

BOOKS *in* CANADA

and national review of books

VOLUME 3 NO. 8

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WANTED



**CHARLES
TEMPLETON**

FOR
EXECUTIVE
KIDNAPPING &
CONSPIRACY
TO THRILL



**PATRICK
WATSON**

FOR
ECOLOGICAL
FASCISM &
HARD BOILED
PLOTTING



**RICHARD
ROHMER**

FOR
AMERICAN
IMPERIALISM
& ATTEMPTED
SUSPENSE

BY: ABRAHAM ROTSTEIN, MOL WATKINS, LEONDO BERGERON,
GREG GURNOE, EDGAR Z. FRIEDENBERG

TWO POTBOILERS GOTO MARKET

One's by Dick, the other by Chuck;
Chuck's has flair but Dick's is muck'

Exxoneration, by Richard Rohmer, McClelland & Stewart, 213 pages, \$8.95 cloth.

The Kidnapping of the President, by Charles Templeton, McClelland & Stewart, 237 pages, \$8.95 cloth.

By PAUL STUEWE

THE THRILLER OR "novel of suspense" has become one of the hardier perennials of Anglo-American publishing, and now several indigenous varieties are available for cultivation by those who would have us *Read Canadian* all the way across the board. The notion that a national literature ought to encompass potboilers as well as poetic cycles makes a certain amount of economic sense - if we're going to read them, we might as well reap the rewards of writing, producing and selling them — and there is always the chance that an Ambler, a Chandler or a Simenon may emerge from the swelling ranks of Canadian thriller writers. There are already signs, however, that in venturing into the realm of the mass-market best seller we are also importing some rather dubious techniques of hoopla and ballyhoo, of star systems and cults of personality, that are going to have a radical, and probably undesirable, effect upon the health of our national literary life. Which brings us to the selling of *Exxoneration* and *The Kidnapping of the President*.

The key to marketing any new product is publicity, and since both Rohmer and Templeton are public men, they have obvious advantages (compared with John Doe) in terms of general awareness of their names and familiarity with the use of the media for publicity purposes. Thus they are particularly well suited to contribute to that bandwagon psychology, that "Everybody's reading it why aren't you?" syndrome, resulting from the co-ordinated blitz of newspaper reviews, radio and TV talk-show appearances and, yes, a *Books in Canada* notice, all dedicated to flogging the largest number of books in the smallest amount of time. The

Why was this book published? ... Given the gross ineptitude of Exxoneration, one must presume that [Rohmer's] public renown translates directly into profitable publishability.

question is, of course, to what extent their status as "personalities" affected McClelland & Stewart's decision to publish their work; and while I have no way of measuring this influence, the evidence suggests that at least one of these books would never have seen the light of print if its author had been a less conspicuous public figure.

In the case of *Exxoneration*, indeed, one may hope that the publisher has overestimated the general reader's capacity for the digestion of tripe. I don't think that I have ever, with the possible exception of some "vanity press" titles, encountered a book so clumsily and gracelessly written, so completely dead to the nuances of language.

Exxoneration's plot, which descends from the plausible (U.S. demands our natural gas) to the unlikely (Canada defeats U.S. military invasion) to the preposterous (Canadian technocrat outwits U.S. political and industrial establishment), might in other hands constitute a framework for some amusing fantasy or rousing action; but given Rohmer's inability to provide anything more than the most stereotypical details of characterization and pictorial background, the endless parade of nondescript declarative sentences soon submerges the reader in a miasma of apathy and despair. To invert the standard "pre-publication rave review," once I picked up *Exxoneration*, I could hardly wait to put it down.

So why was this book published? Well, Rohmer has one bestseller (*Ultimatum*) to his credit, he had a widely publicized tiff with the Canadian edition of *Time* over the inadequacies of their "Best Sellers" list, he maintains a highly visible public profile through his work for various Royal Commissions and other political, professional and business associations, and last month he even made the entertainment pages of the *Toronto Star* by taking a potshot at *Mordecai Richler*. He is, in other words, a man who could presumably find a publisher for a rewrite of the telephone book; and given the gross ineptitude of *Exxoneration*, one must presume that his public renown translates directly into profitable publishability.

Templeton's *The Kidnapping of the President* is a much superior entry in the thriller sweepstakes, fast-paced and intelligently structured and obviously the product of a good deal of hard work. An ingenious and only medium-fetched kidnapping scheme is developed from multiple but complementary viewpoints, and a major subplot concerning political morality is deftly woven through a complicated narrative. Once its formal satisfactions have been acknowledged, however, it must be said that some of *The Kidnapping of the President's* contents are a good & all less gratifying, and that the book tends to ignore some inconvenient truths in its rush to neat and economical judgment.

Templeton's protagonists fall into two distinct categories: calm, capable, fundamentally decent American politicians; and fanatic, maladjusted, fundamentally disturbed Latin American revolutionaries. Templeton could not, of course, anticipate the publishing of the White House tapes and the revelation (to some) that venality and narrow self-interest were no strangers to high places, but his Noble Pillars of Democracy would ring untrue even if the Watergate scandal had been "contained." His revolutionaries, similarly, appear to have been abstracted from sociological studies of "deviant" youth, with no thought given to the possibility that revolution might be a reasonable alternative for Latin Americans faced with corrupt, authoritarian regimes. The reality of both American and Latin American political life is much more complex than Templeton is willing to admit, and his choice of monochromatic character traits for the forces of Good and Evil keeps *The Kidnapping of the President* from becoming anything more than highly competent entertainment.

Which is, apparently, all that Templeton intended it to be. He told the *Toronto Star*: "I wrote it to learn how to write a book. Now I'm going to sit down seriously and write the best book I can possibly write." Commendable honesty, but once again we should be aware of the pitfalls inherent in the assumption that authors "established" in some field or other are the logical candidates for literary stardom. The point, surely, is that most writers learn their craft without benefit of having their fledgling efforts published and marketed, and the world is undoubtedly a better place for it. As a means of keeping it that way, let's award an ear and a tail to *The Kidnapping of the President*, a bang and a whimper to *Exxoneration*, and a loud bull roar to the notion that authorship is the last refuge of a celebrity. □

UP THE WALL IN SUPER-8

Zero to Airtime, by Patrick Watson, Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 256 pages, \$6.95 cloth.

By JON RUDDY

PROFANITY. OBSCENITY, crudity. more profanity — all in a brief first paragraph. And still on the first page: "...one of those long afternoon explorations that take you off the bed and across the floor and up the wall and over the furniture, wet and laughing and crying and singing and crazy and sad. . ." Gosh! Patrick Watson, the talking head, has written a hardboiled media thriller.

Watson's protagonist, Joe Ireton, is a leg man in seven-league boots, a freelance who zips around the continent in a Twin Comanche fitted out with film processing tanks in the wings. On the ground he's handy with a pistol; he brings down a helicopter with one shot. In the air he could thread a needle with a nose wheel; he zaps the would-be assassin of a Presidential candidate by knocking him over with his undercarriage at Dulles International Airport.

When he isn't wet and laughing and crying and singing; and crazy and sad. Ireton is into the right things: trumpeter swans and prison reform and native rights and nationalism and the conservation of energy resources. It would be churlish to sketch the plot — although the identity of the major villain is revealed to the alert, or even sleepy, reader in chapter four.

The author has flown off tangentially from a couple of recent news stories, one concerning a mysterious "ecology saboteur" in the U.S., the other an apparent tampering with the watercourses around Hudson Bay. He postulates a sinister political movement undermining a weak U.S. administration and encouraging Quebec separation and manifest destiny. The good Americans want to buy our water; the bad ones want to take it. Ireton exposes everything on film for a documentary that makes *This Hour Has Seven Days* look like *Country Calendar*.

In order to save all that wafer, save a band of Indians, and

Not since Pussy Galore have we been confronted with such a relentless amalgam of virtues and delicious vices.

save the country-well. jeez, a fellow needs a friend. And just as Watson's exposé ("the biggest, darkest, dirtiest conspiracy of the half-century") is a producer's fantasy, his heroine is a middle-aged man's fantasy. Not since Pussy Galore have we been confronted with such a relentless amalgam of virtues and delicious vices. *Véronique*, a noble Indian naiad out of the pages of *Hiawatha* as revised by Arthur Hailey and John D. Macdonald, ties a mean plane, makes love up the wall. has an ever-ready camera (she films the hit-and-fly episode at Dulles through the windscreen), stares death in the face with luminous dark eyes, and never opens her mouth until the author remembers she's around and pulls a string.

Peripheral characters are similarly idealized. A. Howard Auerbach, "Secretary of the Interior in a U.S. administration that otherwise stank of corruption," is the kind of guy at whom you'd like to shout: "Get thee to a monastery." Apart from anything else, he paddles a canoe at about 90 miles an hour and is certainly the only character in recent fiction who has tried to stop a seaplane with his hand. Carl Ghostkeeper, a wise old Indian chief, is much too inclined to intone, "*Kiwache-yea-me tinawa tapisoc dotaymac!*" — which Watson carefully translates as, "We welcome you as brothers!" Just as I thought.

The author is good whenever he's writing about using a Super-8 camera, getting politicians to talk, flying a small plane, cloudscape, the Canadian Shield, and storms. He is fairly awful on sex. The sexual climax of *Zero to Airtime* reads (this is a separate paragraph, it goes without saying): "Enwrapped, delivered, found." Uh-huh.

The plot is ingenious but scarcely challenging, since every twist and turn is preceded by a road sign. When a character says, "After that we ... they decided to go underground," the fact that he's an incipient baddie is as obvious to us students of *Ironsides* as an open seacock to the captain of a submarine. When the threatened hero has a friend who's a look-alike, we *Late Show* buffs know he's going to get his, and turning the pages until he does is (as Joe Ireton would put it) a fucking bore. □

THE ARCTIC GAS ANTIMASQUE

The Mackenzie Pipeline: Arctic Gas and Canadian Energy Policy, edited by Peter H. Pearse, *A Carleton Contemporary*, McClelland & Stewart, 229 pages, \$4.95 paper.

By MEL WATKINS

TO BUILD 'OR NOT to build? Once upon a time it was railways, and this country went hog-wild. Now it is mind-boggling energy projects and we seem about to do the same.

But history never quite repeats itself, and this time round we have experts galore. from economists to environmentalists to sociologists, to help us decide what to do. Predictably, a substantial number work as hired guns for the big developers; to those familiar with the contemporary folkways of the academic-cum-consultant, this does not surprise.

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HELMETS &
AIRMAIL
STAMPS**



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A collection of the thoughts and observations of Canada's best-known Indian, a wise and respected observer of the vagaries of human nature who says: "I am a chief but my power to make war is gone, and the only weapon left to me is speech. it is only with tongue and words that I can fight my people's war."

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Clarke Irwin, the national publishers

What is surprising is that there appear to be a growing number of academics **who relate** to the older intellectual **tradition** of being critics of **society**, and hence of the ruling **interests** and **their** nefarious schemes **to rip** off **ordinary** folk.

This book is produced by some dozen such **people, about** half of whom am on the **faculty** of the University of **British** Columbia. The authors include **the** distinguished resource economist Tony **Scott** and the brilliant young **econometrician** John **Helliwell**; if I single **them** out it is in **part** because, being an economist too, I **must hang** my head in shame that my colleagues **at the** University of Toronto, on **the** whole less **distinguished**, have tended **rather** to sell **their** souls to Arctic Gas.

On the **10 chapters** in the book, **Earle** Gray, the top PR man for **Arctic** Gas, gets one **to** espouse the **case** for **the** pipeline. Lest anyone **think** this is unfair, let **it** be recorded immediately that the best **Gray** can do is tell us about all the studies **Arctic** Gas has commissioned, **at** a cost of millions, **but** the results of which we **are** asked to accept on faith.

The **rest** of the book is more informative. Its **core** consists of a powerful critique of **the** view that **the** Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline is in Canada's economic **interest**. The central **concept** employed by the authors is that of "economic **rent,**" or **surplus** after all costs, as popularized by Eric **Kierans**. Key questions asked, and answered, are: How big **are the** rents that will accrue from gas (and oil) production? How much of these **rents** will **accrue** to Canadians; as **revenues** **to** government **from** royalties, **rather** than to **Americans** as shareholders in the big energy companies?

Paul Bradley looks at **"the** major players" in **the** Mackenzie Delta gas play. The U.S. needs new energy **sources,**

and is ready and able **to** grab, but has **definite alternatives** to high-cost **Arctic** gas. The companies, notwithstanding all their poor-mouthing about **the** risks of **frontier** development, **stand** to make bundles of money well in excess of any normal **return** on capital. (John **Helliwell**, in **research** completed since this book appeared, shows that the pipeline itself **promises** to generate substantial rents as well.) As to the Canadian government, its interest has demonstrably not been in capturing **rents, but** the **exact** opposite, namely concessions and incentives **to the** companies to speed up the exploitation of Northern resources.

Lawyers Andy Thompson, now Chairman of **the** B.C. Energy Commission, and **Micheal Cromellin** dramatically document the **latter** point. The **proposed** pipeline would **draw** half the **gas** needed from **the** Delta and half from Alaska. Over a 10-year period, the **Government** of Alaska would **collect** \$202 million **more** in **royalties from production** of the Alaskan half than would **our** government from Delta **producers**. And by global standards, Alaska's **royalty** rates are **not** that high.

Ernst Berndt shows that the demand **from** energy is cut back more by higher prices than **the** National **Energy** Board allows for in its forecasts; **the inference** is clear that non-**frontier supplies** may be more adequate than **NEB** forecasts indicate. Milton Moore, in a lucid analysis of Canada's energy options, sees the **real** choice as being **between** building the pipeline now with Delta gas exported to the U.S., and **postponing the** pipeline until Delta gas is needed in Canada. While **Arctic** Gas has always claimed that some gas was **urgently** needed in Canada — and has **lately** been raising that amount in an almost hysterical way — Moon



Ten years ago there was little interest in "Canadiana" and even less interest in "Canadian Clocks". Since the celebration of Canada's one hundredth birthday in 1967 the overall interest in "Canadiana" has grown extensively. At the same time the growth in the hobby of collecting clocks has been nothing short of fantastic.

Recently many books have been written on various aspects of "Canadiana" but until the publication of this book there was little information avail-

able about "Canadian Clocks and Clockmakers". In fact few people realized that clocks were actually manufactured in Canada and that there are numerous examples of beautiful Canadian clock craftsmanship on display on museums across the country.

With this book the author has made a substantial contribution to the recognition of the clock industry in Canada.

506 pages, hard cover \$24.95



Also available: CLOCKS, The Arthur Pequegnat Clock Catalogue 1904-28.

