

Book Reviews

The Emerging Goddess: The Creative Process in Art, Science and Other Fields. By Albert Rothenberg. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1979. Pp. xii, 440. \$22.50.

Dr. Rothenberg believes it is possible to identify and assess the creative potential of a person by the speed and frequency with which he responds with opposite meanings in a word association test. He bases this belief upon experimental studies carried out at Yale University and a summary of his findings is included in this book, in which he seeks to establish opposition as a central and intrinsic element of the creative process.

Rothenberg postulates two thought processes as being essential to the creation of ideas or images which are both new and valuable, each of them based upon the principle of antithesis: "janusian" thinking, which involves the simultaneous synthesis of opposites; and "homospacial" thinking, which is concerned with the superimposition or fusion of opposites within the same space.

In his introduction, Rothenberg dismisses Koestler's model of bisociation of incompatible elements, and Mednick's theory of the combination of remotely associated elements on the grounds that they are not specifically limited to the creative process. He also rejects the lateral thinking of DeBono and the divergent thinking of Guilford as being too general in their application to be regarded as basic to creativity. Janusian and homospacial thinking are, however, presented as being *essential* to the creative process, a proposition I am unable to accept.

As a psychologist/psychiatrist Dr. Rothenberg sets much of his discussion within a Freudian or psychoanalytical frame of reference. He differs from the more classical position of Ernst Kris in believing that creative thinking is not primary, or subconscious, thinking. Whereas in primary thinking, as in dreaming, opposites are capable of representing each other, "in creative thinking", Rothenberg suggests, "simultaneous opposition or antithesis, rather than interchangeable opposition, occurs as a function of secondary process type cognition."

The possibility of new ideas arising fully formed from the subconscious he also rejects. Whereas dreaming is an involuntary act, creative thinking is deliberate: ". . . dreams function primarily to keep the dreamer at rest by concealing truth and meaning from the dreamer and from other people." He sees the creative process as the "mirror image" of dreaming, a concept I find hard to grasp. "Though he is not aware of it, the person engaged in creative activity is attempting to reverse censorship of unconscious material in order to gain increased conscious control over his inner psychological world."

Opposites are, by definition, limits, and knowing the limits of a binary scale provides a basis for storing and manipulating knowledge. "By bringing together polarities and limits simultaneously in a janusian formulation—even though they are in conflict—an entire dimension potentially is encapsulated. An entire system is suggested. And one of the reasons the creator engages in janusian thinking is that, consciously or unconsciously, he is attempting to encapsulate a dimension or, in a sense, a world."

Janusian thinking is abstract: homospatial thinking is necessary to render janusian constructs into concrete form. "Either at the very moment of formulation, or at some later time, homospatial thinking operates in conjunction with janusian thinking to produce integrated entities such as artistic and scientific metaphors or more fully developed paradigms and models. By means of homospatial thinking, opposites and antitheses in a janusian construct are superimposed or otherwise fused in space and integrations are produced." He characterises the creative process as a sequence of repeatedly separating-out and bringing-together, which he calls "articulation".

While the concepts of janusian and homospatial thinking are potentially useful models in examining the creative process, I cannot see them as being either as important or intrinsic as Dr. Rothenberg suggests. He is defining creativity in a more limited sense and context than is useful or reasonable. Rothenberg emphasises that his findings are based empirically upon investigatory research, carried out during psychiatric interviews with fifty-seven eminent people, selected on the basis of their recognised creative abilities, as well as upon word association tests carried out with a wider group of subjects. He discusses, at some length, the motivation and operative behaviour of a major poet in creating a particular poem, and suggests ways in which his theories might explain creative activity in other areas of art and science. I must admit to finding these discussions more revealing of the author than his subject, but his theories are certainly interesting and may well prove to be important additions to the understanding of this diverse and complex phenomenon.

Emily Carr, A Biography. Maria Tippett, Toronto, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1979. Pp. xiv, 314. \$16.95

The Art of Emily Carr. Doris Shadbolt, Vancouver: Clarke Irwin and McIntyre, 1979. Pp. 223, 1979.

Emily Carr was a remarkable and complex woman. She has long been recognized in her own country as one of the pioneers of a uniquely Canadian manner of painting. While her contemporaries on the west coast continued a conservative tradition of English watercolour painting, Emily Carr, excited by the modern, expressive styles to which she had been exposed while studying in France, pursued what was in her relatively isolated environment a wholly personal and avant garde painting style. A small group of colleagues in central Canada, Lawren Harris and The Group of Seven, welcomed her into their midst, offering the encouragement, credibility, assurance and moral and professional support she craved until she finally gained national recognition at the age of fifty.

Although the stereotypical 'struggling artist' scenario was ingrained in Carr's life, Maria Tippett, in this biography, reconstructs Carr's story with a truth and solidity that avoids the melodramatic. Emily Carr was a woman of independent mind and spirit living during a period when self-expression by a woman was not encouraged. Her commitment to a career as an artist took her abroad to England and France to study. To support herself, her painting and her menagerie of pets, she taught art classes and ran a boarding house. She travelled by canoe, under the most adverse of physical conditions, to remote Indian villages, sketching and painting and thereby documenting for future generations a decaying culture. She smoked cigarettes in public, wore dowdy clothing and was anything but genteel, either in appearance or in speech. Emily Carr was a painter, writer, ceramist, teacher, public speaker and business woman; for the biographer she was a goldmine.

In her book, Maria Tippett, a cultural historian at Simon Fraser University, draws heavily on Emily Carr's personal papers including an unpublished autobiography, letters and diaries which Carr kept religiously throughout her life. She has used this material well. Though quotations are abundantly employed, Tippett achieves a successful balance between their use and interpretive, biographical discussion. Through five years of research she became familiar with Carr's moods and eccentricities and separates for the reader the truth in Carr's own versions, from the exaggerations and 'little white lies'.

Tippett has traced Emily Carr's life in thirteen chronological chapters each covering, with the exception of her childhood years, short periods of two to three years. Discussion of the formative years of Carr's life reveals the artist's relationships with her sisters (who conformed to conventions) and with her mother and father. Carr's relationship with her father is the most puzzling and is therefore of particular interest. What was once a warm and intimate

natural love of daughter for father turned suddenly into an intense hatred, almost revulsion. Emily's diaries are not specific, but it is clear that an unpleasant sexual incident turned the tables. The reader's understanding of Emily Carr is certainly biased by this discovery; one is hesitantly tempted to relate Carr's lifelong shyness, even in life-drawing classes, and her single status (she did have suitors) to this childhood event. Tippetts allows this bias.

Tippetts guides the reader through Carr's mature years with equal care: her student days in Canada and abroad, her interpersonal relationships with teachers and comrades, family and the local art public, the revelations of the work of Lawren Harris and "The Group" with whom she felt such a close affinity, her first exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada and her eventual national establishment as an important figure in painting in Canada. All of this is accompanied by reproductions of the paintings (ten in colour) and, even more interesting in the context of Tippetts's approach to Carr's life, the inclusion of numerous archival photographs of the artist, her family and surroundings from childhood to her death in 1945.

A key word in Carr's diaries is "big". This simple, child-like word was the closest she could come to describing her intentions as an artist: to express in her landscape paintings strength, dignity, an almost massive religious or spiritual uplifting and a sweeping sense of pride and awe. Emily Carr was a "big" woman. Tippetts has succeeded in relaying this message.

