began to wonder: Have I become invisible? A surge of indignation boiled somewhere in the esophagus as the Rs gargled and the Ss hissed metrically. Gatenby must hate me. I thought. Where have I gone wrong? Nobody appreciates my sweet and sentimental nature. The alphabet had lost its Ps; Paris, Prague, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, have disappeared from mad maps of the world.

The big room at Harbourfront seems at least as large as Maple Leaf Gardens or the Montreal Forum. If the mike fails, people would have to lip-read because of the stellar distances. But some reaction does make itself felt, a" unspoken murmur or little stir sometimes, as if forest leaves were touched by the sun or winter cold. You are aware of something, a mental umbilical, as if you were whispering between the audience's heart or pulsebeats. And the larger the crowd, the more you're aware of this unspoken reaction that you can't even describe but only know like some metaphysical vibration.

The largest crowd I ever read before was 500 at Prince George, B.C. The sponsors had advertised a folksinger, but he didn't show. So there I was, stuck in front of half a thousand lumberjacks who hated poetry but expected to be entertained. Prince George is a tough town, and the next flight out wasn't until next morning. What was I to do? My mother never told me about things like that, and I hate the sight of blood from caulked boots.

The Forest City Gallery in London, Ont., does not resemble the great hall of the Norse gods in Prince George. It is narrow and white, very white, with paintings on the walls. Culture seemed close to me then (the paintings, no doubt), something I have fled from and toward all my life and wasn't fast enough in any direction. But Chris Dawdney reassured me. I mounted the podium tensely, thinking of T. S. Eliot, *Catch 22*, *Paradise Lost*, and stuff like that. After which I descended the scale of merit to my own stuff.

Sometimes reading poems is like jumping into very cold water, which may turn out to be Scotch in which ice cubes are floating. Or hot water, which someone has pre-heated for your arrival by explaining that you're not really insane, it just looks that way. And sometimes I feel a bit hostile myself. After reading eight times in three days to audiences near Sudbury, Ont., a large moose appeared at the window whenever I spoke. At a secondary school one Idd asked, with obvious agreement from his fellow clods: Why was I so eccentric? To which I responded patiently: I'd rather be a little goddam eccentric than wear a blue denim uniform the way they did all the days of my remaining life.

But generally I keep my temper. I am patient and generous to a fault, which is usually my own. At the Inuvik, N.W.T.,

library a few years ago, I read to some 75 people, including Eskimos. (I mention Eskimos because, living in a tent on an arctic island in Cumberland Sound, I read my own poems to a couple of Eskimo women who were feeding their babies at the time, just to hear the sound of a" English voice.) A guy named Ross was at the reading. He worked for the Department of Transport at Fort Norman, and had with him a critical article he'd written about me for an English magazine. I thought: Now ain't that "ice: somebody's actually heard of me among the ice cubes. Besides, my mother's maiden name was Ross, which predisposes me somewhat. So we made a" appointment to drink some beer next day in my hotel room. And he gave me his poems for evening entertainment. (They always do that; they always give me their crummy poems.)

Before Ross arrived at my hotel room, I read his poems. They were awful. I expected no less. Then I read the critical piece he'd written about me, expecting the praise and adulation that are my just due. It was awful too, a complete and final putdown of Purdy. He said I was so bad I ought to stop writing entirely. It was nearly noon, the time when Ross was supposed to appear. Should I agree with his criticism? What could I say to him? And why did he come to me at all when he thought I was such a bad writer?

But I knew why. He wanted advice on where to publish his crummy poems, how to get money from a stone or a publisher, how to be a writer if you're not. With my pride in tatters, I received him, goodheartedly offering him a beer. But he didn't drink beer. (And I always basically mistrust anyone who doesn't drink beer; they generally turn out to be stuffed shirts.) I gave him a soft drink instead, probably Orange Crush. And for the next hour I told him everything, gave him all the help and advice I could think of: how to be a writer (which I've always wondered about myself); the niceties of iambic and trochaic; and where to send the afterbirth. I felt very noble and magnanimous about it, because it's my basic nature to be kind and helpful. However, I also did my best to make Ross as uncomfortable as possible because of his bad literary judgement. I noticed he wriggled occasionally, juggling his soft drink. □

**Good Summer Reads
from Seal Books**

Where the Cherries End Up — Gail Henley

Troika — David Gurr • Teddy — John Gault

Seal Books
from McClelland &
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The Mark of Canadian Bestsellers

The Wave — Christopher Hyde

The rooster, the hen, and the ego

by Fraser Sutherland

For My Neighbours in Hell. by Irving Layton. Mosaic Press/Valley Editions. 94 pages, \$6.95 paper (ISBN 0 88962 112 8).

The Love Poems of Irving Layton, by Irving Layton. McClelland & Stewart, 139 pages, 58.95 paper (ISBN 07710 4909 9).

An Unlikely Affair: The Irving Layton-Dorothy Rath Correspondence, by Irving Layton and Dorothy Rath, Mosaic Press/Valley Editions. 230 pages. \$14.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88962 1012).

IF THE AUTHOR of *For My Neighbours in Hell* were unknown it would be easy to call him "exceptionally promising," to cite successful poems such as "Apocalypse" and "The Abyss," and to quote such masterful lines as these from "The Comedian":

*Yet even our comic's kind to fair ladies,
even as you re-arrange your collage of stills
in ignorant worship of his clever spoof,
he lets you mistake your sad obliquity
and seems to yourself pious and spiritual
each time men touch you and you freeze in
hell*

Simultaneously, I would feel compelled to note the large proportion of flopped epigram, lame variations on "the concentration camp commandant loved Mozart" theme, gratuitous four-letter words, unsubstantiated slanging ("cretinous female from S. Africa," "shitpile," "Canucky schmuck"), to paint out that it does not take a great deal of moral courage to call Hitler and Stalin unpleasant persons, and even make an attempt to drive into the poet's obdurate skull the elementary fact that not all Jews are alike, nor are all goyim. The poet resembles a rancorous rooster atop the 20th century's dunghill, the dunghill a given, the rooster self-perceived.

Irving Layton is not an unknown writer: he has published, at last count, 40 books. He is a complicated man, and his poetry no less so, as shown by the dialectic between lyricism and irony in *The Love Poems of Irving Layton*. Instead of the numbered Graham Coughtry prints in the 1978 limited-edition collector's item, *Love Poems*, like *For My Neighbours in Hell*, has a good Ludwig Zeller-Susana Wald cover collage. It's a sound, consistent collection drawn from many years of work, all the better for us to watch the poet wrestle mightily with his demiurges of Love and

Death. While there is a certain amount of fake canvas-thumping and misapplied hammerlocks, the contest is serious, the decision inevitably a draw. Sometimes, as in "I would Pot Your Sake Be Gentle," the stasis results in a hushed loveliness:

*Bear with me, bear with me —
Your goodness, gift so little understood
Even by angels I suppose
And by us here somewhat undervalued
Is what I hold to when madness comes.
It is the soft night against which I flare
Rocketwise, and when I fall
See my way back by my own embers.*

Such lines are like a gifted translation from the classical Greek of a great poet. Which need not, I hope, appear to be a backhand compliment for Layton at his best ("Berry Picking," "Misunderstanding," "Sacrament By the Water") has command of his adventurous talent.

I remember the joy of first encountering Layton's work, its irresistible vigour and swooping imagery. Dorothy Rath obviously shared that joy. In my few dealings with Layton, he has been friendly and obliging but, fortunately for both of us, I did not physically ache for him, as Rath did early in their friendship, writing in a poem-letter of Nov. 29, 1966:

*If I step softly
and hold my elbows so —
close to my side —
maybe something within me will not shatter
from the blow
from the small sound the door made
as I closed it softly
when I had to let you go.*

But I am getting ahead of the story in *An Unlikely Affair*, which in one sense is a clumsily constructed novel with an early climax and a long denouement. Rath begins as a hero-worshipping Layton fan. Then she falls, by her lights, deeply in love with him, and much of this correspondence's interest consists in her coming to terms with it.

Early in their relationship Layton fires off a rocket:

*Love! You say you love me. Nonsense
my dear Dorothy. You are in love with a
chimera, a rosy bubble floating to the
surface from your repressed unconscious.
You know nothing about me, the kind of
man I am. YOU know nothing about my
likes and dislikes, habits, relatives, nervous
tics, etc. It would make just as much sense*

if you were to go over to the first stranger you meet, and say to him: "I Love You." If I didn't make allowances for the overheated imagination of poets, I'd almost be offended with you, for making such a declaration, since I dislike being reduced to somebody else's fantasy figure. I prefer my own full-blooded reality, and when someone says she loves me I want to feel it's for something I am, not for what I'm dreamed up to be in idle moments of leisure and boredom.

Rath is contrite. Layton apologizes. Their friendship prospers.

Easy to mock Rath's tireless activities as Layton's one-woman press-clipping service—the slightest mention of him in the media is instantly relayed—yet I wonder if, in a peculiar way, her love did not triumph. Even if her attitude to him verges on idolatry, she holds fast to what she knows best, and emerges from these pages as a decent, compassionate, intellectually alert woman with a small but real talent as a poet. There may even be some truth in Adrienne Clarkson's rather precious comment that the correspondence shows "the artist and his audience locked in eternal need."

Layton does not come off badly, either. Infrequent are lapses into bombast, such as his 'paean to Lyndon Johnson's peace-making abilities (April 4, 1968), or into diatribe. On A.J.M. Smith: "The poor bugger, the silly blind bat." (Feb. 18, 1974). Suppose, for argument's sake, Smith did misjudge Layton's poetry: does he deserve unrelenting opprobrium? Layton is usually kind, generous-spirited, and, strange to relate, modest. He may even be correct to assume that, regarding women, he is more pursued than pursuing. Sometimes he is little-boy poignant: "I'm currently engaged in the most difficult operation of my life. I'm attempting with all the furious patience I can summon to make my present marriage the success my two earlier ones were not" (Dec. 19, 1967). He has since divorced and remarried.

Mosaic's jacket copy seems to have been bungled, stating that "the correspondence lasted fifteen years, from 1961-1976." Yet the first letter is dated March 25, 1963, and the last one March 16, 1977. Layton apparently initiated the book's publication, but we're not told its editor — if any. The lack of editorial notes and index will leave future readers in a dense fog. If the book was intended to be an unscholarly but dramatic chronicle of a friendship, it could have been profitably abridged.

This review started out with a dilemma: What are we to make of Layton the man, and his poetry? The name of one Layton publisher suggests an analogy: Mosaic. Both the poet and his poetry are mosaics. Each tacitly asks us to forgive the sometimes-ugly constituent shards for the sake of the total effect. A mosaic, after all, is the product of single pairs of hands and eyes, uniting in a beautiful object. Perhaps to separate encrusted gems from cemented rubble is a mistake. I don't think so, but the case can be made.

The last word may be left to Domthy Parker, quoted by Domthy Rath in a letter of Feb. 17, 1967:

*A heart in half is chaste, archaic:
But mine resembles a mosaic.*

□

Marsh on, mes enfants

Pentecost, by Robert Marteau, translated from the French by David Ellis, Exile Editions. 118 pages, \$8.95 paper (ISBN 0 920428 14 2).

By ROSALIND CONWAY

THE COVER describes this novel, by a French poet living in Quebec, as a "poetic, gothic mystery." The eponymous hero the farmers call Pentecost steals off into the marsh in search of a nobler exit than the hearse cod grave. And then the hunt is on for him; motivated by boredom, lust, and even goodwill the local men pursue him into dangerous, misty canals near the French coast.

This is a strange sort of mystery. By no means is it a whodunit: it is a who will do it, what will be done, and why. The latter is not completely settled when the book cuds, for

the passions and enmities go back generations, cod even the lineage of the characters is unclear.

Pentecost is truly gothic in its paraphernalia. To Henry Walpole, Matthew Lewis, Mary Shelley, sod their successors gothic meant medieval: monks, ruins, supernatural occurrences, alchemy, and some pretty nasty business on the part of one or two figures. Here there is an abbey and a mined chateau: mist and night envelop everything; prophetic tokens are unearthed; the King of Hearts is repeatedly played: and visions end oracular dreams occur.

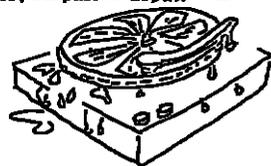
Central to the novel is a local myth of two Agrippas who blur into one. Agrippa Casse-Cou ("broken neck") was a captain, Calvinist, and church burner who is said to be related to Pentecost's daughter. After being pierced in the thigh (surely a euphemism) by a jealous lover, he fled on horseback into the morass. Similarly the monk Agrippa Come d'or ("golden horn"), an alchemist who invoked the Virgin Mary, disappeared into the fen on a boat.

They are Pentecost's spiritual forebears: one evil, the other good, they both suggest the alchemist Cornelius Agrippa, the diabolical and the divine. Pentecost desires co end as mythic es theirs, bet then is link in his character to suggest that he is a diabolical creator. He is almost absent fmm the novel; all the reader knows of him is that he is a painter and a recluse who performs a vanishing act.

And here lies the problem with this book: one does not come to know the characters. The English reader is faced with the difficulty of interpreting allegorical names and places that are not translated by Ellis. Furthermore, Marteau is generally mote attentive to setting and description than character development.

He also seems rather inattentive to form. Because the book combines genres, it creates mom confusion than fusion. On one level *Pentecost* is a gothic tale that digresses; on another it is a narrative poem of cantos; on still another it is a mystery in which the deaths occur at the cod, rather than the start. Its lengthy descriptions are cinematographic and often gratuitous. And when the person who is lurking somewhere behind all the atmosphere finally is named, the narrative promptly marches off in an entirely different direction.

Pentecost is a frustrating book to read because of its problems. It is the sort of novel that reminds one why many poets don't write fiction: they don't have the narrative knack. Marteau has lost his eerie goings-a in a foggy, convoluted tale that cannot manage to draw the reader in and carry him along. Marteau is out in the marshes, out past hi depth. □



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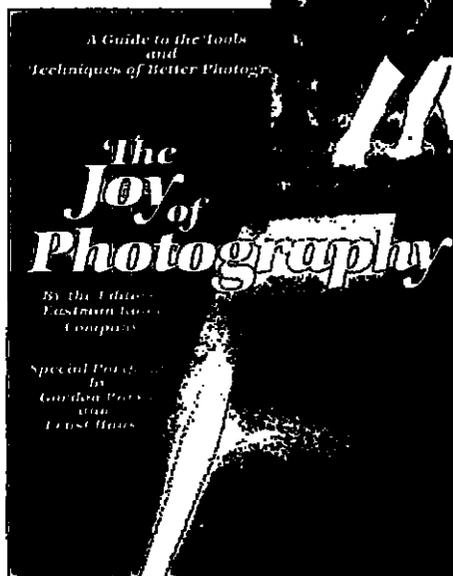
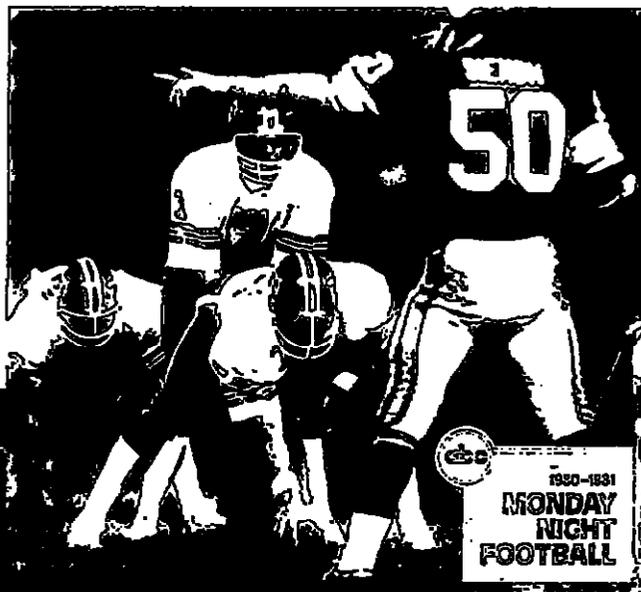
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Tricks of the drag trade

The *Twyborn Affair*, by Patrick White, Viking, 432 pages, 518.95 cloth (ISBN 0 670 73789 5).

By ILA GOODY

PATRICK WHITE, the Australian Nobel laureate, presents in *The Twyborn Affair* his own quirky version of *Myra Breckenridge* and *Orlando*. Semi-androgynous characters are to be found throughout White's earlier novels (*Theodora*, for example, in *The Aunt's Story*), but here the fate of the transvestite Eddie Twyborn constitutes the central narrative focus. "Twice-horn" as Tiresias was, shifting less comfortably between the costumes of each gender. Twyborn appears first as Eudoxia Vatzatzes, the tantalizingly lovely *heteira* of an old Greek; then as a young First World War hero returning to an Australian sheep station to test his masculine identity; and finally as Eudith Trist, an aging violet-powdered London bawd, hopelessly in love with her more sexually conventional aristocratic patron.