52 pages, soft cover \$4.50

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and others in this book show that there is no Canadian need until the late 1980s. This argues to postpone, for as Moore puts it "the benefits to Canadians from gas exports are negligible."

But it is John Helliwell, with his computer simulation of the Canadian economy, with and without the pipeline, who delivers the real body blows to Arctic Gas. For two years Messrs. Welder, Horte and Gray have run about the country selling their pipeline with big talk about jobs and solving the unemployment problem. Helliwell shows that, being such a massive project, it will indeed create a boom; but once construction is completed, there will be, in the nature of the case, "a large induced slump." Anyway, if creating jobs is the object of the exercise — and, of course, it isn't for Arctic Gas, which can be assumed merely to be engaged in the straightforward pursuit of profits — then, says Helliwell, the Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline is "inefficient and unwieldy as a make-work project."

In the final chapter, Helliwell's model is put to work by four of the authors to quantify benefits and costs from the national perspective. The major conclusion, as a kind of summary of everything in the book except Gray, is that "Canada's national interest lies in postponement of Northern pipeline construction until the 1980s." They find no net economic benefit to Canadians from developing Delta gas in this decade. In its claim to the contrary, Arctic Gas fails, among other things, to allow for the elementary fact that Canadian consumers will suffer real income losses from buying high-priced gas while the rents, which are indeed large, either flow out of the country or are ploughed back into developing yet more high-priced sources.

Further, the authors show that Arctic Gas is even wrong when it claims that Delta gas must be exported to the U.S., and Prudhoe Bay gas piped through Canada, for Canadians to get maximum benefit in the long run. In the face of the competing threat from Alberta Gas Trunk and its so-called Maple Leaf line — which surfaced just a few weeks ago — Arctic Gas has been skating away from the first claim. Apparently it should abandon the second as well, but then, of course, there would be no justification for its particular proposal.

Additional arguments for postponement can be adduced from consideration of the uncertainty of impact on the fragile Northern environment and the certainty of a near social disaster for native people, and the book touches both of these bases as well. Everett Peterson, a pipeline expert until recently with Environment Canada, judiciously examines the evidence on the first matter. For this reviewer, his most striking observation is that adverse environmental

I must hang my head in shame that my colleagues at the University of Toronto ... have tended to sell their souls to Arctic Gas.

impact assessments never stop projects and don't even lead to significant modifications to minimize bad effects; there is a clear lesson here for economists should they imagine that merely telling it like it is makes much difference.

The respected industrial relations expert and labour historian, Stuart Jamieson, contributes the weakest chapter of the book; he deals with the impact on native people. Though

WATCH OUT FOR CHARLIE'S GANG

CANADIAN ENDANGERED SPECIES

by Darryl Stewart

Canadians may get another chance to preserve the beauties of her native creatures - but with 80 species on the endangered list, this may be our last chance.

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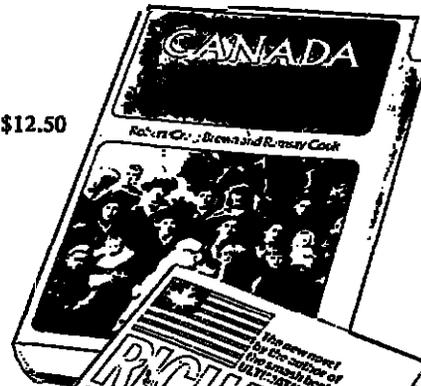
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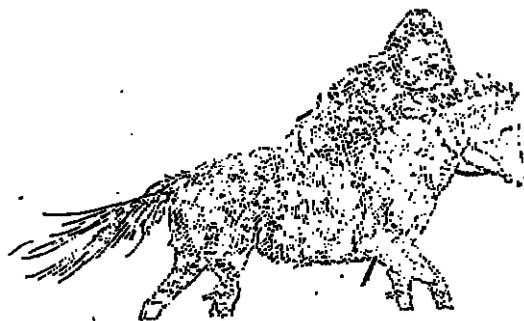
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clearly sympathetic to the lot of native people, he gets no further than advocating greater government effort to prepare people for the impact, and then ameliorate the **effects** when they come. No mention is made of the increasing political consciousness of native people in the Mackenzie Valley and of the potential for a new development strategy **that** lies in their land claim.

The chapters in the book were completed in **the summer of 1973**. Arctic Gas's pipeline is now distinctly more problematic. But should Arctic Gas go **belly-up** tomorrow, there **will** be more than **enough** left to **worry** about. The Maple

Leaf line; by permitting Alberta to **use** up its gas in **petrochemical** production for export to the U.S., may be as great a **disaster** as the Arctic **Gas** line and, being wrapped in the flag, more difficult to fight. The greatly intensified oil play in the **Beaufort** Sea promises a yet more deadly ball game, with even **greater** adverse impact on the native people of the Delta and the Arctic ecosystem.

Certainly, none of the aspersions cast on experts in this review should be read as denying the hope that the UBC economists and their associates hang in there to expose **these** new threats. □



Zuckerberg



ONWARD AND UPWARD WITH SINCLAIR ROSS

Sawbones Memorial. by Sinclair Ross; McClelland & Stewart, 140 pages, \$7.95 cloth.

By KAREN MULHALLEN

THIS IS SINCLAIR ROSS's fourth **novel**. Its publication is a major **literary** event. In a rich year in Canadian letters **Sawbones Memorial** stands out for its flawless technical **accomplishment**, its range of human experience, its broad and gentle **humour**, and its genial intelligence. It is 33 years since Ross's first novel was published and in that time **reviewers** and critics have frequently said that *As For Me and My House* (1941) was "the greatest **Canadian** novel." Those traders who **are** given to making such awards will, I believe, now be forced to **re-assign** the prize to Ross's latest work. **Sawbones Memorial** will also necessitate a **re-evaluation** of Ross's whole literary career and, it's to be hoped, a more sympathetic reading of *The Well* (1958) and *Whir of Gold* (1970). Finally, **Sawbones Memorial** should deflate patently absurd critical positions that claim Ross's

talent **lies in being a short-story** writer rather than a novelist. The wholly realized world and the deep **presentation** of character that are the mark of his short stories are surely the sign of the novelist. Perhaps now his critics will say Ross's **short** stories are really little novels in disguise.

In examining the notes I had made for this **review**, I found among them the phrase **tour de force** and I realized that I had **already** used the term, only a year ago, in reviewing a **novel** by Helen **Weinzweig** called **Passing Ceremony**. **There** are superficial similarities between **Sawbones Memorial** and **several** novels whose form gives the reader the sense that characters **are** disembodied, cut off **from** space and time. Such "chamber music" novels include **Passing Ceremony**, William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*, Virginia Woolf's *The Waves* and Sheila Watson's *Double Hook*. Each of these is quite unlike the other, yet they have a family resemblance, and each has been called a **tour de force** because in each, perhaps, the author has gone against convention and created a world **in which characters reach** out to one another from deepest isolation and **silence**. But only in Ross's novel **Sawbones Memorial** do **the characters**

actually touch one another in both time and space, through generations and over continents, and one **realizes**, with a **snack**, that this communication, this network of contacts, is achieved because *Sawbones Memorial* is **presented almost** wholly through dialogue, through conversation.

Sawbones Memorial unfolds in 40 unnumbered episodes; and gentle humor, and its genial intelligence. It is 33 others consist of two speeches, an announcement of **refreshments**, conversations between two, **three** or many characters, and a superbly rendered singsong in which each **those readers who are given to making such a fuss** entitled "Redwing." Each section or episode is interconnected by the **overlap** of character, theme, and plot, and by the **interpolation** of snatches of dialogue and overheard conversation. The interior monologues, played in five keys, follow naturally after **several** scenes in which the town of Upward and four generations of its inhabitants are **presented**.

The novel begins with a dialogue between the titular hem, **75-year-old** Dr. Hunter, and his oldest friend,

*In one sense **Sawbones Memorial is a memory theatre - a theatre for the dead, the living and the about-to-be-born.***

77-year-old Harry Hubbs. Their conversation is harsh, even violent, as Harry Hubbs salaciously demands to know of Dr. Hunter's conquests of "rusted up" farm women over the past 45 years. This almost repulsive beginning **forces** the reader to make a decision to enter the novel. Once the decision is made the reader is caught up in this world of continual conversation.

The novel is set on the evening of April 20, 1948, in the yet-unopened new hospital, The Hunter **Memorial**, in Upward, Saskatchewan, on the birthday of Dr. Hunter, on the 45th anniversary of his arrival in the town, on the eve of his retirement and departure, and on the dedication of the hospital to his memory. Within this tight, single room, this **Memorial** and several novels whose titles give the reader gather to eat, gossip, and perform. Near the end of the novel one of the **chief** characters, Duncan Gillespie, addresses the townspeople; he tells them the dedicatory plaque is not yet **memories** do."

In one sense *Sawbones Memorial* is a memory theatre — a theatre for the dead, the living and the about-to-be-born. Dr. Hunter discovers the hospital's name early in the novel Dr. Hunter discusses the hospital's name with the Rev. Mrs. Joyce **Grimble**: "That's what some of them call the cemetery, too, The Hunter **Memorial**. I suppose I've done my share." **Birth**, life, and **death** find their appropriate setting within the hospital whose shaman is the wise, tolerant, humorous, and very human Dr. Hunter. He has seen into the heart of the town, presided at its most important rituals, and, out of the tragedy of his **own** impoverished **marriage**, found love for others. Hence while "memories matter," life is more important. Dr. Hunter leaves behind him **the continuing gift of life** — Benny, **Duncan** and Nick are all his sons; each must **learn** to put away the past, to come "back where he belongs." So, too, Dr. Hunter's monologue terminates the novel with words that promise a **new** beginning (as in *As For Me and My House*): "April and the smell of April just as it was all beginning that day too ... **everything** else though just about the same."

The range of *Sawbones Memorial* can only be conveyed

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in the reading of it. The technique **varies from** intense monologue to friendly parody in the comment on the song "Redwing" as emblematic of "the **indifference of nature** to the **human predicament. Very Canadian.**" The use of **discrete** episodes is not mechanical. The novel's development is a gradual initiation so that each new **character** is suddenly recognized from snatches we had already overheard. The cumulative effect of these morsels prepares us for the ending when all gossip about Hunter is laid bare in his final **affirmative** monologue.

The characters, too, are as varied as the Doctor himself: the **courageous Caroline Gillespie** who came from England because she **wanted "so much to be part of it.** A big new country, a **country of beginnings.**" and the fertile, vibrant Sarah whose love for the Doctor and her **children** fills her monologue and the reception.

Each monologue is suited to its character; each episode's language is modulated to its speakers. **Choric** sections are broken by emotional passages; detailed genealogy and chronology are interwoven with lyrical **moments**; the **proprietors** of the town newspaper, Dan and Nellie **Furby**, conduct several sections that, rich in information and compassion, seem the **fulfillment** of a distant scene **from Joyce's Ulysses.** Finally, then, greed, lust, jealousy and prejudice are dispelled by forgiveness and love. And Dr. Hunter says man does "have the capacity to learn, to improve."

This is a rich, **brilliant and** penetrating book; it is a **celebration.** Upward is like Ida Robinson, one of the **town's first settlers**, who "didn't just survive, she came through with her head up, telling a joke on herself, ready for **more.**" Sinclair Ross has shown us, as **Nellie** says, "pride in our hearts, a sense of achievement, new faith in the **future**, and . . . also the tub of memories. . ." □

SLEIGH BELLS AND OTHER JINGLES

Nicholas Knock and Other People, by **Dennis Lee**, illustrated by **Frank Newfeld**, **Macmillan**, 64 pages, \$5.95 cloth.

Alligator Pie, by **Dennis Lee**, illustrated by **Frank Newfeld**, **Macmillan**, 64 pages, \$5.95 cloth.

The Sleighs of My Childhood, by **Carlo Itallano**, illustrated by the author, French text by **René Chicoine**, **Tundra Books**, unpaginated, \$9.95 cloth.

The Secret World of OS, by **Pierre Berton**, illustrated by **Patsy Berton**, **McClelland & Stewart**, unpaginated, \$5.95 cloth.

By **SUSAN LESLIE**

WE USED TO HAVE a Chinese vegetable man named Yip, who came by our house once a week in his old **truck**, giving us apples and nuts to munch on while he sold my mother turnips and carrots and potatoes. He had sold vegetables at my mother's house before she ever married. For the **first** few years of my life, his visits **were** a weekly occasion. At Christmas he gave my mother **liihee nuts**, and he always **sold us** a big box of mandarin oranges. But by the time I was six or seven, Yip was gone, and my shopping memories after that are all of supermarkets. I had forgotten

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The following review appeared in the October/November 1974 issue of THE BULLETIN, the official publication off the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation.

Days of Rage

Herman Buller. October Publications. 1974. Cloth 8.95. paper \$3.95. 277 pages.

This is the last and best of Herman Buller's Quebec trilogy. The other two novels in the series. QUEBEC IN REVOLT and ONE MAN ALONE, are now out of print and are considered Canadiana collectors' items.

QUEBEC IN REVOLT was a historical novel that dealt with the cause célèbre known as The Guibord Affair - the struggle between state and church, and the forces of anti-clericalism in nineteenth century Quebec. ONE MAN ALONE was a sociological novel about the interplay of the "three solitudes" — French, English and Jewish communities on the island of Montreal, during the depression of the thirties in the days of Duplessis.

DAYS OF RAGE, an ideological novel about contemporary Quebec. is a powerful evocation of the mind of a young French-Canadian separatist. The integrity of his life and the depth of his commitment are conveyed in an engrossing and passionate narrative.

Although it is an extraordinary book, and the writing is both persuasive and fascinating, it is not easy reading - it is often brutal and shocking. However, it will illuminate for many readers the reasons why those who seek an independent Quebec choose the FLQ as a means.

Herman Buller has achieved a remarkable feat. Observing a scrupulous respect for contemporary facts, he has entered into the consciousness of his hem. Most important, he has captured the essential psychology of a dedicated and intelligent revolutionary, who clearly understands not only the political but the philosophical implications of his choice.

DAYS OF RAGE, a novel of protest as well as compassion, is essential reading for anyone wishing to have a clear understanding of the present Quebec situation. It is a work of substance that should not only be on the shelf of every college and secondary school library, but also on the required reading lists in courses on Canadian literature and Canadian studies.

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poetry from new star

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NEW STAR BOOKS
2504 York Avenue, Vancouver, B.C.

all about Yip until I read Carlo Italiano's wonderful book *The Sleighs of My Childhood*.