The title of Doris Shadbolt's book on Emily Carr indicates its difference from Tippetts's biography. The difference in approach is further reflected in a difference in presentation. Indeed, the reader would not want to select one book over the other, for the two books do not overlap either in intention or in actuality. They appeared on the bookshelves around the same time and they are complementary. Doris Shadbolt has written a history of an art career. She has included biographical material when it enhances the reader's understanding of Emily Carr's accomplishments as an artist. Whereas in Tippetts's book we are primarily interested in a life, here the expressed priority is the art.

Doris Shadbolt has meticulously traced the progression of Carr's work from the early student accomplishments in England and more vibrant expressive attempts as a student in France, through the development of her Indian pictures from their strict documentary beginnings to their reduced, dramatic and more formal stage, to her mature work, the religious, sweeping forest and landscape paintings. It is a well written, historical analysis which uses the wealth of resource material well and accurately discusses the stylistic and ideological influences of her contemporaries. (She was at one time, for example, completely captivated by Lawren Harris' ideas on theosophy and tried very hard to incorporate these ideas in her work).

But the problem, if it is one, with Shadbolt's book is its presentation. It is a blockbuster "coffee table" book aimed at the gift giving public rather than the reading public. It's simply too big and too heavy to read other than

leaning over a table or desk. One can't curl up in an easy chair with *The Art of Emily Carr*. As with most art books of this format, it doesn't even invite reading. A quick count showed 124 illustrated pages to 48 of text and the text is in a large print that needs a certain distance to focus.

The Art of Emily Carr is a picture book, a very handsome showpiece. There are 135 individual colour reproductions in the book including the stunning book jacket. The colours are superb. The paper stock on which the book is printed is of high quality and a heavy weight so that the colours bounce off its surface, reflecting as much light as possible. The result is a wonderful book to look at at one's leisure, to touch and finger through; and to read when the time is right.

Dalhousie University Art Gallery

Linda J. Milrod

The Crawford Symposium. Edited and with an Introduction by Frank M. Tierney. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1979. pp. 158.

The rapid ascent of Isabella Valancy Crawford's literary reputation over the last decade has been remarkable, and it has been manifested in a spate of words never before expended on her poetry. The earlier critics, on the whole, were neither neglectful nor remiss in their appreciation, but their pronouncements were few and far between in the days when Canadian literature was a decidedly poor and neglected relation of British and American literature in our universities.

Perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of the earlier criticism is the unpredictability of its pattern. As one would expect, T.G. Marquis writes approvingly of Crawford in his *English-Canadian Literature* of 1913. It is surprising, however, to find Pelham Edgar, a proponent of the Jamesian novel and the new poetry of T.S. Eliot, singling her out, in his brief survey of Canadian literature in the *Cambridge History of English Literature* (1916), as "the first Canadian poet of distinction" and asserting that "her work would challenge attention in the poetical history of any country". Equally unexpected is the total neglect of her poetry by Archibald MacMechan in his *Headwaters of Canadian Literature* (1924), for MacMechan was an ardent Tennysonian whose adherence to the literary standards of romanticism made him openly unsympathetic to the modernist school of poetry and explicitly critical of Pelham Edgar's role as one of its academic advocates. The view of E.K. Brown (*On Canadian Poetry*, 1943), who praises Crawford's depiction of pioneering, her description of the "teeming vitality" of nature, her skill in dialect verse, and her extraordinary imagination, was natural enough for a specialist in Canadian literature and an admirer of Lampman's and D.C. Scott's poetry. But again the unexpected happened when the tough-minded

and militantly anti-romantic A.J.M. Smith, in his revised anthology of Canadian poetry (1948), echoed Brown's admiration. Then, shortly after Smith had given Crawford's poetry his influential seal of approval, Desmond Pacey reversed the decision with a vengeance by sharply opposing the "more enthusiastic estimates of her work", and by calling her long poems "tastelessly and clumsily florid", "melodramatic extravaganzas" in which "the good lines are almost lost in the wild confusion of the whole". Pacey's severity was exceptional, but it is safe to say that, in spite of Brown and Smith, few academics in the 1950's regarded Isabella Crawford as more than a definitely minor Canadian poet. Her romantic idealism, her florid style, and her indulgence in sentiment were not likely to recommend her poetry to the modernist movement then dominant in the writing and study of Canadian poetry.

James Reaney's engaging and imaginative essay of 1959 in *Our Living Tradition* was really the first serious attempt to demonstrate and analyze—rather than simply to declare, as Brown and Smith had done—the remarkable qualities of "Malcolm's Katie" and a few shorter poems. Throughout the 1960's the Reaney view remained the last word on the subject, and it was reinforced by Roy Daniells' generally favourable discussion of Crawford in the prestigious *Literary History of Canada* (1965).

At last in the 1970's came what Dorothy Livesay aptly calls a "flurry" of papers and articles—those of Bessai (1970), Martin (1972, 1976), Yeoman (1972), Livesay (1973), Ower (1974), Hughes (1975), and Mathews (1977). Finally the revival was certified beyond question by the Crawford Symposium, held in Ottawa in May, 1977—the sixth in a series sponsored by the Department of English in the University of Ottawa, a series which had previously studied the undoubtedly major figures of Grove, Klein, Lampman, Pratt, and D.C. Scott. The resulting volume of papers doubles the number of articles produced earlier in the decade and also includes a useful checklist of Crawford's writings and a bibliography of criticism.

Does Isabella Crawford really belong to the select group of major Canadian writers already "re-appraised" in the series? These contributors seem to have no serious doubts that she does. As the editor of the volume observes in his introduction, the "result was a greater admiration for her creative gifts (some scholars labeled her a genius) . . ." The various speakers naturally took their topics seriously, but the proof is best observed in the final portion of the proceedings, a session on the "achievement" of Isabella Valancy Crawford in which a devastatingly direct and only partly tongue-in-cheek debunking of Crawford's stature by Louis Dudek was fervently countered by Clara Thomas and Elizabeth Waterston, and apparently repudiated by the assembly at large. The Montreal poet and critic complained that he had "been suffering . . . for two days listening to papers and discussions that seem entirely out of focus with the needs of Canadian criticism", and observed that he had spent much of his literary life "disinfecting and

fumigating against the kind of poetry—represented by Isabella Valancy Crawford—that the papers and panelists have been analyzing and treating with very high seriousness”. He added that “Miss Crawford’s poetry is all hollow convention”, that “there are not two lines of genuine personal feeling in all her poetry”, and that “fake idealism” is “the very substance and intent of her poetry”. His final charge was that the symposium speakers had really been dealing with a “failed poet”, yet had “to a marked degree” lacked the perspectives “of common sense, of reality, and of honesty of judgment” which must be applied to the examination of past as well as present Canadian writing.

Perhaps the panelists were unprepared for such an acidic and extreme revival of Desmond Pacey’s earlier criticism. At any rate, they were reluctant to take Dudek’s charges seriously. One reply, while incidentally reasserting the strengths of the poetry, side-stepped the issue raised by declaring that, even if Dudek were right and Isabella Crawford deserved “only the most indulgent and nationalistic criticism”, she should be given respect and attention because she was “a woman-artist of nineteenth-century Canada”—that is, a writer labouring under specific disadvantages in a male-dominated world. Perhaps one need not be insensitive to the sad facts of Isabella Crawford’s short life to feel uneasy about this particular approach to literary study, an approach which tends to make the sex of a writer such a dominant factor and tends to apply extra-literary considerations to literary evaluation. Isabella Crawford was compelled by extreme poverty to please popular and vulgar tastes, she lacked friends and associates capable of encouraging and fostering her talent, and she suffered dreadfully from the repeated blows of fate, but the deepest sympathy for her is ultimately extraneous to the fundamental issue, the quality of her art. It would have been interesting, and perhaps not wasted effort, if Dudek’s charges had been met head on, and refuted. One can agree with Elizabeth Waterston that there is more than one kind of reality and realism in life and literature, and that Isabella Crawford was a realist of a kind not included in Louis Dudek’s formula—and yet wish that the point had been demonstrated more explicitly than it is in the imagistic conclusion to the volume.

