BORDER/LINES

CULTURES • CONTEXTS • CANADAS

NO. 7/8
SPRING/SUMMER 1987
$5.00

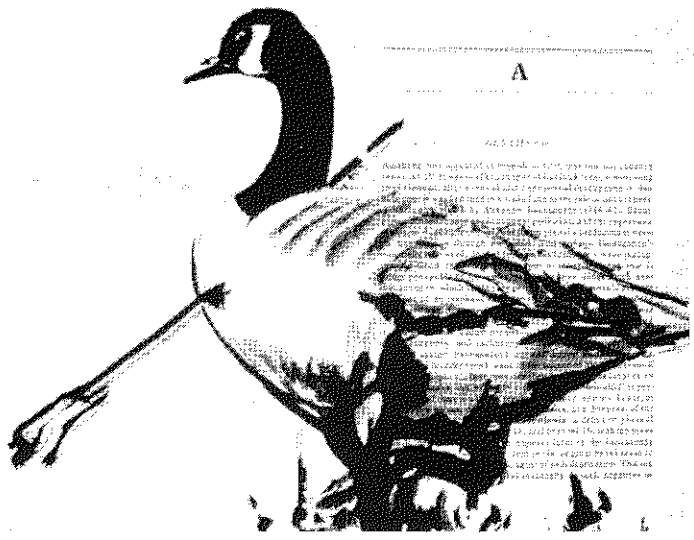
precise, in its earlier meaning.
xclusively to this sense of the past,
to include a sense [illegible] or
whole range, and
inds of knowa

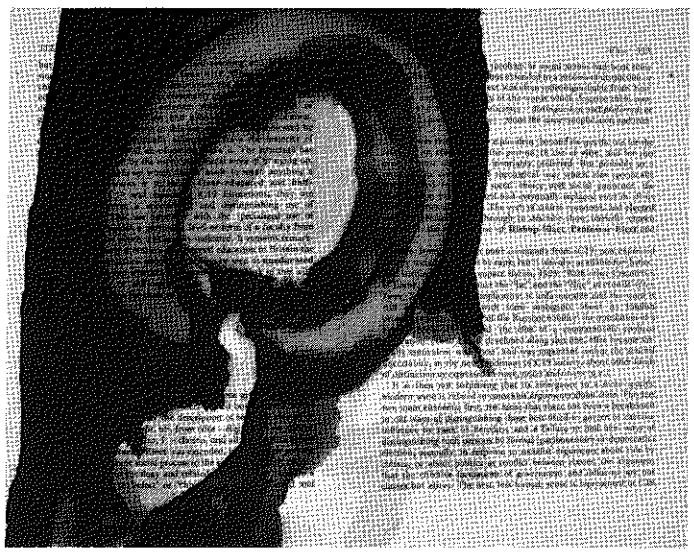
MODERN NATIONALISM
HAVANA FILM FESTIVAL
NATIVE THEATRE
ECOLOGICAL THEORY
FEMINIST UTOPIAS

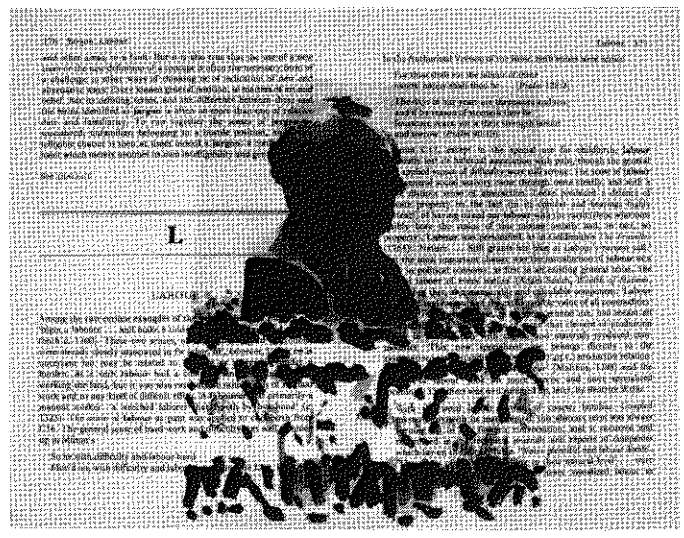
NITY

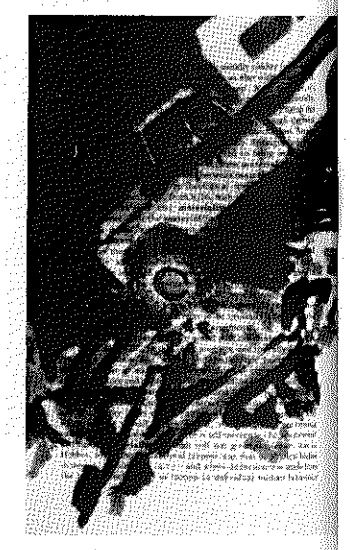
roup of [illegible]s, including human
huma[illegible]an, which repre[illegible]
ular specia[illegible]ti[illegible]s of a root
, of a mar[illegible] *manus*, L –[illegible]r

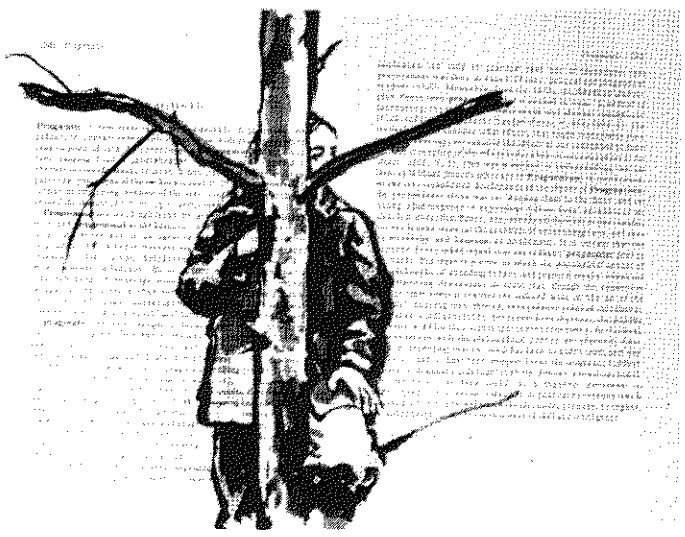
d th[illegible]stinction between hu[illegible]
set[illegible]d in its modern form[illegible]
he n[illegible]mal spelling for the m[illegible]

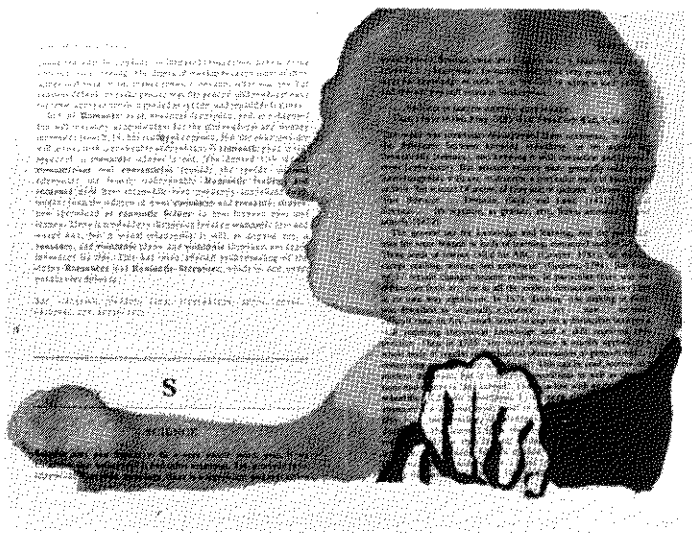












Border/lines
cultures contexts canadas
Number 7/8 Spring 1987

Border/lines is published four times a year by Border/lines Magazine Society, Inc., a charitable organization engaged in producing written, visual and audio educational materials on culture, the arts and contemporary social issues.

Subscriptions (four issues):

individuals	$16.
low income	14.
institutions	25.

Foreign subscriptions for all countries are payable in US dollars. Rates for air mail delivery are available on request.

Business Address:
Border/lines
Bethune College
York University
4700 Keele Street
North York, Ontario
M3J 1P3 CANADA

Editorial Address:
Border/lines
92 1/2 Stafford Street
Toronto, Ontario
M6J 2S1 CANADA

Border/lines is indexed in America: History and Life, Historical Abstracts and The Alternative Press Index.

We would like to thank the Ontario Arts Council and the Canada Council for their generous support.

2nd Class Mail Registration No. 6799

ISSN 0826-967X

Printed and Published in Canada 1987, Border/lines Magazine Society, Inc.

Printed and Published in Canada

BORDER/LINES

CULTURES • CONTEXTS • CANADAS

ERRATA, ERRATA, ERRATA

The last issue (6, Winter 1986/87) had more typographical errors than we could list in detail, however:

- Kay Armatage's article *Feminist New Narrative: Shock Troops or Rear Guard?* had a number of major errors, particularly the spelling of the title.

- The Canada Council and the Ontario Arts Council were not properly acknowledged in our masthead.

- In the review of *The Newly-Born Woman*, we inadvertantly omitted to name Betsy Wing, the translator.