In one of White's earlier novels, *The Solid Mandala*, Waldo Brown burnt his fragmentary novel. "Tiresias a Youngish Man," the night before his death. *The Twyborn Affair* is a regenerated version of that novel, replete with all the forms of virtuosity — the range of mythic references, exoticism of setting, troupes of grotesque figures, suggestive word games — characteristic of White's most distinctive work. External suggestiveness, however, is the key both to the success of this narrative and to its inability to satisfy entirely. For just as Eudoxia/Eddie/Eadith evades any pervasive emotional commitment during a long quest for sexual self-acceptance, so White also manages through clever manipulation of allusive descriptive surfaces to circumvent any extensive psychological exploration of her.

The major subject of this novel is in fact not Twyborn's anguished emicisim, but the furniture of language, myth, and image against which the characters move and are seen. The initial *jardin exotique* of Eudoxia and her lover manifests the elegance of some of Lawrence Durrell's descriptions of Rhodes and Corfu. Eddie's fantastic objects of antipathetic desire — a ginger-haired, aggressively masculine foreman; a slovenly Magna Mater with huge, powdery breasts — have a more than passing resemblance to the grotesques of Fellini and Wertmüller. Most dazzling of all are the mirrors, labyrinths, and masquerades of Mrs. Trist's

London bordello. Throbbing between two lives like the Tiresias in T. S. Eliot's "Waste Land," she is herself only at the violet hour between the false dawn and the real. Her most truthful moment — and her single completed tryst — comes when she momentarily acknowledges her kinship with a homosexual peer who resembles her youthful self:

They were shown standing together at the end of a long corridor or hall or mirrors, where memory becomes, and in which they were portrayed stereoscopically, refracted, duplicated, melted into the one image, and by moments shamefully distorted into lepers or Velasquez dwarfs.

Only in the final section of *The Twyborn Affair* does White fuse the baroque ornamentation of his style with the characterization of his hero. But even there Eddie's precarious, elaborate identity is still that of a highly painted shell covering a meagerly depicted psyche. For much of this novel White hints that gender orientation does not really matter; but if so, why make such a ado? Or, if it does make a difference, why not explore the issue with all the psychological intensity that made his character portrayals in earlier novels (*Voss*, *Himmelfarb*, *Hurtle Duffield*, to name only a few) so compelling? The insight manifested in Patrick White's previous fiction surely justifies us in expecting from him a continuing expression of authentic psychological as well as stylistic artistry. □

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Greene in judgement

by Dean Bonney

Ways of Escape, by Graham Greene, Lester & Orpen Dennys, 266 pages, \$14.95 cloth (ISBN 0 919630 13 8).

Doctor Fischer of Geneva, or *The Bomb Party*, by Graham Greene. Clarke Irwin, 140 pages, \$11.95 cloth (ISBN 0 370 30316 4).

GRAHAM GREENE'S *Ways of Escape* is the second volume of his autobiography. The Dennys in the publisher's name is his niece. By granting the English-language rights to this medium-sized Toronto house and Permitting Canadian publication a full three months before British and American publication. Uncle Graham is evidently conferring a gift, and a handsome one, even if much of the material has already appeared in essays and prefaces.

It's not a confession. As in *A Sort of Life* nine years ago, he keeps "those parts of a life most beloved of columnists" to himself. He mentions his wife, his infidelities, his ruined marriage, his mistress or mistresses, and other "private" matters, but he doesn't elaborate. There are portraits, however, affectionate, of friends, all of them dead — Herbert Read, a Norwegian poet called Nordahl Grieg, David O. Selznick, Alexander Korda, and Evelyn Waugh.

It's largely an account of writing and of travel, central factors that make the title an unusually precise label. "I wonder how all those who do not write, compose or paint can manage to escape the madness, the melancholia, the panic feat which is inherent in the human situation." To escape the grind of novel-writing, he huddled to reviewing films and later to doing film scripts. In time short stories and plays served the same purpose. He travelled to escape the monotony of a safe, settled existence. Not, he insists, to look for material. Many of these journeys involved risk. He was searching for insecurity, which gave him the same kind of exhilaration the adolescent attempts at Russian roulette described in *A Sort of Life* had given him.

The book will engross anyone who knows Greene's work or is interested in what goes into writing fiction because he tells you what each novel cost him and what he thinks of it now. Rereading his early novels, including the two he's suppressed,

he found painful. "There are far too many adjectives and too much explanation of motive, no trust in the reader's understanding." *Brighton Rock* is "one of the best I ever wrote." *The Power and the Glory* is "the only novel I have written to a thesis" and it "gave me more satisfaction than any other." *The Heart of the Matter*, his first great international success, he now finds disappointing, too many flaws he couldn't find a way to correct. He has much the same view of its successor. *The End of the Affair*. Its popularity makes it suspect and he sees too many technical problems he had to leave unsolved. *A Burnt-Out Case* was another difficult one. "Never had a novel proved more recalcitrant or more depressing." *The Honorary Consul* is "perhaps the novel I prefer to all others."

You can set your own opinions against his. Wilson in *The Heart of the Matter*, Smythe in *The End of the Affair*, and Parkinson in *A Burnt-Out Case* "refused to come alive." They did for me. But the demi-saint and figment, Sarah, in *The End of the Affair* is to him his best-realized female character.

He rightly objects to being classified as a Catholic novelist on the grounds that it's as nonsensical as being judged as a bald novelist or a pigeon-toed novelist, leaving unacknowledged the fact that Catholicism drenches his fittest work.



He doesn't like the term Greenland either, because, he says, Nottingham, London, Sierra Leone, In & China, Haiti, Cuba, Paraguay, and so forth were really like that when he was there. But surely the critics mean outlook, not setting.

For novelists or would-be novelists there's plenty of wisdom from this elder of the tribe. "The material of a novel accumulates without the author's knowledge, not always easily, not always without fatigue or pain or even fear . . . [a novelist] is encrusted with characters, it's often easier to scribe something from a long way off . . . writing a novel does not become easier with practice . . . [and keenest of all these titbits] the beastly adverb — far more damaging to a writer than an adjective."

There are the usual number of acrid homilies without which any Graham Greene book would be incomplete, and signs of an encroaching mellowness. He's 76 now. His regrets are no longer a burden, here at least.

There's ample humour too, never absent from any of his books, no matter how bleak. In 1954 he was deported from Puerto Rico under the McCarran Act. He vividly imparts the glee with which he complicated and publicized the incident once he saw what was happening. There's also much drollery in his recounting a court case that happened when Shirley Temple sued him for libel, and won, because he had suggested in a review that all that dimpled coquetry was aimed at ditty old men. He mentions other hazards in movie reviewing. "On one occasion I opened a letter to find a piece of shit enclosed. I have always believed that it was a piece of aristocratic shit, for I had made cruel fun a little while before of a certain French marquis who had made a documentary film. . . . Thirty years later in Paris at a dinner of the *haute bourgeoisie* I sat opposite him. . . I longed to ask him the truth, but I was daunted by the furniture."

He was certain *A Burnt-Out Case* (1960) would be his last novel. But in time the germ of *The Honorary Consul* lodged in his mind and the book got written, his very last novel, he felt sure. A few years later he published *The Human Factor*. It really was the last possible novel. He's written enough of them. Then, two years ago having Christmas dinner with his daughter and grandchildren, an idea occurred to him and . . .

Doctor Fischer of Geneva is described in the jacket blurb as a black entertainment. I found it grey rather than black and I was less entertained than fascinated, as always, by the offhand mastery with which it's put together. Touches of craft glint from almost every page. An ambulance goes "crying down the hill." A man is fixed, once and for all, in this description. "dark suit, dark tie, dark hair, thin body and thin lips and an unconvincing smile."

The characters are persuasive, not as human beings — they're too pat for that — but as attesting caricatures all working hard to make the plot come outright. Their talk is the efficient dialogue of the accomplished dramatist and script-writer.

It's a story of non-violent sadism, mounted to demonstrate the point that no greed can match the greed of the very rich. It's also a device that allows the author to get off a few more good ones on love, death, faith, age, evil, hate, despair, failure, and damnation. And Anglicans. □

Glitter from the dark

by Michael Bullock

In the Country of the Antipodes, by Ludwig Zeller, translated from the Spanish by Albert Moritz and Susana Wald, Mosaic Press/Valley Editions, illustrated, 175 pages. \$8.95 paper (ISBN 0 88962 110 1).

EVERY NEW publication that appears under the banner of surrealism raises afresh the questions: What is surrealism and is surrealism still a living force? Since Ludwig Zeller, both as a poet and as an artist stands in the forefront of contemporary surrealism, these questions immediately arise in connection with his latest book, *In the Country of the Antipodes*, which contains not only a wide selection of his poetry covering the period 1964-1979 (originally written in Spanish), but also collages both by himself and by Susana Wald, portraits of the author by three different hands, 10 calligrams or concrete poems and an excellent "Introduction to the Poetry of Ludwig Zeller" by Albert Moritz, one of the translators. Because of the multiplicity of material gathered between the covers of this one volume, it constitutes a paradigm of current surrealist creativity.

Moritz deals at length with the role of dream in Zeller's poetry and states, rather paradoxically: "The poem always attempts to assume and subsume both reality, with its onerous insubstantial flow, and dream with its lacerating impact of the real knife-edge. In this attempt, dream becomes the fundamental category, the 'tenor' of the metaphor, and reality is only its image." Whether this transposition of the relative solidity of dream and reality may truly be deduced from this poetry as the author's fundamental philosophical outlook is perhaps questionable. Unquestionable, however, is the fact that its essential subject matter is the relationship between dream and reality and a search for a transcendent synthesis in which the opposition between them is resolved. This, of course, is the very essence of surrealism.

After dealing with the subject of dream in Zeller's work, Moritz is naturally led to a specific consideration of the role played by surrealism. He writes:

Though Zeller derives from many sources simultaneously, there is no doubt that he is an inheritor and beneficiary of surrealism. Once this is said, we must pay special attention to his revisions of surrealism in order to avoid misunderstanding. He stands in relation to it somewhat as Poe stood to

first generation English romanticism: he understood and emphasized the shadow side of being, and the danger of annihilation and incoherence in the project of surrendering oneself interiorly to the subconscious and exteriorly to objective chance. The doctrinal optimism of Breton, noble and profound though it is, imposes a consciously willed direction on the flux of reality, channeling it toward the benevolence which, in Breton's deepest belief, was its essential truth. Zeller has preferred to re-open both the subjective and objective questions, to delve into both dream and reality in order to deal with them before any human direction has been given. In so doing, he has discovered and wrestled with a Proteus many of whose shapes are malign. Far from undercutting Breton, Zeller comes as a development and a completion, an example of the self-transcendence of surrealism which Breton himself declared to be its true nature.

All this is perfectly true, except that the hint of apologia it contains, the implication that Zeller might appear to be at odds with Breton over, for example, Breton's "doctrinal optimism," are really quite unnecessary and unfounded if we consider Breton's point of view as expressed in the Second Manifesto rather than the First. The optimistic expectations of the overwhelming benefits to be derived from "automatic writing," as formulated in the First Manifesto, give way in the Second to the statement: "The whole point, for surrealism, was to convince ourselves that we had got our hands on the 'prime matter' (in the alchemical sense) of language. After that, we knew where to get it, and it goes without saying that we had no interest in reproducing it to the point of satiety; this is said for the benefit of those who are surprised that among us the practice of automatic writing was abandoned so quickly."

From this point on the "automatic" element in surrealism, the "surrender to the subconscious," became simply one (powerful) element in the act of surrealist writing, which must spring, in Breton's own words, from "the total psychophysical field."

Zeller's poetry 'answers fully to this demand. It is clear that his tremendous wealth of imagery springs directly from the subconscious — no amount of rational thought could artificially concoct these startling juxtapositions and vivid metaphors. On the other hand, Zeller's

poems are no incoherent outpourings of random images without theme or meaning, but the expression of a profound philosophical consideration of the human condition and the nature of being. Essentially, as Moritz points out in his introduction, Zeller's poetry — and it is right to speak of his poetry rather than of his poems, since the individual poems are welded together as parts in a single great enterprise — is "a work of unremitting criticism," an effort "to ship away the false schemas erected before reality by human obsession or weakness." Poetry of such serious purpose is quite alien to the general trend of current writing in English and presents considerable difficulty to the reader accustomed to the poetry of personal anecdote, flashes of insight, or description of a situation that is the dominant mode on both sides of the Atlantic. An added problem is presented by the density and multi-layered structure of the poems, what Moritz describes as "the metaphorical process of superimposing seemingly disparate, actually unified realities." Zeller draws his imagery from a storehouse of knowledge spanning a very wide variety of fields — literature, philosophy, history, mythology, cosmology, and geology, to name a few — and he superimposes data from various sources one upon the other, so that in Section XXII of "The Pleasures of Oedipus," for example, Oedipus is simultaneously Christ and "the nails scraping my eye sockets" are both the fingernails with which Oedipus tore out his eyes and the nails that attached Christ to the cross.

This poetry enchants with its fabulous imagery, but the reader who is content to yield to its hypnotic flow (especially forceful in the long poems) or allow himself to be dazzled into a state of trance by its coruscating brilliance, without looking beneath the surface of its many layers of meaning, will be fobbing himself off with the appearance and denying himself the substance.

It remains to say a word about the translations. I have never agreed with Robert Frost's dictum that "poetry is what gets lost in translation" except in the case of poetry intended to appeal almost exclusively to the ear. In *the Country of the Antipodes* is a splendid refutation of this pessimistic claim. No doubt some verbal felicities will have fallen by the wayside, but the overall effect is of immensely powerful and vivid poetry that sounds as though it had been originally written in English — though it could scarcely be the work of anyone currently writing in that language. The author's Chilean origins and grounding in the Spanish tradition are inescapably evident in the uninhibited richness of his imagery. □



With this band, I thee wed

Honour Your Partner, by Helen Levi, Queenston House, 159 pages, \$12.95 cloth (ISBN 0 919866 43 3) and \$4.95 paper (ISBN 0 919866 44 1).

By **DORIS COWAN**

HELEN LEVI's *Honour Your Partner* is the third novel of a trilogy — the first two were *A Small Informal Dance*, which was a finalist for the Books in Canada Award for First Novels in 1977, and *Tangle Your Web and Dosey-Do-but*. Like the others, it can be read as a separate book. It is a sharp and comic portrait of a section of society in Plum Bluff, a Manitoba village. Levi has a cool, ruthless wit, and an eye for peculiar, though unexotic, human traits. She reminds me, in tone and detail, of the English novelist Beryl Bainbridge, except that Levi's characters do not, like Bainbridge's, slide inevitably from awkwardness and confusion into humiliation and chaos. The possibility is always there, but though the inhabitants of Plum Bluff often dither unnoticingly close to the brink, they always dodge away in time.

Willie and Marion Giss move into an old house in the village. He is an Anglican

Bishop, just retired. They are hoping for a leisurely and peaceful life in their new home. Marion, especially, wants to be left alone to think over her life without disturbance or interruption. But their daughter Catherine arrives before they have unpacked, bringing her two small sons with her. She announces that she has left her husband, who is "too involved in his male ego," and has refused to attend "sensitivity training sessions" with her. Willie takes an unexpectedly liberal position on the subject of divorce. "You must always remember," he says to Marion, "that not every couple can bees fortunate as we have been. Perfect love is rare." Marion silently agrees. "Perfect love was indeed rare, even more rare than be knew, because for most of her life Marion Giss had not cared much for her husband."

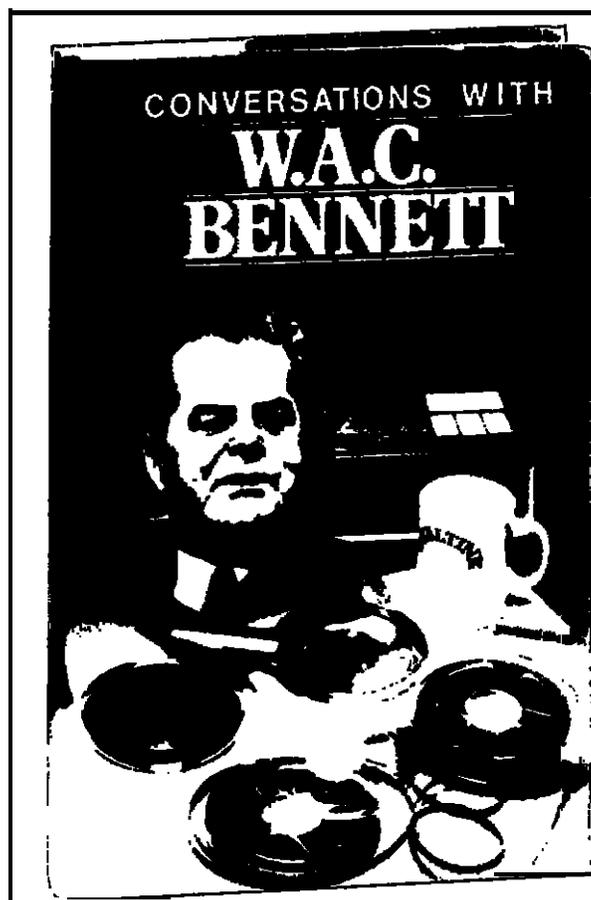
She doesn't care much for her daughters either. Not that she intends to change her life; she will make the best of it, as she always has, but she doesn't intend to like it. We observe her family through the filter of her weary, scornful, but still aggressively practical mind, and her resolute action propels the narrative forcefully, and to line comic effect. The reader is increasingly entertained by the bishop's remarks, which, though blameless in themselves, are made to appear either idiotic or tediously sensible, depending on how embittered Marion's view of him is at the moment when they are uttered.