Though Louis Dudek would seem to be looking at Crawford’s poetry through a lens that produces distortions as gross in their way as those of the indiscriminating eulogists of Canadian poesy once ridiculed in F.R. Scott’s “Canadian Authors Meet”, perhaps his rancour had been aroused not so much by meditation upon “Malcolm’s Katie” as by some of the papers he heard at the symposium. Did he too wince when listening to the most strained bits of Freudian image-reading in John Ower’s “Crawford and the Penetrating Weapon” (for example, “The almost punning ‘jingle’ of ‘Max’ and ‘axe’ suggests the implement is a sort of metonymic extension of Gordon’s virility.”) or to the exaggerated Marxist version of Crawford as seeing “class and class conflict everywhere” expressed in Kenneth Hughes’ “The

Helot' and the Objective Correlative"? More convincing discussions are those of Dorothy Livesay and Penny Petrone on the difficulties of assembling biographical data, of Margo Dunn on the early fairy stories, and of Catherine Ross on the recently unearthed manuscript poem here called "Narrative II". Fred Cogswell's "highly speculative" but clever and persuasive feminist interpretation of "Said the Canoe" is well worth reading, as is S.R. MacGillivray's account of the editorial problems to be faced in establishing definitive texts of the poems. Perhaps the most impressive of all is Elizabeth Waterston's "Crawford, Tennyson, and the Domestic Idyll", a perceptive extension of Dorothy Livesay's earlier article on Crawford's relation to Tennyson.

It would seem that the 1970's have engendered a Crawford revival which, if its proponents have their way, will convince us that a fifth Confederation poet is a major voice in the Canadian literary context. It is to be hoped that, somewhere between the extremes of uncritical or misguided adulation on the one hand and the "fumigating" instincts of the Dudeks on the other, a moderate and rational spirit will prevail in the escorting of Isabella Crawford to her seat among the wearers of Canadian-grown laurel.

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M.G. Parks

The Playwright as Magician: Shakespeare's Image of the Poet in the English Public Theatre. By Alvin B. Kernan. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979. Pp. vii, 164. Notes, Index.

Alvin Kernan's *The Cankered Muse* opened a new and livelier appreciation of Renaissance satire, especially on the stage, largely because of its satisfying fusion of broad theorizing with brilliant readings of individual texts. His editions for the Yale Ben Jonson and his many other publications have made a major contribution to Renaissance studies. But not all books by important critics are important books. Although this latest book shares some of the great virtues of his first, it shows uncharacteristic weaknesses in both those early areas of strength.

The Playwright as Magician finds an evolutionary development from "courtly" poet to "public" playwright in Shakespeare's self-consciousness as an artist. Kernan feels Shakespeare expresses his own final image of himself in Prospero, and he finds that image prototypically modern—a magician, half magus and half bamboozler, obsessively aware of power and its prostitution. Chapters 3 to 6 consider the tensions between Renaissance poetic theory and certain social and theatrical realities: the quality of Shakespeare's actors and audiences, the social relevance of his art, his stylistic inheritance, and the structure of his playhouse. Through a subtle

analysis of metadramatic elements, Kernan traces these concerns in a number of plays. His discussion of mirroring sub-plot in *King Lear* (Chapter 5) makes an especially convincing statement about the ending of that play.

However, Kernan wishes to go beyond the reading of individual plays or even sequences of them. He seems eager to associate his latest work with that of social historians like Christopher Hill, and seeks an explanation for Shakespeare's artistic development in factors such as the shift from patronage to professionalism, the rise of printing, and the appearance of a public market for "commodity" art. Unfortunately, it is strikingly obvious in both his opening and closing chapters, that certain aspects of Kernan's thought remain quite ahistorical.

Chapter 1 evokes a broad literary-historical context in which Petrarch and Sidney establish the Renaissance image of the poet. Petrarch sets the "heroic" pattern, the professional poet as "another Christ and Caesar" (p.9), while Sidney's amateur courtliness comes down to mere decorousness (p.15). Such schematism will satisfy few readers of either poet, and closer examination reveals difficulties. Because the key term "professional" is extended to Petrarch, it functions sometimes as an economic and thus historically-rooted term, sometimes as a synonym for the modern poet's "continuous self-conscious awareness of himself" (p.2), surely an attitude as Vergilian as Petrarchan. On pages 7 and 8 the actual claims made by Petrarch's staging of his coronation are radically confused with a retrospective view of them. Kernan is right to feel that Petrarch would be troubled by the assertion that he was replacing religious and monarchic values with poetic ones. The whole ceremony is aimed at the celebratory integration of poetry into the worlds that matter; God and Caesar validate poetry, not *vice versa*. Since Kernan pronounces a twentieth-century inverted view of these relations "historically inevitable" (p.8), thus reading Renaissance literary history as existentialist typology, it is not surprising to find Sartrian artistic self-consciousness directly linked with Petrarch and other Renaissance figures in the last chapter.

Important as social and literary history are, they do not exhaust the scope of historical inquiry. Renaissance Platonism sheds considerable light on the tensions Kernan sees emerging from Shakespeare's attempt to work within Sidney's aesthetic. But to introduce the stubbornly unsecular element of Platonism would detract from Kernan's persistent attempt to formulate Shakespeare's aims exclusively in social or existential terms. It is helpful to mark Sidney's Platonizing aesthetic "aristocratic". However, to acknowledge Prospero a Neo-Platonic magician and then avoid any explanation of the meaning of such magic in favour of Robert West's assertion that it reveals "outerness" (p.156), is to avoid considerable recent research into Renaissance thought. Kernan finds Shakespeare/Prospero making absolute claims for the theatre: "It is both visionary and moral in the most profound sense, for it recreates the central pattern of existence, which the playwright has

come to understand imaginatively through his own sufferings and exile, and it affects the imaginatively competent spectator in such a way as to allow him to experience and be transformed by the illusion without having to endure being actually drowned and reborn" (p. 143). Kernan implies that this art transforms by virtue of being experienced pattern, but Sidney's visionary and moral patterns are effective because rooted in religious and philosophical beliefs about the nature of God's world. Man's ability to transform by recreating them is always contingent, because the poet confronts that sickening wrench of real from ideal, not only in his theatre and his public, but in his fallen self.

Kernan's virtuosity as a reader of Renaissance plays is evidenced again in this book, but his chapter on the *Sonnets* reveals sharply just how strong a bias towards the stage he has. The sequence is allegorized as "an apology for the necessity of working in the public theatre" (p.48), with the young man cast as "the Muse of courtly lyric poetry fostered by patronage" and the dark lady "the Muse of theatre" (p.46). Courtly poetry, it seems, has been "a sea of anonymity" (p.38), oblivious to the self-reflection of drama (p.40). Kernan finds Shakespeare demonstrating in his *Sonnets* that "only a realistic dramatic style can truthfully present the complexities and ironies of actual existence" (p.45). Kernan's passion for theatre has enriched his readers, but when it denies the life of other forms, it becomes prejudice. His generalizations about non-dramatic poetry (and pre-Renaissance drama) are often ill-considered. They confound the terms lyric and courtly and locate both too easily in the simple fact of patronage. The playwright's response to his large public audience is important and exciting, but it hardly warrants the claim that it forced him "to consider, as the poet writing for a small select audience never had to, just what relationship his work bore to a larger political world in which the English nation was passing from a Medieval kingdom to a modern state" (p.85). Edmund Spenser's is only the first name among the many Renaissance poets who belie this claim.