For these and other sins of omission, our apologies, but we would like to add that *Border/lines* attempts to edit and produce the best magazine possible. However, due to the limitations of money, time and slave labour we do not always meet our highest ambitions. Again, our apologies, but please stick with us. Send gifts, flowers and volunteer proof readers, thank you.

EXCURSIONS

Mausoleums, Oxymorons, and Carnivals

The welcome energy that has resulted in the contemporary proliferation of magazines and journals concerning themselves with some aspect of culture also creates the compulsion to confront intellectual movements that attempt to redirect our sense of what culture is. This means not only recognizing their existence but also being wary of suffocation by their attempt at whole-scale appropriation. Take, for example, that scholastic and aesthetic fad known as postmodernism which is currently sweeping the conference circuits and seeping through the cracks of academe.

Now, theoretical schools or artistic movements that try to name themselves have been generally apocalyptic in tone and nihilistic in intent. And it is certainly true that most movements that do not so qualify were either named after a concept (positivism), a thinker (Aristotle) a historically convenient figure (Victoria), or a style (Baroque), and always by subsequent generations. The idea of the modern, the post-modern, or the ultra-modern are thus curiosities of those whose sense of time running out overwhelms their ability to offer descriptive or even approximately analytical categorizations, or attempts to grab the present before others define it. The categorical imperative turns to consume its own tail. The literature of the aesthetics of the "postmodern" offers simultaneously an explosion and implosion of images, metaphors, allegories and tropes which suggest that the time of Now may be the time of the Oxymoron, that skirmishes amongst improbable images are better than the repetition of over-used ones. It is curious to witness critical theorists behaving like newspaper columnists; the instant judgement of the moment being, however, translated into sweeping generalizations of an entire epoch.

One of the legacies of Hegelian-Marxist thinking is the attempt to make connections across the whole sweep of culture, society, economics, politics and biology. But if in Marxist thinking the attempt came from analysing and metaphorizing a recognizable socio-economic base, the cultural has been purely constructed out of the flotsum and jetsum of images and productions. The baleful influence of the French misanthropes (notably Baudrillard, Bataille, Lyotard) echoes in their North American clones whose *mitrailleuse* splatters its bullets at random across an entire continent in a fit of intellectual *Beider-Meinhofism*. The hermetic cult of post-modernistic rhetoric is a cynical substitute for examining the present in any critical manner. It is the contemplation of its own detritus.

Of course much of everyday culture is self-seeking (or already self-referential), produced by mountebanks concerned with novelty for its own sake, a culture of narcissism, the glorification of atrophy. This dynamic has continuously appropriated what used to call itself the avant-garde. And in addition, framed within a different but related institutional apparatus, there is the culture of hegemony, the articulation of control, the culture of the major galleries and Robert Fulford, the sanctification of The Tradition and nationalism-as-fetish. This safe culture will not be put on the bargaining table easily because it is the culture of the self-image. Archival inheritance, threatened by appropriation as the mere-tricious adornment of a bourgeoisie intent on displaying -- against all the evidence -- that it is cultured, must be rethought, but not in those terms.

The two cultures -- the culture of the mausoleum and the culture of the oxymoron -- represent the polarities of the cultural debate as it is presently circulated in public-institutional discourse. Both cultures are predominantly concerned with instant legitimacy and the political neutralization of art. The mausoleum culture is in haste -- through Governor General's awards and the like -- to co-opt products, from whatever source, which can validate its tenuous claim to power; the culture of the oxymoron refutes this co-optation, and the sense of history that it implies, by arguing for even greater disconnectedness, for absolute relativism, with the claim that what it is doing is not 'mere' culture but philosophy -- in Lyotard's words "working without rules in order to formulate the rules of what will have been done." With such a programme it too can claim any contemporary writer or artist, artefact or process as part of its raw material, a terrorism dedicated to the dismissal of any content of what is said and the context within which it is said. But by claiming to be open both cultures are predicated on closure and the pursuit of system-building.

Border/lines is concerned with opening cultural discourses, of intervening in specific areas so that the potentials for social and political emancipation are eased out of the talk, the paint, the plastic, the silicone chip and the environment. The problem with the culture of the mausoleum is that its metaphor is the Hall of Fame to which we come to remember; the problem with the culture of the oxymoron is that its metaphor is a structured language which it seeks to explode. Neither helps much with exploration or emancipation because the metaphors are themselves continuously decontextualised and hence anti-social. They are not inhabited by people, and are consequently abstract categories which only come alive when used for other political purposes.

The truly emancipatory culture is one which is constantly testing the experience of the present by rereading history, not only , we must hasten to add, the history given to us by the Mausoleum, (which is basically the history of a particular mode of class-ification), but the history of action and the history of those products which sit in our living rooms or public spaces as things we are obliged to encounter. The sense of language we are after can be drawn from the image of the carnivalesque where we encounter ourselves in other guises, deliberately relating to moments not necessarily ours by making them part of ourselves. If the culture of the postmodern is a humourless culture of relativism and exclusion, of sealing off the past and the other, then emancipatory culture is the strategically motivated and contextualized exploration of alternatives by juxtaposition. Like the mausoleum culture it recognizes history and other cultures and like the oxymoron it recognizes the importance of linguistic rediscovery. But unlike both it is conscious of the joy of practice, and conscious also that such joy is only possible by admitting desire and politics and movement and place as integral to the conditions of being, and of becoming.

Invention. Our entire environment is constructed, occupied, invented. The "natural" landscape of our parkland is as much a social construction as the "natural" landscape of our sexuality. But we still have to live in them, and therefore our deconstruction of these as ideological texts is part of a strategy for establishing spaces for living, for finding our own principled processes of self-creation and collective re-invention. The politics of our nationalism is not concerned with defending territory but rather with redefining the conditions of the territory we want to inhabit. These are not metaphorical arguments. Well, perhaps in part they are; but ultimately they act as a catalyst to figure out what is going on here.

Border/lines, finding itself forced to maintain all the borders of culture, has never argued for the mausoleum view of culture and it has often seemed close to the oxymoronic (because we are tempted by what is not known as much as by what is known), but it is time, surely, for the carnivalesque to make itself more obvious. Thus, Nature is not reduced simply to the strategies of dominance or the rediscovery of language, but becomes part of our disguises and our problems. And history, that "cry in the street" as Joyce called it, must be taken back to the streets and the playgrounds and the texts and the airwaves and the homes, by ripping it out of the mausoleums that would encase it forever in the framework of an almost dead bourgeois hegemony. Politics has been neutered by the language of those who would say that no politics matters except my language, and no sex except my sex, no horizon except the impossibility of any utopia. *Border/lines* has begun to think about the politics of the specific, of the everyday, of the global, of the knowledge that comes from tangible connections. It will continue to do so.

Jody Berland and Ioan Davies are members of the Border/lines *collective.*

STATES OF GRACE

Anyone who witnessed Barbara Frum's rather tasteless gushings over Paul Simon, on the Christmas Eve broadcast of *The Journal,* would probably concur that his new record, *Graceland*, has acquired the status of a genuine cultural event. Even in an industry where hyperbole is the norm, its reception has been surprising. Simon is, after all, hardly the cutting edge of American music. Nonetheless, cries of "album of the decade" have already been heard. In a long article in the *New York Times* (26 August 1986), for example, Stephen Holden effused that it "effervesces with an extraordinary sense of artistic freedom and adventure." While under other circumstances this endorsement alone might trigger suspicion in the minds of the more politically sophisticated, the response of large sections of the left and the cognoscenti has been almost equally unreserved.

But because it was recorded in South Africa, using local musicians, it's also an album which seems almost calculatingly designed to generate a whole set of uneasy responses among many people opposed to the apartheid regime. The more simple-minded complaints either zero in on its alleged evasion of South African politics, or aim for higher ground by attacking more generally its "exploitation" of African music and musicians.

Neither of these objections is, by itself, very forceful. Although it's true that Simon eschews direct commentary on South Africa, these issues are very close to the surface in "The Boy in the Bubble" and "Homeless." But he's much more concerned with enacting the encounter between Africa and the metropolis to which he alludes explicitly in "You Can Call Me Al." On most tracks this is realized by counterposing southern African music to Simon's very metropolitan literary sensibility.

This strategy has its own rewards. *Graceland* is much less susceptible than most of Simon's work to accusations of preciosity. The tension between his voice and lyrics and the instrumental work gives it an edge which is absent from much of the rest of his music. This is most evident on the tracks which feature Baghiti Khumalo and Ray Phiri. I find the two songs with Ladysmith Black Mambazo less interesting because they attempt to reconstruct on a purely vocal level the edge which emerges, on other tracks, in the interplay between voice and instruments.

When the perspectives embodied in African instrumentation and Western lyrical concerns are held in suspension, as indeed they are on many tracks, *Graceland* is most successful. But Simon blows it completely when he attempts a less ambiguous return to America. The zydeco track is merely embarrassing; the song recorded with Los Lobos is disastrous. It's difficult to relate them in any significant way to the concerns of the rest of the album, apart from the presence on both of an accordion. A polka would make as much sense.