For the most part, Helen Levi handles her comic materials very well. She has the calm, patient style of a witty talker who can

take any triviality and arrange it, without rushing or fussing, so that its complete ludicrousness is, all at once, fully and artfully displayed. She creates a tidy, solidly structured world, one that its inhabitants find reliable but fundamentally unsatisfactory, and against this backdrop she nonchalantly describes the closing in on Marion Giss of everything she hoped she had seen the last of.

With all these pleasures to report I'm sorry to have to say that they don't quite add up to enough, because Levi doesn't, finally, dare to allow any of her characters to be irredeemably foolish or selfish, or to plunge on to the ridiculous fetes that had seemed unavoidable. About half-way through the book she seems to regret the destructiveness of the humorous attacks she has so carelessly bunched. She begins to backtrack, and whitewash over places she gleefully blackened before. The bishop is really a sympathetic man and not the blinkered, pompous, fatuous fellow he had at first seemed to be. Catherine's folly turns out to be retrievable too. Back she goes to her husband. And the other daughter, Shirley, isn't really week-minded — just young, greedy, and impressionable. In fact, the whole novel goes into reverse, and downhill.

By diverting the force of her satire onto some of her secondary characters, the author attempts to sustain her ironic tone and keep us from noticing that she has gone somewhat soft on the Giss family. She almost succeeds in this, for she is nothing if not resourceful, and has a rich imagination;



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AT BETTER BOOKSTORES ACROSS CANADA
METHUEN PUBLICATIONS

If she hardens her heart a little, and allows her characters to persist in their folly, her future work will be very interesting indeed. □

Poets with "I" trouble

The Illustrated Universe, by Riiki. Aya Press, illustrated, unpaginated, 525.00 cloth signed (ISBN 0 920544 09 6) and 96.00 paper (ISBN 0 920544 08 8).

Alternate Endings, by Jill Rogers. Sono Nis Press, 60 pages. \$5.95 paper (ISBN 0 91946291 X).

By BRUCE WHITEMAN

THAT THESE TWO quite different books should both be written by young women poets who live in British Columbia suggests that regionalism has not such a robot-bonded control over our poetry as is sometimes thought. There are so many accidents involved in the development of any poet's style: the place where you live certainly is one, but only one of many. There are surrealists in Toronto, realists in Montreal, post-modernists in Calgary, writers of haiku in Victoria. If there is a constant in the growth of a poet, it is that indefinable need that brought Victor Coleman to *The Desert Music* and Rikki to *Nadja*. Poets somehow manage to ferret out the books that were written, in part, for them; magically, the only copy within 200 miles just happens to belong to a brother's friend's uncle.

The publisher of Rikki's new book claims that it is "an important alchemical document." There has been such a thing since the publication in 1661 of Robert Boyle's *The Sceptical Chymist*, which milked the death-knell of alchemy. I am being literal, of course, but a book of poems that vaguely uses the imagistic language of alchemy and makes passing reference to the etymology of the world (*al kmi*, the black land) is hardly thereby elevated to the status of an important alchemical text. Behind Rikki's surrealist imagery lie not directions for the transformation of the soul, but, more mundanely, the particulars of the sexual dance. This is serious enough in itself, and it is beyond me why even a Little press should feel called upon to "use such hyperbole to describe one of its books.

Rikki's surrealism is not at all *outré*; in fact, most of the time it strikes me as a weak attempt to hang a veil between the poet and her readers. The "I" or "We" is tiringly present, and the mildly surrealistic language does nothing to persuade us that these poems arise from a level of discourse deeper than the ego. It seems only to make the emotions expressed sound more adolescent than they are, more undisciplined and unfocused. There is something designedly

little-girlish in describing the female genitals as a "small coral bear. Cardamon and candytuft. The rosy reef that opens and closes. Red opal ringed. Between her legs a sugar factory."

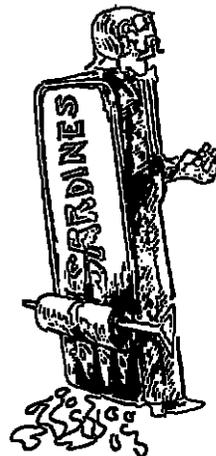
To my mind the prose of the first section ("Natural History") is more effective than the poems of the other four parts; the prose is more anecdotal, more tied to events, and thus less profuse and exaggerated than the language of Rikki's poetry proper. The title of the book is itself an example of the sort of linguistic exaggeration that tends. I think, to make the reader suspicious of the poet's intentions and capabilities.

Unlike Rikki, Jill Rogers writes in a style that is neither florid nor exaggerated. Her poems are dry, assertive, absent of noisy effects. What these poets share is a too frequent use of "I": perhaps it is a sign of the times, but of the 15 poems in the first section of *Alternate Endings*, nine employ "I" in the first line, and two more in the second line: "I can see," "I am trying to understand you," "I have been left," and so forth. I suppose that poems about relationships and a woman's survival must inevitably circle like planets about the sun of the ego; but I wish this weren't so, if only because of the repetitiveness of the language. That repetitiveness here is not helped by much variety in the poems' structure. Rogers's lines tend almost always to be built upon the natural phrases of speech, without counterpoint or jagged rhythm. The one poem that does "not adhere so predictably to this phrasal construction is "Conversation," and it is one of the most interesting in the book:

*what I am saying now
I have said before
in other ways
and again
the words shift
catch light from your eyes
change too far to retrieve
past my reach and you think
I'm reaching out to you again
and the smile on your face
is not right
is not what I meant*

*s/fence is more dangerous
even my body betrays me*

A central poem is "The Body in Pans," in which Rogers deals with the increasing



incidence of breakdown in marriages and relationships, and with the fact that we have so little to combat that breakdown: "our bodies are fragile/need all parts to survive/are not perfect/have very few tricks/up their sleeves."

Both poets are young, and I hope that the narrow world to which each book gives witness will, in the future, open up to include all that lies beyond (but not outside) the ego's km. The old pun on *I eye* teaches that the self can be not merely a version of control and asseveration, but a mode of access to the outside world. □

Tunnel visions

The Mole Men, by Negovan Rajic, translated from the French by David Lobdell, Oberon Press, 95 pages, \$12.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88750 334 9) and \$5.95 paper (ISBN 0 88750 335 7).

By LEN GASPARINI

IN A COMMUNIST country, where socialist realism is the approved artistic mode, this novella would certainly be labelled subversive. Its motif is Kafkaesque, and its prescience is undeniably Orwellian. In other words, it is a beautiful and dangerous book, and Oberon Press should be praised for making it available in translation.

The "amblers narrator in Rajic's *The Mole Men* is confined in a psychiatric hospital for reason 3 largely to do with something he has witnessed in a deserted park. On one of his customary afternoon strolls the narrator, a "insignificant clerk, has chanced upon a fellow citizen in a somnambulistic trance, burrowing into a wooded knoll. The incident disturbs him greatly, and he decides to investigate it further. Several months elapse before he reports what he has seen to the authorities, who ridicule him for his imagination and curiosity.

Unappeased, he begins to explore the subterranean labyrinth of these mole men, and soon comes to the realization that all of them are respected engineers, architects, lawyers, and businessmen leading double lives. Shocked by the fact that everyone is aware of this peculiar situation but unwilling or afraid to do anything about it, the narrator sees himself as a solitary outsider in a society that is anesthetized by the ideologic concept of what Rajic calls the *Great Idea*. The similarity of this book to Dostoyevsky's *Notes from the Underground* is unmistakable. The narrator even lives in a little room the size of an elevator.

As the story progresses in succinct, vivid prose, the narrator is harassed by a bull-headed police commissioner. At times the symbolism is so blatant that it is somewhat

embarrassing. The commissioner follows him to his meagre lodgings, interrogates him, and then confiscates an album of Hieronymus Bosch's paintings. The album is used as evidence of the narrator's diseased state of mind. Shades of *The Trial* and the movie *Fahrenheit 451* hover menacingly. It is predictable the narrator is going to be in for an unpleasant time. He receives a summons instructing him to report to the Institute of Mental Health. The bead doctor examines him, and concludes that he is an incorrigible trouble-maker for believing in the existence of the mole man. There is no easy exit for him but a blind denial of the truth, which is a death in itself. The novella ends rather abruptly with an epilogue that indicates the narrator spent the rest of his life behind the walls of the psychiatric hospital.

Negovan Rajic has written a compelling and haunting story, and it is not surprising *The Mole Men* won the Esso Prize of the *Cercle du livre de France* in 1978, and was chosen by *Le Devoir* as one of the 12 best novels published in Quebec that year. David Lobdell's translation is first-rate. The message in *The Mole Men* is subtle and powerful. Totalitarianism may work well for bees and ants and moles; but human nature is another matter. □

Trees, trysts, and temptations

The Book of Fall, by Ken Norris, Maker Press, 45 pages, unpriced paper (ISBN 0 92074401 X).

Seasons in Transition, by Carol H. Leckner, Fiddlehead Poetry Books, 103 pages, \$5.00 paper (ISBN 0 92013063 0).

Mephistopheles and the Astronaut, by David Solway, Mosaic Press/ Valley Editions, 63 pages, \$10.00 cloth (ISBN 0 38962 103 9) and \$4.95 paper (ISBN 9 38962 104 7).

By HANS JEWINSKI

THIS BOOK-LENGTH poem by Ken Norris, *The Book of Fall*, is sorely in need of a tough editor, or any editor for that matter. The poem is the second volume of the on-going work, *Report on the Second Half of the Twentieth Century*, but there is no explanation of its place in the overall scheme of the larger work, nor what the goals of that work might be. Even a detailed explanation, however, could not save this poem. It reads like the diary of someone convalescing from the removal of the heart. There is no blood, no juice. The stanzas (poems?) of this book (sometimes separated by a star, sometimes by being set on a new page, and once by being numbered-for some reason leaving out the number one) too often read like unfinished prose stories

The Penguin Book of Canadian Short Stories

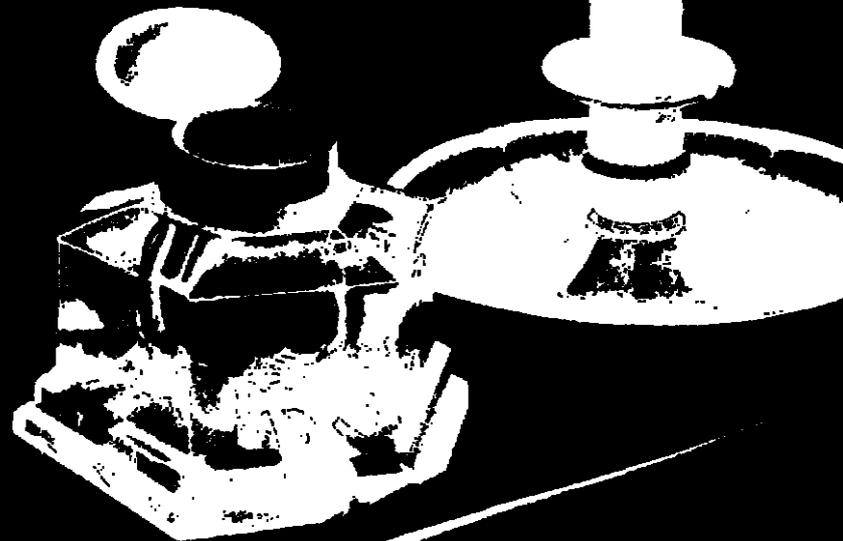
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recycled by chopping up the lines and calling them poems.

The central concern of the poem, aside from the changing of the weather. Is a boring love story that allows Norris to meditate on whatever trivial matters come to his mind. The magic of trees: "that tree/ is surely myself, & it is like the language/ stripped of its colors." Why trees? Presumably because "they tenaciously endure."

conspicuous from the removal of the heart his poem:

*I am left with only the literal facts, -
small acts of doing,
and the sense of being -
consciousness*

or:

*I became resolved about working it all out
until I knew I was still firmly
rooted in life, then my resolve stid away.*

Just when it seems that there is no chance that the poem will spring to action, a few lines (such as "& I dreamed last night that I was/ Louis Dudek's adopted son. & I became angry/when he did not treat toe in a fatherly way") show that Norris has a sense of mission. that he can indeed be passionate. and that there is still the hint of a pulse. Let's hope that he finds an editor to make Book Three more a poem and less a dii.

Carol H. Leckner's *Seasons in Transition* could also have benefited from an editor's more thorough attention. Her name is misspelled on the title page and in the library information. even though her first

book. *Daisies OR a Whale's Back*, was brmueht out by the same publisher in 1974.

The new book contains 10 poems in its 105 pages. so there seems to be no need to include poems like "Akashic Record" ("Was life just a bowl of cherries?") which beside "Mandelstam, Osip":

*Let your words and life
steal past their hair on my scalp
the hair I hold so dear to me.*

Leckner scrutinizes her role as a North American poet: "Stalin and Hitler/ are dead-alive/ and I am not ready for jail/ because I write." Strong poems such as

"Choice of Power" and "Stages of Carol L" (the name spelled correctly this time in the title, in the poem, and on the contents page) tend to lose some of their power by being placed between a series of light-weight efforts.

In her better poems Leckner has a keen eye for relationships and whet cements them together. In "At All Costs" she comments wryly on a woman's mle after a seduction:

*It's not that she wants to be
passive and cunting
hiding behind beautiful meals
and gentle habits.*

And then some of the habits she writes about, in "Yellow Peril" for example, are not so gentle:

*I would like
to straddle
the building*

*I work in
and pee on it*

In contrast to the first two books, David Solway's *Mephistopheles and the Astronaut* was served well by everyone who

illustrated and designed a covet that is mysterious and eye-catching: Tim Inkster designed the book so that the poems have living space; and Solway (with or without

an editor) ordered the poems to ensure variety and intensity. Every page of the book indicates care and purpose. and the expectations this work engenders in the reader are fulfilled. The book ends with an 11-poem series (from which the book takes its name) which through its graceful, piercing wit is worth the price of the book alone. This series must be read, there Js nothing else to say about it.

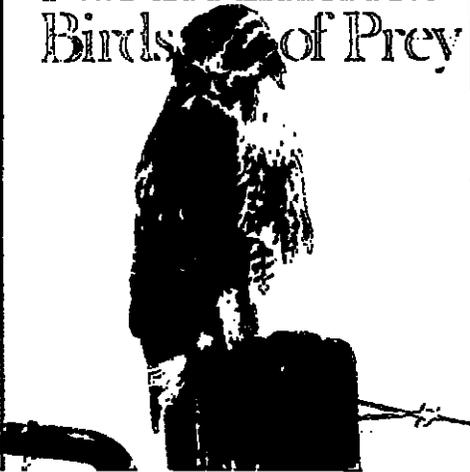
Throughout the book Solway displays a very reserved craftsmanship that is willing and able to challenge its artistic heritage. Although it seldom comes close to a knock-out. it surely wins on points. Here is the opening stanza of "The Passionate Shepherd to his Love":

*Come live with me and be my love
and we shall some temptations try,
and some reject, and some approve,
but nothing instantly deny.*

solway's poems are measured, musical, and sculpted to perfection. His thymes and metres are quiet and understated, and they

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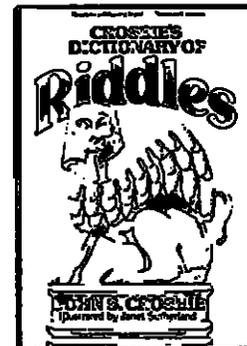
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work well with his tongue-in-cheek humour. "Elegy of Cassio" is a case in point:

*He was not a jealous man, Lodovico;
call him what you will, but jealous? — no.
Drowned in a whole Mediterranean of
pettiness,
untimbered by the supersubtlest Venetian of
them all;
but a jealous man? — not he.*

Solway is readable, quotable, and memorable. □

Hungry? Take the upper jawbone of a moose. . .

Slicing, Hooking and Cooking: Gourmet Recipes for Golfers and Other Good Sports, by Jackie Eddy. Personal Library. 192 pages, 59.95 cloth (ISBN 0 920510 06 X).

The Northern Cookbook, by Eleanor A. Ellis. Hurtig, 368 Pages, 58.95: paper (ISBN 0 88330178 2).

Gifts in Good Taste, by Helen Hecht and Linda LaBate Mushlin, Atheneum, 256 pages, \$13.50 (ISBN 0 68910997 0).

By DuBARRY CAMPAU

JACKIE EDDY IS a busy mother, wife, athlete, and a generous and popular hostess. Perhaps she has grown weary of being asked how she manages to do all she does and still cook so marvellously and decided to show the world that organization and, above all, a love of food and a keen sense of taste are all that it takes.