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The Poet as Philosopher: Petrarch and the Formation of Renaissance Conscientiousness. By Charles Trinkhaus. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979. xi + 147 pp. \$14 U.S.

Charles Trinkhaus is one of America's most distinguished intellectual historians of the late medieval and Renaissance periods. *In Our Image and Likeness* (1970) stands alongside works by Burckhardt, Kristeller, Bolgar, and Cassirer as a landmark in our understanding of a period of intellectual

turbulence and confusion which we uneasily perceive as bringing forth a world we are now in the process of moving beyond. Trinkaus himself points to the contemporary scepticism "toward the large and metaphysical solution" and the preference for breaking down the problem into the concrete, the personal, and the circumstantial" (114), and sees comparable habits of mind among the early humanists, most especially Boccaccio and the subject of this present book, Petrarch.

The work collects five essays, originally written between 1954 and 1974, and presents a view of Petrarch essentially in harmony with that of his major work. It covers such topics as Petrarch and Classical Philosophy, what Trinkaus calls the "Double Consciousness" of Renaissance Philosophy, Petrarch's sense of individuality, his "estrangement and personal autonomy" and his exaltation of *theologia poetica*. All the essays are learned, stimulating and often benefit from the forcefulness of their original oral delivery.

The view of Petrarch Trinkaus presents is in accord with his general historical method, that cultural changes are focussed and best studied in the lives of great individuals chosen for their sensitivity to the intellectual and emotional contradictions of their lives and struggling to reconcile them in their works. Despite his emphasis on the theological continuities of Renaissance thought, Trinkaus remains a Burkhardtian, with a strongly romantic conception of the Renaissance as a distinctive period characterised by attempts to reconcile conflicting understandings of the universe and man's destiny and choice of life. Petrarch, he argues, is distinctive because of his "total focus on the individual as an individual," facing the world "in a state of alienation" but rising above his alienation "by achieving personal autonomy" (124). The central Petrarchan question of how to live is seen as central to an age "caught up in the problem of the centrality of faith and the meaning of human thought, action, and rhetorical expression in relation to faith and salvation" (30). In particular, Trinkaus sees Petrarch's dilemma of the "double-consciousness" of Christian and pagan thought as "a basic structure of Renaissance moral and anthropological consciousness" (53), one that, as well, brings to light the "depersonalization and estrangement of city life" which he sees as "a central feature of the modern moral dilemma" (84).

Particularly interesting is his treatment of Petrarch's sense of individuality. What Paul Zumthor terms the emerging "je du poète" of late medieval literature is more than a literary development. Trinkaus links Petrarch's view of poetry "as the key to divine insight" (98) with his "use of emotional experience, the recreation in emotion of that experience, and the imagined prolongation and projection of it in the *Canzoniere*" (2) as "the first major manifestation of the great transformation from the objective mode of classical thought and perception to the subjective Renaissance and modern modes" (2-3). A fundamental claim of the argument is that by establishing "the centrality of his own and every other man's subjectivity" (26), Petrarch laid the basis for much of the modern sensibility.

"Individual" and "Individuality" have been crucial words in the development of the modern world. Since the Middle Ages, they have changed from implying indivisibility and so a necessary connection to other members of a community or society, to the sense that emerges, in English in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, meaning "singular" and "unique," and constituting a fundamental order of being. We can, I think, see a basic weakness in Trinkaus' mode of scholarship by considering that the new development of a self-conscious individuality is simply an intellectual or literary matter. Trinkaus concedes that "many questions remain concerning the character and the extent of such a shift" (3); nonetheless, even in his longer work, he made few attempts to root the subject in the fundamental socio-cultural changes of late medieval society. Ideas are powerful forces in human affairs, but equally powerful are the hidden or repressed feelings and assumptions that gather around them and, above all, the changing socio-cultural realities which they attempt to describe and evoke. Intellectual history has too often been emasculated by its timidity to see the rich and necessary interconnections between ideas and feelings, ideas and social realities.

Notwithstanding these qualifications on its methodology, Trinkaus' book is a richly stimulating and lively collection of essays upon one of the greatest figures in our cultural history. *The Poet as Philosopher* is more than a worthy footnote to *In Our Image and Likeness*.

Wilfred Laurier University

Gary F. Waller

The Confidence Man in Modern Fiction: A Rogue's Gallery with Six Portraits. By John G. Blair. London: Clarke, Doble and Brendon, 1979. Pp. 140. £5.80.

One difficulty when reading a critical book about writers of fiction—con-men all—who write about characters who "exact the moral complicity of [their victims] as a pre-condition for fleecing (them)" is that one is never quite sure whether one is not being "fleeced" by the critic's own confidence trap. I have long been fascinated by the trickster, the magician, and the confidence man as disguises of the artist; I am inclined to see in each a reflection of the author's views of human nature and of the world, and I suspect that what we see through such figures—that the only reality in which we can have confidence is the reality created by the manipulation of appearances—is true. Thus I am an easy "mark" for Blair's book: I want to believe his premises.

Whether conned or not by my own "moral complicity," I found Blair's book very intriguing. It is short (only 130 pages of text) and readable; it pursues its thesis through eight succinct chapters, with clear sign posts at every important crossroads. Blair's thesis is that there has been a distinct

"evolution" of the confidence man and the nature of the reader's engagement with him in modern fiction. The confidence man is based upon a criminal type that was once morally and socially abhorred (as in Robert Greene's Cony-catching pamphlets); sometimes he was thought to be in league with the devil, or even to be a devil himself (Blair makes an interesting case that Milton's Satan is a precursor of the con-man). But with Melville the confidence man became a metaphor for the artist of the universe, God Himself. Melville's concerns are primarily epistemological and metaphysical: how can one trust anything, even one's own experience, in a universe whose reality is only "artifice" and in which "life . . . is an elaborate masquerade in which any unmasking only reveals a further mask" (p. 50)?

Something demonic still clings to Melville's "God as Con-man," but, as the figure progresses through Gide (*Les Caves du Vatican*), Mann (*Felix Krull*), Camus (*La Chute*), Vonnegut (*Cat's Cradle*), to Fowles (*The Magus*), Blair perceives an "upward reevaluation of the notion 'confidence man' which is replete with implications of cultural evolution" (p. 99). As novelists began to explore the moral implications of existence in a world one can no longer with confidence believe to have been created by a benevolent deity, the confidence man (the manipulator of appearances, the value-creator) becomes, progressively, Pope—or Anti-Pope—(Gide), Everyman (Mann), Prophet (Camus), Messiah (Vonnegut), and, inevitably, the "Con-man as God" (Fowles). His victim becomes, concurrently, more and more self-conscious, willfully self-deluding, and subservient, while the reader becomes "progressively oriented to the victim" (p. 100). At the culmination of this process the victim and the reader learn (are conned into learning?) through the benevolent "godgame" of *The Magus*, that each human being must accept "responsibility for himself by choosing the roles he is willing to play No one is innocent, but only the morally mature players accept conscious responsibility for acting out their lives" (pp. 126-127).

I am inclined to be suspicious of the simplicity and neatness of this schema, but Blair invites confidence in several ways, not least by his evaluations of these novels. *Cat's Cradle* is "thin" and Vonnegut a minor writer, for instance. *The Magus*, while admirably dramatising and teaching through its "con" the "life-giving function of fiction" (p. 129), is nevertheless "the most traditional in fictional conception and hence narrative strategy" (p. 135). Melville's *The Confidence Man*, on the other hand, although the earliest of the novels Blair deals with, is "the most 'modern,' the most radical in terms of traditional fictional contracts" (p. 136), . . . the one "that remains the most far-reaching of all" these works (p. 33).