Italiano grew up in Montreal in the 1920s and '30s. when sleighs hauled about the city's provisions in winter. Farmers came into town in their homemade sleighs, bringing mot vegetables to markets. The bean vendor went from house to house, selling hot fèves au lard. There were a coal sleigh, a milk sleigh and a bread sleigh. The rag picker, the knife sharpener, the movers, the Royal Mail — everybody did their business by sleigh. Italiano loved the sleighs and their horses, and his affection for them is very evident.

Italiano's strength and experience is as an illustrator, but the text he has written for *Sleighs* is as simple and graceful as his drawings. The text has the oddly detailed quality of childhood memories. For each of the 23 sleighs he has drawn, there is a short description of what it did, or when it came or what it smelled like or who its driver was. There is a French text as well. It's not a translation, but a rendering of the same sort of memories by René Chicoine, who also grew up in Montreal when it was "the sleigh capital of the world."

Tundra Books' concern with quality in the production of their books is obvious in *Sleighs of My Childhood*. The kind of care Tundra takes — in binding and colour reproduction and paper - is costly (the book sells for \$9.95). But *Sleighs of My Childhood* looks and feels so special that it will be well treated by the children who read it. Tundra describes it as a "book for all ages" (which rescues it from the hinterlands of the Juvenile section) and I think they are right.

Dennis Lee's two new books of poetry are for children especially. But both are the sort of children's books that depend on an adult not just for the purchase price, but also for the reading. Children's rhymes are restless, and belong only temporarily, for transportation purposes, on the page. The poems in *Alligator Pie* and *Nicholas Knock and Other People* need to be read aloud, and preferably by someone who can be carried away by their special brand of nonsense.

Alligator Pie is for very young children. Some of Lee's poems in this book are so energetic and sprightly that once read, they roll around in your head so that you can't forget them. I will forever wiggle to the laundromat, which should enliven washdays to come.

Nicholas Knock and Other People is intended for older children who can read the poems themselves. This second book does not seem as successful to me. Lee forgets his audience at times, and makes allusions and jokes that only the rare child will understand. There are also poems that do not seem quite ready to be published. If it were your very own daddy reading his own poems, they would seem quite wonderful, I'm sure. But they do not travel well beyond the Lee bedside, where they were first performed.

Lee has filled the poems with references to things Canadian. There are many Canadian place-names, with particular emphasis on famous Toronto sites such as Honest Ed's, The Corner of Bloor and Yonge, and Casa Loma. Some of the poems interpret this sense of place in rather parochial terms, however. For example, in *Nicholas Knock*, the poem "Spadina," about the campaign to stop the expressway, will not mean much to children in Vancouver or Winnipeg or Halifax.

Frank Newfeld's illustrations are bright and rich. Their detail enlivens all the poems. In a few instances, where the poems seem fragile or forced, it is Newfeld's drawings that take one's interest.

Poetry for children is almost always oral, it can't be separated from nursery rhymes and counting songs and skipping jingles. To judge by his afterword, Lee is quite ready to



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accept his poems being transmuted by the reader or the listener. I think he would be pleased to he& children's versions of his poems, changed and reworked by forgetfulness and inventiveness. At least some of the poems in *Alligator Pie* and *Nicholas Knock* promise to be as much a part of children's repertoire as Mother Goose. But I think them is material in both books that will never make it fmm the schoolroom to the playground.

The Secret World of Og, which first appeared in 1962, has been reissued by McClelland & Stewart in a paperback edition. New illustrations, by Berton's daughter Patsy, were the occasion for the reissue; suffice it to say that only a father could love them.

The Secret World of Og was made up for the Berton children (who all have names starting with "P") and its heroes and heroines are all Berton offspring. The best parts of the book are those that touch on each child's eccentricities. Berton can be delightful when he's describing his own. But, as for the subterranean land of Og, and the ad-

ventures that take the PBs down there—these have all been stolen, from C.S. Lewis' *Narnia* books, Norton's *The Borrowers*, and even Alice herself. Berton is quick and amusing, and one could almost forgive the thefts, if it were not for his annoying way of making smart asides to the adults he knows ate nearby. His arch comments on racial prejudice and the evils of comic books seem out of place.

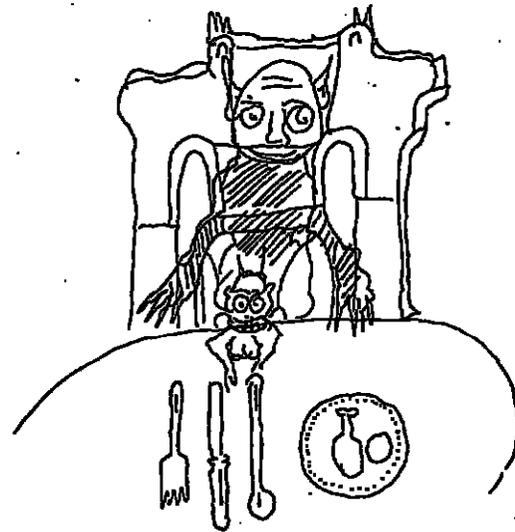
McClelland & Stewart have taken the liberty of describing *The Secret World of Og* as "Pierre Berton's classic children's story." Can a book become a classic in 15 years? Can a Pierre Berton book ever become a classic? One would wish McClelland & Stewart a children's classic; it would do wonders for their economic picture. But I don't think Og will make the grade. Dennis Lee's books, too, have been described as "children's classics." I think we should reserve judgment, for a generation at least. Perhaps our children will buy the Lee books for their children, and then the question can be seriously pot. □

HOLDING SHARES IN CANADA INC.

A Nation Unaware: The Canadian Economic Culture, by Herschel Hardin, J.J. Douglas, 378 pages, \$10.95 cloth.

By ABRAHAM RÖTSTEIN

FOG MAY ALWAYS have hovered over the Canadian economic horizon but things are particularly dense at the moment. Leaving aside the national issue of inflation and the energy crisis, a frequently beard question in our more sedate provinces runs as follows: "What's a nice Conservative Premier like you doing with a publicly owned company like this?" Lougheed's government has its new and successful oil and gas corporations and has bought out Pacific Western Airlines; Davis has a major new energy corporation (as well as the long-standing Ontario Hydro); Lougheed is investing in Ontario's Urban Transportation Development Corporation to develop new modes of public transit and Frank Moores in Newfoundland has got back a substantial portion of Brinco's energy project in Labrador and launched a major publicly owned venture. Hardly the heady atmosphere of the NDP for whom this would be no great surprise. We're watching solid "free enterprise" governments matter-of-factly flexing their economic muscle to the puzzlement of some of their supporters and the silent consent of



Jon Romakoff/78-

MR INFLATION'S SON

others. The federal government has been in the business of publicly owned corporations since pre-Confederation days and Petrocan is only the latest offshoot in the energy field.

The key to these seemingly unexpected developments lies in a striking new book on "the Canadian economic culture." by Herschel Hardin. It is the best overall discussion on Canadian economic history to have appeared in a decade. Beautifully written, with irreverence, insight and Rashes of brilliance, Hardin's book will be a &light for those who want to move on from the classic *Canadian Economic History* by W.T. Easterbrook and H.G.J. Aitken.

It will also provide a guide to those who want to pin down what is particularly Canadian about our indigenous economic experience. Hardin's theme is that out of the broad and continuing contradictions of our society — French-English relations, the regions versus Ottawa and Canada versus the U.S. — has arisen a consistent set of economic responses that now constitutes an authentic tradition or economic "identity."

It can best be seen as a contrast to the free-wheeling competitive spirit of American ideology (and British political economy) and puts the state (federal and provincial) in the driver's seat. Since most of what we've done in thii vein in the past from the CPR to the CBC to Polymer is bound ttp with Conservative governments, it can, hardly be called



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"socialism." Sir Adam Beck, for example, who nationalized hydro in Ontario. may never even have had Karl Marx.

The problem with all this is how to understand the phenomenon on its own indigenous terms. The major obfuscation comes from the doctrine that efficiency and justice in the economy are best obtained by letting the free-market system take its course and organize everything, which is pretty well what is taught in most of our introductory courses in economics. This turns public enterprise at best into an artificial form of political expediency and at worst into a sort of boondocks economics, bound by definition to serve everyone badly.

As Hardin points out, the genesis of economic institutions, particularly the Canadian model, cannot be viewed outside the broadest Framework of the aims of the larger society: "The public enterprise culture is the practical expression of Canadian nationalism ... [and is] after all these years, and under great historical pressure, internalized in our collective temperament."

Public enterprise is one side of this pattern, which Hardin calls "redistribution." The other is the long tradition of equalization payments to the provinces because of regional disparities. As the Rowell-Sirois Report cautiously stated, the case: -

When, as a result of national policies undertaken in the general interest, one region or class or individual is fortuitously enriched and others impoverished, it would appear that there is some obligation, if not to redress the balance, at least to provide for the victim.

Hardin lists about three dozen Federal and provincial publicly owned corporations mainly in the area of public utilities, resources and transportation. Leaving financial enterprises aside, Hardin calculates that "crown corporations make up over one-third of all Canadian-controlled corporate assets." In addition to these, there are Crown corporations in the field of culture such as the CBC and the Canadian Film Development Corporation, then are trading agencies such as the Canadian Wheat Board, and housing corporations such as the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Ontario Housing Corporation.

Hardin's message then is that we try to recognize and understand the outlook or ideology that has emerged out of the tensions and contradictions of the Canadian experience — the Canadian ideology — and abandon the confusion and troubled conscience that arise from hewing to the imported "market" ideologies. Hardin avoids becoming trapped in conventional and doctrinaire debates about capitalism versus socialism although some of the ripoffs that have gone on in both the private and public sectors are cleverly pinpointed and exposed. But Canadian economic history recast merely as a history of ripoffs does little more than nurture our moral and political indignation. That may become gratuitous unless we address the question: Where does the institutional momentum in Canada come from that offers a way out? This momentum is born out of the struggle for national coherence rather than the fitful war of the classes.

Hardin's theoretical inspiration is derived from the work of the late Karl Polanyi, whose seminal volume *The Great Transformation* offered a global analysis and critique of 19th-century laissez-faire economics in terms of the primacy of society over the self-regulating market economy. Polanyi examined historically the presence of two economic patterns that were alternatives to market organization, namely reciprocity and redistribution, and it is the latter

pattern on which **Hardin** draws. Some fuller explanation of **Polanyi's** approach might have **helped the** reader obtain a better notion of the theoretical background.

What might have clinched the argument dramatically for **Hardin** is an institutional analysis of the **growth** of the wheat **economy** in Western Canada. Amidst the major **struggle** of settling the West, **extending** the spur lines of the railroad and establishing **viable** provinces, a consistent battle was fought around the dominance of the Winnipeg grain exchange before the First World **War**. Epithets and suspicions of this classical example of a market institution never ceased. But some three **dozen** federal and provincial royal commissions **failed** to justify or even articulate the Western farmers' deep distrust of this "**gambling** hell." In a fortuitous series of crises and innovations we **managed** eventually to replace the Winnipeg grain exchange by the Canadian Wheat Board — **Hardin's** **redistributive** mechanism — and found that it drew consistent and **unqualified support from** Western farmers, from the agricultural co-ops and from the wheat pools. It was a forced and difficult- **birth** that **responded** to deep-seated Canadian **circumstances**. **Dogmas** on the Right and Left only delayed and diverted from a workable resolution. But the confusion and bitterness was a heavy price to pay for **our** colonial cast of mind and **lack** of **awareness** of **our** own institutional tradition.

Perhaps Herschel **Hardin** can be diverted for a while longer from his activities as an eminent playwright and head of the Association for Public Broadcasting in British Columbia to give **us** an institutional history of the wheat **economy**. It might even fulfill the late Harold **Innis's** long-standing aspiration for an indigenously conceived "**economics** of new **countries**." *CI*

DEAR OLD ELITIST RULE DAYS

The Politics of the Canadian Public **School**, edited by George **Martell**, **James Lorimer & Company**, Illustrated, 257 pages, \$4.95 **paper**.

By EDGAR **Z. FRIEDENBERG**

THIS USEFUL AND interesting book is even *mom* **innovative** in its emphasis than in its content. The **full** measure of **George Martell's** influence on Canadian education and culture' will probably not be generally appreciated for years; **but as a principal founder of This Magazine Is About Schools**, which became nearly a **-decade** ago the first general-readership journal in English to devote itself to the critical analysis of the school-in-culture, he helped to **create** a focal point for an approach to **educational** conflict that was both earthly concrete and politically sophisticated. It still is, though now the journal is called merely *This Magazine* to **emphasize** that its concern is not limited to the schools but extends to Canadian society as a whole.

As a postscript to the present volume notes, "Most of the **material** in this book originally appeared in the pages of

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This Magazine," and Martell himself contributes its introduction and final paper while Satu Repo, co-editor of *This Magazine* and Martell's wife, contributes three articles, out of a dozen devoted to English Canada. This is helpful; it lends *The Politics of the Canadian Public School* unity that is often regrettably lacking in books of readings. Several of the individual pieces, moreover, are much too good to be merely ephemeral; notably the moving brief in which the parents of the primarily working-class Park School Community Council attack the system of testing and tracking by which the Toronto Board of Education denies the very existence of intellectual competence among their children and then proceeds to starve it out; and Eleanor Smollett's short but original and illuminating set of observations on "Schools and the Illusion of Choice: The Middle Class and the 'Open' Classmom." This is a true gem of fieldwork, in which Ms. Smollett demonstrates the means by which the basic epistemology of the child is moulded in the classroom, leading him to perceive life as a series of multiple-choice items in which the choices are provided by others and inevitably pertain to dimension rather than to quality.

The common origin of most of *The Politics of the Canadian Public School in This Magazine* — an editorial note even suggests that its readers "should think of it as a regular issue" — provides the book with a set of common theses, derived from certain implicit and explicit assumptions. The theses appear to me largely incontrovertible; the assumptions much less so. The themes that run through the book, ones it seems to me no reasonable man could deny, are that the schools are the instrument of ruling-class policy, and hence serve to instill in working-class pupils the characteristics that facilitate their continued subordination and ex-

ploitation; and that teachers have made this easier than it need have been by their conception of themselves as "professionals," a conception that shielded them from having to face their own subordination and concealed from them their considerable common area of economic interest with the working-class parents whose children they help oppress. Martell argues that the prospects for improvement in this respect are excellent as teachers become more militant and effectively unionized and learn to respect their kinship with the working class.

These are not new propositions, of course; but they take on new life here. In his introduction, Martell makes a most revealing analysis of an aspect of the situation that is new and very important: the tendency of the establishment to undermine the schools, now that they have served their function in establishing and maintaining class structure and the baby-boom is over, by merging them into the therapeutic-welfare apparatus of direct social control. Schooling no longer provides the opportunities it did in the recent past for profitably expanded investment, and supporting a separate professional cadre of increasingly demanding teachers is a costlier way of maintaining social control than merging the educative function in with therapy and social work. In this argument, Martell comes closer to Ivan Illich's present — and highly conservative — position than I should think he would find comfortable. Illich is having second thoughts about deschooling society on the cogent grounds that compulsory schooling at least focuses and limits the state's authority to control learning to a particular age-group and place, leaving a little more freedom in the world than would otherwise obtain.