Her section on appetizers is one of the most tempting I have ever read; by the time I had tried out a few of them I didn't really care whether I ever got to a main course. Clam savouries, with cheddar cheese, are tangy and subtle. Curried chicken balls, with herbs, almonds and, of course, curry can adorn both a cocktail party and a picnic. Her sauce For escargots has a dash of Worcestershire sauce — just where it's needed.

I did, finally, manage to wrench myself away from the starters and get on to such delights as sole and crab in silver triangles (the silver comes from the Foil Packages in which they're baked and which seal in all the flavour); a rich and luscious cannelloni made with crepes instead of pasta; a fool-proof way of defrosting and roasting a leg of New Zealand lamb, prepared with a marinade that includes ginger and garlic; and a highly seasoned tourtiere with an oatmeal base.

The next best thing to the taste of Ms. Eddy's food is the advice she gives about how to prepare it quickly, how to Freeze it, what goes with what, and when to serve it.

She includes food for parties and Food that children will enjoy. This book could keep a whole family happy but it's also useful for the single host, especially a busy one.

Those of us who live in temperate zones may find *The Northern Cookbook* a bit special. Yet all it needs is a little translation into the terms of our local supermarkets to make it as useful here as in the Northwest Territories.

For instance, I haven't been able to get my hands on a good Caribou steak for years, but I couldn't resist trying out something called Hawaiian Caribou (isn't that wonderfully inter-climatic?). I bought myself a fine hunk of beef, added (as per directions) some sugar, ginger, garlic, onion, soy sauce, sod pineapple and had a succulent dish that Trader Vie would be proud to serve.

I'll admit I was stymied when it came to a Jellied Moose Nose (it requires the upper jawbone of a moose) but the recipes for wild duck, especially one called Purple Plum Ducklings, work equally well. For the tame varieties, Fluffy Codfish Pie can, and should, be made at any latitude: the pungent seasoning (sweet peppers, bacon, thyme; and onions) enhance that old-fashioned salt-cad aroma. The fish recipes are almost all interesting, with a Free-wheeling combination of ingredients that makes a bouillabaise seem almost banal.

Variations on sourdough take up a whole section, including everything from the starter to muffins, waffles and chocolate cake. If you are lucky enough to have a hunter in your circle, this book will be invaluable. And if your meat and fish still come in cellophane packets, it will still be an inspiration.

I am a firm believer that all presents should be eatable or drinkable, so I Found *Gifts in Good Taste* a joy. Everything in it is contrived to be portable — to be given to your hostess, to a sick Friend, to a birthday boy or girl, to anyone you love. Alternatively, it can be taken on a picnic. Most of the ones I whipped up, however, remained firmly at home although I did share them with a few appreciative guests.

Because I'm a lime Freak, I couldn't wait to pop a batch of lime tea cakes in the oven. They came out of it a joy to my heart, actually tasting of fresh limes, and not gooey but light and almost too edible. Sometime I may even give some of these away, but not until I've had my fill.

The Kentucky sweet potato pie actually did go to a party, where it seemed to be most welcome. The recipe calls for bourbon (naturally), but having none on hand I used Irish whisky with good effect.

The Mock Game Paté is one of the best I've ever made. Although chicken, chicken livers, and lamb replace partridge, pheasant, and woodcock, the intricacy of the seasoning forms a complete disguise. Red wine, brandy, juniper berries, pen pepper-corns, garlic, and spices do wonderful things together.

The authors, who are quite serious about

continued on page 20

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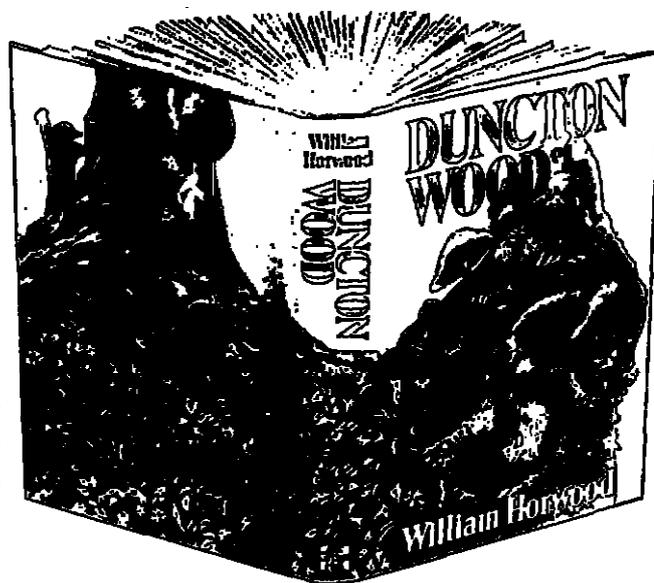
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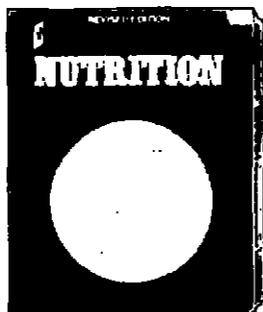
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the gih aspect of their recipes. give explicit directions as to wrappings and containers. They are also firm about the use of natural, fresh ingredients. Nobody will ever confuse any of these dainties with a Hostess Twinkly.

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could save a lot of wear and tear on your credit cards — and the recipients of a loaf of dill bread, a chestnut torte, a plateful of mocha meringues, a jar of sweet violet jelly, or a terrine of paté de campagne will bless you forever. □

yet he dedicates himself to finding the spot as if it is a challenge.

lie doesn't limit himself to imposing cm the peopk. He marvels at the intricate construction of a termite city he finds on a jungle path with its "dens bulging" and its "textured spherical forms." Then, with the excuse that they are easily rebuilt; "I took great pleasure in clubbing the huge dens into pieces." While being paddled along the river Elder sees "a woven silk network of glistening spider webs that stretched about twelve metres up and at least twenty metres across. Never before had I seen such proof of the incredible agility and patience of the spider." He immediately acknowledges this patience "by breaking down a wall. . . ."

The last couple of pages are devoted to Elder's bureaucratic encounters as he attempts to get his animals back to Toronto alive. At one point it is necessary to rip the shirt of an airline official. He stays up all night nursing his baby monkey in a highway ditch near the Miami airport. It is the destiny of this same monkey, which Elder "saved from a jungle stew pot," to be electrocuted on the trolleybus wires outside Elder's Toronto house. This coda is the only worthwhile part of *This Thing of Darkness*.

The personality of the author is puzzling. Elder didn't go into the jungle with a missionary's zeal to put pants on the souls of the Indians nor to go native in the homomtk sense of many other modern explorers, such as painter Tobias Schneebaum. No. Elder comes off as a sort of a bumbling team leader with blinders on, leaving little bits of destruction in his wake as he departs happily with his "20,000 dollars worth of film equipment" and an anaconda called Andy. The key to his perspective is inadvertently revealed in the middle of the book. When Elder makes contact with one tribe they ignore him, and he is reminded of his "fraternity initiation at the Zete House at the University of Western Ontario when we sat naked at 'Golden Nugget lime' with ice cubes on our laps. . . ." □

Up the creek without a scruple

by Jim Christy

This Thing of Darkness, by Norman Elder, NC Press, 148 pages. \$24.95 cloth (ISBN 0919600 87 5).

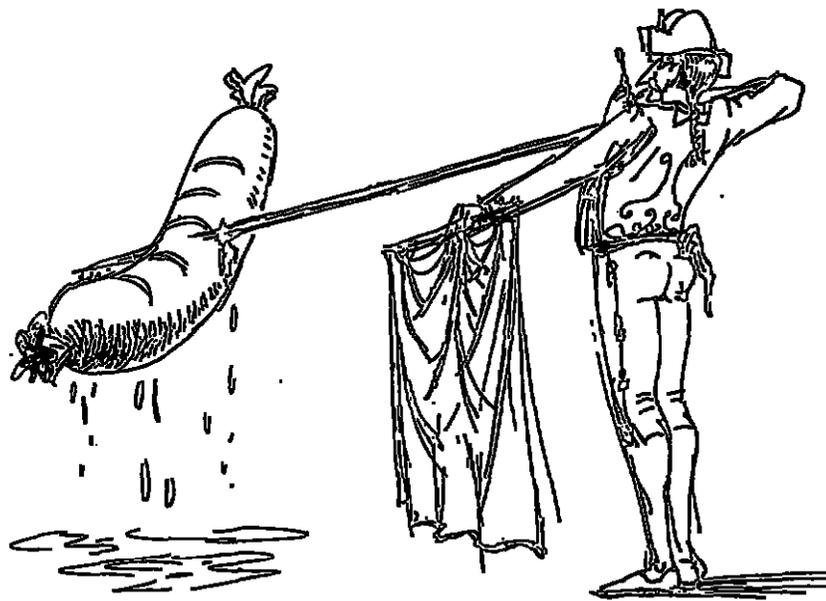
IT IS TRULY some thing of darkness that prevents one from discerning the light of thii book's inspiration. Besides, there is not even a flicker of new information about the Amazon area and its inhabitants. It is curious that people are still publishing their accounts of first contacts with Amazon Indians and offering mary a bow to the 400-year tradition of such literature. It is also a dubious practice to claim your particular expedition penetrates "previously unknown areas of the Amazon basin." especially when the American pilot you hire knows just where to go and the Colombian liver boatman who meets you delivers you to the Indians. The point is that this book comes along at least 200 years too late.

Another point eludes Elder, although he makes a half-hearted grasp at it now and again. The astonishment of Amazon travel is to view how the modern world has inundated the area. It is horrible to witness the ravages of the trans-Amazonian highway and genocide conducted in the name of progress, but it is also fascinating to observe the heroic entrenchment of an ancient way of life in the face of a technological invasion. At Elder's base camp, the town of Leticia, one sees U.S. Army veterans putting around on motorbikes arranging tourist monkey hunts, and hippies snorting cocaine in cafes near the Tarantula discotheque, while an how away in the jungle painted warriors are engaged in an age-old hallucinogenic vision quest. There is none of this dichotomy, none of that fascination in these pages.

Elder does seem to like the people he comes to visit, and he is certainly enthusiastic. but there is a sense of comedy to his journeys. I hoped at the beginning he might be putting on his reader but, alas, there are too many references to "primitive" people and too many "trusty guides," as well as such gems of unintentional understatement

as, "Apart from the five metre alligator thrashing about beside us, electric eels, freshwater sharks, piranhas and other fish made the water quite dangerous." He is taken, upon initial meeting with one tribe, to be shown a boy who has been bitten by a fer de lance. The boy's kg is rotting from gangrene and, since he is without the white man's usual magic medicine. Elder tries to "transmit positive energy to him." Nothing more is said of the boy for 29 pages, when we learn he has recovered and Elder comments that "many illnesses are psychosomatic and can be defeated by the tight mental attitude."

The comedy takes a pathetic turn as Elder repeatedly mentions his worries about "imposing" on the Indians' way of life and then proceeds to impose. I-k observer that the Indians don't want him to know the location of their growing place. Whenever it is time to prepare dinner the women rush off into the jungle and Elder tries to follow them. Naturally they elude him. He knows why they do it — they fear he may be an evil spirit who will cause the land to go barren —



A surreal self-portrait

Someone With Me. by William Kurelek. McClelland & Stewart. 176 pages. \$14.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 4564 6).

By CHRISTOPHER HUME

THIS IS A reworked version of the book William Kurelek wrote for Dr. James Maas, a psychologist at Cornell University, after he had been "cured." The story of his journey toward mental health is told with a naive honesty that at times can make the reader squirm. The details may be 20th century but the basic ingredients — an implacable and tyrannical father, a hostile world and total loneliness — are ageless. Here are elements of Greek tragedy, biblical parable, and soap opera combined to make a ran of real live fairy tale: it takes a long, long time but eventually the hem prevails. In Kurelek's case this meant overcoming excruciating eye pains, chronic depression, and feelings of depersonalization to become one of the most acclaimed painters Canada has produced.

His troubles started with his father. Metro Kurelek, a Ukrainian peasant who arrived in Canada as a very young man. "Father was nineteen ...," we are told. "His suitcase was light but he brought with him a heavy load of bitterness and suspicion." He arrived in the Prairies in 1924 when most of the land had already been claimed and conditions were horrendous. By four a.m. of the day after he had appeared he was at work. Things gradually improved for the family but were never easy. Being the eldest son, William was expected to help out on the farm. He turned out to be less than his father had hoped for. Time and time he tries, only to be slapped down by his perpetually angry father for being weak and clumsy-indeed, for being a child.

"What bothered me," writes Kurelek, "was that he was so impatient with us not because we were lazy — we weren't — but because we were inexperienced. Perfection, immediate perfection, was simply what he expected." In one particularly grim episode the 12-year-old Kurelek is stuck in the seat of a tractor and "expected to start it, drive it in a straight line, make proper turns at the corners of the field, even service it — all in one day." Needless to say, he failed. His father's reaction is to shake his head and tell his son he is just plain "stupid" and useless as "dog dirt." Kurelek's mother only added to his torment: when not nagging or boxing ears she would attempt to placate her children by telling them they "mustn't be annoyed" with their father. "He's trying so hard and things aren't working out."

School, of course, was one more source of never-ending misery. Kurelek is bullied,

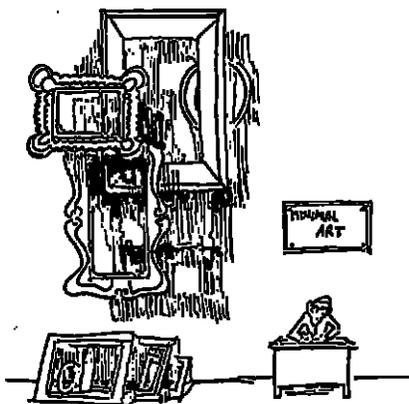
mocked, and ostracized because he doesn't speak English, because he is new, and finally because he is somehow different from the rest. It is little wonder that by the time Kurelek reached his late teens he was ripe for mental collapse. His only relief came from his artistic talents, having was the one thing he knew he could do really well. "Considering my many early failures and feelings of inadequacy," he says, "it hardly needs a Sigmund Freud to understand why I later developed an almost obsessive creative drive."

At age 22 Kurelek took himself to England where he intended to finish his art studies and finally get well. He immediately signed himself into the Maudsley Psychiatric Hospital. Unhappy with the treatment, or rather lack thereof, he moved to another, the Netherne. The chapter in which he describes his stay is entitled "Help Me Please Help Me Please Help." That pretty well sums up his condition. Convinced his case is beyond hope Kurelek made several suicide attempts and then painted one of his "biggest, most pleasant works — a grim going away gift to society entitled 'I Spit On Life.'" Eventually Kurelek agreed "with joy"; to undergo Electro-Convulsive Therapy (ECT), or, as it's usually called, shock treatment. Here is his account of ECT:

Quickly I would lie down and loosen my belt. My collar was already undone, and a rubber mouthpiece was given to me to bite on. All this under a series of rapid-fire orders while male nurses stood on both sides, ready to hold my arms and legs so I'd not fall out of the bed while convulsing. A needle would go into my arm. Another doctor would say, "Hands Up!" I would mire my arms and in an instant the scolding drug would do its terrifying work. Every single muscle in my body seemed to tighten into one big knot. My mouth would drop open as if to gasp in horror, yet even that gasp was cut short by the paralysis.

As ghastly as they sound Kurelek writes of the "blessed relief they afforded [him] from the crushing load of depression [he'd] carried all those years."

The responsibility for Kurelek's recovery doesn't go entirely to ECT, but to his



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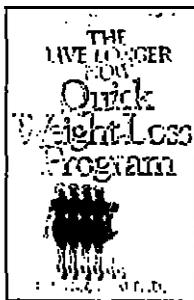
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DIANA AND NIKON
by Janet Malcolm

A collection of perceptive and refreshing essays on the art and substance of photography by the New Yorker magazine's photographic critic Janet Malcolm, evaluating masters like Weston, Winograd, Callahan. Steichen and others by the esthetics of their art, rather than popular appeal. Illustrated with 80 pp photos.

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conversion to **Catholicism**. The "someone" of the title refers to God, whose purpose, **Kurelek** tells us, is a good one. Good perhaps, but not happy or exciting. If **Kurelek** is any indication it's downright dull. His conversion is described in considerable detail but remains curiously flat, as though it enabled him not to better love a world that had treated him so badly but instead to place himself above it.

The blurb on the jacket calls *Someone With Me* "an inspiring odyssey of a boy from an impoverished prairie farm who became one of Canada's greatest artists. ..." That's one way of looking at it I suppose, but **Kurelek** writes the way he sometimes paints; the happy ending is never a part of the picture. We are given in its place the gory details. When **Kurelek's** agony ends, so does the book. The best comment about the style is **Kurelek's** own: "In telling you this story, I will have to be quite open. Actually I have no choice but to be quite open because I'm not a good writer." **Kurelek** believed that by revealing all he could help other disturbed people find peace of mind. Maybe, but somehow I doubt it. He hasn't added anything to our understanding of the various human predicaments. If **Kurelek** said anything it was through his printings; they will endure long after his book has been put down and forgotten. □

**Jesus
wept**

The Israelis: Portrait of a People in Conflict, by Frank H. Epp, McClelland & Stewart, illustrated. 205 pages, \$15.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 3088 6).