Blair's book does not just pursue a thesis about the development of the confidence figure in modern fiction; it also offers a theory of fiction-making. The author is, and always has been, the ultimate con-man; in modern fiction he begins to take off his mask, "to acknowledge his manipulative control over his fiction The writer's self-conscious wrestling with the pretences

of fiction becomes the subject of the work" (p. 139). Paradoxically, however, this self-revelation becomes another means by which he masks himself: "the confidence man's spirit of pretence has so invaded contemporary writing that he remains out of sight behind the scene, perhaps quietly paring his fingernails, though who could know" (p. 139).

Whether or not one is convinced by Blair's thesis or theory, *The Confidence Man in Modern Fiction* is an important attempt to come to terms with a sub-genre of the novel that has been too little considered. It is well worth reading—trust me.

The University of British Columbia

Lee M. Whitehead

The Art of Malcolm Lowry, editor Anne Smith. London: Vision Press Limited, 1978.

Malcolm Lowry stock seems to be about as high as that of gold these days; but authors, like precious metals, are at the mercy of the speculators. As I write this review, the price of gold is falling; as great a writer as Lowry was, there is little reason to believe that he will survive the fluctuations of the literary marketplace. Lowry's stock began to rise in the early 60's (*Under the Volcano*, long out of print, was re-published in 1962), and since then there has been a plethora of critical articles and texts as well as biographies. Fortunately, such writings take Lowry seriously as an artist, if not as a man, and there haven't been, to my knowledge, any repeats of the critical gaffs that followed the initial publication of *Volcano* in 1947. But it seems to be the man, as much as the artist, who determines the longevity of a literary reputation at the top. Hemingway gets sideswiped at every opportunity, and Fitzgerald has taken his lumps; one feels that Faulkner is an inevitable target. Two things that Lowry shares with these three American giants are his artistic genius and his prolific drinking. Those abstainers of the present and future who have trouble with Hemingway's double daiquiris and macho lifestyle and with Fitzgerald's Hollywood benders and Zelda will perhaps hesitate before lowering the critical boom on Faulkner—at least the man knew where his roots were and, despite Hollywood, was a comparative stay-at-home. But what of Lowry who could probably drink all three under the table and whose greatest work of art is about a man who almost killed himself with drinking and who, most might say, might as well have?

Lowry is also vulnerable because, as a writer, he is a sprinter rather than a long-distance runner. In a comparison of individual works, *Volcano* narrowly edges out *Absalom! Absalom!* and *Light in August* (take your pick). As great a novel as *Gatsby* certainly is, it cannot match *Volcano's* breadth and depth of vision. But the sum total of Lowry's writing cannot compare in

quality with the impressive canons of the American trio. The short stories in *Hear us O Lord from heaven thy dwelling place* will sustain Lowry's reputation as man and artist because, as T.E. Bareham has said in reference to both Lowry and Geoffrey Firmin, they offer solutions to the dilemma of the self-created inferno ("The Crack-Up" explained Fitzgerald's inferno; but, for him, art wasn't a way out as much as a way on). The Lowry who attempted to create a legend about himself in his own lifetime and who let his drinking kill him (nothing honourable about that, and there just might have been with the shotgun in Ketchum) will always colour the response of the abstainers—and the ones who hate bullfights, the very rich, and *pourriture noble* do control the marketplace.

All this by way of introduction to a new Vision Critical Study, *The Art of Malcolm Lowry*, edited by Anne Smith, eight essays that pay tribute to the artist and his work; the man himself does not appear on stage except in a gentle, debunking-the-legend Preface by his brother Russell Lowry. The first essay by Richard Hauer Costa sums up thirty years of *Volcano* criticism. Certainly Costa provides points worth knowing—for example, just who have been the critics, famous and infamous, who have had their say about the novel. But if Costa's essay is informative, it does not really, for all its facts and figures, provide much food for thought. Indeed, what I remember most is Costa's rather amazing claim to have first read *Volcano* in a single sitting and then to have begun it again immediately! Much more impressive, in critical terms, are Stephen Tiftt's "Tragedy as a Meditation on Itself: Reflexiveness in *Under the Volcano*," and Brian O'Kill's "Aspects of Language in *Under the Volcano*."

Tiftt argues that the main subject of *Volcano* is the Consul's reflexive preoccupation with his tragedy and that this preoccupation is his *hamartia*: "The Consul dedicates himself to the tragic destiny which—he is convinced—is his." Geoffrey Firmin isn't doomed nor does he suffer primarily because of his alcoholism but because "Like Bunyan in the first half of his autobiography *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, the Consul feels that he is a predestined reprobate . . . his constant preoccupation with the possible signs of his sinful state mires him deeper in hopelessness." Time and again, Tiftt insists, Firmin has the opportunity to extricate himself from the mire of his Mexican condition, but time and again he refuses to act—not because it is impossible for him to act but because the possibility makes no difference: "The tragedy proceeds from the conviction that it must proceed."

Brian O'Kill addresses himself to Lowry's use of language in *Volcano* and he is interested in a comparison with Faulkner. If some earlier critics were unable to cope with Lowry's barrage of words and images "heaped on in shovelfuls", O'Kill emphasizes that to understand Faulkner's prose is to comprehend Lowry's. He quotes Conrad Aiken (an important friend of and influence on Lowry) on the writing of Faulkner:

Overelaborate they certainly are, baroque and involuted in the extreme, these sentences: trailing clauses . . . parenthesis after parenthesis . . . Nevertheless . . . if one considers these queer sentences not simply by themselves, as whole, one sees a functional reason and necessity for their being as they are . . . It is a persistent offering of obstacles, a calculated system of screens and obtrusions, of confusions and ambiguous interpolations and delays, with one express purpose . . . to keep the form—and the idea—fluid and unfinished, still in motion . . . and unknown, until the dropping into place of the very last syllable . . .

It seems to me that Aiken accurately assesses Faulkner here and that, with his analogy, O'Kill gets to the heart of Lowry's writing style in *Volcano*. An investigation might be made into other parallels between Faulkner and Lowry by following up O'Kill's assertion that, with the four main characters of *Volcano*, Lowry was attempting to portray "a composite, inclusive, or collective consciousness with unlimited resources of learning, memory, and language."

Interestingly enough, both O'Kill and Tiffts are critical of Lowry's use of the occult in *Volcano*. Tiffts accuses Lowry of employing the occult as a "melodramatic tactic, a flirting with mystical insight"; O'Kill writes that such things as neo-Cabbalism "taught Lowry nothing but gave him spurious authority . . ." If O'Kill can later wonder whether there are any "reliable criteria" by which to judge Lowry's use of language "except a rationalization of our own experience of reading", then perhaps he should also wonder at his own rather glib association and judgement of neo-Cabbalism and the Tao. Much more perceptive in her response to Lowry's use of the mystical in his art is Perle Epstein. She provides a basically Buddhist interpretation of the short story "The Forest Path to the Spring". It is, it seems to me, an essentially Zen Buddhist explanation of the story, in which the musician-narrator learns that to search for meaning is not to search, that to attain *satori*, or enlightenment, is to allow the universe to unfold as it should. One thing missing from Epstein's otherwise very convincing essay is a consideration of Lowry's articulation of the struggle to comprehend the Zen vision as itself anti-Zen. "The Forest Path" has much to do with the Christian adage "Seek and ye shall find" and less to do with the words of one modern Japanese roshi (master) to a questing pilgrim: "Expect nothing".