Graceland isn't the first Simon album to incorporate non-metropolitan music. Nor is it the only recent album which seeks to construct a dialogue between African and Western musical concerns. Talking Heads' *Remain in Light* comes readily to mind. This is a project which is obviously difficult. One runs the risk either of falling into a naive and often racist identification with "the primitive" or of simply raiding another culture for fast thrills. Juluka offered a horrifying example of what to expect when this tension isn't confronted. But Talking Heads negotiated it successfully; so, for the most part, does Simon.

But this relative success doesn't get him off the hook so easily. Other issues remain, precisely because it's South Africa which is being addressed. The most important of these is the cultural boycott. Simon has stated that he received approval for the trip from such prominent American anti-apartheid cultural activists as Harry Belafonte and Quincy Jones. Irrespective of the truth of this claim (and one would want more information about the context of these discussions than Simon has provided), it does raise the issue of the status of the boycott. It is, after all, sponsored and administered by the United Nations. The authority of individual Americans, however prominent, to "clear" artists to work in South Africa is at best questionable.

In this context, Simon's claim that the boycott hurts black South Africans becomes particularly objectionable. And it's hard not to read his decision to include Linda Ronstadt, a prominent Sun City performer, on one track as a deliberate repudiation of the UN blacklist. The fact that "Under African Skies" happens to be the worst on the album is a purely serendipitous demonstration of the symbiotic relationship between art and politics. Linda Ronstadt has, after all, botched other musician's sessions. But here it's almost as if her voice drives the song into the third worldist bathos which the record elsewhere manages to evade. If this were a Lou Reed album, I'd be tempted to interpret the utter sentimentalism of the track as a calculated irony. But the man who wrote "Bridge Over Troubled Water" seems incapable of such finely calibrated effects.

Nonetheless, some very complex questions remain to be answered. The boycott was adopted at a time when the resistance movement within South Africa was at its lowest ebb. Its organizations were driven deeply underground, its leaders either jailed or in exile, and its mass base beaten temporarily into quiescence. Artists who identified with popular aspirations went into exile; there was good reason to be suspicious of most work being produced openly within the country.

This situation has been transformed in recent years. The current upsurge in popular resistance has been widely echoed in the arts. Increasingly, most interesting cultural production takes shape in often explicit dialogue with the liberation movement. In literature, in theatre, not least of all in music, there is a large body of sophisticated and politically engaged work. Canadians may be most familiar with the literary production; but even many of the mainstream popular musicians in South Africa have aligned themselves with the resistance. Is there any way through which this material could be made available to people outside South Africa without abandoning the boycott? Or in other words, is it possible to construct a policy which permits us to attack both the Rod Stewarts and Linda Ronstadts of the world and continue the isolation of the South African regime, and to diffuse the tremendously exciting work which is now being produced? One hopes so. *Graceland* is hardly the crucial test case for this dilemma. But it does, once again, focus these issues for us.

Paul Simon. *Graceland.* Produced by Paul Simon. Warner Brothers: 1986

This article previously appeared in *Southern Africa Report*, Vol. 2, no. 3, December 1986.

David Galbraith has lived and worked in southern Africa.

EXCURSIONS

Tele-Monopoly Canada *Now Playing in Quebec*

IMAGINE THE FOLLOWING: Rogers Cablesystems buys CFTO-TV and parlays the deal into participation in the privatization of the BBC and the cabling of the British Isles.

This exercise in the suspension of disbelief is not a science fiction scenario, but a near-perfect analogy of the transaction sanctioned by the CRTC early this year, involving some of the major high-rollers of Québec private broadcasting. The flaw in the analogy is that Videotron and Tele-Metropole are relatively more monopolistic in Québec than Rogers and CFTO are in English Canada, and the mother country, in this case France, is indeed in the process of selling off its public service broadcaster.

While the rest of us have no recourse but to sit back and wait for the government to crank up the process of revising Canada's increasingly outmoded broadcast legislation, the agency charged with protecting the public interest thus continues to invent the future according to its own cultural-industrial design.

As the Caplan-Sauvageau task force on broadcasting noted with pique, the CRTC has no policy on concentration of ownership, nor on cross-media ownership in single markets, nor on vertical integration. Where private ownership transactions are concerned, it judges every case on its merits, leaving important precedents in its wake. Relatively unnoticed outside specialized cireles in English Canada, the CRTC decision announced at the end of January has created a new model of corporate concentration, the fully integrated video supermarket, in the hope of launching a Canadian enterprise into the big leagues of transnational television.

By permitting Le Groupe Videotron Ltée. to acquire Tele-Metropole Inc., the CRTC sanctioned the union of Québec's main cable company operator and the most lucrative private sector television broadcaster in Canada (According to the Bureau of Broadcast Measurement, Tele-Metropole's CFTM-TV had 26% of the audience share of the Montreal market in the fall of 1985, as compared, for example, to CFTO's 19% in Toronto).

The case was a regulator's wet dream, with bureaucrats getting to decide which group of Canadian capitalists would get to add a winning racehorse to its stable, and ride it in the international sweepstakes.

Less than a year earlier, the CRTC rejected a similar bid for Tele-Metropole by Power Corporation on the basis of Power's flimsy promise of performance, although public interest groups in Quebec had called for the rejection because the Power group already owns the Montreal daily newspaper *La Presse*.

The main beneficiaries of the hiatus were T-M's owners, who watched their property's selling price rise by 35% in a period of nine months, from $98 million to $134 million, between the two bids. The CRTC decision is shocking to critics of media ownership concentration, who thought that they had successfully opposed Power's bid only to have the CRTC approve a much more onerous form of concentration.

Tele-Metropole, or "Channel 10" as it is known in Montreal, is the proverbial little company that grew. Founded in 1961 by J.A. DeSeve, Channel 10 was Quebec's first French-language private sector TV station. The foundation set up to manage DeSeve's estate after his death is not particularly interested in television. In recent years, it has been ploughing its profits back into resource exploration ventures--a typically Canadian approach, but not quite what the Broadcasting Act has in mind when it speaks of preserving the country's cultural fabric. The DeSeve heirs have for some time been quite ready to take their leave of the TV business and move on to other things, such as philanthropy and coupon-clipping, but they were hemmed in by the founder's will, which specifies that Tele-Metropole could only be sold to Québecois interests.

Tele-Metropole's Channel 10 is not only Québec's most lucrative private station, but also a flagship and principal shareholder of its major private network, TVA (the Québec equivalent to CTV). Tele-Metropole had revenue of about $100 million in 1986. Through TVA, the station supplied about 70% of the programming seen on French-language private television in Québec. There are not many pools of capital in Québec that could easily buy up such a property. On that basis alone, Power Corp. apparently felt its proposal was in the bag, and offered a mere $1 million a year in new money for programming, and no guarantees that Tele-Metropole's news operations would be insulated from those of Power's other media interests. The CRTC judged the proposal inadequate and told Tele-Metropole to come back with another buyer.

Videotron learned from the Power experience, and seduced the CRTC with a more substantial plan that pushed all the right nationalist buttons. It promised a range of new programming initiatives worth $30 million over five years. As the company has not been active previously in traditional information (ie, news) marketing, the proposed transaction did not raise the same degree of public concern. The Fédération Professionnelle des Journalistes du Québec, for example, which had vocally opposed the Power Corp. project, was acquiescent towards Videotron. The CRTC award to Videotron is, however, far more insidious in its implications for democratic communications.

Videotron is another example of a little company that grew, founded by a cable company engineer, André Chagnon, who put together enough capital to buy out his employer in 1981. Through a series of acquisitions and innovative use of research and technology, Videotron then rode the expanding wave of cable subscription and new pay services of the early 1980s. In 1986, it reported revenue of $130 million, and earnings were up 54% in the first quarter of the current year.

Videotron is literally a household name in Québec. The company controls around 70% of the Québec cable market, with 700,000 subscribers in 150 municipalities including Québec City and the eastern half of Montreal Island. (In all the Canadas, only Rogers Cablesystems is bigger, but Rogers is relatively less monopolistic as its interests are diffused from coast to coast, for control of around 23% of the total Canadian market. Rogers has no interests in Québec, but Videotron owns an Alberta cable company, QCTV, which adds another 120,000 subscribers to its clientele).

But that is only part of the story. As new technical possibilities and consumer habits present themselves, Videotron has been building its initial foundation to become a producer and provider of diversified television-based services. In the Montreal area it currently programs 11 non-broadcast channels, and is developing an interactive system (Videoway) for tele-marketing which will enable users, among other things, to buy a range of goods and services from their homes. In November 1986, Videotron concluded an agreement with the Steinberg supermarket chain to promote Steinberg's weekly specials on one of its non-broadcast channels. Within a few years, Videotron announced at the time, non-broadcast TV advertising will be a more important source of revenue for the company than cable subscriptions.

In addition to cable distribution and tele-marketing services, Videotron also operates a production facility, a subsidiary that sells and services converters, and a research and development company. By acquiring Tele- Metropole, it inherits, along with Channel 10, a station in Chicoutimi, a major advertising company, another production house, a post-production and sub-titling company, T-M's interest in TVA and a smaller regional network, as well as the DeSeve group's oil and gas interests.