By LISL LEVINSOHN

THIS IS THE third book published by Frank Epp during his 10-year peace offensive on behalf of Palestinian statehood. The volume is dedicated to the Jewish people, especially those "of the present still longing to be more deeply understood." An altruistic, but arguable, benefaction.

The book is written over, under, and around 96 taped interviews with Israelis but, alas, "only one third of the words spoken reached the printed page." That's too bad. Based on the blurbs alone, one had hopes that this "unique portrait of a colourful, opinionated people" might go the whole hog. If **Epp** was forced to perform such radical editorial surgery "for the sake of brevity," he also had to accommodate his need for "meaningful categorization," for the sake of neatness. Therefore the suitably tinselled prose was fitted into 10 chapters, variously headed "Settlers," "Critics," "Activists" and so on. In case these titles

confuse unwary readers, Epp provides each chapter with an explanatory preview of what's to come. The introduction for "Soldiers," for instance, promises that people will talk about "their unwanted soldiering and their deep desire for a permanent peace."

But before we can affirm this information for ourselves, we have another obstacle: Epp prefaces each and every interview with not only an obligatory mini-biography but also with a briskly depersonalizing paraphrase of what "this unusual people" really mean to say. This cautionary word-filter is often very muddled. An example: an Iraqi is given 15 printed lines in which to express himself; Epp himself uses five lines to explain when and why the speaker left his homeland for Israel, and then adds: "The Palestinians are also entitled to their rights, but for them a state may have to wait for a more propitious time." Our Iraqi friend, already pre-empted by the author's message, ends his statement this way: "Maybe in twenty or thirty years they will have a state. Now a state would be like a bomb in this area." Propitious time, indeed! Epp persists in this discourtesy, sanitizing, tidying, emasculating what his absent guests really say, for the sake of tastefulness. But perhaps *noblesse oblige*, in Epp's case.

There are many other attempts at hygienic uplift. Only one of the speakers actually "fled" Europe: all the rest simply "left" and "came" or "went" to Israel. The mess-exodus from Europe is delicately referred to as "twentieth-century movement" toward Israel; Jews "felt" persecuted, but, it is implied, never really were. As to scholarship: Epp places the Anschluss (*sic*) in 1934 (*sic*), and translates "Eine alte Frau" as "an elderly woman" (*sic*). Even his beloved charts don't quite add up: two tiny chartlets — one with three figures, the other with two — result in 97 instead of 96. (Epp is very keen on statistics and quantitative summaries.)

Because we must continually plod through Epp's own verbal distractions, and don't know what the speakers were "persuaded" to discuss and just how much was deleted, telescoped, or transposed, we lose belief in the significance of Epp's dialogue with the speakers — just as he did before omitting two thirds of it. Epp's monologue becomes ever more ponderously obvious, while the "portraits" vanish under its weight. These are no longer living human beings, potential friends, speaking to us but merely their utilitarian problems, verbalized and merchandised as book components.

The remarkable epilogue makes it clear that Epp found the production of this book a doubly arduous chore: his heart wasn't really in it. He describes his "rather complete empathy with the Palestinians and an open espousal of their cause" as though the reader could possibly be unaware of it.

Epp, a militant pacifist, is president of Conrad Grebel College, a Mennonite residence and teaching college affiliated with

the University of Waterloo. His 1965 doctoral thesis was titled "Germanist and National-Socialist Influence among Canadian Minority Groups" (one wonders how it came out: pro or con?) Dr. Epp says this work helped lead him into "joining with Canadian Jews in championing righteous causes." After that, there was, apparently, no holding back. The Israelis "helped remove [my] emotional blockages by opening wide their doors and hearts." And furthermore, as he listened "to the spell-binding nature of their stories. . . my boyish heart was melted and intermittently struggled to hold back my tears."

But before we give away too many Brownie-points we read: "The Jews threatened kings and empires. Their ghettos somehow kept shaking the national capitals. The world feared them and they feared the world. This phobia, a complex of most minority groups. . ." We must remember that he's writing this so that Jews may be "more deeply understood" -and a little chicken-soup stereotyping never hurt anybody. When Epp despaired, he was "strengthened whenever I was reminded how much *Fiddler on the Roof* told the story of my own Russian Mennonite people." Only connect!

In one of his chapter introductions, Epp writes: "Religious Jews, it is assumed, are orthodox Jews. . ." This it is assumed — the largest fly in all the unction — is the perfect illustration of Epp's distant, fastidious, finger-tip grasp of the Jewish reality (but he pays so much stiff-upper-lip service to, but uses as a kind of aversion therapy).

Peace in the Middle East — which we know is coming -and its results are not without their ecological traumata, as Epp envisions: "Then the desert will really blossom; the hills and the valleys will dance with joy [perhaps 'to *Fiddler on the Roof* music?], the springs will gush forth unendingly, and the fields will produce abundantly."

Amen. But in the meantime, each of us must resolve his own internal conflicts. Each of us must make his own peace. Dr. Epp must also decide whether to play visionary or commandant. □

Little England made him

Growing Up Stupid Under the Union Jack, by Austin Clarke. McClelland & Stewart, 192 pages, \$13.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 2131 3).

By DAN HILTS

MOST OF US find our own lives an endless source of amusement and fascination. We are often all too eager to share these feelings with others. Sometimes, however, we will

relinquish time to one whose life seems particularly adventurous, well-connected, or profitable, especially if it is told with charm and wit. Austin Clarke's memoirs have some of these ingredients. Their concern is one pivotal year between 1944 and 1945 when the author came of age in his native Barbados.

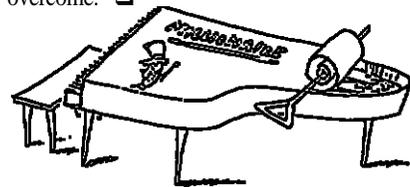
Canadians can certainly sympathize with another country that suffered even greater cultural attenuation under British rule than we did. In Barbados domination was accompanied by a strong measure of racism. Whites lived in unofficial segregation, pampered by black housekeepers and gardeners and guarded by large dogs. Their leisure was also separated from the squalor and excitement of the black communities. Clarke was raised from poverty largely through an education achieved by hard work and financial sacrifice. Without much support from a father who is only rarely mentioned, he was only able to afford school because of the contributions of an aunt in Panama.

The details of family life, the smells and sounds of the island, are caught in sharp focus. The basis of fundamentalist religion is revealed as a search for moral superiority and as an outlet for creative energies. Clarke recalls both the pride in and resentment about being taught in an imitation English private school in a colony that prided itself on being known as "Little England." Even discounting the natural tendency to exaggerate childhood traumas, the schools

he attended sound dreadful. Arbitrary and heavy-handed corporal punishment was common. Learning by rote British history, Latin, and French without any reference to local culture was hardly calculated to make education anything but painful drudgery.

The long-range view of the Second World War from a peaceful tropical island is evocative. The main contact with the fighting overseas was by radio. Churchill's lugubrious speeches alternated with lists of the wounded and dead. The only intrusion was the sinking of a cargo ship by a German submarine, which prompted the whites to head for the hills.

Despite some interesting aspects, however, the book is not compelling reading. It's a bit like looking at someone's random collection of childhood photographs. Most of the individual pictures are composed well enough and some are even arresting, but they lack any sort of unity or coherence. There is also a curious lack of emphasis: most of the vignettes are presented in the same desultory manner. The lack of chronological or emotional structure combined with a point of view that is firmly placed in the past are limitations the book does not overcome. □



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superthriller about an international conspiracy to change the course of history — and the one woman who can stop it.

Crack criminal lawyer Sylvia West is stunned when her husband, John, vanishes without a trace. She digs into his life as a corporate attorney — and into his past — haunted by suspicions about the man she married, lived with and never really knew.

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ACADEMIC PRESS CANADA



The perils of rural living: if the unknown doesn't get you, the smells and weather will

BY THEIR OWN account, Bruce and Barbara Small are allergic to the smell of grass and trees, ragweed pollen, foam rubber, car exhaust, furnace fumes, synthetic clothing, wheat, rye, rice, eggs, milk, tobacco smoke, food preservatives, pint (wet or dry), the vapours from heated television tubes, telephone receivers, and shoe leather. Poor Bruce can't even stand the smell of paper and ink, so he used a computer terminal to write *Sunnyhill: The Health Story of the '80s* (Small and Associates, RR 1, Goodwood, Ont. L0C 1A0, illustrated, 208 pages, \$14.95 cloth). Because of their remarkable fragility, the Smalls built a \$200,000 rural retreat — the Sunnyhill of the title — from which they foray only when equipped with portable air purifiers, charcoal breathing fillers, their own bedding, and meals that they insist on preparing for themselves. Their house has separate dressing rooms so smelly clothes can be kept out of the bedrooms (fumes, including those from birth-control devices,

can ruin their sex life) and special lockers to isolate such contaminated foreign objects as magazines from their living quarters.

The Smalls chose steel and concrete for the construction of Sunnyhill, since they're sensitive to softwoods, some hardwoods, plywood, varnish, glue, urethane, and plastic (the plaster walls were left unfinished), but their book doesn't tell how they survived, among other things, the persistent cement dust that comes from concrete. They're allergic to stove fumes, so they cook (often wild game — no chemicals) in a microwave oven, though Bruce concedes somewhat warily that the radiation, while non-allergenic, might cause cancer. And he fails to explain how they insulated the house — which is curious, since in different chapters he remarks (1) that Barbara is allergic to insulation, and (2) that the house is insulated. These are the sort of quibbles the Smalls will undoubtedly have to tolerate, for after reading their book it's almost impossible not to question the purity of

everything. They seem dedicated to the premise that if you're feeling paranoid it's probably because the whole world really is bent on destroying you.

The dark forces are more mysterious in Hugh Cochrane's *Gateway to Oblivion: The Great Lakes' Bermuda Triangle* (Doubleday, illustrated, 183 pages, \$11.95 cloth). Cochrane begins his inventory of strange occurrences with a history of the Marysburgh Vortex, a sinister presence at the east end of Lake Ontario where ships' compasses reportedly go haywire and their crews inexplicably disappear or fell victim to violent disasters. Stretching geography, as the subtitle suggests, Cochrane links events near the Vortex to similar disappearances in the Bermuda Triangle area of the Atlantic Ocean. Then, with the caveat that these destructive forces seem to move around, he attributes the same kind of influences to unexplained shipwrecks, missing airplanes, and other catastrophes that have occurred near any of the Great Lakes — the 1871 Chicago fire, for one. Inevitably, he also manages to connect such phenomena with sightings of UFOs. A partial explanation for these mysteries is the theory of "undiscovered natural forces" — possibly violent charges of electricity from the earth's core-which, by considerable inference, Cochrane offers as the cause of recent widespread cattle mutilations in the American Midwest. Whew!

The Weather Book. by Reuben A.

RINGS OF STONE

The Prehistoric Stone Circles of Britain and Ireland

Aubrey Burl, with photographs by Edward Piper

More than 800 prehistoric stone circles stand throughout the British Isles. Some are huge megaliths set stark against wild moorland landscape, others small but perfect rings protected by remote valleys. All are striking and disturbing reminders of our mysterious past. Their great antiquity has excited the imagination of layman and scholar since the time of John Aubrey, but today only Stonehenge and Avebury attract many visitors. In this book Aubrey Burl has selected forty of the most significant and lovely stone circles in the British Isles. His vivid descriptions are based on the latest archaeological information and the photographs capture the enigmatic quality and power of these 4000 year old monuments.

256 pp., 150 black and white, 24 colour illustrations, maps and diagrams \$21.50

OXFORD

THE VIKING WORLD

James Graham-Campbell

The Viking explorations by sea reached as far south as the Mediterranean and North Africa, and westwards across the Atlantic to North America, while on land their trade routes stretched from the Baltic to China. Thriving trade centres were established at Kaupang, Hedeby and Birka, where traders from Russia, Ireland, the Rhineland and Egypt came with furs, wine, glass, weapons, silks, spices, silver and slaves. Colonies were set up in Britain, Ireland, France, Iceland, Greenland and Newfoundland and became so integrated with local populations that Viking culture was inextricably assimilated into the native ways of life. At home the Vikings had a settled, agricultural society, a pantheon of gods flexible enough to accommodate Christian deity, and woodcarvers, jewellers, sculptors, runemasters and poets of great skill and originality. This book surveys the Viking phenomenon in all its aspects.

220 pp., 150 colour illustrations \$29.50

THE NORTHERN WORLD

The History and Heritage of Northern Europe, AD 400 - 1100

Edited by David M. Wilson

The Renaissance made us forget our Northern ancestors, yet the contribution of the Germanic speaking people to our civilization between AD 400 and 1100 is as vital as that of the Latin speakers. Who were these men — the Goths and Franks, the Saxons and Celts, the Slavs and Vikings — to whom we owe so much? Why is it that until recently we paid them so little attention? To answer these questions David Wilson has assembled a team of historians and archaeologists from England, Germany, Denmark and Sweden. They have condensed the discoveries of modern research into a concise and readable form, illustrated by a wealth of photographs and diagrams. Separate chapters are devoted to the Germanic tribes, the Anglo-Saxons, the Scandinavians in their homeland, the Vikings overseas, the Celts and the Northern Slavs. In addition there are two chapters bringing the story up to modern times.

340 illustrations. 82 in colour \$49.00

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Hornstein (McClelland & Stewart, illustrated, 95 pgs. 57.95 paper) is an attractively designed meteorological primer that applies scientific observation to such folklore as the old weather rhyme:

*Red sky in the morning,
Sailors take warning.
Red sky at night,
Sailor's delight.*

For example, science has proved the popular belief that lightning fertilizes the soil (it frees tons of nitrogen from the atmosphere), and has debunked the myth of Groundhog Day (groundhogs like to sleep in). There's more about fertilizer and groundhogs in Ken Reeves's *Food Plants: Answers that Work* (Clarke Irwin, illustrated, 168 pages, \$6.95 paper), which gives practical advice, in question and answer form, on subjects as diverse as how to graft fruit trees and ways to control moles in the garden. And 52 more exotic animals — gaur, baboons, and iguanas, among others — are profiled in the National Museum of Natural Sciences publication, *Natural History Notebook No. 3*, by Charles Douglas (National Museums of Canada, illustrated, 53 pages, \$2.00 paper), which concentrates this time on Asian and African beasts.

Last year Totem Books published Grace Deutsch's *Country Fairs of Ontario*, which summarized 229 provincial fairs and listed them alphabetically by region. *Ontario Country Diary*, by Susan Perry and Joe McKendry (Nelson, illustrated, 136 pages, \$7.95 paper) lists more than 600 fairs and festivals, but the descriptions aren't as detailed as Deutsch's and, for some reason, they're arranged chronologically, which

makes it difficult to look up fairs in your area unless you know their approximate dates. A "index" — which Deutsch's book does have — certainly would have helped. Nevertheless, I was able to discover a number of local favourites from my end of the province — the Embro Highland Games, Zurich Bean Festival, and the Western Ontario Steam Threshers Reunion at Brigden, to name three. The directory also includes cursory descriptions of some of the towns and a couple of good recipes for such interesting concoctions as fiddlehead pickles. On the other hand, Deutsch's book is three dollars cheaper.

A pod-natured, but less romantic view of rural life is portrayed by 82-year-old Peggy Holmes, sided by Joy Roberts, in *It Could Have Been Worse: The Autobiography of a Pioneer* (Collins, illustrated, 190 pages, \$13.95 cloth). Young Peggy left England just after the First World War to homestead in northern Alberta with her new husband, Harry. Through sheer perseverance they succeeded where others failed, and acquired an ever-increasing herd of scrub cattle and horses left in their charge by neighbours who had given up, as one put it, "the unequal struggle." Eventually the Holmes family also were defeated, mostly because of the frail health of Peggy's father, who came to live with them, and her difficulties bearing children. Against conventional wisdom, she made pets of all the farm animals, whose care occupied a huge amount of their time, especially in winter. The title comes from a remark made by Harry after a favourite calf had fallen through the ice at a waterhole and died. □

on/off/set

by Wayne Grady

How Canada's 19th-century romantic poets found the slough mightier than the sword

THERE ARE SEVERAL good reasons for noting the publication of W. L. Morton's selected essays. *Contexts of Canada's Past* (Macmillan, 289 pgs, \$9.95 paper). These 19 essays, spanning the years 1946 to 1977, reflect Morton's important contributions to the literature of Canadian history: not only his synthesis of the two dominant approaches in North American history — the Laurentian theme and the frontier thesis — but also, and of more interest from a literary point of view, his probing into the foundations of that perpetually advancing and receding chimera, the Canadian identity.