The remaining essays in this volume are concerned with the "new form" of *October Ferry to Gabriola*, Lowry's "contribution to the art of fiction" in *Hear us O Lord*, the subservience of personality to place in Lowry's fiction, and the influence of the Expressionists (especially the film-makers of the 20's and 30's) on Lowry. *Volcano* does provide the unity for Anne Smith's collection of essays just as it stands at the centre of Malcolm Lowry's artistic achievement. The essays of Costa, Tifft, O'Kill, Sherill Grace, and George Woodcock are linked by their common subject-matter. Epstein's unique interpretation of "Forest Path" can stand alone; but I would have preferred at

least another essay on *October Ferry* and on *Hear us O Lord* for comparative purposes. Also, surely the date and place of publication of the individual essays could be provided. Not all of them, perhaps not any one, were written exclusively for this book.

Dalhousie University

J. A. Wainwright

Pélagie-la-Charrette. By Antonine Maillet. Montreal: Leméac, 1979. Pp. 351.

A people which populated its land of once impenetrable forests and mysteriously shifting dunes with uncounted generations of necromancers, sorcerers, will-o'-the-wisps and ghosts, is today acclaiming its greatest literary exorcist. Antonine Maillet, herself well versed in Acadian folklore (*Rabelais et les traditions populaires en Acadie*, 1971), set out from the beginning of her comet-like career to "demythologize" the rich but stifling heritage of a nation which, after two centuries, still defined itself in terms of the Expulsion of 1755. A refreshing and encouraging whiff of tongue-in-cheek disrespect for the lamentations of, and about, the Acadian past wafted already through *L'Acadie pour quasiment rien* (1973). With *Mariaagélas* (1973) and *Les Cordes-de-Bois* (1977) Acadians rediscovered to their surprise and pride that they could chuckle, laugh and joke about themselves and their English neighbour and not be punished for it by Fate or Church. Even the often troubling humour of the famous *Sagouine* (1971) could not but reaffirm them in their new-found belief that what was must not obscure what is and what could be.

To be sure, after fifteen works published in just ten years, the most difficult book, the cornerstone of the Acadian "Comédie Humaine" and the triumph over the retrospection complex, still remained to be written. In her literary universe, Antonine Maillet had not ventured back much further than the Prohibition era (*Mariaagélas*), as if Longfellow, although already dismissed in 1975 (*Evangéline Deusse*), continued to loom too large. Four years later, Acadia was deemed to be ready for Pélagie LeBlanc, née Bourg, whom Antonine Maillet had carried within her since the age of ten (*Les Nouvelles littéraires*, 22-29 December 1979).

Pélagie-la-Charrette, characteristically, does not describe the Deportation of 1755 nor the exile of thousands of Acadians in southern North America, but the heroic, ten-year return trek from Georgia to the Memramcook valley. The outrage of Grand-Pré and the misery of fifteen cotton-picking years lose much of their traditional symbolic weight in the light of Pélagie-the-Matriarch's courageous march and triumphant repossession of Acadia. With her death on the threshold of paradise regained, 1755 has been properly ex-

orcised, struck from the national psyche; henceforth, her tombstone bearing the year 1780 will be a beacon to guide all those who embark on the quest of Acadian identity.

Thanks to this programmatic, albeit literary, readjustment of the historical perspective and of the way in which Acadians perceive themselves, *Pélagie* is the most progressive, forward-looking work of an author whose intellectual background and creative talents had begun to frustrate fellow writers and readers looking for more than quaint modernizations of century-old local folklore. From the ashes of the old myth a new, cautiously optimistic one is liable to rise, a myth which can now be nourished by writers of another kind. With Claude LeBouthilier, for example, the literary future of Acadia has only just begun (*L'Acadien reprend son pays*, 1977; *Isabelle-sur-Mer*, 1979).

Pélagie, like most of Antonine Maillet's other works, is thus caught in the present dilemma of the young literature of Acadia: what is known of it beyond the shores of Bouctouche and La Pointe-de-l'Eglise has been hailed and crowned for reasons which make many an Acadian author cringe. Montreal welcomed La Sagouine and gawked at Evangéline II because Quebec, after two hundred years of colonization, had finally discovered a sister nation worse off than herself and eminently "colonizable" in turn (*Le MacLean*, July 1974, p. 34). To certain Quebecers the "Vive l'Acadie libre" supposedly implied in Antonine Maillet's winning of the Prix Goncourt sounds just as undiplomatic as a certain Gaullicism once did to English Canada (*Les Nouvelles littéraires*, 13-20 December 1979). Worse still, France herself, all agog with things Canadian from lumberjack fashions to Pelagian epics, is largely unable to look behind the Rabelaisian descriptions of a picturesque people living in an exotic land and speaking a nostalgically-remembered language, and see the real issues facing Acadia and the role of Acadian writing in defining and resolving them. Since Antonine Maillet accepted the prize that *Pélagie* won her on behalf of all of Acadia, its halo cannot but illuminate also the literature of real commitment of, for example, a Laval Goupil (*Le Djibou*, 1975) or a Jacques Savoie (*Raconte-moi Massabielle*, 1979). *Pélagie* led her people into the 1780's; Acadia must now choose who will lead it into the 1980's.

Dalhousie University

Hans R. Runte

Frankenstein's Creation: The Book, the Monster, and Human Reality. By David Ketterer. University of Victoria: English Literary Studies (No. 16), 1979. Pp. 124. \$3.75.

"All that exists consists of interpretations" says Nietzsche, a comment which applies to nothing so much as to literary criticism. David Ketterer's magisterial little book on Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* proves the wisdom of Nietzsche's remark by drawing together the *disjecti membra* of critical com-

mentary on the novel. Far from having been slighted, *Frankenstein* has received sufficient attention in the last twenty years to secure its place as a central document of Romantic culture. It has been subjected to a variety of readings by Freudians, formalists, and historicists; its narrative structure has been deftly analyzed and its debts to previous literature painstakingly accounted for; and all these approaches Professor Ketterer has assembled in the service of a total interpretation of the work. His scholarship is admirable; I know of no other single book that gathers together the available criticism of *Frankenstein* so thoroughly. He freely admits that the bulk of his work is "largely derivative", concerning himself primarily with elaborating upon and weighing the merits of others' interpretations. His aim therefore is metacritical, developing not his own unique approach to the novel but rather what he refers to as "the radical interpretive implications" of his discussion.

Paradoxically, however, the real vitality of this book reveals itself less in its overall thesis than in the specific insights it evolves within the framework of the traditional approaches Ketterer surveys. He avoids the facile assimilation of the novel into the genre of science-fiction by noting that Mary's use of science in the book is generally metaphoric of creativity itself. He develops the *doppelgänger* theme, first noted by Muriel Spark, to show that the book is in fact a vast hall of mirrors reflecting aspects of Frankenstein's personality. He shrewdly points out that Frankenstein is often imaged as a wrecked ship (thus linking his tale effectively to the frame), that the monster's consistent association with the moon helps to identify him as a personification of Burke's natural sublime, and that Walton's sight of the monster hovering over the corpse of his creator at the end of the novel provides a fearfully ironic symmetry to the earlier situation in the laboratory. These and other flashes illuminate the text at intervals, but the book as a whole fails to generate a steady glow. Its very comprehensiveness becomes a flaw, giving it somewhat the air of a very superior graduate dissertation. As one might fear in this sort of enterprise, the radical conclusions it promises are diffusely generalized. The culminating interpretation of the monster as a metaphor for "human reality" is virtually meaningless. If the monster is everything in general, he can be nothing in particular.