Its major scheme, however, is to expand into overseas markets, particularly in France, and to do this it had to have Tele-Metropole.

In 1983 Videotron entered into an agreement to supply technical expertise to La Compagnie Générale des Eaux, a private French company involved in

cabling several dozen major urban centres in France. In November 1986, Videotron acquired 10% of the C.G.E. subsidiary that is doing the cabling.

Through Tele-Metropole, it now intends to participate in the world's first privatization of a national public broadcaster, TF 1, which the Chirac government has put on the trading block. Arrangements for Videotron's participation in the TF 1 privatization were made public in November and were contingent on CRTC approval of the Tele-Metropole takeover.

The internationalization of Videotron/Tele-Metropole is not only an essential element of André Chagnon's grand design in itself, it is also essential to making this unprecedented degree of concentration and vertical integration palatable to the Canadian, and particularly the Québec, public. In his presentation to the CRTC in December, Chagnon spelled it all out:

"...only a major enterprise can hope to carve a choice place for Québec in the world of audiovisual titans taking shape on the horizon...Videotron believes that the present international evolution of broadcasting towards giant corporations like those of Berlusconi, Murdoch, Maxwell, Viacom, Hersant-Hachette-RTL, demand that Québec's principal television station make alliances. Refusal to take our place among these giants will sooner or later mean the domination of their products in our markets."
(pp 32-33; free trans.)

By framing its project so astutely, Videotron appeals to the view that we must be prepared to place industrial considerations ahead of sociocultural ones, in this case sacrifice the possibility of pluralism in broadcasting for a piece of the global communications pie.

The acquisition of Tele-Metropole makes Videotron "the most important element of the broadcasting system in Québec", said the CRTC in its announcement of the decision. The eclipse of the public sector by the private is henceforth total--and quintessentially Canadian. If telecommunications are indeed to the 20th century what railroads were to the 19th, *eh bien,* Videotron is after all as Canadian as...the CPR.

***Marc Raboy** is border/lines contributing editor in Montreal, and teaches journalism and communications at Laval University in Québec City.*

Details for this article were drawn from the Report of the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy, official documents filed with the CRTC, newspaper reports, and a research file prepared by the Institut Canadien d'Education des Adultes.

Ungrateful Voyageurs

"Il y a du danger à s'imitier soi-même." Pierre Reverdy

Content without form. The invisible foreground of city life. Stinking of months and years of sweat they roam, seeming to be zombies through the marketplace.

Women of deixis. Street people never on holiday because they never work. Mediators of consumption, they choose only from what is already thrown away. And in the winter, they spend a lot of time looking for shelter. They wander from bus depots to libraries, from subways to churches.

They change all the rules. Shopping malls become places to keep warm, sleep, beg coffee money, find discarded cigarette ends or half-eaten sandwiches, or newspapers to keep as blankets for cold bench-sitting days in the parks.

Ida sometimes sleeps in shelters for vagrant women. They let you in around six pm. They give you supper, soap, aspirins. You can watch TV then you go to bed. They make you wash with disinfectant soap before you can have a bed. You have to use it in case you have fleas or lice. Ida sleeps sitting up, with her back against the wall, covers pulled up over her head. Everyone must get up at 7 am, have breakfast and be out by eight. They receive bus tickets if they need to travel to look for jobs and accomodation. Ida has lived on the street for two years.

"We used to live on Broadview. I got pregnant and he moved out on me. After I had the baby, I got welfare plus mother's allowance. I started drinking a lot. Then it gets all fuzzy. I remember the day they came and took my baby away from me. I remember the day they told me to get out of the apartment. Then no welfare. So I had to learn about the street. It all happened like in a flash....But it all seems so long ago now."

Ida leaves the shelter at 8 am and goes to the local church drop-in centre. They have the morning classified ads stapled to the wall. You can write down phone numbers of places to live. Ida never reads any of these ads.

"When I think of it -- I'd have to go and be interviewed by a landlord. I'd have to sign a paper. I'd have to make sure I could give him money every little while. I'd have to buy furniture, and pots. I see those ads and I think all this at once and I get dizzy. So I keep away from the paper."

Angie is a widow from the east coast. She worked for a federal government office for twenty years. Then, suddenly, her husband died. She walked away from her past.

"I had to get away. He was everywhere. He talked to me in the house, but he was dead. He was every man I saw at work. I just left, that's all."

Angie has lived on the street for ten years. During that time, money has been continually deposited to her bank account from her husband's pension and from her own. (Her former boss registered her for early retirement.) She has enough money to buy a small house. But how to go back to "normal"? Fictions of happiness and satisfaction. How to go back to following the rules, having a telephone, having to stay put in one spot? To get mail. To lose carefully-honed city-jungle instincts. How to go back to cooking, owning a budgie, washing everyday, smiling at strangers, staying out of garbage cans. And why go back? She has not touched any of her money for ten years. She doesn't know how to approach it.

Angie stays out of the shelters as much as possible, even in winter. There is too much hate. "I get enough of that outside. The other women look at you as if they want to kill you. And the staff are terrible. They are so damn self-righteous. You have to feel so grateful to them. If you don't act grateful, then they put you down. Who needs it? "

There are many different kinds of isolation. One can live in the arctic, or one can live in a cardboard box in the heart of a busy city. These women live in but not of the city; they are floating down the middle of water/alleyways, dangerously far from any shoreline, and always in unfriendly territory.

Ida and Angie have learned to be resourceful. They can live on "nothing." Working people hurry by. Afraid of the rags and the stench, we avert our gaze. We say no every time we turn our eyes away, projecting the violence of our negation into suspicious and tired street faces. Yet these faces are profound. A thousand unanswered questions throb in the forehead. Street women address these questions by living a radical present, not beholden to any past, not looking for any sympathy, and yet dependent on every future.

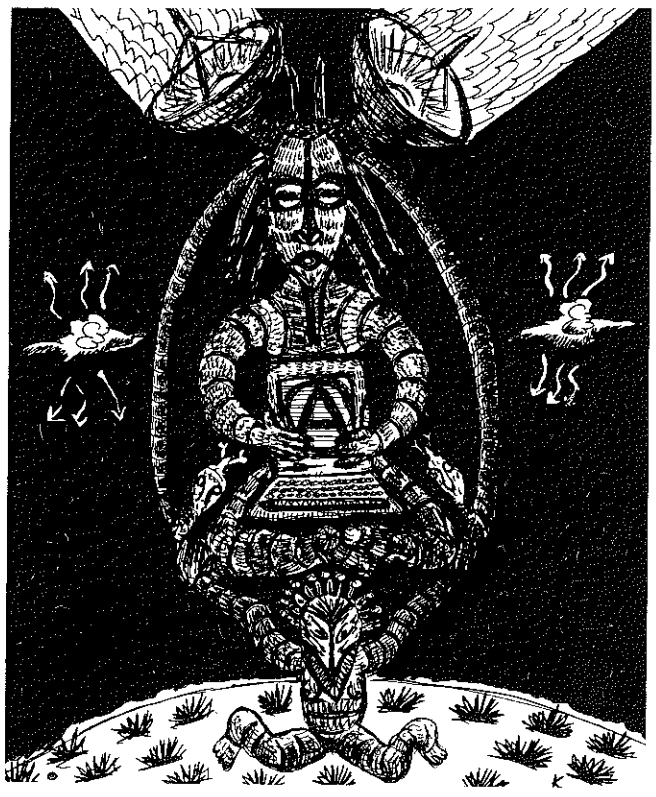
Everyday reactions to male and female vagrants are qualitatively different. Homeless females are constructed discursively as unfortunate waifs, desperately hoping to be saved. One of the assumptions arising from this stereotypic construction is that these waiting orphans will feel forever indebted to their rescuers.

***Loretta Czernis** was born in St. Joseph's Hospital on 28 July 1952. At a tender age she left Toronto and travelled the world for 17 years. Loretta now lives at 176 the Esplanade in downtown Toronto. In the future she plans to move northward and live at no fixed address.*

EXCURSIONS

NEW SOURCES:

COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND THE WORLD INFORMATION ORDER



When Captain Midnight broke into three and a half million homes with his own message by taking over the satellite sending a prime-time film all over North America, many people took it to be a sign of the imminent breakdown of the western dominated World Information Order. Others, pointing out how quickly the satellite pirate was tracked down, said it was merely an isolated and insignificant outcry, easily snuffed out by the U.S. military-industrial complex with its virtually complete control over all communications technology.

As usual there is an element of truth in both points of view. There can be no disputing the monolithic hold which western capitalist interests have over our communications technology. However, it is becoming increasingly apparent that these interests can no longer completely dictate the content of the transmissions carried on their machinery. Captain Midnight was actually only found by chance: a member of the public decided to report the details of a suspicious conversation heard over a crossed telephone line.

Observers from the old school of communications theory have tended to obscure the issue of the content of the media by focussing on the hardware associated with communications. Herbert Schiller, professor of communication at University of California, said recently:

"Global information domination and control in the 1980s is based largely on the capability to manufacture the hardware of advanced technologies such as satellites and computers, the organization and administration of international communications networks, the construction and ownership of comprehensive electronic data banks and the creation of the software that sets all the information activity in motion."