Despite the change in *This Magazine's* title, Martell and

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his colleagues **clearly** remain devoted in principle to the public-school system as a social institution; and it is here that I begin to be troubled by their assumptions. I have much the same **difficulty** with **most** of the critics of the book by Christopher Jencks and others on **Inequality**, in which Jencks concludes that schooling is not significantly **correlated** with subsequent economic **status**, and that the school is therefore not the social institution **through** which to promote equality. Since **Jencks** is strongly committed to equality of economic opportunity, he recommends that this be sought by **direct** fiscal means like much more progressive taxation. But **his critics attack him as a crypto-elitist** because their commitment to the school system as an institution **capable of promoting equality is so unquestioning**. They are convinced that it can help **redress** "cultural **deprivation**" and must be made to, and that such people as Jencks are therefore covertly supporting the ruling elites. Set many of **these critics are** revisionist historians of education who insist, quite correctly, that the school always has been the instrument by which the class structure of North American society has been serviced and maintained. Why, then, indeed, should **committed** egalitarians **continue** to **shore** up the school system instead of trying to devise other arrangements for meeting the needs of the lower class directly?

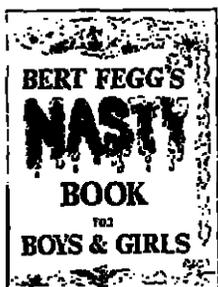
Good schools, if one believes **them** to be possible, **are** certainly an attractive idea because they would be expected to foster growth and development and **thereby strengthen** those presently deprived rather than simply compensating for their weaknesses. But the idea that a publicly supported school system will buck the established **status** system in the interests of social justice seems to me based on a **miscon-**

ception of what the state is. I is the instrument of social and economic power, and it was developed. **in its** present and familiar form, to promote the ends of industrial production. **The socialist states** may be a little better **than** the capitalist states at achieving a more equitable **distribution** of goods and services **produced**; but they are much more ruthless and **thorough about** assigning their **citizens** to what **the authorities determine** to be their appropriate place in society.

But **Martell** and his **colleagues** clearly believe that, by achieving a major shift of political power in **favour** of the working **class**, the state may become the instrument of **social justice** and the means by which the needs of a much larger **proportion** of its citizens may be met, **through** the schools as well as by other political **institutions**. Much of **The Politics of the Canadian Public School** is therefore devoted to the actual and potential **role** of teachers' unions in various parts of Canada. The whole Quebec **section** of the book is made up entirely of papers **about** or by. **the Corporation des Enseignants de Quebec**; there are chapters on the role of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation in the recent NDP victory and a rather anxious one about the comparative passivity of the **Ontario** Secondary School Teachers' Federation by **Martell** himself. Reading **Martell** on teachers' unions is rather like listening to an **intelligent** but fond parent talk about his children. He isn't **uncritical**, and he understands and is candid about their faults: but his assumption that they are lovable as well as significant and that their **growth** will **eventually** benefit the whole country becomes cloying. Stronger teachers' unions will, I think, lead to **improved** schools because the vulnerability and passivity of teachers, which add to their resentment, will be reduced as they become stronger and better paid. And even

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if they did not, teachers would be well advised to build strong organizations in their own best interest. But I think **Martell** is dead wrong in expecting this to **result** in either a better understanding with and of **working-class** parents or more commitment to the dignity of pupils. One of the things teachers' organizations most frequently demand is **more** freedom to control children. In fact, one of the few things **Albert Shanker** ever said to me **was that** if **children** ever expected to have any rights in school, they'd better harry up and organize themselves. I'd buy that.

Most of the contributors to *The Politics of the Canadian Public School* clearly regard their position as **left-radical**; if so, I wish they would be a little more realistic, or at least

more generous, **about** class interests as well as class **conflict**. Canada remains one of the few places — almost the last relatively decent place — where it is even worthwhile to be middle-class. If you **are** middle-class — as some of us, I believe, still **are** — **this** is an important and valuable aspect of the Canadian social system. But nationalism, with which this book is rife, is now being more and more effectively urged upon **the** Canadian bourgeoisie to obscure its legitimate class interests. Legitimate? **Damn right**; it was precisely in order to legitimate those class interests that the bourgeoisie **invented the national state**. **This** is no time to forget the good lessons Marx taught us, even though he might wish we would. □

A BI-FOCUS ON BARRY LORD

By GREG CIJRNOE

BARRY LORD'S *The History of Painting in Canada: Toward a People's Art* has finally appeared. Many people had known he **was writing** it, and were waiting for it with varying degrees of anticipation or **apprehension**. I suppose my own feelings were mixed on the **matter**. It is **an** ambitious book, as I had expected, and a significant addition to **our growing** collection of basic writings in Canadian **art** history and criticism, so essential to a continuing tradition of Canadian culture and to a good look at the forgotten figures of Canadian painting, particularly Joseph **Légaré** and William G.R. Hind.

Lord's book attempts to deal with areas that are not normally covered in general histories of easel painting. He begins with a chapter titled "Painting of the Native Peoples," in which **he** covers the art of the aboriginal peoples of Canada. **He includes comments on** the social setting and on the influence of the **arrival** of the Europeans. Since most if not **all** aboriginal art is not **illusionistic** but uses signs and conventions understood by the people of its particular **culture**, the only way to decipher the works in question is through reference to writings by people like **Henry Schoolcraft**, who knew some of the artists and who was told first-hand of the meaning of the stylized representations. **Lord** does this with **careful** "readings" of various works, using original material by people such as Schoolcraft. As well, he makes a **convincing** plea in this chapter for the **return** of confiscated potlatches of the West Coast Indian tribes from **the** Royal Ontario Museum—a suggestion **made difficult in cases where aboriginal**

The **History of Painting in Canada: Toward A People's Art**, by **Barry Lord**, NC Press, illustrated, 253 pages, \$6.95 paper.

groups have been dispersed or otherwise drastically altered by white society.

The second chapter deals with **the** early painting of Quebec and with its historical and cultural background. At this point Lord introduces what are normally called "primitive" Paintings and begins to **build** a case for them as an indigenous tradition of painting in Canada. Much of this material is taken from Russell Harper's *People's Art: Naive Art in Canada*, **although** Harper maintains, **incorrectly I think, that the** artists he writes about worked in isolation. It **becomes** clearer at this point, as Lord introduces historical and economic examples to reinforce **his** assessments, **that the** simple, in fact **condescending**, language he uses **to give** the examples begins to contain loaded words **such as** "imperialism," "patriotic," "straggle," etc. These words are introduced with a simple description of **their** meaning; and from then on they appear **frequently** in the text, turning many people off in the process, **I suspect. It's a pity, because there are simple unloaded words that could have been used in each case.**

In the chapters on Upper and Lower Canada, a theme similar to that which **runs** through Dennis Reid's *Concise History of Canadian Painting* makes itself felt: **that** many Canadians have developed original and **significant** work independently of the styles in the world art **centres**, only to become imitators of the major international styles after **exposure** to them — most significantly

continued on page 36

By LÉANDRE BERGERON

THE TRADITIONAL histories of Painting have perpetuated the myth that "the **artist is a free soul who creates** paintings purely out of his imagination; **the dealer**, a dedicated **lover of the arts**, discovers these paintings in **the** artist's studio and decides to give **them** an exhibition in his gallery; **the critic**, a disinterested observer with a line eye for "quality," reviews the exhibition in his art magazine or newspaper column; **the collector**, equally devoted to aesthetic values, reads the review and visits the exhibition to add this new artist's paintings to his collection; finally, **the curators and art historians contribute** their knowledge of the past and ability to analyze **the** profound meaning of the artist's work, and decide to include him in a major group show **that** associates him with similar artists Past and present; or they grant him the highest **reward**, a one-man **retrospective** exhibition that shows how **every** little pencil **mark he ever made on** a piece of paper is **all** a part of his magnificent and mysterious life's work, thereby ranking him among all the geniuses of history!"

Barry **Lord's** book, **from** which this **quotation** has been taken, is a masterstroke at demythifying painting in general and Canadian and Quebecois painting in particular. **Going over painting in Canada from native blanket painting to Greg Curnoe's mural of the R-34 (intended for Dorval airport), Lord applies a truly scientific approach to this art. The painter is not a "free soul" like a Moses on the mountain waiting for aesthetic dictates from on high. The painter is a human being, a social being integrated in a specific society, and in**

this case, a class society. Because of the **fundamental contradiction of a class** society, that is the necessary clash between the ruling class and the oppressed classes, the artist, like any one else, must situate himself in the class **struggle**. Usually of oppressed-class origin, he must soon **decide** if he is to serve the **rulers** of his society and therefore paint what the **rulers prefer** for the perpetuation of **their rule**, or express in his works the plight and struggle of the **oppressed classes** of his society. Each artist consciously or unconsciously makes this decision. In native society, "the main job of the artist was to produce **crests** for clans. These crests identified who owned the objects, whose house or village you went in, and what their rights were. They also told the legends of the clan **that supposedly** justified how it got its rights." In **Québécois** society in the years **preceding** the Revolution of **1837-38**, painter **Antoine-Sébastien** Flamondon does a portrait of Louis-Joseph Papineau. "a notary's son who became lawyer, was elected Speaker of the House. In the course of the next 15 years he **gathered over** 87,000 signatures on petitions of **protest** to London **in** his sustained campaigns **for** greater **power for the elected representatives of** the people and less for the appointed agents of the British bourgeoisie. By 1833 he was calling on the **Canayens** to boycott British merchants' **goods** and to draw their savings from the **British-owned Bank of Montreal.**" Flamondon has clearly decided to paint the **Canayen** petty bourgeoisie on the rise. But he paints as a colonized artist, an artist who had to go to the metropolis of the world of **the** time, Paris, **to learn** the official style of neo-classical painting. At the same time, another artist, Joseph **Légaré** chooses to paint like a **true Patriote** the plight of the people during the cholera epidemic in Quebec. But which artist is considered by the traditional **art** professors and critics as the artist of the **Québécois** scene of that period? Krieghoff. Why? Because Krieghoff depicts the **Québécois** as the ruling class **liked** to see them. Let us look at his painting, "Merrymaking":

When we remember Durham's description of the **Canayens**, however, and reflect that paintings of this subject were sold **repeatedly** at auctions in Quebec to **British patrons**, our smiles fade. For here is Durham's "race of men habituated by the incessant labour of a rude and unskilled agriculture, and habitually fond of social enjoyments." There carousing drunkards are fit only to play the role of comedians to their "civilized" British rulers, who paid Krieghoff well to paint them in this scene



Miller Brittain's Longshoremen (1938-40), reproduced in The History of Painting in Canada.

again and again. They are equivalent to the minstrel shows in which black people at this time were presented as clowns to white audiences.

And so on through the British and American **regimes**. Landscape artists have **to decide** if they **are going** to paint Canadian landscapes as exotic scenes for British patrons or as they **are for** those patrons who live in Canada. Robert Whale's "View of **Hamilton**" (1853) is more of **the** former group, while **somewhat** later the Group of Seven **try** to develop a national landscape art:

Landscape historically is a bourgeois art form. To achieve a national art of the Canadian landscape, therefore, the support of a **national bourgeoisie** was needed. The national bourgeoisie are the middle-sized capitalists in a colonial country such as Canada. They have a certain regard for the national interest and the land, since their capital and profits are realized principally within the nation. As a class it is extremely unreliable because its members both want to drive out the imperialists (so as to increase profits) and want to exploit people (so as to increase profits). Its class interests are clearly not saved by imperialist domination of the country, and at certain stages of the struggle for liberation the national bourgeoisie or parts of it can be a useful ally for the people.

During the dark ages of **Church** oppression in Quebec (from the 1870s to **the 1950s**), a painter like **Ozias Leduc** is "totally dependent on the Church for

his livelihood." On the **side** he paints non-religious subjects like "**L'enfant au pain**" (1892-99):

The **Québécois** tradition had begun with the votive painters' depictions of people overcoming danger, and had been brought to its high point in the social document paintings of **Légaré**. But in the long years after the defeat of the revolution (that is the revolution of 1837-38), the Church had served its British masters well by undermining my such confidence of the people in their power. Leduc's rendition is accordingly cautious: the Church's stifling hand is evident in the small scale, the subdued tones, the utter stillness and the quasi-spiritual atmosphere that suffuses the otherwise earthy materiality of paintings like "**Le repas du colon.**" This is the art of colonial repression.

Then later, other **Québécois** artists like **Borduas** struggle to break through the "spiritual blockade" surrounding Quebec with a scathing manifesto called **Refus global** (1948), a **progressive and revolutionary attack** for the period but petty-bourgeois in its outlook because it does not identify with the working people's struggle against capitalist exploitation.

Among Canadian painters, Charles W. Jefferys and Emily Carr are among the few to paint the **struggle** of the people in Canadian history. Miller Brittain's "**Workers Arise!**" (1936) shows how a painter **chooses to struggle** with the working class.

These are but a few examples of how each **Canadian and Québécois** artist is



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This book is an absolute must for all Canadians. The **Québécois** translation now in progress will provide the **Québécois** with a true revolutionary view of their painters. □

Paysan Place revisited

Diary of a Dirty Old Man, by H. Gordon Green, McClelland & Stewart, 189 pages, \$7.95 cloth.

My Father's House, by Jean-Guy Carrier, Oberon Press, 95 pages, \$2.95 paper.

By PHIL LANTHIER

IT'S HARD TO believe that H. Gordon Green and Jean-Guy Carrier are both writing about the same rural Quebec. They appear to have inhabited two different planets, and to possess attitudes and perceptions light years distant from each other.

Diary of a Dirty Old Man is about a 56-year-old farmer-teacher. more or less H. Gordon Green himself I take it, who falls in love with a very young girl, much to the discomfort, needless to say, of his wife and the girl's father. **My Father's House** is a sequence of short stories about the hard life of young William Moreau as he comes of age in a village in Bellechasse County. Carrier, who left Quebec as a young man, now lives in Ontario and writes in English. Green is an experienced and often-published writer whose work has appeared in *Maclean's*, *Reader's Digest*, *Weekend* and other periodicals.

Green's dirty old man is, alas, really quite clean. He's a sensible, folksy old fella whose affection for young Sherry McIver grows into love slowly and reluctantly. Evil-minded readers like myself who expect from the book's title that its contents will be the anarchic slaverings of a prurient old reprobate will be disappointed. This book is, in fact, an easy read and may quite safely be given to aunts, uncles and parents for Christmas.