The rapacious creature delineated by Professor Ketterer's critical imaginings seems to swallow up everything, even the work of fiction itself, in one of this book's most teasing formulations. Essential to its thesis is the contention that Mary Shelley draws an implicit analogy between Frankenstein's creation of the monster and her creation of the story which recounts it. Ample and quite convincing evidence is brought forward to show that the monster is a metaphor for the entire narrative world of the novel, not to mention for Frankenstein as well as for reality. Unfortunately, the potential of this fresh and provocative argument is left unexplored; it remains at most a charming conceit suggested by Henry James' comparison of the novel form to a loose and baggy monster.

If *Frankenstein* is one of those novels that allows the author to reflect on the nature of his own creative process, then much more could have been said about both Mary Shelley's own attitude to imaginative writing and the role of the reader in interpreting what she has written. On the one hand, the analogy between book and monster opens up psychoanalytic questions. Did Mary Shelley experience the same guilt and anxiety over artistic creation that she depicts in Frankenstein's nearly fatal "nervous symptoms"? Might they arise in each case from the violation of taboos, in the case of Frankenstein those regarding the inviolability of the dead and in the case of Mary those regarding forbidden topics in both her own work and her husband's poetry? On the other hand, likening the monster to the book focuses attention on the act of interpretation itself. If the monster is in some sense a text, then like a text he is an object of interpretation. And, indeed, that is precisely what Professor Ketterer's method so exhaustively shows. It is to be regretted that he has missed the opportunity to read the book in the context of its surrounding scholarship as a demonstration of hermeneutic principle. He has undertaken an ambitious project, but like Frankenstein he produces imperfect results.

Dalhousie University

Ronald Tetreault

Optimism: The Biology of Hope. By Lionel Tiger. Don Mills, Ontario: Musson Book Co. Pp. 318. \$14.95.

The author's thesis rests on the assertion that (as an example) any animal that hunts prey or seeks a mate, must have a hope of success, hence exhibits the rudiments of optimism, which reaches its highest level in man who can think and plan ahead. As a generalization optimism is presented as the unifying hereditary principle which explains the whole array of life-support survival patterns in the behaviour of man and other animals. In his bold reasoning the author is surely guilty of "the noble temptation to see too much in everything" (G. K. Chesterton's definition of optimism). If we accepted Tiger's use of the words we should have to include under hope and emergent optimism the establishment of a pecking order in the barnyard; the greediness of the pig; the dog in the manger; the vain display of the peacock; the squirreling away of nuts; the "loving" parental care shown by the hen; the ostrich with its head in the sand; the sex approach of the bull; and much besides. Such assumptions are no part of Darwinism, on which the book is said to be planned, and are also contrary to the approach of Pavlov. I shall lighten the reviewer's burden by dismissing Tiger's thesis and discussing the book under a more descriptive if less exotic title: *Essays of a sociologist on optimism and other attitudes of Western man.*

The approach used in the book is that of Lévi-Strauss who sought to identify in a variety of societies, what thoughts are "good to think" or "easy to entertain" and thus may determine our behaviour towards religion, parental love, political promises, food and shelter, adornment, strategies of sex, plans for the future, acquisition of money, medical treatment and more. The uniquely human notion that progress in all these areas is inevitable, is thought to have gradually taken hold as mankind graduated from a hunting-gathering life, then from agriculture, and latterly began to receive the limitless bounty of industrialization.

A discussion of parenthood and sex notes that the centre of our lives is the long family commitment during which children are trained to complement their inherited equipment so that they can adapt to the special circumstances of their tribe. Other animals (except to a limited degree our nearest kin) acquire their predictable behaviour through the imprint of heredity alone. Among humans the parents make the central imprint which is supplemented by the control efforts of the church and the state. There is a natural conflict between nepotism and public responsibility which evokes tension and, in revolutionary movements like Maoism, causes family life to be suppressed. The Catholic church attempts to bridge the gap by building community life around the idealized family pattern of Joseph and Mary.

The uniquely human practice of religion best illustrates optimism, as it extends down from faith in a future heaven to worldly utopias, better cities, or a peaceful future. The certainty of divine rightness is accepted by society when practiced by influential groups (occupation of Judaea and Samaria by Israel). Minorities, however, which claim to be children of God are dismissed as aberrant or mentally disordered (early Mormons).

Other chapters deal with prosperity, greed and taxes, and with efforts of the therapeutic professions to alleviate negative optimism (mental disorders). In total the book offers a surprising array of information loosely linked by the theme of optimism and interspersed with mini-essays on travel, modern American living and food habits, the stock market, etc. There is an account of the famous Palio horse race held since the twelfth century in Siena. Another account describes the Dordogne caves with their Cro-Magnon decorations. At the end the book is provided with a monographic bibliography and an extensive index. As the jacket says: "*Optimism*, with its warmth and urgency, is a book at one with its subject; it is on the side of life."

Lionel Tiger is a native of Montreal ('a cynical ghetto community in which everyone feels himself a member of a minority, including the French Canadian majority'). A graduate of McGill, he has been awarded by the Canada Council a Killam Fellowship in interdisciplinary research and has taught sociology at U.B.C. He now teaches anthropology at Rutgers.

Nova Scotia and Confederation 1867 - 74. Canadian Studies in History and Government No. 15. By Kenneth G. Pryke. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979. Pp. XII, 240.

The general story of Nova Scotia and Confederation has been told many times, some might say, *ad nauseam*. In this volume the material to the end of 1868 is unexceptional and generally well handled, although at times it might have been developed further to advantage. Was it the Fenian scare which induced enough Conservative Assemblymen to change their stance on union between 1865 and 1866, and hence made Nova Scotia's entrance into Confederation possible? Or did other factors account for their reversal and was the threat of invasion a convenient justification? Was the British Parliament altogether too gullible in accepting the untruths and half-truths supplied to its members by Dr. Charles Tupper and do its debates on the B.N.A. Act show the Mother of Parliaments at its worst?

The important part of the book deals with events subsequent to Joseph Howe's acceptance of "better terms" early in 1869, since for the first time it provides a full-blown account of the adaptation of Nova Scotia's political and party systems to the circumstances of federalism. This period in the province's politics is characterized by a complexity that almost defies comprehension, the more so as its federal M.P.'s were split among original Confederates, Howites, uncompromising anti-Confederates, and less extreme anti-Confederates, willing to share in the patronage of a Confederate government. For this reason Professor Pryke may have tried too hard to find some sort of theoretical apparatus to explain a politics that is primarily idiosyncratic. But to this reviewer the chief failing is of the opposite kind, a surfeit of material amidst which the forest is sometimes lost for the trees.

The principal political actor at this juncture was Sir John A. Macdonald who, misled earlier about the actual state of affairs in Nova Scotia by Confederates like Charles Tupper and Jonathan McCully, took the pacification of the province into his own hands lest the federation, of which he was the chief architect, should collapse. The significance which Professor Pryke's account ascribes to conflicting views on centralization and decentralization in these days appears to be greatly exaggerated. Macdonald's strategy was simple and direct: to "strike off the tallest head", viz., Joseph Howe, and then adhere scrupulously to the bargain he had made with him.

A primary ingredient of that bargain was to allow Howe the bestowal of a major share of the federal offices in Nova Scotia and the book attaches far too little importance to Howe's use of this patronage to keep most of the province's M.P.'s on a moderate course. It is also a little unfair to single out Tupper's displeasure resulting from his failure to have his son-in-law appointed director of prisons in Nova Scotia in preference to Howe's nominee; actually the chief complaints against losing the power of patronage to Howe were Adams G. Archibald and Jonathan McCully, and Macdonald read

them both a stern lecture for their seeming unwillingness to recognize the higher interest. But despite Howe's considerable success with patronage it does seem to go much too far to suggest that the support he received as a result from the moderate anti-Confederates in Parliament partook of the nature of a coalition in any meaningful sense.