What Schiller and others have missed is the impact of two factors: Firstly, the huge growth in global data transmissions which has driven down the cost of communications and communications equipment; and secondly, the rise of a class of people willing to co-opt the technology or set up alternative communication systems and sources of information.

It is now possible to make use of one of the public data networks to communicate between any one of over 75 countries for only a few dollars an hour. With earth station satellite equipment dropping from $100,000 a few years ago to $15,000 today -- even countries as poor as Zimbabwe are now installing the equipment needed to link into these networks.

Likewise, the cost of the computer hardware one user needs to communicate with another has plummeted. Miniaturisation has made it possible for the power of the computer to be packaged in portable units at prices not far beyond the means of most remote third world villages. $500 will buy a terminal capable of sending and receiving any number of messages and files. $ 1,000 will purchase everything necessary to operate an international database and messaging system.

With a modem -- a device the size of a small book -- such a system can transmit or receive over normal telephone lines, through cheaper but slightly less accessible data lines, or even via shortwave (which no one controls) using more recently developed "packet radio" technology. The latter was used with success last year by VITA (Volunteers In Technical Assistance) to co-ordinate some of the food relief distribution efforts in remote Ethiopian villages.

Any small computer can be made to work automatically by flipping the right switches on the modem so that it will answer an incoming call and route it to the computer. With the appropriate software even a Commodore 64 can be run unattended continuously to provide a drop-off point for newsletter articles or messages to other users of the system, a forum for the discussion of pertinent issues, and even a databank of relevant archival material. Software to do all this has been written by enthusiastic computer hackers and distributed by them for free, so that for about $1,000 it is now possible to set up a globally accessible electronic publishing node, more usually called a bulletin board system or BBS. Moreover, this can be made to take place in the "background" so that the user can continue to type or carry on with other computer use. All of this can happen on the ubiquitous IBM "clone" systems sold at discount stores.

The best known electronic networks are massive commercial databases like CompuServe (owned by H & R Block) which try to offer as broad a service as possible to their large subscriber base (in the case of CompuServe, 250,000 people). There are also, however, literally thousands of small publicly accessible systems which are not publicized mainly because they operate on a non-commercial basis.

At last count there were over 1,400 bulletin board systems operating in Canada and about 12,000 in the US. Because local calls are expensive overseas BBSs have been slower to catch on there, but even so there are probably another 1,000 systems dotted about the globe.

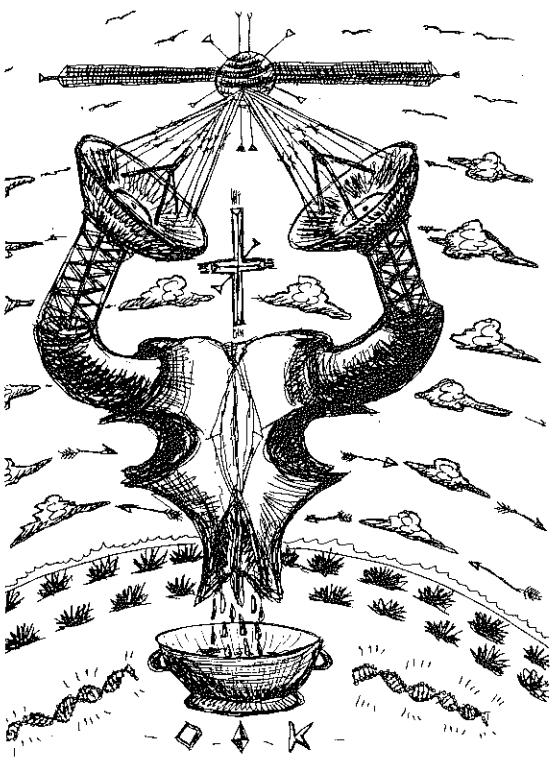
Initially many of the BBSs catered to the computer hacker and were of little interest to most users. These systems did, however, help to spread the use of cheap software. Hackers unwilling to pay the high prices of commercial software have written their programmes and made them publically available to anyone who wants them. These days it is possible to obtain public domain word processing, spreadsheets and databases, as well as far more esoteric software. Programmes distributed under the "shareware" agreement promote copying while encouraging a small registration -- usually about $30 -- "if you decide you like the programme and wish to receive a printed manual and upgrades." Much of this software is as good or better than the commercial equivalents, so many home-based programmers have made a living on the meagre registration fee because there are no distribution costs -- the programme is voluntarily produced and redistributed by electronic networks.

Toronto is in fact home to the largest electronic depository of such material in the world -- Canada Remote Systems. For a small membership fee to cover the costs of the operation, CRS makes a database of over 500 million characters of programming available to anyone with a modem.

Illustrations: Oliver Kellhamer

Such systems have served to prime the field of electronic communications by providing cheap access to the necessary tools. Now non-computer related BBSs are appearing thick and fast in virtually every area of human endeavor. Possibly because of the isolating nature of the computer, particularly popular topics have been role-playing games and computer dating. Camelot and Dial-Your-Match are two examples among the more than 200 systems in the Toronto area. Artists may converse on Artnet, Speak or the Cat Gallery while people interested in social movements dial up The Catalyst in Vancouver, Alternet in Ottawa, and Gateway in Toronto.

In California, the Community Memory Project has replaced a newspaper with a network of publicly accessible computers into which any citizen can place news or information and any other citizen can give alternate views or request clarification. It has been in operation since 1976. Econet is another such electronic network linking users concerned with the environment and international development in 65 countries. The service offers free



electronic mail and it also has additional facilities allowing any user to initiate a "conference" on any particular issue. Users from all over the world make submissions (as messages) to the conference which then become a point of reference to stimulate further discussion or to allow new members to catch up on the topic. In this way a conference can go on for months at the convenience of the user.

Similar alternative electronic networks are now springing up all over North America. PeaceNET, linking peace groups was officially launched last year. After some initial teething problems, the Whole Earth 'Lectronic Link (WELL) operated by Stewart Brand's Whole Earth Review (formerly CoEvolution Quarterly) is now one of the more dynamic forums for electronic networkers. Unison in Colorado is the home of the Electronic Networker's Association and GreenNET. In Europe, the equivalents are Communitree, Poptel and GeoNet. It is only a matter of time before major networks begin to appear south of the equator.

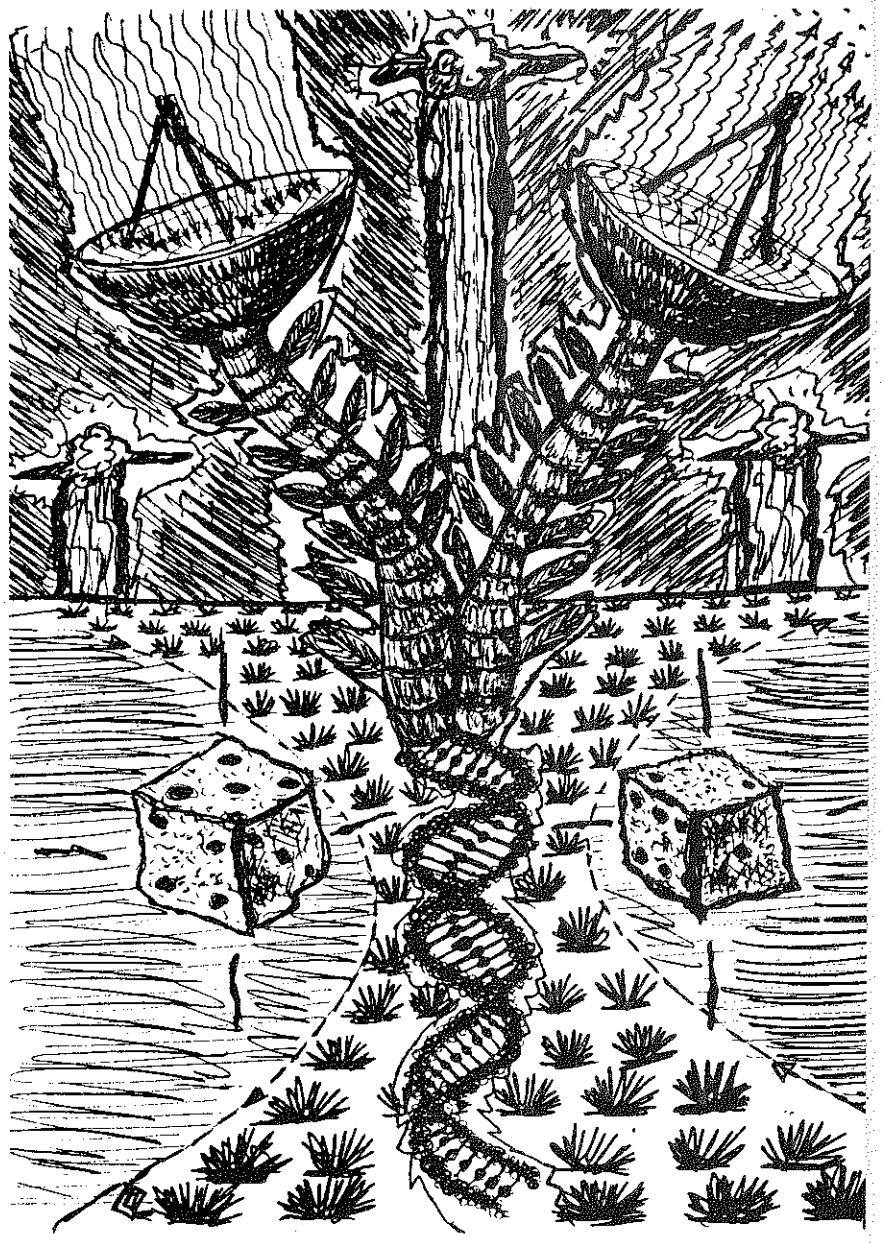
Likewise, networks are beginning to link up to each other so that we can envision a system of transitional computerized social networks composed of equally autonomous communities distributed around the globe. As Bill Ellis of TRANET puts it:

"Each network within the system would have a number of interconnected information nodes to serve the local communities. Any one of these nodes will be able to access and copy the files of any of the others. No one would have unique files not shared by a number of others. So, no node could control the in-flow or the outflow of information. One might collect and put in the files of the network publications relevant to low-cost housing; another might develop files of experts on wood stoves, a third might concentrate on legislative actions relative to population control. The network's memory would be the synergy of the memory of the individual members.