The diary, coveting a period of roughly two years, provides Green with a chance to voice his displeasure with the loss of oldskills and values and the prevalence of modern foolishness. From his vantage point of rural felicity, he laments instant foods, computerized education, the decline of maple syrup and the sad passing of upper and lower berths in railway trains. There is also some good advice (on page 147) on how to bake a porcupine, which will come in handy when everything breaks down.

Green's formula is the shameless concoction of a dirty old writer: take a nice guy who can do things like skin a muskrat and shear sheep, who likes books and is good with kids and dogs; add an engagingly direct and unbelievably uncomplicated girl yearning for the simple life of the land; and pepper with farm animals and a bit of sex. The result is a Disneyesque idyll for the 1970s. Irresistible.

Carrier's world is lunar terrain compared to Green's. The style of *My Father's House* is terse, minimal and stony. Perhaps too much so. The life of the people is given such bare expression that they seem to me as faceless and anonymous as the cloaked figure in the Jean Paul Lemieux painting reproduced on the book's cover. As in a Lemieux painting, the stories are filled with desolate, silent spaces, those of "mon grand pays solitaire."

In one powerful story, a village priest, Father Alexandre, who is normally forbidden to preach because of some unexplained aberration in his past, does by stratagem mount the pulpit. He speaks with painful directness to his people: "We are afraid of each other, even in this small place. . . We musn't frighten each other with our simple meanings." They cannot endure this; at the end they slip out of the church, their eyes averted, "dark figures shuffling in silence." In another story, William, grown to manhood, turns away from love with Thérèse, his friend's wife. Some nameless gap opens between them. William curls up in cold sheets, the house creaks in the wind, Thérèse weeps in another room.

Carrier's perception is of "the bitterness of things and the pallor of human faces." His country is a place you leave before petrification into ice or stone sets in, and William, in the end, does leave -for Ontario. At the close of Green's book, his diarist has settled comfortably in with his young mistress and fine herd of beefcattle. It sure helps to have 350 acres. □

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The Coming of Winter, by David Adams Richards, Oberon, 259 pages, \$8.95 cloth.

By PAT BARCLAY

WHAT IS THERE to say about a first novel of such superlative tedium as *The Coming of Winter*? That its author is 23 years old; that the first five chapters of it were awarded the Norma Epstein prize in creative writing in 1973; that (to quote from the dust jacket) it is "an obsessively honest picture of what it is like to come of age where there are no imperatives, no illusions, nodreams?"

One cites these few shreds of evidence for the defence almost wistfully, as if hoping that the act of committing them to paper might be enough to erase the blunt fact of the novel's failure from the mind. But it doesn't work. One is left with the unpleasant task of exhuming a work much better consigned to oblivion.

The Coming of Winter paints a sullen portrait of the life of one New Brunswick family as its 20-year-old son comes of age and marries. The parents are miserable, the son is taciturn or enraged in their company, the daughter sings in the bathtub "as if everything was good." When we catch a glimpse of the bride-to-be she is scowling as often as not. The son's friends booze it up, play senseless practical jokes, and one of them is killed offstage. There's a funeral and later a wedding, and an atmosphere of joylessness common to both. Common to the novel, in fact. There's something listless about all the characters except one; something that makes the reader want to shake them into animation, into feelings that are not repressed for once, into articulation of their strangled thoughts.

The one exception is John Delano, a nihilistic pal of the son's who smacks of James Dean and Gordon Pinsent's *Rowdyman*. Delano is twice as alive as Kevin, the wooden hero. When he plays a malicious prank on Kevin's wedding day a reconciliation of sorts is effected between father and son. Offstage again, that is. One concludes that the author, aware of his own limitations, has avoided his few moments of potential drama like the plague.

He can squander four pages on a description of Clinton Dulse dressing for

his son's wedding, though. If you're looking for an author who can wring every last drop of emotional tension out of the act of knotting a tie, Richards is your man.

Here is an account of Kevin out hunting:

Then he stopped, silent, stiffened. No movement, not even shouldering his rifle, not even that. And his pulse, he could hear his pulse as it rushed everything through him. The deadened pale excitement of his face: Everything at that moment was weightless . . . that instant he craved for it to be there, noticing nothing, but only the brown hide of the animal . . . through the thin twigs.

The next moment, our hero has shot a cow.

It's symbolic, in a way, of the whole novel — heading out loaded for deer and bagging a cow. Maybe the real trouble with *The Coming of Winter* is that it's too painfully Canadian. It's as unlike the reckless high spirits of *American Graffiti*, for instance, as porridge is from popcorn. A steady diet of first novels like this one would be enough to subvert the most diehard nationalist among us for life. □

A bowlfull of mints

74: New Canadian Stories, edited by David Helwig and Joan Harcourt, Oberon Press, 155 pages, \$6.95 cloth and \$3.50 paper.

By MICHAEL SMITH

THE BEST THING about New Canadian Stories is that these stories really are new. Too many anthologies trade in shop-worn stories by sometimes shop-worn writers until by sheer repetition they turn into something akin to Canadian classics. Such books are often a disappointment, because so much of so many of them is stuff you almost can't have escaped having read at least twice in the past. But Oberon Press accepts for this annual collection only submissions that have never been published before. And that alone is nearly enough to make this book worthwhile.

As in Oberon's three previous annuals, contributors range from the obscure to the weighty, from a first story by Margaret Gibson Gilboord — about an incandescent (her word) madwoman named Ada — to others by Harold

Horwood, Timothy Findley and Alice Munro. They range in quality from fair to dazzling, and it's interesting to guess how many writers actually try (you have to submit a year in advance) to get into this collection, which is becoming, by reputation anyway, a sort of guidepost to current trends.

This year, for instance, there's a new contribution to the apparently healthy **CanAfrican genre** (Margaret Laurence-Dave Godfrey--Hugh Hood) in "**Rapunzel**" by Audrey Thomas. Her story perhaps most resembles those of Margaret Laurence because it deals with the problem of freedom, this time in the form of a lone young woman travelling in Africa in search of "meanings." But it's much more impressionistic than the stories Laurence writes, and — fortunately — much less disposed toward the travelogue style that seems to mark too many stories set *à* l'afrique.

Similarly, Harold Horwood sets his "Coming to an End" on an unnamed West Indian island. It starts out strong as a traveller, apparently a tourist, tries to explore the exit mutes from a nightmarish rural ghetto and somehow manages to mislay his car. But the ending seemed to me too implausible, too facile to fit, to frighten, or ultimately to appear real.

W.D. Valgardson carries on the Hugh Gamer tradition of bold action writing in "Hunting," which takes three deer hooters-two of them new at it — through a gag-and-vomit on moonshine to a violent calamity. By contrast, Timothy Findley's "The Book of Pins" portrays a stylishly decadent encounter between a druggy bitch-writer and her gay paramour that depends upon pure indolence to preserve its perfect form.

Seven of these dozen stories are written in the first person; and in several of these the narrator is an active character. Generally this works well, and leads the writers into casual, simple stories instead of the fruity verbiage that third-person writing sometimes brings. Fred Euringer's "The Rat and the Goose" is the most casual. I think, opening like a barroom tale: "And then another one of my phobias goes back to an affair I had with a rat."

Of course, the great danger in this is the chance that a story will dwindle from good fiction to mundane reminiscence, which seems a serious problem in David McFadden's "The Pleasures of Love." But there's a knife edge where memory and fiction meet, and nobody writes in the first person better



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David Hughes contributes the first half of the book which is concerned with the physiological basis of race — physical anthropology.

Evelyn Kallen follows with an equally long section on the peoples of Canada — not only the indigenous or founding groups, but the people who actually inhabit Canada. The book has very recently won them the \$5,000 CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS FOUNDATION award.



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than Alice Munro. Her "Home" is a troubling story, a return to the Western Ontario countryside that she has exploited through three books. Now she travels home as an adult writer, back to her step-mother and 72-year-old father, who is presumably dying, in a way that appears to stir her so strongly that she must comment on it and on her writing itself in a series of factual asides.

Munro tells at one point how she has used up the small town of her past; in this story her past has caught up. Her newly vulnerable father seems so distant from the father of the country girl in many of her stories. The town has become imprecise, while it's interesting that she names such real places as London and Teeswater, which before she might well have disguised. She isn't able to give a fictional ending, and closes instead with a commentary on what really happened next — where fiction meets the facts.

Despite the reportage, the prize in this story is that it still works so well — as indeed do so many stories in this book. The editors note: "Now and then a reviewer announces that the short story is dead." Well, this reviewer isn't going to — and we owe a lot to Oberon Press for helping give these stories a needed breath of life. □

Origins and lemons

Atlantic Crossings, by David Helwig, Oberon Press, unpaginated, \$4.95 cloth and \$2.50 paper.

In Search of Owen Roblin, by Al Purdy, McClelland & Stewart, \$12.95 cloth.

Change-Up: New Poems, by Raymond Souster, Oberon Press, unpaginated, \$2.95 paper.

By CHRISTOPHER LEVRN SON

IN THE LAST few years in Canada, the long poem and the poem sequence seem to have been gaining ground, and with them a preoccupation with some of the themes that the long poem is best equipped to handle — the search for national and personal origins and the relationship of modern man to his past.

Atlantic Crossings by David Helwig treats the traumatic prelude to the New World in a sequence of four poems about attempted and actual crossings from St. Brendan in the sixth century,

through a slave-trader from Africa and Columbus in Jamaica to the Norsemen who found Vinland. These poems are also, according to the blurb, "explorations of pain." Especially when, as here, the poems' contexts are primitive, it is easy for a concern with pain to lapse into self-pity or sensationalism, the latter a trap Helwig does not always avoid. At his best, however, he has a superbly economical clarity, as in Columbus's "I lie on earth/that never was/before my faith. I found this world." Through the simple, sometimes ironic, registering of relevant detail, Helwig has created memorable scenes and recreated in tactile human terms the atmosphere of remote and savage worlds. The controlling intelligence is evident but, except in the last section, "The Vinland Saga," where the speaker is a woman, the poet's emotional commitment is more ambiguous. The details of the book are fine, the total meaning less clear.

It is certainly no lack of emotional commitment that makes Raymond Souster's new book disappointing. Always a populist poet, Souster returns now rather too frequently to the same subject matter — wins asking for handouts, nostalgia for the innocence of youth, foreshadowings of the pathos of age, reminiscences of the war and a host of random epiphanies from everyday life in downtown Toronto. These are not trivial subjects but the attitudes they evoke have become predictable — the diminutive celebration, the obvious irony — and sometimes the overt moral comes too pat, the significance is imposed on too slight a vehicle. Of course there are still several fine poems. "My Harvest Quickens," for instance, describes how poplars shed in the fall and concludes,

*If this then is dying
then to die is magnificent,
if this is how it always ends
then there is nothing to fear.
All over in a night of wind
and slow, measured falling.*

and exhibits a complete congruence of mood and technique that is moving in its restraint. "One of our Aircraft," "Our Good Reliable Nathan" and at least the first half of "To My Cat Minou Murdered by a Neighbour" are witness to Souster's skill in effective understatement and them are shorter poems, such as "Not the Flooding River," that mark a real departure in terms of candor and phrasing. All the more unfortunate, then, that so many poems seem to aim no higher than a stock response

and state rather than evoke "despair," "loneliness" and the other big **abstractions**.

What **Purdy** and **Helwig** in their different ways share, and what **Souster**, whatever his other virtues, lacks, is historical imagination. **Purdy** has given proof of this in many of his best **poems** but **never** in so sustained a way as in his long poem *In Search of Owen Roblin*. Here he makes for himself "the privilege of finding a small opening/in the past" by focusing on his own locality at Roblin Lake, Ontario, and on his memories or relics of two figures, his grandfather and Owen Roblin. The motivation for this particular inquiry is personal, perhaps egocentric, as he admits in the **sometimes-too-overt** final paragraphs. But by thoughtfully inter-fusing his own present with the roots that he finds, he is able to create a sense of intimacy with the early 19th-century Canadian past that transcends the merely local and personal. Curiosity leads to a sort of reverence, though always **clear-eyed and unsolemn**: at one place he evokes his grandfather as a "personal family myth as real as hamburger."

The form, too, is more apt than one might suppose. **Purdy's** normal verse medium is colloquial, unemphatic. In fact the lines here are shorter and rhythmically more interesting than usual and capable of **great flexibility** of tone and intensity. At times near prose in the "bridge" passages of documentation that any long poem **needs** — a "actual New York State anti-loyalist edict is inserted verbatim — they rise elsewhere to passages of beautiful lyrical dialogue between a" exiled Loyalist settler and his wife, between Purdy's nonagenarian grandfather and Purdy himself as a child, or, on one occasion, to a lyrical (and thematically entirely fitting) description of birds building their nests.

What holds the poem together is Purdy's abiding concern with the **relativity** of time and with the necessity of communication and understanding with both past and future. The poet begins by looking at **posed photographs** of ancestors and wondering

*if that frozen blankness
was inherited by them and passed on
to you or was it developed in a genetic
vacuum
the trapdoor from past to present.*

Later in the poem Purdy decides that he has "somehow become his grandfather's memory." Aided by Bob

Waller's photographs of local trees, barns and fences, that strike by their **documentary** relevance rather than by any self-consciously arty quality, this **memory** becomes, as was surely intended, a microcosm of one aspect of the Canadian experience. A beautifully produced book, except for its irritating fad of non-pagination that it shams with the other two, **this poem** has too much to say to ail of us to remain a **coffee-table** luxury item. □

The plough and its stars

Salt of the Earth, by Heather Robertson, James Lorimer & Company, illustrated; 224 pages, \$17.50 cloth.

By RICHARD LONDON

THIS **SUPERBLY** produced book contains a selection of first-hand accounts of homesteading in the Prairie provinces between 1882, the year of the railway, and 1914. During that period some two million settlers poured onto land that had become generally accessible for the first time. The literary records, taken from letters, diaries and reminiscences, are augmented and considerably enhanced by 120 photographs made, for the most part, by the hardy professional photographers who set up shop with the founding of each Prairie town.