Morton's 1970 essay, "Seeing an Unliterary Landscape," is particularly useful when one is trying to express, for example, what is wrong with the poetry of Charles Sangster. Morton, who like Sangster grew

up on Romantic and Victorian tracle, writes about his difficulty in reconciling the actual Manitoban landscape, which he saw in profusion all about him ("my West completely envisioned"), with the literary landscape described by early Canadian writers. Romanticism fostered in them, he says, "a deliberate and stylized separation of the authentic actual from the alleged real." He rejected Martha Ostenso and F. P. Grove because they created a "cultural landscape" that was "no more authentic than the Tennysonian" (or, we "tight safely add, the Sangsterian"); that is, the world depicted in their writing was an imaginary one, an unsuccessful transplantation from the literary hot-house of 19th-century Europe rather than a faithful representation of life in the New World. "The difficulty," Morton explains, is "to reconcile a land-



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scape actually seen and realistically experienced with an internal landscape formed by reading." To find a literary vision, in other words, "which fuses the thing seen and the person seeing." Morton also expands this difficulty beyond his own experience, beyond even the regional experience of the Prairies, by noting that "the need to reconcile the actual and the mind's landscape. . . underlies the need . . . of a new country to create its own literature and write its own history."

We have heard all this before, of course, from staunch nationalists who wonder whether Wordsworth, airlifted suddenly into a Manitoba blii, would have stopped counting fence posts long enough to raise his eye soul-smitten to find ("mid dreadful clouds) "an azure disc-shield of Tranquillity;/Invisible, unlooked-for, minister of providential goodness ever night!" The question, naturally, has no answer: but Grove.. though mildly rejected by Morton, did go through such a deracination. and a comparison of the novels he wrote in Germany with those he wrote in Manitoba shows that he did attempt to come to terms with the bicameral dilemma. But Morton was looking for a writer who would write about Canada as well as Wordsworth wrote about England; what he found were writers who wrote about Canada the way they thought Wordsworth would have written about it.

Which brings us back to Sangster. The Tecumseh Press (8 Mohawk Crescent, Ottawa, K2H 7G6), has been reissuing Sangster's work for several years, the recent edition being *Hesperus and Other Poem and Lyrics* (204 pages, 85.95 papa), first published by Sangster in 1860, revised by him before his death in 1893, but not published in its new form until now. Sangster himself is an interesting specimen for the psychological biographer: He was born in Kingston, Upper Canada, in 1822, and from 1837 to 1848 he worked at Fort Henry, making bullets. In 1850 he began working for the *British Whig*, Kingston's newspaper (presumably pushing a different kind of lead) as a bookkeeper, proofreader, and sub-editor, for the next 14 years. During this time he published the only two books of poems to appear in his lifetime: *The St. Lawrence and the Saguenay and Other Poem* (1856) and the present volume in 1860. In 1868 he quit newspaper work and moved to Ottawa, where he took a job as senior second-class clerk in the Post Office, retiring in 1886 because of poor health. Although his two books had been favourably received — Charles Mair called Sangster "the best Canadian poet of the time, in some respects even of time to come" — he published nothing for nearly 30 years, until W.D. Lighthall asked him for submissions for his *Songs of the Great Dominion* (1889). Sangster replied that he

had been too busy at the Post Office to write poems, but that he was then occupied in revising his early books and compiling two new ones. In a letter dated March 12, 1889, Sangster reported that the third volume was complete, that the fourth was well under way, and that:

I can do nothing with volumes one and two until this is done. The "slashing" and "passing thro' the crucible" is pretty much done already. There will when all this is completed be four volumes. Viz

1. The St. Lawrence, etc.
2. Hesperus, etc.
3. Norland Echoes & other Strains
4. The Angel Guest & other Poems.

By 1891 all four volumes had been mailed to Lightball, but for reasons known only to him none of them were published until Frank M. Tiemey began editing them for Tecumseh Press. *Norland Echoes* (117 pages, 84.95 paper) came out in 1976, *The Angel Guest* (81 pages, \$3.95 paper) in 1977, and we now have the revised *Hesperus* with promises of the revised *St. Lawrence* to follow hard upon. "These editions," Tiemey rightly remarks, "will make possible new and thorough appraisals of this important early Canadian poet."

Though Sangster occasionally rose to that mystical fusion of seer and seen of which Morton wrote, most of his poetry suffers from an absolute absence of self or persona. Sangster, like many of our pre-

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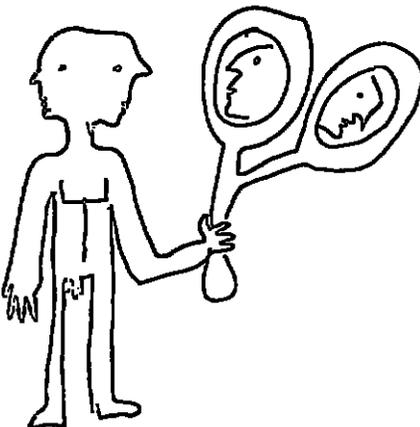
Confederation bards, rarely put himself in his poems. This begins by allowing the poet to describe an event or a phenomenon or even an emotion as though no one were seeing it or having it (particularly in such patriotic spilling as "A Royal Welcome," "Brock," and "The Death of Wolfe."), and ends by allowing him to describe things that no one, not even the poet himself, has ever seen. Consider the opening stanza of "Lost and Found":

*In the mildest, greenest grove
Blest by sprite or fairy,
Where the melting echoes rove,
Voices sweet and airy;
Where the streams
Drink the beams
Of the Sun,
As they run
Riverward
Through the sward,
A shepherd went astray —
E'en gods have lost their way.*

This from the poet with whom Charles Mair shared his patriotic pedestal. "I have constantly advocated the growth of a native Canadian literature," wrote Mair. "Indeed I think Charles Sangster and myself were almost the pioneers in that field." True, Sangster wrote the above in 1856, but he did not revise it in 1891, by which time he had been completely overshadowed by such better poets as Archibald Lampman who, ironically, began working in the same Post Office as Sangster in 1883. Lampman was a better poet partly because of his ability to fuse his own ego with the "authentic landscape" through which he moved. There are no fairies, sprites, or shepherds in Lampman, and when Lampman and Duncan Campbell Scott went on their wilderness treks they did not pitch their tents on "swards" or sing lustily as they paddled-

*"Hurrah for the Rapid! that merrily,
merrily
Gambols and leaps on its tortuous way:
Soon we will enter it, cheerily, cheerily,
Pleased with its freshness, and wet with its
spray"*

—as Sangster's rowers liked to do. Tierney is certainly correct in calling for a re-evaluation of Sangster's role in establishing a national literature, but Sangster, like the superannuated civil servant he was, is unlikely to be promoted thereby: the best he can hope for is a lateral transfer. □



Storytelling

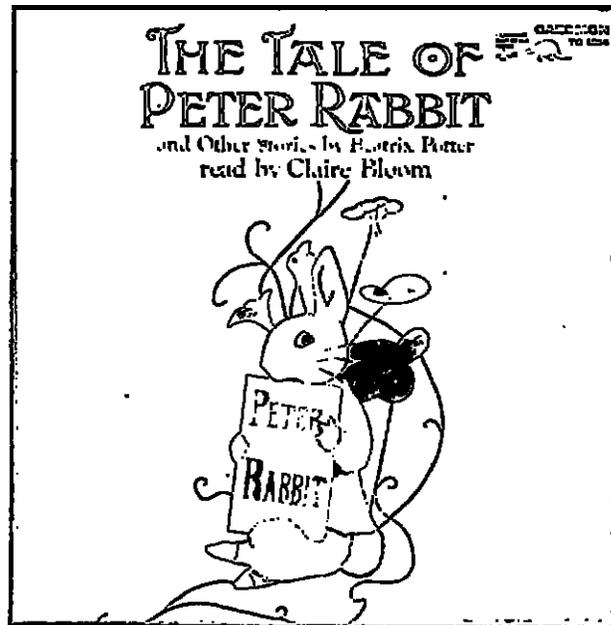
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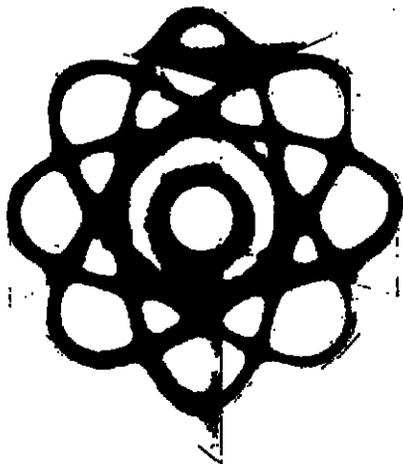
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G. Bruce Doorn, pp. 203, \$8.95

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Of related interest:
Energy Policy:
The Global Challenge
Peter N. Gomez, ed., 1978, xx,
pp. 435, \$16.95

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a thousand words

by Christopher Hume

Coast-to-coast in a puff of smoke, via Banff, the Klondike, and the Bruce Trail

COFFEETABLES should be happy this summer. No matter what, they certainly haven't been neglected. Stating from the left of the ashtray we find **Cigarette Pack Art** by Chris Mullen (Totem. 128 pages. \$9.95 paper). I've always thought that smoking must have been a lot more Fun back in the days before we knew about lung cancer and all the rest of it. Not any safer. just simpler. Anyway, here is a big, bright, happy book that ignores all the warnings and instead explores "the Fascinating relationship between cigarette packs and popular culture over the last century." Although tobacco has been in use For a long time, cigarettes didn't appear until the 1880s. In the beginning many producers refused to take them seriously. "The decision to produce cigarettes rather than smoking or plug tobacco was a brave one," Mullen says. "Much of the credit For this farsightedness must go to James Buchanan 'Buck' Duke (1856-1925) ... the man who did not believe that cigarettes were just a passing Fad." Now that's what I call *farsightedness*. Long before the rest of us, good old "Buck" realized that no one would go bmke overestimating the self-destructiveness of the North American public.

As if cigarettes weren't enough, gold was discovered about the same time in the Klondike. Among the thousands of men and women infected by the ensuing gold fever were Clarke and Clarence Kinsey. They arrived in Dawson City in 1898 and spent the next 10 years mining and taking photographs. The Kinseys lived in the then boom town of Grand Forks. Nowadays all that remains of the town is the photographic record they left behind. Their pictures, collected in **Klondike Lost** by Norm Bolotin (Alaska Northwest Publishing, 128 pages, 514.95 paper), are of excellent quality and provide a wonderful record of life in one of the most remote parts of the world during the "last great [human] stampede." There, in the midst of all that gold-soaked 'mud, people struggled to recreate a semblance of middle-class Victorian gentility. It ended as quickly as it began with only a Few hundred ever striking it rich. Bolotin's text is nicely detailed and richly anecdotal. Good stuff.

The **Banff Purchase** by Peggy Cousineau (Wiley, \$19.95 cloth) is a collection of photographs by seven contemporary Canadian photographers. Photographers who in this case are artists. They *must* be; it says so right on the cover: "Here photography is not just a method of reproduction. It is visual art." (This makes one wonder:

The Kinseys didn't call their work art; does that mean it isn't?) Each of the seven is different and distinct. David McMillan specializes in colourful urban clutter that goes nowhere. Tom Gibson and Charles Gagnon play around a lot with shapes. Orest Semchisen's trip through rural Alberta is curiously devoid of people. There's quite a bit of that in these photos — absolute lifelessness. Even Nina Raginsky's coloured portraits seem a little bloodless. 'Except for the shot of Miss Eleanor Mitchell by the sea — and Miss Mitchell's smile is the happiest thing in the book — you could easily get the impression Raginsky doesn't like people very much. Robert Boudreau's extraordinarily tactile landscapes are spectacular. They make you want to reach out to touch and feel.

From the West Coast comes **The Art of the Earth** by Rom Murray and Walter Dexter (Sono Nis Press, 116 pages, 59.95 paper). she's the poet, he's the ceramist, and the book is for people who love pottery. On one page you see a photograph (a method of reproduction) of a piece of pottery. on the opposite a poem (anything from Keats to Homer). A nice guy would say this is a nice book. I'd say it's dull. So is **Still Standing** by Terry Sunderland (College of Cape Breton Press, 51.94 paper). which consists of 32 pen and ink sketches, with notes, of old Cape Breton buildings — farm houses, churches, cottages, and so on. The drawings aren't up to the standards of the architecture.

Doug Gilroy's **Parkland Portraits** (Western Producer Prairie Books, 127 pages, \$14.95 paper) is a useful item for weekend naturalists. Included are photographs and short descriptions of the flora and fauna typical of central Canada. A good one For kids, but it could have been much better printed.

The biggest offering of the season comes from Oxford University Press with its **Regional Portraits of Canada Series**. Oxford has set itself a hiih standard; the quality is excellent and the price — \$12.95 per cloth-bound book — is reasonable. The five most recent releases are:

The Bruce Trail Country, photographs by Peter Fowler. Having walked parts of the Bruce Trail myself I particularly enjoyed this one. Southern Ontario on a beautiful summer's afternoon, with a few crisp winter mornings thrown in for the sake of accuracy. Makes you want to get up and start hiking.

Ottawa — Our Nation's Capital

photographs by Rudi Haas. Terrible title but more great snaps. Ottawa doesn't really look this good, does it? Haas has fun with the city but isn't above shooting the changing of the guard.

Nova Scotia, photographs by Sherman Hines. Slick. Slick. Slick. Every shot could have been a travel poster for Nova Scotia. Crystal clear with full living colour. Special effects by the province.

Cottage Country, photographs by Peter Fowler. Muskoka, or cottage country, is the locale for all those beer commercials you see on TV. "For 15 years now Fred and the boys have been getting together for a little..." The whole notion of the summer cottage will probably soon be a

thing of the past. This book will serve as a reminder of what it was like.

Newfoundland and Labrador, photographs by John de Visser. Perhaps the best of the bunch. I wished it was a movie. Some of de Visser's photographs have an almost translucent quality. They seem to radiate somehow. Again, every one is a poster.

Oxford isn't through yet. It appears that the series is working its way west. Due soon are Chinook Country, Alberta South, Saskatchewan and The Yellowhead Route. In all, at least 10 more volumes are in the works. This should keep the coffee rabies content for the whole summer. □

first impressions

by Douglas Will

A bracing seascape in black and white, a dull Tom Thomson, and an Ojibwa mezzotint

WHAT I'VE READ of Silver Donald Cameron's previous work has been marked by passion and style. *Dragon Lady* (McClelland & Stewart, 301 pages, \$13.95) puts there talents to work in a thriller that mixes international military-industrial politics with the salt spray and black mm of the Nova Scotia coast. It's a thoroughly satisfying performance.

The story is headline-timely, its global issues (CANDU, for one) convincingly Canadian yet comprehensible and intriguing to a larger audience, its local settings powerfully felt and pictured. A few readers may complain that the dialogue could occasionally be tighter, that elements of the plot could be less predictable. But for me the book's refusal to be slick, to play formula-fiction games, to sacrifice detail and atmosphere to glibness, is exactly the source of its appeal.

At the heart of the novel is a basic opposition between the values of a rooted, closely knit, morally responsible community and those of the alienated, unstable, opportunistically amoral world of freelance nuclear-weapons brokers. It's Nova Scotia (Nectar Harbor — "a human place to live") versus New York — "a horrible nightmare of a television story." Woodstoves in kitchens and canvas on boats and old-time music against technology and hired killers. Love against the void.

There are some uncomplicated but deep and hard-won insights in Cameron's book, and enough suspense, both political and elemental to grab anyone's attention. The scenes of coasting, from Dartmouth to Canso and beyond, at sea and in the villages, are an exhilarating tonic. *Dragon Lady* fills the cup of the local-colour thriller right to the brim. It's a lovely read.

* * *

ROY MACGREGOR does a workmanlike job on the Tom Thomson story in *Shorelines* (McClelland & Stewart, 298 pages, \$13.95), but the novel is too decorous and plodding for my taste. It leaves the impression of writing performed on assignment. There's a tidy plot, solid characters, a turn for images that advertises itself as "literary" — yet the book never seems to rise above competence and snatch a reader away.

Part of the trouble may lie with the novel's structure. MacGregor has chosen to weave his researches and imaginings about Thomson's death, and the Algonquin years that led up to it, with the story of a woman who, 40-odd years later, attempts to discover if she is the painter's daughter. This could work, of course, but MacGregor allows the mysteries of the earlier events to remain unresolved, and fails, until the very end, to make the woman's search for identity much more than a narrative device. The book lacks a true centre, lacks a novelist's true presence.

The best thing in *Shorelines* is the characterization of the two old people. Thomson's fiancée Jenny Turner and her faithful admirer and self-appointed protector Russell Pemberton, through whose memories most of the long-a-go circumstances unfold. MacGregor has a good feel for his location, too. The sense of a small Muskoka town and its changes across the decades is deftly communicated. His attempts to fill out a larger canvas with headlines and lists of contemporary phenomena, however, are no more successful than such gimmicks usually are.

Shorelines moves too slowly. The prose, though capable of some fine scenes, now and again goes flat. MacGregor has the right ingredients here, but he seems to have put



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NATIONAL MUSEUMS OF CANADA

June-July, 1980 Books in Canada 88

them together with an inadequate measure of inspiration. The book's a little dull.