"We can anticipate a completely egalitarian information system in which any household on earth could communicate freely with any other at any distance to provide assistance, request help or exchange goods. There would be no heirarchy or bureaucracy to filter the exchanges. Each planetary citizen would have many optional paths through which s/he could improve the local well-being or participate in world governance."

Perhaps an overly optimistic vision, but nevertheless an accurate reflection of the potential that is here. New communications technology has made interactive and democratic information systems more feasible. The author has assisted with an exhibition dealing with these topics called "Ear To The World". Held at A Space gallery in Toronto from March 30th to April 3rd, the exhibition established and demonstrated a low cost, prototype news and information surveillance system, thus enabling artists and the community to access a spectrum of news and information from a large number of sources, many of them conventionally unavailable.

***Michael Jensen** is an information consultant and freelance writer in Toronto. He is currently writing a guide to Canadian electronic information.*



Illustrations: Oliver Kellhamer

EXCURSIONS

CAPITALISM for Sale

The Toronto Stock Exchange, the Montreal Stock Exchange, the Dow Jones Industrial Average, the price of Gold and the Canadian exchange rate -- these are the subjects of the Standard News Indices (SNI) as they are found in Canadian network television news. Each is a regular, routine feature of our nightly newscast; each is also a finely crafted promotional pitch designed to move the merchandise, otherwise known as capitalism, into the ideological marketplace.

Presented with the task of unraveling the complexities of the SNI and the seamless world of economic discourse they present to us each evening, one must look beyond the indices as mere suppliers of economic 'information' to their status as constituents for the symbolic sphere governing consumption.

We come to the SNI as social readers, actively participating in their production of signification. And yet, as indicators of the daily fluctuations on the currency, stock, and precious metal commodity markets, the SNI's mode of address speaks only to those people possessing a direct material stake in what the indices have to say. As members of this society we are all affected by what SNI claim to stand in for, but this rationalization hardly justifies their inclusion when, for example, a mere 9.4% of the adult Canadian population is concerned with the daily activities of the composite stock index.

Even that number, provided by the TSE, is misleading because it infers that all investors use the daily indices on a daily basis. Certainly for those investors classified by economists as 'passive', daily stock market information is largely ignored. Furthermore your unaverage average stock owners are probably only interested in their own particular investments and prefer to get their information from their brokers, financial newspapers and specialty newsletters.

Thus in order to analytically determine how ideological themes operate through SNI, let us consider the 'cultural picture of the world' that emerges from the individual indices. When examining the functioning of SNI within ideological discourse, we should dispense with any notion of a 'ruling elite' imposing signifying practices from above with the conscious intent of 'duping the masses'.

In its place, we can conceive of a view of ideology acting through a number of legitimating mechanisms basic to the discursive practices of everyday life. Contained in SNI are the signifying elements of consumption as they are reproduced in the codes structuring the range or horizon of the preferred meaning presented by the indices.

Ideological assumptions and prescriptions are thus amplified by the indices in particular ways to create a specialized system of meaning that works to sell the social order as a commodity.

The language of the SNI connotes the dictates of the marketplace, thereby serving to naturalize the manner in which we apprehend the world of capitalism. The indices signify that the marketplace exists in relation to its own set of unified laws, thus the indices 'explain' (and therefore legitimize) the institutional order by ascribing cognitive validity to its objectified meanings.

Thus the daily fluctuations of the stock market become part of our everyday experiences. As a source for the objectified facts basic to our common-sense constructions, indices provide ordered knowledge of economic variables, thereby allowing us to internalize what they claim to represent. In this way a world reduced to conceptual categories is made to appear meaningful.

While the existing institutional relations are transitory, historical phenomena, they are represented by the SNI as if they were somehow inevitable or natural, and outside the constraints of time. Because SNI possess neither a history nor a mark of authorship, they are fixated as inert facticity, consequently their ideological elements are camouflaged.

By establishing the dominant inference as a literal visual-transcription of the economic order, the world of human economic practices undergoes a process of commodification which forces us to apprehend that world through the reified terms of the SNI. In fact, their very 'taken-for-grantedness' within the newscast acts as a hindrance to a critical examination of the social relations that determine them.

The information, as it is presented, is decontextualized. It is essentially meaningless for the majority of viewers, yet the very inclusion of SNI effectively serves to blur or gloss-over what are economic class interests by creating a false sense of participation. Thus the discourse presented by the SNI serves as hegemonic function by further mystifying power relations within the larger society, purporting as it does to speak to all when in fact its meaning is not likely to transcend latent class boundaries.

One news producer admitted that "probably only five to ten per cent of the audience is able to analyze the data we provide." A news editor for *The National* insisted that the need for indices was "based on instinct," but he had "no idea who uses them." Question: What are the present indices saying to us about our society and its priorities?

Given that millions of Canadians are unemployed or underemployed, live below the poverty level, and are concerned about acid rain, starvation in Third World countries and the danger of nuclear war, why is there no regular provision of statistical information catering to these interests in our nightly news?

According to news editor for *The National*: "In a twenty-two minute broadcast, time is the major restraint. Right now we don't have the room to accommodate any more (indices) than the ones we've got." While the CBC pointed out that there has been in the past a considerable amount of internal debate at the corporation concerning the possible implementation of alternative indices, at present they insist "there's not enough time for social indexes, and anyway, there's no easy electronic way to do them."

There was an unwillingness on the part of the networks to conceptualize the implementation of indices other than those which fall within the established parameters of purely economic concerns. Global TV responded by admitting that since the gold index 'stabilized' in 1984, it has "not been such a great indicator. Platinum would be much better . . . It's highly volatile due to the situation in South Africa." Also suggested were a Real Estate Index, a Crude Oil Index and a Bond Market Index to "tell you where interest rates are going and also the economic strength of Canada."

But what types of indices would be of greater relevance to the interests of the majority of Canadians? This question, first posed by Peter A. Bruck, director of Carleton University's Centre for Communication, Culture and Society (CCCS), has provided the impetus to keep him and a team of researchers busy organizing to change the SNI. They have assigned to themselves the task of translating critical research into opportunities for a critical social practice.

A number of alternative indices, many still in the idea phase, are already being examined. An Under/Unemployment Index has been proposed as a daily update on the crisis of the labour market and its failure to provide adequate work opportunities for millions of Canadians. Similarly, a National Poverty Index could be included as an index showing in composite form the number of Canadians living below the poverty line, set in relation to the number of Canadians living in opulent affluence.

UNRAVELING THE STANDARD NEWS INDICES

Statistically more ambitious is the Inequality Index, a daily indicator of the changing spread in earnings between Canadians who make a living through wages and those who make a living as owners of stocks and capital. Another idea is the Ecology/Environmental Poison Index (regional and national) which would be a daily composite index on the acreage of lasting deforestation and soil erosion in Canada, and the changes in levels of dioxin and other lethal poisons in foods and waters.