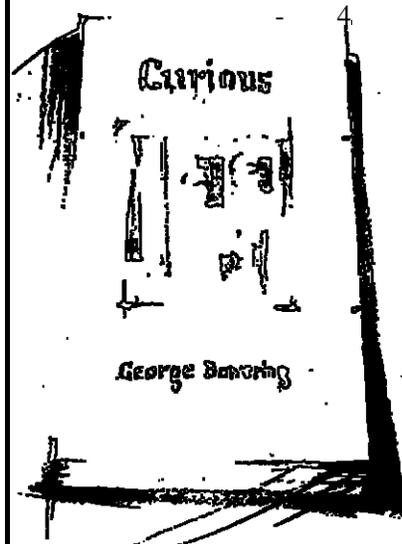
There is an immediacy about this work and a clarity and precision that is historically effective and often personally touching. This is not a developed academic view of Western migration, but the primary source material itself, although the men and women who wrote down their experiences and photographed themselves and their surroundings were endowed with considerable historical perspective. They realized intuitively that what they had to say about it would be important in the future. Heather Robertson has chosen excerpts from the best writing and presented them with the best photographs, simply, without comment, but arranged according to broad subject groupings.

The accounts range from a description of the appalling conditions aboard an immigrant boat, previously used for transporting cattle, to precise instructions on how to construct a sod hut. Although most of the stories are founded on rural homesteading and the

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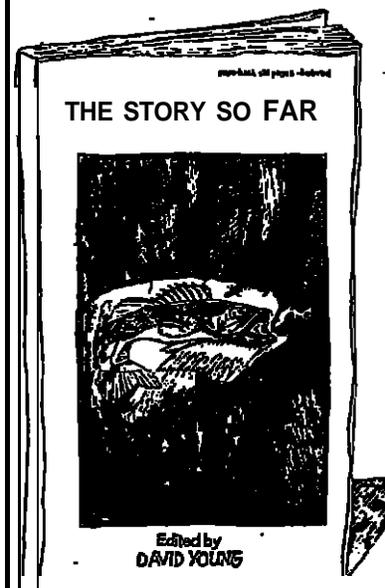
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attempts to wrest a living from the soil, them ate also **stories** of the **founding** of banks, stores, and barber shops. Chinese restaurant owners, Jewish homesteaders, Dcukhobcr farmers whose women had to pull the ploughs to break the first sod, the North-West **Mounted Police**, who, **according** to the account published here, spent a great deal of their time pursuing deserters from **the force**, and the scions of the English **aristocracy**, all contribute their experiences. A **recurrent** theme is the harsh Prairie winter: the effect of the bitter cold on people caught **unprepared**; the blizzards that could cover a man so effectively that his body wasn't found until the spring; and the bleak desclatid of the bald landscape.

The photographs **are** stunning. Although the techniques of the time meant that most **are** obviously posed, the people are arranged in relation to **their surroundings** so that the pictures have the qualities of objectivity **and** permanence. A man and a woman, formally dressed in serge and taffeta, seated in **front** of their tiny **shack**, speak **eloquently** of the difficulties of maintaining the **standards** of their age in a basically hostile environment. **An impressive** sense of isolation is **given**, with buildings and people shown in **relief** against the flat Prairie.

This **book** is a tribute to the **pioneer** writers and **photographers whose real artistic** abilities **serve** impressive ends, and to the archives which have **long-sightedly preserved so much** of this valuable material. It is also a tribute to the sensitive skills of Heather **Robertson**, who has assembled what must be one of the best books co the Canadian west. □

Forking and whoopee

Six War Years 1939-45: Memories of Canadians at Home and Abroad, by Barry Broadfoot, Doubleday, illustrated, 417 pages, \$12.50 cloth.

By **NEVILLE THOMPSON**

EMPLOYING THE technique that was **so** successful in *Ten Lost Years 1929-1939: Memories of Canadians Who Survived the Depression*, **Barry Broadfoot** travelled across the country once more with his trusty **tape-recorder**, this time asking people to talk about what they did during **the** Second World War.

The memories he selected for publication are remarkably fresh **and articulate**. This is a **tribute** to Bmadfcot's skill as an interviewer and editor but also a reflection that, even more than **the** Depression, the war was the great event in the lives of those old enough to remember it. Also, **although Broadfoot** does not say how he chose his subjects **or** what **proportion** refused to **participate**, it is reasonable to assume that the people most willing to discuss their **experiences were** those whose **recollections** have been **honed** by **constant repetition** over the years, who **perhaps** remember with advantage what feats they did in those days. **The** shy, those **so** profoundly affected that they have tried consciously to suppress **their** memories, and those whose lives have been clammed with events for the past 30 years, are necessarily **under-represented**. There is only **one passage** in which a man struggles to find words to express what the **war** meant to him and has to abandon the task. **Officers**, not being **ordinary** Canadians, are not much heard from **or** highly **regarded**. **Fragging**, apparently, was not **unknown** in the **Canadian** army. There is no real contribution 'from French Canada (though there is criticism from other parts of the **country**) or from the **Maritimes**. Thii is the **war as** seen from the West sod Ontario.

Within these limitations, however, Bmadfcct has produced a book that will be read with enjoyment by those who lived through the war, with profit by **those too young** to remember and who **often** have the most stereotyped **conception** of it, **and which** will **remain** a source of permanent value to historians writing about the war's **impact** on **Canadian society**.

These reminiscences testify to the heroism, sacrifice, hard work, **boredom**, brutality, shame and fatuity of the war. But what it meant for most of those persons **Broadfoot interviewed** was freedom. At the beginning people enlisted **less** for patriotism or to fight Nazism than **to escape from the Depression**. **Going** to war meant a pair of boots, a uniform, travel and sexual **adventure, liberation from grinding** family **concerns** and the stultifying **atmosphere** of rural and small-town Canada. **For those** who stayed co the home **front** it meant jobs and high wages, a **return** to **human** dignity after **10** lean years and a wide **range** of opportunities to **exercise** individual ingenuity on small-time profiteering, stealing and evading official regulations. For most of the survivors, the war years are bathed in

the sweet nostalgic haze of the Legion ball on Saturday night. "It was a party." one of them told Broadfoot. "I enjoyed myself. I'll never have so much fun again in my life." □

A review of Peter Gzowski's Book About This Country in the Morning

Peter Gzowski's Book About This Country in the Morning, edited by Peter Gzowski, Hurlig, 229 pages, \$7.95.

By CARLA WOLFE

FOR THREE YEARS, along with thousands of other Canadian women, I've been a little bit in love with Peter Gzowski. Because of spells of going to school, working part-time and working full-time, I was never able to indulge myself in *This Country in the Morning* five days a week; but on almost every morning that I managed to spend at home. Peter and friends kept me company. I miss him a lot, and I miss Danny Finkleman and Helen Hutchinson and Joe Fann and the late Andrew Allan and all the people who showed up now and then to take part in peculiar contests or sing songs or just talk.

So I'd hoped that Peter Gzowski's Book: About This Country in the Morning would become a treasured



A Franklin caricature of Peter Gzowski from Peter Gzowski's Book About This Country in the Morning.

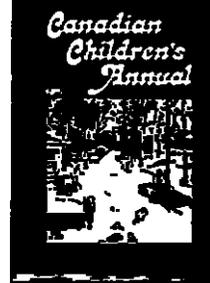
souvenir, like old love letters and baby pictures, to be browsed through every now and then with nostalgic smiles. But it isn't. It's more like an old high-school yearbook, looked at now in disbelief that you could ever have looked like that or worn those clothes in public. Whatever it was that the program had on the air, for me and all those others, glimmers only occasionally and faintly in this book.

It isn't because "there is no logical sequence," as Gzowski points out early in the book. That's fine; that can be fun if what you're muddling around in is good stuff. Much of this is simply boring. There are three interviews with our last three prime ministers that reveal absolutely nothing new or interesting about them. There's "Dii of Karen's Pregnancy," which I found dull and juvenile on the air; it remains so here (though my 12-year-old daughter liked it). My biggest disappointment was discovering that delightful, acerbic, charming Andrew Allan couldn't write; what sounded incisive and amusing reads like Rod McKuen. Take for example some of his Christmas wishes:

To the Man Who Has Everything, the comforting restfulness of Nothing. To the woman who is beautiful, the kindness that makes beauty perfect. To the woman who believes she is not beautiful, loving kindness at Christmas.

We're also given a script of Gzowski, Danny Finkleman and Robert Fulford reading a scene from *Tarzan of the Apes*, playing respectively Narrator, Tarzan and Jane. That one was pretty funny on the air, but here it's as flat as the page. There are contest entries — largely rewarmed tongue-twisters and bad limericks beginning "There once was a baby named Justin," although there are several good letters explaining why the writer will be absent from work on Chinook Day. (My own prize goes to John Fairbrother of Fort Simpson, who explains that his lead dog has a flat paw.) There are three letters from listener Vic Dardick that are fascinating, but all reproduced in difficult-to-read handwriting, and in one case on a scale so small that I almost gave up halfway through the first page.

As well, the art work is trendy and superficial. There are a few appealing drawings, but the general impression is of a sort of neo-primitive-art nouveau-black light poster stew. It may indicate something more than my artistic ignorance that, although four different people drew illustrations for the book, I



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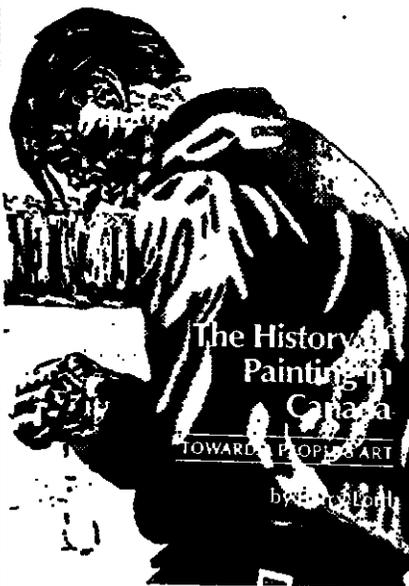
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couldn't tell three of them apart without consulting the list at the back of the book.

It's not a total loss, though: A few people come through as I felt I knew them — Paul Hiebert and his bad poetry, Marjorie Harris. **on women**, Harry Bruce on a number of things. The report on hockey in Humboldt is still* engrossing, as is "the Pincher Creek Case." an examination of several points-of view in a case of industrial pollution. One contest that works here is the one to write a plot for the great Canadian novel. And there's a nice little trivia quiz, and some "how to" instructions for building a kite, starting a vegetable garden, and even making a Siwash racing harness for your husky.

But overall, the book is a crashing disappointment. It's true that what's here is largely what was on the air, but where it belongs is on the air. Please. Peter, give up compiling books and come back to the CBC. □

External's quiet affairs

Snow Job: Canada, the United States and Vietnam (1954 to 1973), by Charles Taylor, Anansi, 209 pages, \$8.50 cloth and \$3.95 paper.

By J.A.S. EVANS

CANADA'S ROLE in Vietnam was neither large nor glorious: a circumstance that has never bothered me in the slightest. Canada was a member of the International Control Commission set up by the 1954 Geneva Agreements, which allowed France to depart from Vietnam with some semblance of dignity. In 1972, Canada became a temporary, unwilling member of another international control commission that allowed the United States to abandon the Vietnam war under the slogan, "Peace with Honour." In between, while the U.S. under President Johnson was determined to win a victory in Vietnam, Canada made some peace initiatives, and sold military supplies to the Americans. This was a policy followed by a good number of other countries; I shall not guess which followed the example of which.

Four years ago, Chester L. Cooper, an American diplomat who had been involved in Southeast Asia since the Second World War, published his memoirs of the Vietnam involvement

in a book titled *The Lost Crusade*. Cooper was a shrewd observer, and a balanced one: friendly to Canadians whenever he thought about us, which was doubtless seldom. His book appears in the bibliography Charles Taylor appends to his *Snow Job*. Cooper refers to one Canadian peace initiative: in 1964, the U.S., in a "somewhat unorthodox approach," "borrowed" a Canadian diplomat, Blair Seaborn, a "bright and sophisticated official" who was Canadian representative on the ICC; Seaborn, acting with the approval of our Prime Minister, was to "cut through the layers of public propaganda and private obfuscation" and deliver a "clear signal" from Washington to Hanoi. Seaborn's mission achieved nothing, and the "effort was soon dropped." The whole incident, which occupies much space in Taylor's book, takes up only little more than a page in Cooper's book, and is one of a series of such initiatives, all of them unsuccessful. A second Canadian peace move, this time headed by Chester Ronning, is not mentioned at all by Cooper, and was probably simply overlooked in Washington.

Yet this continuing effort of Canada during the 1960s to influence the U.S. on Vietnam — an effort that seemed so unimportant in Washington — is what Charles Taylor's *Snow Job* is all about. Canada's technique was "quiet diplomacy," which involved giving friendly advice behind the scenes and generally making oneself useful to the Great Powers. "Quiet diplomacy" had made Lester Pearson's reputation as a diplomat. Charles Taylor argues that Vietnam demonstrated the bankruptcy of the "quiet diplomacy" technique, and he reacts with moral indignation at the realization that Canada was used, and that her diplomats were, in Cooper's word, "borrowed." He is partly right: "quiet diplomacy" did not work in Vietnam, though there may still be a place for it in other international disputes. But I cannot altogether share Taylor's indignation. Countries that aim to make themselves useful, as Canada did, must not be surprised to find themselves used. Nor was our country the only one that tried to make itself useful in ending the Vietnam war. We had many rivals. Our efforts were neither as persistent nor as spectacularly ineffective as those of the British, who were almost pitifully eager for the kudos that a diplomatic settlement in Vietnam would bring them, if only they could engineer it. But the U.S. finally withdrew from Vietnam only after she

had balanced the profits and losses in the war, and decided that abandoning it was to her advantage. One lesson from Vietnam for the Canadian Department of External Affairs is that **Great Powers** look after their own **interests as they see them**, and no amount of "quiet diplomacy" will induce them to act otherwise.

The other lesson we should learn is that Canadian diplomacy should act in the same way and look after our **interests**. At no time in the 1960s does it appear that anyone in **External Affairs** asked what advantage Canada derived from our foreign policy. In fact, since "quiet diplomacy" could only be **successful** if Canada stayed on friendly terms with everyone, it followed that Canada must not be too **forthright** in standing up for her own interests, and thus destroy her reputation for "mateship," to borrow a term the former editor of the **Financial Times**, **Michael Barkway**, once used to describe the main thrust of Canada's foreign policy towards the U.S. It has cost us a good deal to maintain our reputation for "mateship." Weep no tears for the demise of "quiet diplomacy," if it really is dead.

Yet I cannot entirely **agree** with Taylor's verdict on our role in Vietnam. He is deeply disturbed. I am faintly cynical. Canada, whose foreign policies in the past have often seemed only a generation removed from the mission field or the United **Church parsonage**, went into the real world and found out that other powers looked to their own advantage. So be it: let us look to **ours**. □

The red, white and blues

No Foreign Land: The Biography of a North American Indian, by Wilfred **Pelletier in collaboration** with Ted Poole, Pantheon Books, 211 pages, \$7.95 cloth.