* * *

Shaman's Daughter (Prentice-Hall, 404 pages, \$15.95) is a collaboration between an anthropologist, Rosamond M. Vanderburgh, and a writer, Nan F. Salerno. Their book is thoughtful and moving, fiction that should impress readers with the tenuousness of "modern" civilization's grasp upon the earth.

The novel is a set among the Ojibwa Indians of Ontario's Georgian Bay reserve. It covers 70 years in the life of one woman, Supaya Cedar, and the culture that sustains her even as technology, city temptations, and world wars challenge it. The authors have drawn a superb portrait, avoiding the clichés and stereotypes that always threaten this sort of character. If one can "believe" in Tess Durbeyfield — in her reality as a woman in 8 specific landscapes, climate, and time — one will have no trouble at all with Supaya.

As *Shaman's Daughter* follows its heroine through her trials and joy, her

husbands and children and friends won and lost, it makes fully apprehensible a heritage of ritual and belief that must appear magical to us who aren't part of it. Dreams, visions, premonitions — above all the gift and art of healing — these are the deepest currents of Supaya's being, and the authors blend awe and understanding to make them credible.

The prose style is not, for me, the book's chief reward, but once a reader becomes accustomed to its orotund cadences it can produce some powerful effects. The story really carries the writing along: characterization is clear and deep, and control of tone is exemplary.

Shaman's Daughter might have been a better novel if it were not so exhaustive in its biographical detail, but the anthropological impulse to comprehensiveness has made it, I suspect, a better book. It's certainly richer in nearly all ways — except perhaps in sex and sensationalism — than the mass-market romantic epics about minorities that seem to turn up every other year or so in the United States. This is the real stuff, with a fibre of truth. Cl

two weeks, as a closing date and on that closing date the auction will be conducted by phone. You will usually start with a "floor," that is, the lowest bottom price that you will accept; then houses are phoned in mm and allowed to bid. It is the same as a cattle auction except that the people aren't all in the same room. When you hit a tap price the auction is closed.

BiC: *Shall I be indiscreet here? What might a top price be?*

Atwood: For me? I don't talk about that, but whatever it is, I only get half of it because the hardback publisher takes 50 per cent of my 10 per cent, I'll tell you, though, they don't run an auction on every book. They'll only run an auction if they think there is sufficient interest. I have always split my rights. That is, I've sold the Canadian rights in Canada and I've sold the U.S. rights in the U.S. I think that's a very good scheme for hardbacks, but I'm not at all sure it's a good scheme for paperbacks. For one thing paperback houses in Canada are virtually arms of American publishing companies anyway, so there's not the sense of supporting a native industry. You may just be supporting a branch plant if you split your rights. For another thing, it has consistently hurt me at paperback auctions in the U.S. to split those rights.

BiC: *In what way?*

Atwood: Lower prices. Obviously people would much prefer to buy North American rights and have the Canadian market, which is substantial. So I would say that, financially, that decision has cost me money over the years.

BiC: *What's a commercial success now?*

Atwood: I don't know. For me, success is writing a book that I'm satisfied with and that's the only thing that really counts. Of course, no writer is ever satisfied with any book, so there's no such thing as success for a writer. There's only relative success.

BiC: *Are literary and commercial success compatible?*

Atwood: History has shown there's no predictable relationship between the two. You can be a very good writer like James Joyce, neglected all your life and poor as a church mouse. You can be a Melville and write a masterpiece and have everybody dump on it during your lifetime and not have it recognized until 100 years afterward. So I don't think there's any relationship between the two and I think it's a form of snobbery, both ways, to think that there is.

BiC: *Yet it's true you've come a long way from a beginning in the literary quarterlies to being what is now termed "a hot property" who can command this kind of interest and attention in the U.S. Is what I see perhaps a shift from a literary beginning to this recent commercial success?*

Atwood: You're indulging in exactly the kind of thing we've been talking about. As far as I'm concerned I just write what I want to write. None of my publishers has ever told me what to write. They wouldn't dare. I'm one of those freaky people, a successful literary writer. In England I'm what is called an "up-market writer" as opposed to

interview

by Geoff Hancock

This little Peggy went to market: Atwood on being an international literary success

MARGARET ATWOOD recently returned from a promotion tour to the United States and Britain, where reviews in the leading magazines of her latest novel, *Life Before Man*, have been exceptionally good. In Canada, although the book was a runner-up for the Governor General's Award, the reviews were less enthusiastic. She talked to Geoff Hancock in Toronto about Canadian reaction to her commercial success:

Books in Canada: *I'd like to ask you about the marketing of *Life Before Man* in New York.*

Atwood: Since 1972 my U.S. publisher has been Simon & Schuster so it wasn't an open market sale. The book wasn't auctioned. It just went to my publisher as usual, and the agent and the publisher then agreed on the price. If that agreement had been unsatisfactory, the agent would have taken the manuscript elsewhere. But it was satisfactory and there was high enthusiasm at the company for the book.

BiC: *What about the paperback rights?*

Atwood: The hardback publisher handles the paperback auction. We don't usually have open market auctions in Canada because we have only three paperback publishers and each one is connected to a hardback publisher. As a rule the paperback arm of the publishing company buys the book and pays the author 10 per cent rather

than five, so few authors pass up that deal unless they decide to auction North American rights. In the United States, however, they don't have those kinds of automatic arrangements and there are also more paperback houses than here. What it consists of — and it doesn't really involve meat all — is that the person who handles the paperback rights at the publishing company sends the book out. She sets a time limit, say



Margaret Atwood

bring a "down-marker writer." down-market being Judith Krantz and up-market being Margaret Drabble. I'm an up-market writer who happens to be relatively — not absolutely — successful. We're not talking about *Jaws*. We're not even talking about *The World According to Garp*. We're talking about a book that has been very well reviewed, but it hasn't been reviewed as a piece of commercial trash. I think it's only in Canada that people say things like, "Oh, she's sold out because she's sold more than 15,000 books." Or, "Because it's on the bat-seller list it has to be some kind of junk." This is not the state of affairs in England or the U.S. at the moment. When I'm reviewed there, I'm reviewed as a serious "literary writer." So far nobody in either of those countries has said, "How come you've gone commercial?"

Ble: Why would Canadians be so small in their attitudes toward your success?

Atwood: Well, the obvious answer is that this is a small country in mere ways than one. I don't think Canada is used to the idea that Canadians can be good at anything. They think if you're well reviewed in the U.S. there has to be some kind of hick involved. You've pulled a fast one. That's a tendency in small towns generally. It's also a tendency in small countries. It's a form of provincial distrust, and it's a distrust of yourself. We've thought of ourselves as mediocre for so long. And if somebody else is seen by a foreign country as good, it's a judgement on the rest. I will tell you quite frankly that being Canadian is a stroke against you, especially in England. The *Times* review stated out by saying, "Margaret Atwood has three strokes against her: she's Canadian, she's female, and she's a poet." Looking at the reviews, one might get the impression that this "success" of mine is sudden. But in fact, I've been an underground cult figure in the U.S. for years, partly because of *Surfacing* and partly because of my poetry, which believe it or not, does very well there. So it wasn't a totally sudden thing. □

Notes and comments

WHAT KIND OF people read *Books in Canada*? What do they like and dislike about the magazine? What are their reading habits in general? Where do they come from, what do they do for living, and how do they spend their money? To find out the answers, we enclosed a comprehensive questionnaire in last year's August-September issue and received more than 1,500 replies over the ensuing months. That represents about 5% of our total monthly circulation, a statistically sound base for extrapolation. Our hard-working human computers have now completed an analysis of the data and assembled a profile of the

prototypical reader of these pages. Here it is, with all percentages (other than the first two for gender) representing the total response:

She is female (49.8%) rather than male (48.2%) and somewhere between 25 and 36 years of age (45%). She lives in Ontario (41.7%), probably in a city or metropolitan area (71.4%), owns her own home (51.7%) as opposed to renting an apartment (32.3%), and drives a car (74.9%) — generally owning an economy model (32%) or a mid-size vehicle (22%). She has a university degree (65.8%) and possibly some form of post-graduate education (45.4%), works in one of the professions (54.1%), and enjoys a household income of between \$21,000 and \$30,000 a year (23.6%).

For entertainment, our reader prefers films (98.1%), theatre (86.7%) and classical music (60.9%) to sports events (46.8%) or pop concerts (38.3%). She collects LP records (81.9%) and likes listening to the radio (94.2%). She is more inclined to read books and magazines (98.5%) than watch TV (84.3%). She takes at least one holiday a year (89%), sometimes two or more (43.8%), and prefers Canada (74%) to the United States (31.2%), Europe (28.4%), or a winter holiday in the sun (17.1%). She travels by air at least once a year (84.9%) and often more than once (48.1%). She considers herself a photographer (51.2%) and buys more than 10 rolls of film a year (51.9%). Although she doesn't smoke herself (76.4%), she tends to tolerate the habit in others (39%) rather than actively supporting anti-smoking campaigns (27%).

Altogether, she sounds like an extremely interesting woman, one we would be delighted to meet. Any reader who conforms to all the above criteria should get in touch with the Editor and we'll buy her a drink. We already know she prefers imported wine (78.4%) to the domestic product (56.7%) but likes domestic beer (55.2%) better than foreign brews (27.9%). In liquor, her preference is rye whisky (25.5%) and vodka (23.6%) over malt whisky (16.4%). She also likes liqueurs (43.1%) but will sometimes have a cognac (22.9%).

As for response to the magazine and specific reading habits, the data yielded a wealth of material. Some details:

□ *Books in Canada* is read regularly by 83% of the respondents, most of whom (56%) pick up their copy in a bookstore rather than a library (12.3%), school (4.6%), or by subscription (19.8%). The majority of the copies (57.7%) are read by more than one person and some (3.5%) by 10 or more persons. Our total readership is calculated at 105,000. Nearly 80% keep their copy for the month of issue and 53% keep it more or less permanently. When choosing books to buy, 86.4% find our reviews useful and 78.1% find the publishers' advertisements in *Books in Canada* useful.

□ Nearly 80% — 79.3% to be precise — judged the quality of our articles to be good,

Craft of the Dyer:

Colour from Plants and Lichens of the Northeast

KAREN LEIGH CASSELMAN

Plants and lichens can be used to make rich and subtle dyes. Karen Leigh Casselman describes 150 plant and lichen species which can be used to make textile dyes, explains how to recognize and collect them, and then provides detailed instructions on how to use them. *Craft of the Dyer* is a practical guide — the most thorough available — for weavers, textile artists, and hobbyists. With 12 pages of colour photographs. \$27.50

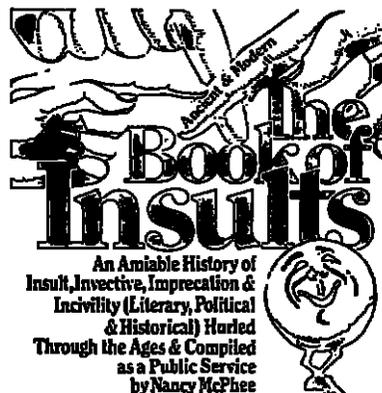


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with a further 17.38 considering them excellent. Aside from features and reviews, the best-liked column in the magazine is easily *CanWit* (9.4%), followed by *The Browser* (4.6%), *Letters to the Editor* (3.8%), *Interview* (3.7%), *On the Racks* (3.6%), and *First Impressions* (1.6%). About 40% of the respondents declined to name a favourite column, the majority of those insisting they liked everything. May they prosper.

□ What should *Books in Canada* be giving readers that it isn't giving now? More of everything, it seems. The most pressing demand: more on books for children and young adults. We have already responded to this by introducing a regular column, *to the Beginning*, that deals exclusively with children's literature. Next, in order of frequency, came requests for more profiles, more information about the publishing trade, more regional coverage, more articles on and by women titers, more interviews, more on non-fiction, more on poetry, more on art books, and so forth — down to more on 19th-century romanticism *la treat*, incidentally, that we're planning for the spring of 1987 to honour the 100th anniversary of Rupert Brooke's birth).

□ All the respondents read at least 10 books a year and 26.5% read more than 100 a year. And our readers are prepared to lay down hard cash: 89.5% buy at least 10 hardcover books a year and 6.3% buy more than 100; 96.1% buy at least 10 paperbacks a year and 12.1% buy more than 100. That suggests our readership as a whole buys nearly one million hardcover books and more than one million paperbacks each year. For 61.4%, the price of a book affects their decision to buy and 52.7% say they "shop around" for the best price on books.

□ What motivates readers to buy books? The vast majority (86.9%) say reviews. Next come friends' recommendations (43.1%), print advertising (20.6%), radio interviews (15.5%), best-seller lists (13.7%), book clubs (11%), and TV chat shows (3.8%).

□ Most readers prefer fiction (60.1%) to non-fiction (45.1%). Biographies interest 10.4% and poetry draws 5.8%.

□ Nearly 78% visit a library at least once a month and 39.2% at least once a week. For book stores, it's 93.3% at least once a month and 46.4% at least once a week. More than 70% frequent a favourite book store. Respondents are about evenly divided

on whether most stores provide an adequate selection of Canadian books: 43.6% say yes and 42.4% say no. A surprising 38.1% prefer to see Canadian books in a Canadiana section rather than on the general shelves (30.6%), while 26.6% expressed no preference.

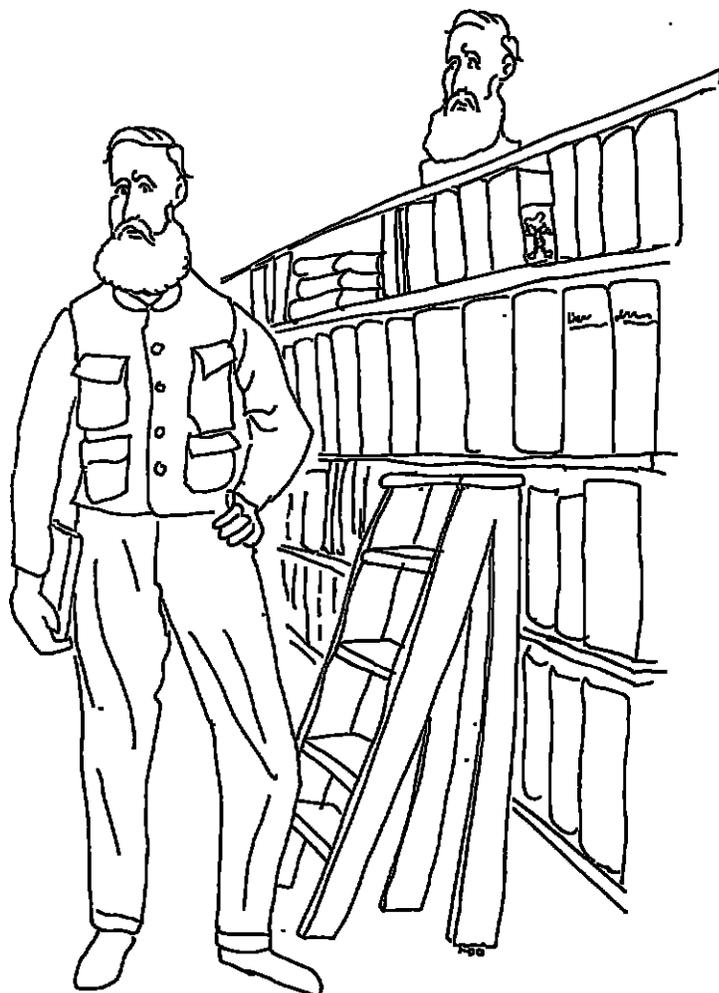
□ Readers obtain the majority of the books they read from book stores (54.6%), followed by libraries (34.9%) and book clubs (2.1%). Roughly 30% of respondents belong to book clubs, but 99.3% of those say they also buy books from stores. And 25.5% of all respondents say book-club advertisements encourage them to patronize bookstores..

□ After Ontario (41.7%), the geographical breakdown of our readership is as follows: British Columbia 17.8%; Prairies 18.7%; Quebec 5.4%; the Atlantic provinces 8.3%; the Yukon and Northwest Territories 0.6%; the U.S. 1.5%; and overseas 0.3% (with 5.5% giving no address).

While slightly more than 50% of our readers belong to the white-collar professions — as might be expected — the remainder are drawn from all walks of life and represent a rich cross-section of Canadian society. A high proportion (10.6%) are students, which pleases us because they represent the literate future of this country. The others include chefs (0.1%) and restaurateurs (0.2%), policemen (0.1%) and clergymen (0.3%), artists (2.5%) and army officers (0.5%), retired persons (1.5%) and the unemployed (1.2%), farmers (0.3%) and actors (0.3%), blue-collar workers (2.7%) and bullion dealers (0.1%). We thank the respondents one and all for the trouble they took to fill out the questionnaire and assure them that the information and opinions they provided will help to build a better *Books in Canada*. □

men and their libraries: 7

by Foo



Letters to the Editor

STIMPSON IMPATIENT

Sir:

Regarding David Stimpson's statement: "This has been my fourth and last year as a judge. I have read 26 first novels and only three of the 26 authors have appeared in print a second time" (April).