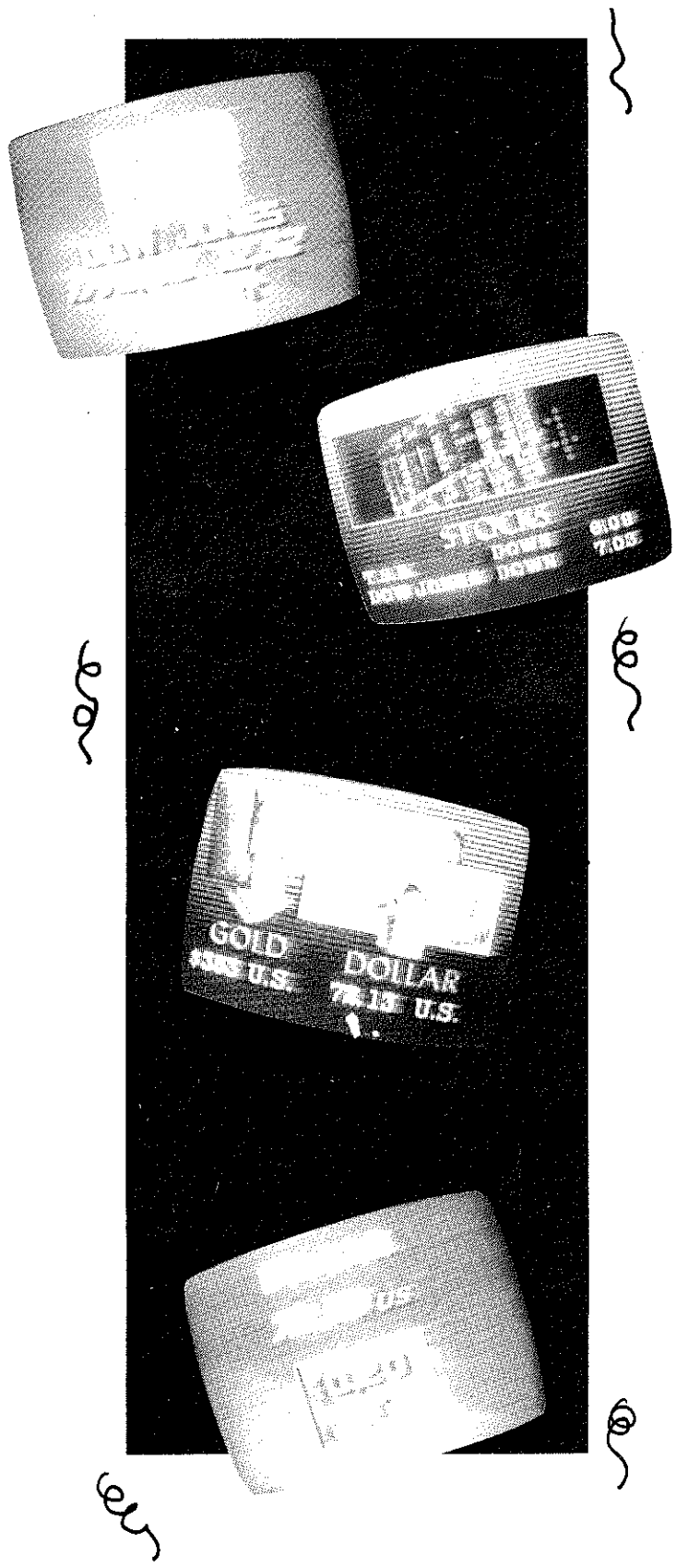
Other proposals include a Global Starvation Index (a weekly update on the areas in need of the greatest amount of assistance), and a World Militarization/Development Index (a weekly indicator on the ratio between world military spending and development spending).

The CCCS research unit is currently seeking people who are interested in contributing to the development of alternative news indices (ANI) such as these ones. Plans are underway to hold a national conference. In the meantime, the endorsement of more than one hundred church, labour and popular groups and organizations has been solicited.

The initial response to the project at this level has been enthusiastic. By making the commodification of social relations the target of analysis, the approach allows for the creation of the space required for interested groups to initiate a wide ranging critique of the established media system.

The next step the unit plans to take is the development of a critical media analysis package to facilitate the implementation of media literacy programs for those groups wishing to assist in the production of ANI. Once the proposals are fully worked out and discussed at the grass-roots level, they will be forwarded to the television networks for consideration.

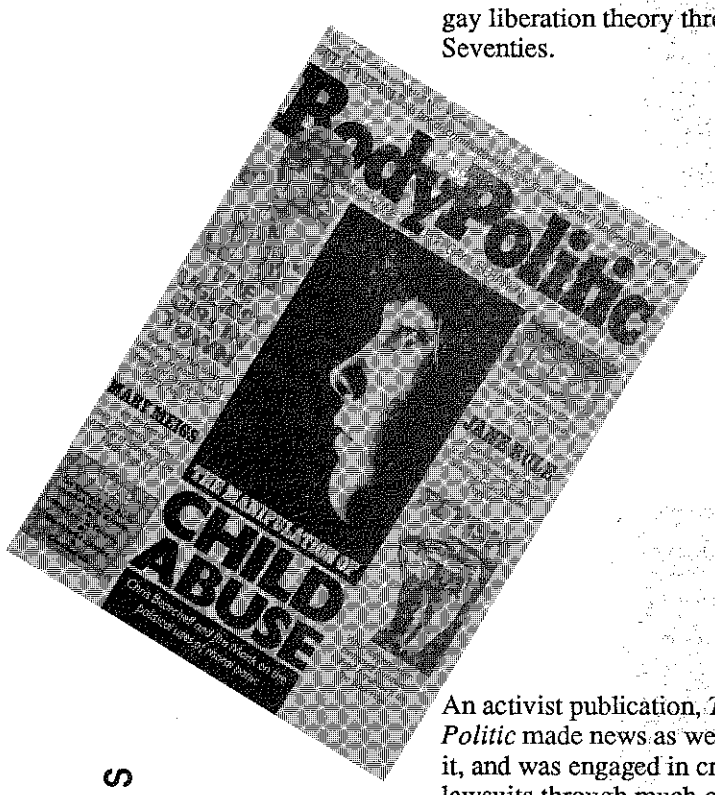
The adoption of the ANI would be a first step towards the networks' news programs dealing with fundamental social inequalities in a serious way.



Stuart Allan *is a researcher at the Centre for communication, Culture and Society at Carleton University.*

FROM THE MARGINS: *THE BODY POLITIC IN A*

JUNCTURES



On December 16, 1986, on the eve of the periodical's fifteenth anniversary, *The Body Politic* suspended publication. It had lived to be one of the oldest, and most respected, of a generation of "underground" (later, "alternative") periodicals that included *This Magazine Is About Schools* and *The Georgia Straight*. The pre-eminent gay theoretical journal of the English-speaking world, TBP was Canada's principal contribution to the international movement, read by literate activists in Stockholm, Sydney, Mexico City and New York, as well as Toronto, Vancouver and Halifax. It was a matrix for the development of gay liberation theory throughout the Seventies.

An activist publication, *The Body Politic* made news as well as reporting it, and was engaged in criminal trials or lawsuits through much of its existence. The most celebrated was its December, 1977 publication of Gerald Hannon's "Men Loving Boys Loving Men," an article on pedophilia that led to charges of using the mails to distribute "immoral, indecent and scurrilous" materials.

TBP was thrice acquitted (the first time on Valentine's Day, 1979) before Ontario's Attorney General abandoned his harassment of the magazine, whose legal costs exceeded $80,000. Despite some unease about the article's subject matter, *TBP* built a solid coalition of gays, feminists and civil libertarians for one of Canada's most important censorship trials. *TBP* was also instrumental in mobilizing the Toronto gay community's response to the bath raids of February 5, 1981.

The decision to suspend publication, made by the Body Politic Collective of Pink Triangle Press, is the subject of some contention. For documents relative to that debate, see the final issue itself, number 135, February 1987, for Rick Bébout's explanatory article, "What happened?" and a typically boisterous letters section; and *Now Magazine*, for Glen Wheeler's news article, "Burying The Body Politic" (Jan 8-14), and the letters in the subsequent two issues. My subject here is *The Body Politic* in its historical context.

In the early 1970s, following the Stonewall rebellion, there was an explosion in gay and lesbian publishing throughout the West. In most countries, including Canada, gay periodicals situated themselves within a broad radical movement that included gay liberation, the New Left and feminism. In the United States, however, the radical wing of the gay movement was quickly marginalized, and control of mass-circulation gay media passed to private entrepreneurs with liberal, or even conservative politics. A case in point was the late David Goodstein's takeover of *The Advocate*, a southern California biweekly news magazine with the largest circulation of any gay periodical in the world. Only a few major US papers, such as Boston's *Gay Community News*, have maintained a radical perspective.

For the average North American gay man, the most visible and accessible gay periodicals have been the glossy skin magazines that appeared in the mid-1970s, beginning with *Blueboy*. While borrowing the general format and visual style of magazines like *Penthouse*, gay soft porn has remained much more marginal, both culturally and economically.

The annexation of Canadian audiences to the US domestic market is particularly evident in gay publishing. Canada has, effectively, no commercial gay publishing industry, and unlike Sweden and Australia, no gay periodical that pays its writers. (This was true as of January, 1987. With the demise of *TBP*, the situation is subject to change.) In the absence of domestic competition, American gay magazines frequently sell better in Canada than in the US. Canadians typically constitute 20% of the readership of magazines like *Mandate* and *First Hand*--provided the magazines are allowed through Customs. Ironically, by depending on volunteer labour, *TBP* may have delayed the development of a Canadian periodical industry that could support gay writers economically.