The Fourth World: An Indian Reality, by George **Manuel in collaboration** with Michael Posluns, Collier-Macmillan, 266 pages, \$7.95 cloth.

By RUTH BROUWER

IN THE FIRST half of **No Foreign Land**, Wilfred Pelletier describes the various stages in his 45 years of life: the childhood on **Manitoulin** Island; the guiding and other odd jobs that fol-

lowed his early **departure** from a hated educational system; the three futile attempts at white-collar businesses prompting a two-year return to the **reserve**; finally, the **move** to Toronto, where he first-became involved in **Indian cultural and** political activities. **But these concrete events are presented** less for their inherent interest than as points of **departure** for the rhetorical wanderings, broad generalizations and internal contradictions that make up so much of **what is ostensibly a personal biography**. **No Foreign Land** is a badly written and ultimately empty **book**; it appears to be little more than an opportunistic response to the current wave of interest in native traditions and **problems**.

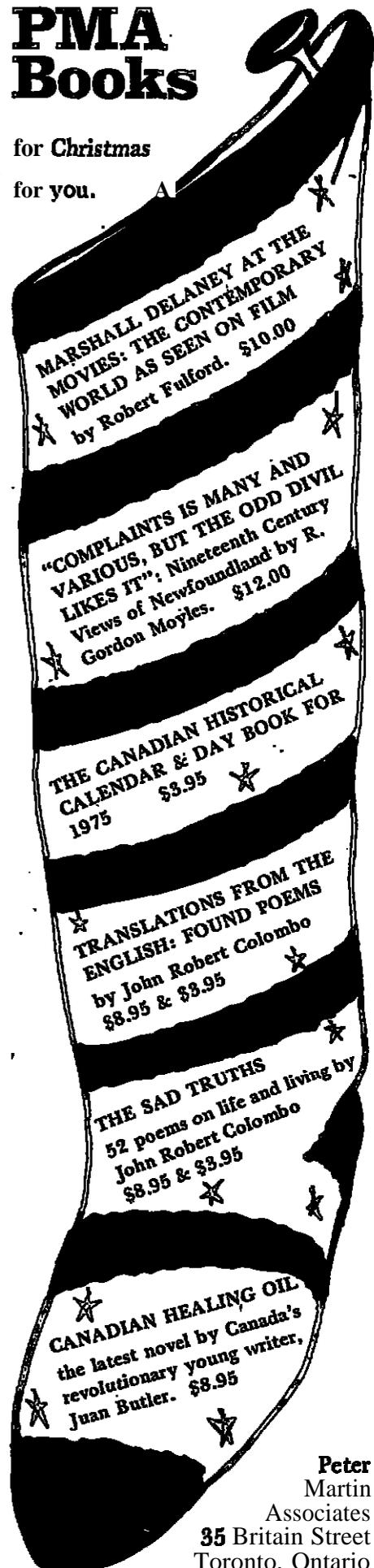
In a chapter entitled "**The Indian Business**," Pelletier **describes the** years in **Toronto** when he became almost a professional delegate to, or organizer of, conferences and other **activities** relating to Indians. Eventually, he says, he saw that Indian politics was a total waste of time-and inimical to the Indians' whole tradition. At that point he got **out of what** he calls the "bullshit circuit" and began "**rediscovering**" himself and **his** people.

Pelletier may think he escaped the bullshit **circuit** but it obviously **left** its mark: he continues to talk much, while saying little that is fresh or perceptive about white-Indian relations. The decision to stop speaking in **public** on the Indians' behalf in fact hasn't stopped him from making all kinds of **generalizations about what Indians do and don't** do. What whites do and don't do. And always, the characterization **is** the same: the Indian way is **good**; the white way is bad. Now that we **white North Americans are seeing the consequences** of our "successful" **conquest** of this continent, we are beginning to **recognize** superior aspects in the traditional Indian way of life. But to go beyond that and take the Pelletier view that **every** white custom and institution **was** basically selfish and destructive, and every Indian characteristic a **virtue**, is simplistic and boring.

Part of the problem with **No Foreign Land** is that the author generalizes from the **crises** and experiences of **his** own life when they don't provide a basis for **doing** so. His participation in **Indian-aid** activities, for example, may have been **hypocritical**, and mainly for the purpose of gaining status in the white man's eyes (as he himself says), but this hardly provides him with grounds for condemning all Indian politics as useless and **inappropriate**. And the fact

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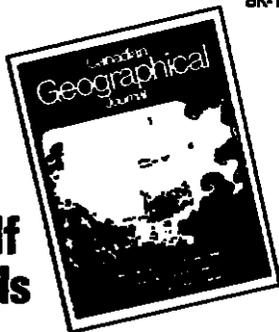
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that Pelletier thinks he's finally discovered his own identity doesn't necessarily mean that he can also identify a set of characteristics as essentially Indian. In trying to do so he merely works himself into a number of contradictions.

Pelletier shouldn't be held solely accountable for the contents or the trendy ("People are where it's really at") writing in *No Foreign Land*. Two functions of a collaborator, surely, are to bring discipline to the selection of materials and skill to their presentation. Ted Poole seems not to have been a great help to his friend in either respect.

In *The Fourth World*, George Manuel, president of the National Indian Brotherhood, gives us a far different and much better book than *No Foreign Land*, although he uses many of the same ingredients as Pelletier and in some ways has a remarkably similar background.

The title refers to Manuel's concept of a new and better world order. It is a concept lacking in specifics, but certain essentials can be discerned. He speaks of "the utilization of technology and its life-enhancing potential within the framework of the values of the people of the aboriginal world." In this new order, aboriginal and colonizing peoples would live together in mutual respect, eschewing both apartheid and assimilation. Manuel doesn't see his concept as impossibly utopian since, according to him, "the Western world is gradually working its way out of its former value system and into the value system of the aboriginal world".

If the preceding paragraph suggests that *The Fourth World* is an aerie-Faerie book about an eventually glorious future, then I've done its author a great disservice.. The book's greatest strength is its clear-eyed view of the Indians' experiences with white North Americans, and in particular, their more recent experiences with white governments.

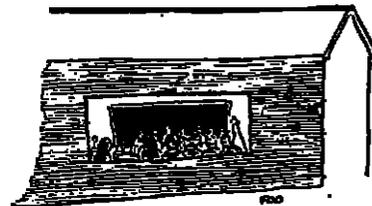
Briefly reviewing the first centuries of white-Indian relations, Manuel makes the sorts of observations that should have been in our history textbooks but never were. He points out, for example, that his people lost this continent to European invaders not because they were inherently more stupid, but because the skills in which they excelled were not the skills of war. As school children, we learned how poor Champlain was dragged into Indian quarrels. Now, Manuel reminds us how frequently the Indians were dragged into, and devastated by, the transplanted

hostilities of Europeans. Seemingly small things, perhaps, but their omission from traditional versions of North American history has coloured the way whole generations have viewed the Indians' past.

Manuel's own experiences, both as a private person and as a participant in Indian politics, have naturally involved him most often with the federal government. It seems to me his book would be worth reading if only for the informal record it provides of the various policies Indian Affairs has experimented with, and then dropped. The common raw in them all, he implies, has not so much been a lack of goodwill as a lack of coherence, forethought and consultation. True, in the 1960s the ritual of consultation was carefully observed, but the century-old habit of deciding in Ottawa was hard to eradicate, as the 1959 white paper on Indian policy clearly illustrated.

There are certainly exaggerations and one-sided views in this version of white-Indian relations — but not enough to discredit it. Usually Manuel recognizes that selected government documents, and other evidence, are a far more damning condemnation of the white man's past performance than any amount of Indian rhetoric. More regrettable is his tendency to idealize the Indians' existence in the days before European contact had irrevocably altered it. This, along with an inclination to see white-oriented federal programs (such as DREE) in their ideal rather than their actual, flawed forms, means that he is almost inevitably going to be dissatisfied with any programs implemented for Indians. Indeed, in his final chapter, Manuel uses the phrases "Home Rule" and "responsible government," in reference to Indian communities of the future and generally makes it clear that in the fourth world, solutions and programs would no longer be imposed on the Indian from the outside.

The Fourth World is longer than it need be, and the writing is uneven and often carelessly edited. But in spite of its flaws, it is a book with fresh and important things to say about the Indians' past, and about the possibilities for their- and our — future. □



Ma king presents of the past

Beyond Four Walls: The Origins and Development of Canadian Museums, by Archie F. Key, McClelland & Stewart, 384 pages, \$12.50 cloth:

Historical Relics Unearthed in New China, distributed by NC Press, illustrated. 220 pages, \$14 cloth.

New Archaeological Finds in China, distributed by NC Press, illustrated, 72 pages, \$1.25 paper.

By WALTER KLEPAC

THE CENTRAL FACT about Canadian museums to emerge from Archie F. Key's study *Beyond Four Walls* is that of their striking heterogeneity. The institutions considered in Key's book range from the large metropolitan public art galleries and the prestigious natural history and anthropological museums to the countless number of quaint dwellings devoted to the historical relics, native artifacts and geological curiosities of the local region.

While Key writes with the unfaltering clarity and the graceful, unforced style of a man thoroughly at home with his subject, he does not seem to be able to see the forest for the trees. Key's fastidious, province-by-province verbal thumbnail sketches of (apparently) each and every one of these institutions fails in the end to give his reader any real indication or feeling for their distinctly regional or national character. Each museum seems to be treated in isolation from all the others. The lack of any uniform set of criteria makes much of what Key has to say about a given institution seem arbitrary and circumstantial. This may also account for the fact that the chapters tend to become tedious reading after a short while. In spite of their author's obvious competence as a writer. That *Beyond Four Walls* does not provide any coherent overall pattern or fundamental concept by which we can more clearly comprehend the recent growth and increased public interest in this field may be owing to Key's failure to make significant use of comparisons between similar types of museums within the various provinces or between Canadian institutions and those of Europe and the United States. Such comparisons would have no doubt illuminated dis-

tinctively Canadian and regional attitudes toward such things as museum policies, underlying philosophies, educational programs and the relation of the institution to its local community.

In his lively but ail-too-brief introductory chapters on the evolution of the modern museum in Europe and North America, Key argues that to offset and contain the social unrest created by the coming of the industrial age in the early 1800s, well-heeled trustees urged that their museums be made into sources of moral uplift and education. This general tendency toward accommodating mass audiences and developing the museum as a cultural and educational resource for scholar and student alike has dominated museum thinking ever since. In a real way it is responsible for the recent and spectacular Chinese Exhibition at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto.

The considerable differences between seeing the works illustrated in *Historical Relics* and that of actually experiencing them first-hand undoubtedly provided the best possible argument for the ROM's incurring all the costly and time-consuming preparations involved in bringing the exhibit from China (via Paris, Vienna, Copenhagen and London) to Canada. The sheer exhilaration one got from coming in direct contact with an erstwhile exotic culture was proof of the legitimacy and viability of the concept of modern museum as a form of "educational entertainment." Such an exhibition, together with its slick, extensive mass-media packaging, clearly establishes the ROM as a genuine part of the popular culture, as it had never been in the past.

Both the show and the book (printed in China with a supplementary text in English) should counteract the man-in-the-street's stereotyped impression of Chinese culture as the exclusive domain of fantastic dragons and Ming vases and delicate silk paintings of life at court. With tremendous economy and an unerring sense of selectivity, the exhibit conveys a vivid impression of the totality of a society and its people. Wherever possible, contemporary farm implements (such as a small bronze scythe along with the mould from which it was cast) were shown at the beginning of a given period or dynasty. This touch gave one an almost subliminal insight into the technology and mind that was capable of producing a jade burial suit for a princess or the flying horse of Kansu. Similarly, the bronze sword, which



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quietly asserts its potential force and authority despite its small size and intricate *silver inlay*, spoke volumes about the **250-year** period of civil wars that immediately preceded the **unification of China**. The photograph of this sword in the book also eloquently conveys the aspect of silent power but in an altogether more **symbolic, far** less physical way. In the picture, the sword seems to hover majestically above its **red felt** setting. While we cannot **tell** exactly what size it is, it strikes us as being large and weighty. IN muted silver body with its glistening edge strongly suggests the Wagnerian rather than the feudal. This is typical of the kind of distortion to be found **throughout Historical Relics**. *Though the* book is invaluable for the richness of detail it **provides**, its photographs lose the **demonstrative** physical presence of the **actual** objects and the Chinese artisan's exquisite **mastery** of scale. In short, as fine as it is the book is no substitute for hating seen the show.

Far less satisfactory *is the* inexpensive booklet, *New Archaeological Finds in China*. With a few sprightly exceptions, the majority of the essays are dull and mechanical. More important, **the editorial collective, in attempting** to describe the purely archaeological significance of the recent excavations as well as the stylistic changes that the excavated **objects** represent, has failed to do either task well. □

Fine lines but loosely Moored

Henry Moore Drawings, by **Sir** Kenneth Clark, McClelland & Stewart, **illustrated, 326** pages, \$35 Cloth.

By **GARY MICHAEL DADLT**

IN A FAMOUS essay on the art of the Bushmen in *Vision and Design*, Roger Fry quoted a child's definition of **drawing**: "First I think, and then I draw a line **round** my think." And that. I should imagine, is about it. At **least**, Fry's nameless child hit upon drawing's main impulse: **it** is the wake left by the thinking eye.

For the **sculptor**, this is especially **true**. Sculpture is a deliberately undertaken discipline frequently involving elaborate, weighty, **slow, and** expensive dealings **with** the material world. For the sculptor, it is especially **impor-**

tant that he draw., not only for the pleasure of the thing itself (Moore has written that "drawing keeps one fit like physical exercises...") but also so that he might **approach** his raw material with a certain lucidity of mind. such lucidity as he possesses having come to some extent from preliminary drawing. So it is **that the** drawings of the sculptor seem to us perhaps more energetic, more revealing, more immediate than do the drawings of **the painter** (for whom drawing seems a logical and expected alternate medium).

Moore is a brilliant sculptor. **Bruce Nauman** used to point put about his **"Henry Moore Bound to Fail"** pieces (which no doubt derive from Moore's own astonishing drawings of wrapped objects; 1942 and 1950) **that** he was **merely** wrapping Moore for storage because "we're going to need him again." In addition, Moore is a prolific though uneven **draughtsman**. In this **new** edition of his drawings, Kenneth Clark has attempted with some **success** a useful thematic and vaguely chronological ordering of the vast outpouring of 50 years of graphic work. About the artist's weaknesses he is **tactful** and less than useful. **About** his meaning he is least useful of all.