Let us consider the mathematics. Given that most writers have to work to survive (this may be one of the revelations of having written a first), a good second novel may take three years of weekends and evenings to produce. Add to that six months finding a publisher, and the one or two years it takes most literary presses to come out with the finished book, and you're looking at a five-year process.

There is also the psychological factor. It little serves a writer's real purpose to publish a second work which doesn't extend the ambitions of the first. To do so is to expose oneself to the critical slaughter. And some time must be taken out for living if one means to write at all.

Your competition has been in existence only

four years? Stimpson's impatience makes no sense to me. He clearly knows little about the creative process itself which, in the case of novelists, has to be one of the most extended demonstrations of the great virtue he lacks. Hate, as in ser. is usually less gratifying than functional. Does Mr. Stimpson want it fart, or good?

Darlene Madott
Toronto

GASPARINI SURREAL

Sir:
Where do you get them? I picked up a copy of *Bic* yesterday and read Len Gasparini's review of *Contemporary Surrealist Prose, Volume 1* (April). The very idea that surrealism "often" rebels against logic and sense was astounding enough but to discover that "when there is no sense, there is nonsense," well it all left me breathless. This man is worth his weight in kidneys. And with such critical insights as "Well, bully for him!", I could hardly think, my had was so full of new perceptions. Also the definition of surrealism was an added gem in the pile.

"Intellectual legerdemain" I love it! Seems Mr. Gasparini belongs to the John Wayne-kiik 'em in the balls — two feet on the ground — you can't fool me school of reality. The next time you review surrealistic work why not get someone who knows something about surrealism?

"One yearns to get back to the real world." Gasparini you're wonderful! You're perfect! You're surreal!

Don Domanski
Toronto

AUGIE NEGATIVE

Sir:
I suppose that as one of the poets in *The Véhicule Poets* (reviewed by Augie Kleinzahler in March) I have the right to reply to what was said in the review. My first reaction to seeing six new books of poetry being reviewed in such a cursory manner was to dismiss the review; after all, each one of these books deserves better than a paragraph or two paragraphs of generalized comments. But what really bugs me is the tone and the whole negative attitude that Augie is taking in the reviews. He isn't actually reviewing the books at all, he is obviously out to settle some old grudges, or out to get some other Montreal poets he doesn't like for whatever reasons.

But isn't this so damned typical of Canadian poetry circles in general? Why can't we deal with the work in question rather than with personalities? So Augie reveals that there are cliques in Montreal poetry, but doesn't this equally apply to Toronto or Vancouver poetry circles? What is he really saying but that he doesn't like personally Fuchs and Norris? And is this really the stuff of criticism? Who really cares that Augie has these grudges? I could take the review apart line by line and show the gross inaccuracies in it; perhaps Fuchs or Norris or Artie Gold will do this just to set the record straight.

Personally, I thank God I live in the country and don't have to deal too often with this childish and immature attitude that pervades so much of Canadian poetry. The grudges and gossip and the cliques are so much hot air; what is important is the work, the poetry, and until we concentrate on that rather than on personalities, we will always be a nation of second-rate poets, because that's what we are. We have a lot of poets in this country but very few that are first-rate. Augie Kleinzahler is just perpetuating that tradition. He's going to have to pay for the bad Karma he's spreading. . .

Stephen Morrissey
Huntingdon, Que.

CanWit No. 54

JUSTASEVERY clown wants to play Hamlet, every politician covets the mass adulation accorded mck stars. Trouble is, the political organizations have such square names. Would the Liberals have done even better last February touring the country as the PETals or The Rolling Grits? Could the Conservatives have capitalized on Joe and Thi Who? What about René et les Ouis or, roaring out of California, Ronnie and the Pacemakers? Now is the time for all rock fans to come to the aid of the parties — provincial, federal, or foreign — and perhaps win \$25 to boot. Address: CanWit No. 54, *Books in Canada*, 366 Adelaide Street East, Toronto M5A 1N4. The deadline is Sept. 1.

RESULTS OF CANWIT NO. 52

READERS WERE ASKED to submit putative author's queries for any research project on a Canadian subject that they or others might wish to entertain. The winner is Barbara Love of Gananoque, Ont., who receives \$25 for this canny inquiry:

For a biographical account of the life and times of Pat II ("The Little Saint"). Irish teacher and trusted adviser and confidant to our 10th Prime Minister, Mackenzie King, I

would appreciate any anecdotes, facetiae, insights, or reminiscences of those who knew, were influenced by, or have had my spiritual communications from him since his demise in August, 1947.

Honourable mentions:

Fat a much-wanted research project by a devoted student of Canada, I am seeking for witness information about Mayor Drapeau, Olympian constructor, specially about hit unusual pregnancy soon before and its issue.

U. Adanaka,
Atsui University
(English Dept.),
Hokkaido.

-C. M. Beattie, Val-Morin, Que.

For my *Puck in Hell: a Psychobiography of Eddie Shack*, I should appreciate meeting or hearing from any survivors of professional encounters with Mr. Shack. Medical reports, coroners' records, old plaster casts, etc., particularly welcome. Am willing to visit any hospital to interview. This project is in no way connected with the unauthorized *Shack-Up!* at present *sub judice* in the courts.

— Barry Baldwin, Calgary

Anyone who can supply biographical information on the early life of author Joyce Castor who galloped off (figuratively speaking) into the sunset a few years ago to write a definitive epic on the settlement of the West and has not been seen or heard of

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since, is asked to get in touch with the undersigned. Childhood scribbles, jottings, or fingerpainting, high-school composition notebooks, or any other unpublished material, whatever its worth, is also welcome. I would, of course, be interested in hearing from Ms. Castor herself, or anyone who knows where she has resurfaced. (Sarnia police have failed to locate her, incidentally.)

R. U. Kidding, Chairperson,
Committee for Research into Major
Influences in the Lives of Lesser
Canadian Writers,
University of Western Ontario,
London, Ont.

— Joan Hennessey, Montreal

* * *

Wanted: memorabilia, diaries, letters, ephemera pertaining to the late Gertrude Arcott-Steben (a.k.a. Gertie Stubbs). Although Lady Arcott-Steben died in 1880 at the family home in Rosedale, it is the earlier historical material concerning the social history of Canada's mining settlements that is required by a private foundation funded by her antecedents. The Board of Directors, which includes senators from both parties, dignitaries of the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches, two Supreme Court judges and suitable representatives from business and the professions, guarantees the confidentiality of any purchase. The collection's repository will not be open to the public.

— Ainslie Peach, Richmond, B.C.

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 1 N4. Phone: (416) 363-5426.

CANADORE COLLEGE. North Bay, is sponsoring summer festival of the arts July 7-25. Courses in Visual Arts, Music, Writing, Dance. Writing instructors will include Miriam Waddington and Gina Mallet. Courses in Creative Short Story Writing and the Practice of Creative Criticism will be offered. Write Artsperience '80, Canadore College, P.O. Box 5001, North Bay, Ontario. P1B 8K9 for information.

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The editors recommend

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

FICTION

- Joshua Then and Now**, by Mordecai Richler, McClelland & Stewart. Richler's back in top form with a novel that operates on a double level of sensibility and imagination — mixing love and vitriol, gossip and prejudice. It is set in and around Montreal's St. Urbain Street. Where else?
- Gentle Sinners**, by W. D. Valgardson, Oberon Press. Set in a Manitoba shanty-town, Ibis is a powerful first novel about adolescence from an accomplished short-story writer who needs lessons from no one in technique.
- Alex Driving South**, by Keith Maillard, Doubleday. A tough, fast-moving tale about a draft-dodger's return to his West Virginia home. Proof that serious fiction can deal with a popular theme without recourse to American Smartass style.

NON-FICTION

- Cries from the Corridor: The New Suburban Ghettos**, by Peter McLaren, Methuen. Dispatcher from a fourth-grade battlefield that make most middle-class concerns about the quality of education seem contemptible.

POETRY

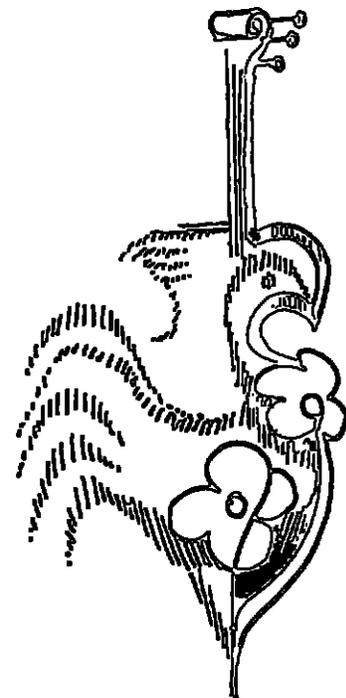
- East of Myloona**, by Andrew Suknaski, Thistle-down Press. Poems about the North — its people and its history — written in the vernacular by one of Western Canada's leading poets.

- Five Hundred Keys**, by Michael Carin, Deneau & Greenberg.
- 4 Minutes to the Job You Want**, by Geoffrey Lalonde, McGraw-Hill Ryerson.
- Gerastin and the Lion**, by Celia Barker Lottridge, illustrated by Joanne Page, Bright Star Children's Bookstores.
- Getting Started**, by Richard D. Smith, R. D. Smith and Associates.
- Ghostcatcher**, by Stephen Guppy, Oolichan Books.
- The Glace Bay Miner's Museum**, by Sheldon Currie, Deluge Press.
- Goldbear and the Three Locks**, by Edward Pickersgill, illustrated by Freddie Potvin, Bright Star Children's Bookstores.
- The Greek Legacy**, by T.M. Robinson, CBC.
- The Hulton Boys**, by Isabella Valancy Crawford, edited by Frank M. Tierney, Borealis Press.
- Heart of a Stranger**, by Margaret Laurence, Seal Books.
- The Heroin Triangle: The Confessions of Michel Mastantuono as told to Michel Auger**, translated by Gaynor Fitzpatrick, Paperjacks.
- How to Invest your Money and Profit from Inflation** (revised edition), by Morion Shulman, Huntig.
- The Idea File of Harold Adams Innis**, edited by William Christian, U of T Press.
- Institutions in Crisis**, edited by Dean Walker, Yorkminster Publishing.
- King King**, by Edward Pickersgill, illustrated by Freddie Potvin, Bright Star Children's Bookstores.
- Leopold Zea**, by Solomon Lipp, Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- A Line Is (teacher's edition)**, G.L.C. Publishers.
- Living on the Ground: Tom Wayman Country**, by Tom Wayman, M & S.
- Locusts**, by Guy N. Smith, Paperjacks.
- Love Affair with a Cougar**, by Lyn Hancock, Seal Books.
- McGill University: For the Advancement of Learning, Volume I: 1827-1895**, by Stanley Brice Frost, McGill-Queen's University Press.
- More Than Survival: Viewpoints Toward a Theology of Nation**, edited by Graham Scott, Canac Publishing.
- Nova Scotia in Your Pocket**, by John W. Prince, Nimbus Publishing.
- Our Own Country Canada**, by Dennis Reid, National Gallery of Canada.
- Power and Change in Canada**, edited by Richard J. Ossenberg, M & S.
- Predilectus**, by Joe Fisher and Peter Commis, Collas.
- Raven's Children**, by Yves Thorelli, Oolichan Books.
- Saltspring**, by John Marshall, Oolichan Books.
- Sara Jeanette Duncan: Novelist of Empire**, by Thomas E. Tausky, P.D. Meaney.
- Singing: An Anthology of Women's Writing from Canadian Prisons**, edited by Bernice Lever and Rickvale Writers Club, Highway Book Shop.
- Snow Seen: The Films and Photographs of Michael Snow**, by Regina Cornwell, PMA Books.
- Treats Nutritional Treats Cookbook**, by Wendy L. Morrison, Detselig Enterprises.
- Undergoing Surgery**, by John A. Macdonald, M & S.
- Up Against It: Children and the Law in Canada**, by Jeffery Wilson, Anansi.
- A User's Guide to Copyright**, by Michael F. Flint, Butterworths.
- Violent Duality: A Study of Margaret Atwood**, by Sherrill Grace, Vehicule Press.
- Weight Control: A Guide for Teenagers**, by Jane Hope and Elizabeth Bright-See, Guidance Centre, Faculty of Education, U of T.
- What Every Woman Should Know About Marriage, Separation and Divorce**, by Lynn King, James Lorimer.
- What Henry Hudson Found**, by John McAuley, Vehicule Press.
- Worker Participation**, by Frank R. Anton, Detselig Enterprises.

Books received

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

- ABC & 123**, by Barbara Wilson, illustrated by Gisele Daigle, Press Porcépic.
- After the Fact**, by Blaine Marchand, Borealis Press.
- The Agonized Life**, by Gaston Miron, translated by Marc Plourde, Torchey Wharf Press.
- Authors and Publishers**, by Lazar Sarna, Butterworths.
- Bonne Route!**, by Morgan Kennedy et al., D. C. Heath.
- Breakdown or Breakthrough**, by James C. Paupst and Toni Robinson, Gage.
- Canada: An Economic History**, by William L. Morr and Donald G. Paterson, Macmillan.
- The Canadian Alternative**, edited by Hedl Bourneol, ECW Press.
- The Canadian Legislative System** (Second, revised edition), by Robert J. Jackson and Michael M. Atkinson, Macmillan.
- China Hand**, by Bruno Skoggard, Seal Books.
- Cock-eyed Optimists**, by Dorothy O'Connell, Deneau & Greenberg.
- The Double Deal**, by Maurice Lamontagne, Optimum.
- The Emergence of Social Security in Canada**, by Dennis Guest, UBC Press.
- European Summer Music Festivals**, edited by M. Geddes and A. Tebbutt, Concert Connection.
- The Final Heresy**, by Robin Woodsworth Carlsen, The Snow Man Press.



Of the books published in 1979-80 which could influence public policy 9 are ours.

1 Questionable and illegal acts committed by the RCMP in the name of "national security" suggest many policy and managerial questions related to the operation of the Security Service and the RCMP as a whole. This book presents an analysis that will facilitate the resolution of these important policy issues.

The RCMP and the Management of National Security *Richard French and André Béliveau pp. 79, \$6.95*

4 Current debates on federalism and regulation have failed to consider this important question — how should regulatory responsibility be distributed among the various levels of government that comprise Canada's federal system? This study is a useful contribution to discussions on federal/provincial relations, regulatory policy, and the role of regulatory agencies.

Federalism and the Regulatory Process *Richard J. Schultz pp. 92, \$1.50*

7 The world's conventional energy supplies have become an endangered species. The nations of the world whose growth and prosperity depend on such supplies must embark on a profound and critical assessment of national priorities. This collection of essays offers a sound framework for such an assessment, and stresses the necessity for international cooperation in restructuring patterns of energy consumption.

Energy Policy: The Global Challenge *edited by Peter N. Nemetz pp. 435, \$16.95*

2 Canada must choose between two approaches for solving its current balance of payment and import-export problems. The author of this study takes the structuralist approach, and argues that the monetarist attitude that dominates official Canadian policy will create additional problems and leave the current ones unsolved.

Canada in the New Monetary Order: Borrow? Devalue? Restructure! *Michael Hudson pp. 117, \$6.95*

5 This study of federal government trade decision-making focuses on tariff and non-tariff barriers to imports. It analyses how trade decisions were made by the federal government between 1988 and 1979, by testing several decision models against information gathered in interviews with politicians, public servants and private citizens.

Imports and Politics *David Protheroe pp. 219, \$8.95*

8 The Canadian nation faces a challenge to its identity that has grown from both internal and external pressures. Regional disparities and separatist movements have created an internal crisis paralleled by our struggle to assert a national identity independent of American influences. These essays discuss both issues, recognizing that Canada's future profoundly affects the future of all North America.

The Future of North America: Canada, the United States, and Quebec Nationalism *edited by Elliot J. Feldman and Neil Nevitte pp. 378, \$7.95*

3 The role and practice of government intervention in the country's economy is a subject of continuing controversy. The future of Canada's nuclear industry is still unclear, as nuclear policy has become the focal point of the debate on the management of high-level technology. This analysis sheds much-needed light on both issues.

Government Intervention in the Canadian Nuclear Industry *G. Bruce Doern pp. 203, \$8.95*

6 The current impasse in treaty rights negotiations has been attributed to the fundamentally different perceptions of native people and government representatives regarding the meaning and implications of those treaties. This collection of essays and interviews is designed to promote a common understanding of the "spirit" of the treaties.

The Spirit of the Alberta Indian Treaties *edited by Richard Price pp. 202, \$8.95*

9 Municipalities have long been at a disadvantage in negotiations with provincial and federal governments because of a lack of formal powers and adequate procedures for meaningful involvement in decision-making. The authors of this book identify problem areas in intergovernmental relations and show how municipalities can participate more effectively in intergovernmental decision-making processes.

Bargaining for Cities: Municipalities and Intergovernmental Relations, an Assessment. *Lionel D. Feldman and Katharine A. Graham pp. 143, \$10.95.*

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