Professor Pryke may also not have emphasized sufficiently two other factors which furthered Macdonald's objectives. Apparently the prevailing opinion in Nova Scotia was all for moderation if the results of the provincial election of 1871 are any indication. The voters seem to have taken a special delight in rejecting the "wild men" among the anti-Confederates starting with Dr. George Murray of Pictou. Even more useful to Macdonald were the Grits of Ontario, who dominated the federal Liberal party and saw everything through Ontario eyes. So antagonistic were they to Nova Scotian interests on many substantive questions, including "better terms," that the province's anti-Confederate M.P.'s had no choice but to support Macdonald as the lesser of two evils.

But whatever the interpretation that is given to Professor Pryke's facts there can be no question about the painstaking, thorough, and accurate character of his research. Except for a misprint of 1871 for 1872 on page 134, the book is also strikingly free of technical faults. And most of it does provide new insights into a largely untrodden field.

Dalhousie University

J. Murray Beck

Race Propaganda & South Africa: The Manipulation of Western Opinion and Policies by the Forces of White Supremacy. By John C. Laurence. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1979. Pp. 215.

In a talk over the South African Broadcasting Corporation radio in 1963 by Ivor Benson, its then favourite "commentator" (read: propagandist), he had this to say:

. . . 99 per cent of the hostility against South Africa is an artificial creation of modern power groups. Millions of innocent people are stirred to hatred by means of skilfully managed propaganda campaigns in press, radio and television . . . We are often viciously attacked in the United States but we should be crazy to regard the American people as our enemies. When they get their facts right, they will be our friends.¹

The task of the South African propaganda machine—engaged in at vast expense and, as Muldergate demonstrated, with considerable deviousness—has no doubt been self-defined as helping potential friends "to get their facts right." Ivor Benson indeed earlier declared, "The South African nation is at the receiving end of propaganda warfare, NOT at the delivering end."²

Mr. Laurence, who himself worked at one time for the South African Department of Information, has in turn devoted himself to the task in this book of setting the "facts" (as portrayed in South African propaganda) right, and also of developing the theme that South Africa is at the delivering end and, at least by implication, not at the receiving end of propaganda warfare. A partial version of the truth is attacked by another partial version of the truth, which in turn But the completion of that sentence would be unjust to Mr. Laurence, since it might evoke the inference that his book is "merely propaganda." This it is not, although at times the dividing line becomes faint. On the other hand it is also not a scholarly analysis of the subject.

From the scholarly point of view Laurence's book would have been strengthened if he had set it within the context of the arena of political conflict, particularly at the international level (for it is with South Africa's externally directed propaganda that he is primarily concerned). It is the prominence of South Africa's racial policies as an international political issue that generates the effluence of propaganda from both sides. But these issues Laurence does not address. Instead, he takes as his starting point, the racial bias implicit in the reporting and commenting in the mass media of the West and in the statements and policies of Western (particularly British) politicians. It is this bias, he argues, that accounts for much of the success of, or receptivity to, South African propaganda. This is fair enough: the obvious sometimes needs to be stated. But in his concluding chapter, Laurence apparently in all seriousness, suggests that if the "outside world" applied to white South Africans travelling in their countries the same race laws as are applied to Blacks in South Africa, white South Africans before very long "would capitulate and force their whites-only government to at last dismantle apartheid" (p. 193). Apart from leading his readers to question his commitment to democratic values, such a proposal begs the question of the pervasive racial prejudice in the West that he has demonstrated in his opening chapter.

There are other defects one could point to: his penchant for hyperbole (e.g. "The means by which South African propaganda is both broadcast to the world and infiltrated into the corridors of powers . . . may be without parallel in its size and scope in human history." p. 56-7); his almost totally inadequate footnoting; his tendency to reduce a potentially valid point by the process of exaggeration to an absurdity ("All the evidence thus suggests that the *verligte/verkrampte* debate in South Africa was in effect nothing but a public relations campaign." p. 59); and—not his fault—one notable example of careless publication: a non-existent frontispiece, listed in the table of contents, and referred to at least twice in the text (pp. 84 and 86).

Nevertheless, the "meat" of the book contained in Part Two, "The Propaganda Themes", does provide an informative and useful corrective to many of the claims made by, or on behalf of, the South African regime. While the student of South African politics will find nothing new in these chapters, the

partially informed, those whose ideas reflect their ethnocentrism, may be helped to develop a more critical appraisal of events in that country. In the end it must be said, however, that a full understanding of any political system does not begin with an analysis—even a scholarly one—of the propaganda that is directed against it or of that which issues from it.

NOTES

1. Ivor Benson, *News and Newspapers*. Johannesburg: South African Broadcasting Corporation, 1963. p. 11.
2. Ivor Benson, *The Press and Public Opinion*. Johannesburg: South African Broadcasting Corporation, 1963. p. 27.

Dalhousie University

Ken Heard

Micmacs and Colonists: Indian-White Relations in the Maritimes, 1713 - 1867. By L.F.S. Upton. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1979. Pp. xvi, 243. \$22.00.

Upton states that the object of his book is "to trace the interaction of the Micmac Indians and British colonists over a period of one hundred and fifty years" (p. xi). What follows is a meticulously researched, scrupulously documented, fact-packed account of this interaction, with names, places, and dates following one another hard and fast as Upton undertakes to describe 150 years of Micmac-European relations in 181 pages of text. It is remarkable that the book covers as much ground as it does and, in doing so, it joins many other such admirably researched chronicles.

The book begins with a chapter on aboriginal Micmac culture, for the reader's use as a benchmark in assessing subsequent culture change. Three chapters are devoted to the eighteenth century English-French struggle for Acadia. What emerges from these chapters is a chronology presented largely from the European point of view, with few glimpses of native culture and the changes it was undergoing throughout this critical time as the Indians came into increasing contact with Europeans.

The midsection of the book seems disjointed because the material here has been taken from three previously published journal articles on Micmac relations with the three Maritime colonial governments, and Upton has chosen to maintain this three-way division, justifying this by saying that the three governments "each treated the Micmacs in its own way" (p. 82). In fact, the chapters suggest that the government attitudes toward and treatment of the Micmac people were quite uniform in that they all ignored the Indians as much as possible, acting only when public interest and outcry forced it.

Readers concerned with native peoples will find most interesting the three chapters grouped under the title "The Micmacs and Colonial Society," for these chapters provide glimpses of everyday Micmac life and suffering, particularly during the nineteenth century, and enable us to understand some of the helpless bewilderment, frustration, and anger the Micmac must have felt when they found themselves unwanted outsiders in their own land. There are indications of the tremendous impact on and destruction of the native culture which resulted from European contact and settlement.

A ten-page epilogue then summarizes significant events in Micmac history over the past 100 years. Upton omits an interpretive discussion, saying that "There is no Conclusion for there is no conclusion to the subject matter of this book" (p. xvi). But in doing this, Upton leaves himself open to the same criticism Boswell made of Dr. Johnson, that he "would reduce all history to no better than an almanack." Can such an approach contribute to our appreciation or understanding of history? With no theoretical model to be tested by this instance of native-European interaction, nor any specific problem to be resolved by the work, it would appear that the study of native history and inter-racial relations has not been significantly advanced. This is deplorable, not only because so many gaps exist in our knowledge of these areas, but also and especially because Upton clearly has put considerable time and effort into the research for this book. It is indeed unfortunate and disappointing that he did not go further at least to integrate and assess his material.

The illustrations include a good variety of old photographs and reproductions of early paintings and drawings. The price of the book seems excessive.

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