The problem, I think, is that Lord **Clark doesn't take any personal or intellectual** chances. One can understand it, of **course**. He **and Moore** have been close friends for many years. But it does **the** sculptor no service to be c&fined within a **text** as **unadventurous** as this. If you want to know when and under what circumstances **Moore** did his famous **Shelter** drawings, for **example**, this is the place to look. If, however, your **intellectual** needs are going to **take** you beyond **offhand mentionings** of "pathos" or of an **"Aeschylean** sense of menace," then it is elsewhere you must **take** your **desires** and your **\$35**.

Early in the book Lord Clark **eschews** "deep psychological explanations" of the drawings. He also assures his readers that he will talk "about the **actual** drawings and not about the motives behind them." Only **partly** true. **Talking** about the drawings themselves, alas, does not mean **to** Lord Clark what it means to formalist critics. It means rather that the reader is in for 10 essays in impressionist criticism that the author has neither the niceness of perception nor (and this is especially important) the **syntactical** wherewithal or phrase-making ability to pull **together**. One gets instead such triumphs of hope over inspection as: "After the

age of seventy we should all be free to say and do exactly what we feel, and Moore's late drawings have the **dionysiac** freedom of the later poems of Po Chui, or the last works of Titian." This is the only book about art, by the way, ever to succeed in making me feel guilty. Lord Clark says on page 155, with what I consider to be a species of aggressive if **limp-wristed** blackmail: "If the miner's back on Pl. 163 is not a piece of drawing worthy of the **great** tradition, then I have been wasting my time during the last fifty years." What we have here is Lord Clark as straight man.

Physically, the book is pleasant enough. There seems to be one omitted photo — fig. 135 is referred to twice, each time as a different drawing. The book is well and attractively bound and the plates are as fine as it is possible to manage. If your coffee table needs it, go ahead. □

Why Jesus wept

Too Many Tears, by Susanne Moss, **McClelland & Stewart**, 128 pages, \$6.95 cloth.

By HELEN PORTER

IN THE EPILOGUE of this book we are given a picture of Pierre Elliott Trudeau addressing the nation on New Year's Day. Susanne Moss is, watching him on her television set, half asleep. But when she hears him say: "There is no segment of our population which is condemned to silent, hopeless oppression," she is suddenly very wide awake. She turns the set off; but what she really wants to do is kick the screen, to drive her spastic leg into his smiling mouth. For she knows as well as anyone in Canada that what the Prime Minister is saying is just not true.

Susanne Moss is a victim of cerebral palsy, though she was in her late 20s before anyone told her the name of the disease. Now 37, she has lived a life of constant struggle against the forces of

ignorance, fear and misunderstanding that have conspired to make many of her days almost completely unbearable. Somehow she has kept going, despite the fact that because of her spastic walk she has more than once been arrested for drunkenness. Despite the assumption of some so-called Christian people that she, a woman of above-average intelligence, is retarded, despite the deaf ear that sales clerks and other service personnel turn to her because her speech is slurred and distorted. Susanne admits to being bitter. But who wouldn't be, in her place? We can only marvel at her courage, her grit, her determination in the face of lots of pity and condescension but almost no real encouragement. She has managed to carve out a life for herself, living alone, working, and looking after her own needs, still encountering discrimination at almost every turn but refusing to be defeated.

The writing of *Too Many Tears* was a physical ordeal for Susanne as well as an emotional one. Few other writers will even begin to comprehend her "struggle with smudgy sheets of carbo, with the spasm in my body that made finding the right key at the typewriter a long and frustrating task." She persevered, and has come up with a book that should be read by all of us who are vain enough to feel that we perhaps have some understanding of severe physical disability.

Susanne dedicates this her first book to John Howard Griffin, author of *Black Like Me*, one of the few people who threw a little light across her tortured path. □

IN BRIEF

LAST YEAR Merle Shain's *Some Men Are More Perfect Than Others* won my unofficial Consolation Prize for 1973: it consoled me of the lovelorn among us than, any other 1973 book. This year's Consolation Prize winner is Ian Sutton, a *Toronto Sun* columnist, who frequently writes on the subject of love. *Lovers and Others* (Clarke Irwin, \$5.95) consists mostly of rewarmed Sun articles. Ms. Sutton's columns frequently make for pleasant enough sub-way reading, but like most newspaper columns, they're too slight to be preserved in book form. Nonetheless, lots of people will feel better as a result of reading Ms. Sutton's book; and Clarke Irwin will earn the money it needs to

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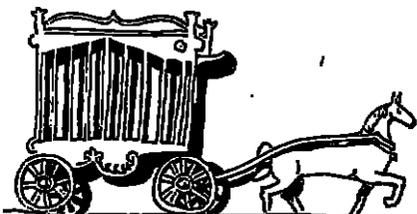
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Translated by Michael Collon

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MW

SHORT STORIES and poems by 27 persons of Hungarian descent are presented in *The Sound of Time* (Canadian-Hungarian Authors' Association, Lethbridge, unpriced). Unfortunately, the 27 include only a small number of writers, and the majority of works and translations are of such standard that it would be unfair to the few significant contributors to have their names mentioned in connection with this book. Even the brief blurbs preceding stories and poems are carelessly written. As one writer-contributor remarked, he did not mind giving his permission to print his story, but he at least expected to see his name spelled correctly. The book was financed by the Department of the Secretary of State. Its artistic merits will not inspire heated discussions in literary circles, but it will no doubt be held high by politicians at election time. The full title of the book is *The Sound of Time: Anthology of Canadian-Hungarian*

Authors. Any way I look at it, "Canadian-Hungarian" means a person of Canadian descent, now a Hungarian citizen or resident. Maybe we should try to recover part of the cost from the Hungarian government.

STEPHEN MBZEI

4 4 4

THE FIRST 20 pages of Nor *Bloody Likely: The Shaw Festival 1962-73* (text by Brian Doherty, photos by Ludwig Dittrich, Lorne Blunt. Helen Flaherty and Robert Ragsdale, \$15) provide some worthwhile insights into the Canadian theatre scene and into the sweat, panic and machinations that go into creating a festival. The Shaw experiment at Niagara-on-the-Lake is now 12 years old, and appropriately Doherty, its founder, has tried to put a summary between covers. Unfortunately, the latter seven eighths of this coffee-table item is a thin mix of kudos for all concerned and some disappointing black-and-white photos. As for the price of this large souvenir program, prospective buyers might wish to say, "Not bloody likely!"

NIGEL SPENCER

BI-FOCUS *continued from page 20*

Homer Watson and later Paul-Emile Borduas. We also begin to notice that the same method used in the first chapter to "read" the aboriginal art of this country is used to deal with the works of later Canadian artists; this is problematical because later Canadian society is not homogeneous in the sense that aboriginal cultures are. Because of this misunderstanding we are subjected to several questionable interpretations of paintings. For instance, of a water-colour of Robert Shore Miines Bouchette of his prison cell, Lord states that an open bird-cage shows the artist's confidence in final victory for the *Patriote* cause. In describing "Blunden Harbour" by Emily Carr, he says that "the rage of the native people can be sensed in the raised fist closest to us and in the determination on the three carved faces." And in describing "L'heure mauve" by Ozias Leduc, he claims "the culture of repression, this half-smothered Québécois tradition, has become the art of a landscape occupied only by a dying glow."

In chapter three, "The British Regime," Lord adds more weight to the revival of interest in the work of Hind,



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as Reid and Harper have done before him, and in a section called "Imperialism and the Art Schools of Paris" he rejects the work of artists such as Paul Peel and J. W. Maurice because he feels that the French style is the primary element in their work. David Milne is rejected for the same reason later on.

As we move into the 20th century, however, I begin to have serious difficulties with this book, for here is where Lord has to start dealing with the work of living and recently dead artists. Earlier, Lord has stated a convincing case for the seminal importance of Légaré in the history of Quebec painting (again like Reid before him) particularly because of the primacy of subject matter in his work. Here I am in complete agreement and find that Lord's insistence on the primacy of subject matter is responsible for many of the insights in *The History of Painting in Canada*. However, now Lord gives us three criteria from a 1940 essay by Mao Tse-Tung that he uses in evaluating Canadian art. They are: that the work be national; that the work be scientific; and that the work be democratic.

I cannot reconcile three criteria formulated by an intellectual from a very different culture with an attempt to

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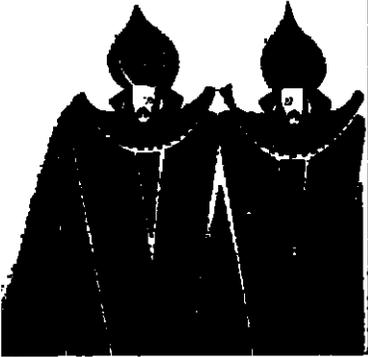
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evaluate Canadian art. It is one thing to recognize that art and artists have grown naturally out of **their** environments and to prefer activity of that nature (an essential position in Canada in the **face** of increasing American domination). It is entirely different when Lord tries to prescribe how indigenous art should be created.

And there **are** further problems when Lord **tries to write** about the emergence of Dada and surrealism and their **influence** in Canada. **André** Breton, by implication, and Leon Trotzky are **accused** of opposing national liberation movements. (**Trotzky** seems to be the **bête noire** of the latter part of this book.) **Breton** and the Dadaists and surrealists in opposing "nationalism" in art were opposing the tendency of various states and national academies of culture to decree what is the national **art** of their counties and to induce artists to work to their prescription, more or less as illustrators of a national idea. Breton (and Trotzky, I might **add**) was a supporter of "self" determination for both individuals and **cultures**, realizing that we can only identify **revolutionary** indigenous art after it is made.

Far from being opposed to national liberation movements, as Lord states, Trotzky supported them in many cases, and furthermore in his *Literature and Revolution* of 1924 he shows a real understanding of the Russian vanguard artists who supported the revolution; and **that** is why his name is included in my painting "For Ben **Bella**." Concerning the same painting, the reference to "**Berra**" does **not** refer to Yogi Berra, as **Lord** states; it is a **reference** to apolitical **figure—an** anarchist. I think. I'd like **no** to clear up a few mistakes in Lord's description of my **Dorval** mural. He has taken his description **of it** from newspaper accounts of the time and repeats their inaccuracies. The **mural** was not about the **history** of flight, but consisted of cut-out, full-scale, two-dimensional, plywood gondolas of the airship R-34, **spaced** along a long passageway with electric motors turning **propellers** on two of them. The main gondola contains a likeness of the famous **Germain airship** commander **Heinrich Mathy**. There is no portrait of Mohammed **Ali** in the mural, **but one** of the texts printed on it contains a quotation **from Freedom**, the anarchist newspaper, about how **Ali** was stripped of his title. The man who resembles Lyndon Johnson is not surrounded by falling bombs. He has been kicked **out** of the gondola through an open door and his hand has been lopped off by the

propeller. **Lord's** account of what **happened** to the mural is correct, however.

The Maoist criteria applied by Lord to recent painting lead to **his utter rejection** of the works of Guido **Molinari** and Claude Tousignant, who are both totally committed artists. They have both **worked** for years on **remarkably consistent** and rigorous work, extending the living tradition of Quebec painting. **They arc.**, for me at least, two of the most important artists in Canada. And what **are** we to make of the fact that the **only** Quebec artist mentioned after Molinari and Tousignant is Serge **Lemoyne** and he certainly deserves more than a mention? Why aren't there references to the young artists around **the Galerie Media**, for instance? Nor does this book **mention many** younger artists from the rest of Canada — **people** such as Roger Savage, Bruce Parsons, David Bolduc, **Jamelie Hassan**, Michael Morris, Robert **Fones**, Stuart **Shaw**, etc.

I **agree** with Lord's assessment of the role of Painters Eleven, that famous offshoot of the Ontario Society of Artists, in chapter **four**, "Painting in the Age of U.S. Imperialism." The ease with which the American critic **Clement** Greenberg was able to alter the direction of many **mature** Canadian painters **certainly reinforces** Lord's views on Canadian provincialism.

In the **area** of original research we can thank Barry Lord for his work on working-class artists and also for **his** work on the Artists' Union of the **1930s** in Hamilton and Tomnto. For me, however, the most important pan of this book is Lard's **description** of the economy of the visual arts. Hem is the first appearance **in** book form of the system of fashion, influence and external control that Canadian artists **labour** under. (The number of **American** citizens in sensitive positions in the visual-arts organization of Canada **is** beyond belief.) Finally, Lord has performed a valuable service in setting out the history of Canadian Artists' **Representation** and explaining its **objectives**. **CAR** will benefit **from** this kind of intelligent exposure; Canadians need **to be** reminded of the unique economic and social achievements the artists of this country **are** gaining through working together as professionals with a common occupation. □

Editor's note: There exists a difference of opinion between Mr. Lord and Mr. Curnoe on the Anglicized spelling of "Trotzky." In this article we have honoured Mr. Curnoe's preference.

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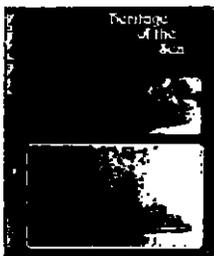


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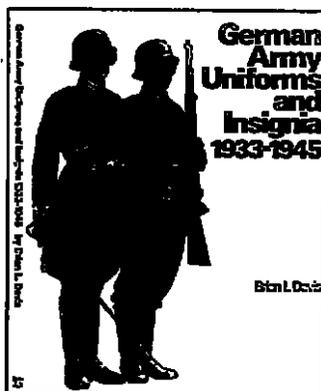
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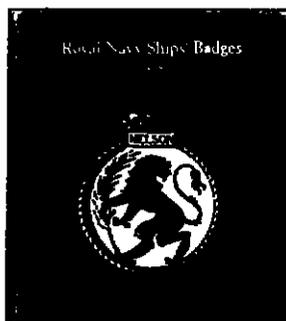
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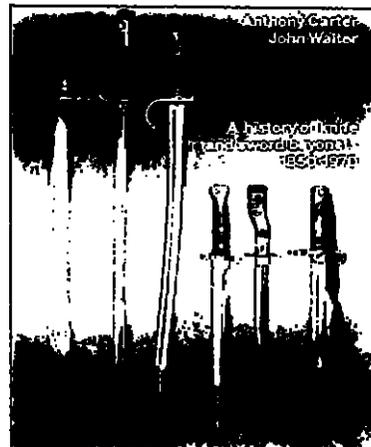
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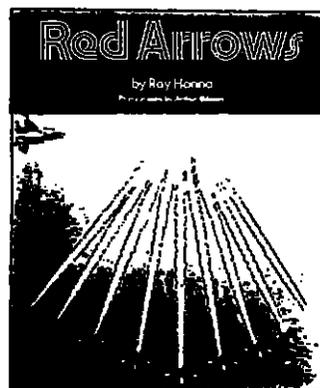
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