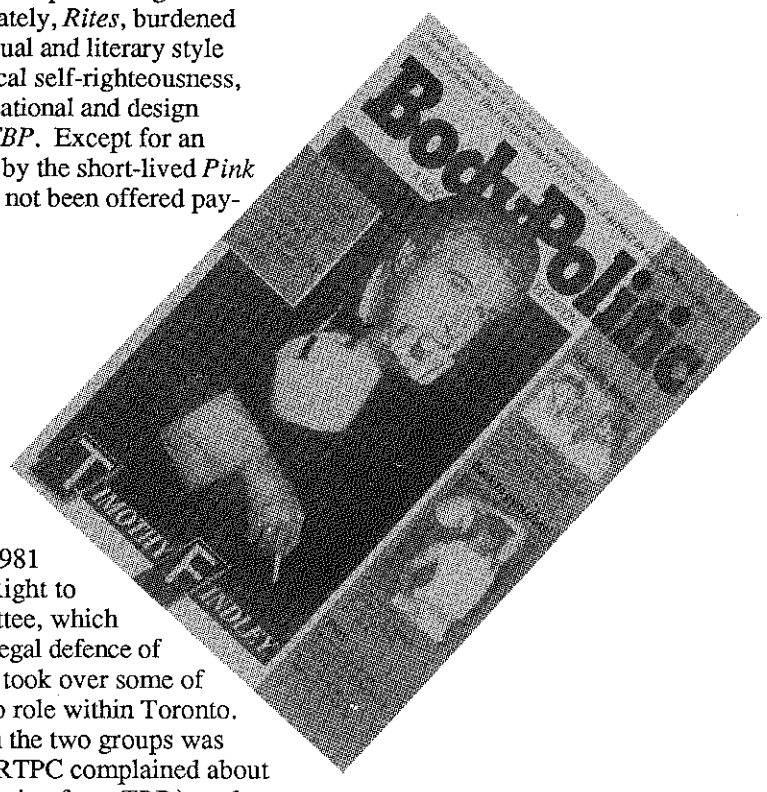
Canadian English-language periodical publishing is characterized by its concentration in Toronto, even more than by US domination. If Canada is culturally peripheral to the US, it is also a country of regions that remain peripheral to the centre. Canadians outside Ontario inhabit colonies within a colony. A progressive cultural institution such as *TBP* must locate itself in relation to both these contradictions.

Through most of existence, *TBP* was the principal--often the only--national institution of gay liberation in English Canada. Only one other serious attempt has been made at (bi)national gay/lesbian organizing. From 1975 to 1979, the National Gay Rights Coalition (later renamed the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Rights Coalition) provided a political structure to complement *TBP*. The Coalition foundered on the usual perils of Canadian gay institutions, respectively: regionalism and lesbian (in)visibility. With its demise, it fell again to *TBP* to knit together the diverse gay and lesbian communities of English Canada. *TBP*, however, was uncomfortable in this role.

TBP reflected the urban gay political culture of Toronto. The circumstances of gay life outside Toronto are often very different from those in the metropolis. For a decade, as a correspondent, I represented *TBP* to the Atlantic provinces, and the region to *TBP*. This presented both practical and conceptual problems. *TBP* accommodated "hard" news (demonstrations, legislation, arrests) more easily than "soft": organizing efforts, social events, developments that unfold gradually. The practices of collecting information by long distance telephone, and "parachuting" reporters into a community, had particularly unfortunate results. Atlantic gays frequently complained that *TBP* was too Toronto oriented, and reported Atlantic news too briefly, and inaccurately.

A NATIONAL CONTEXT

The Body Politic never clearly indicated to what extent it saw national organizing as part of its mandate, making it difficult to confront the paper with its failures in this regard. From 1983, when *Pink Ink* and its successor, *Rites*, provided a second national voice, their relationship with *TBP* was soured on both sides by petty competitiveness. These papers formalized the equal participation of lesbians, explicitly sought a national audience, and promised local correspondents greater input. Unfortunately, *Rites*, burdened with a dreary visual and literary style reeking of political self-righteousness, lacks the organizational and design competence of *TBP*. Except for an abortive attempt by the short-lived *Pink Ink*, writers have not been offered payment.



Following the 1981 bath raids, the Right to Privacy Committee, which coordinated the legal defence of the "found-ins," took over some of *TBP's* leadership role within Toronto. Rivalry between the two groups was both practical, (RTPC complained about a lack of cooperation from *TBP*), and ideological. Scott Tucker's July/August 1982 feature article, "Our Right to the World," criticized "the right to privacy" as a slogan and advocated a defence of public sex. Ken Popert's side column, "Public Sexuality and Social Space," gave one of the clearest formulations of *TBP*'s general ideological "line": "Bars and baths are to the gay movement what factories are to the labour movement: the context in which masses of people acquire a shared sense of identity and the ability to act together for the common good... Gays and lesbians who are content to live and love within the couple have to wake up to the fact that it is their promiscuous brothers (and, increasingly, sisters) who make the gay movement possible."

Consistent with the defense of the sexual ghetto, the paper editorially condemned the 1982 firebombing of *Red Hot Video*, a Vancouver porn outlet. *TBP* 's publication of an ad for the store in June 1983 convinced many women that the paper was incorrigibly hostile to feminism. Paradoxically, the number of women on *TBP* 's masthead subsequently increased, as the paper began to attract "pro-sex" refugees from the feminist porn wars.

In 1985 *TBP* accepted a personal ad from a white man seeking a black partner to act out the role of his personal servant, or houseboy. The nature of the advertised position was ambiguous: was it employment or consensual sex play? After vigorous protests from gays of colour, and a serious split within the Collective, the issue was resolved by the adoption of a more restrictive policy.

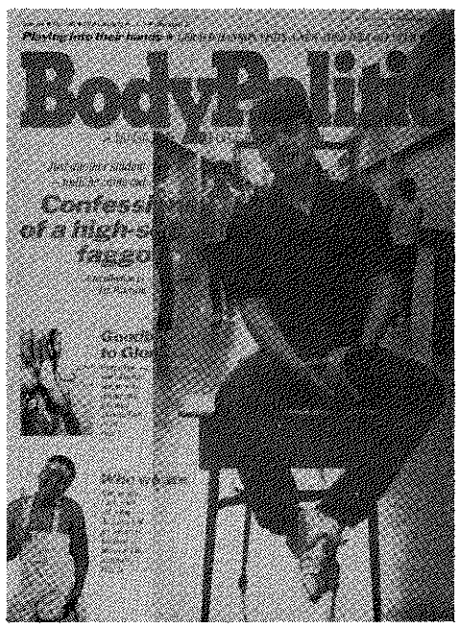
Needless to say, the AIDS crisis caught *TBP* theoretically off-guard. Against the morbid hysteria of the New York gay press, *TBP* continued to uphold the theory and practice of promiscuity. Faced with a new sexual conservatism and accusations of racism and sexism, however, *TBP* became increasingly defensive, reduced to ideological damage control.

The Body Politic declined noticeably in its last years, in both readership and editorial content. The paper's original core group were becoming exhausted, as they approached middle age with no financial security. This "kitchen collective," some of whom had lived together communally in the early years, dominated the paper for so long that their replacement by a younger generation was impossible without major disruption.

The loss of its dominant institution comes at a time of transition in the Canandian gay movement. An opening exists for a broader range of gay periodical writing, particularly fiction. Several groups, including Pink Triangle Press, are planning new periodicals: both theoretical journals and "lifestyle" glossies. Ironically, Canada Custom's recent harassment of American gay porn could have similar effects to the wartime embargo on comic books, and assist the establishment of a professional gay press.

The interests of the national movement might be better served by a journal from outside Toronto, one more receptive to the politics of the hinterland. Given the concentration of human resources in Toronto, however, this seems unlikely. Wherever located, any new national Canadian gay periodical will build on a foundation laid by TBP.

***Robin Metcalfe** is a freelance writer is Halifax.*



1986

YEAR BY YEAR, THE SPIRIT OF THE HAVANA FILM FESTIVAL IS BORNE ON WINDS OF POLITICAL FEELING THAT BLOW FROM NICARAGUA AND EL SALVADOR, CHILE, BRAZIL AND ARGENTINA.

□

FILM FESTIVALS come in all shapes and sizes, but they often have certain patterns of growth and development in common. They typically wax and wane over a period of years, sometimes to wax again, sometimes to descend into what Marx, in another context, called a long crapulent depression.

At some stage along the line, they tend to be invaded by politics: Cannes, Venice, Berlin and Oberhausen are only the most obvious examples. There are certain distinctions of course, especially between festivals oriented primarily towards commercial criteria and those devoted to the celebration of the art, or a particular segment of it (like documentary at Oberhausen, animation at Annecy, underground cinema at Knokke, the ethnographic film at the Festival du Réel in Paris) though many of these still serve as market places. Some try to be universal by dividing themselves into sections (Berlin and Cannes, for example), but few deny the commercial function by eschewing prizes (like Pesaro and London).

In principle, marketplace festivals fear political involvement, while the others often regard it as par for the course. But publicists are attracted to controversy like moths to light, and they exist in different guises. Havana is in this respect quite different, a place where, like journalists, they behave themselves. But Havana is also a place which takes politics and prizes together in its stride, and Hollywood film stars rub shoulders with film makers who are listed in Washington as agents of communism and apologists for terrorism.

Accordingly, the mass media in the USA ignore the festival (though *Variety* now reports it), but this only goads the Cubans to greater effort, and in other camps they win friends. Reports on the Festival have recently been featured on public service television arts programmes in Spain and Britain, for example.

There's a curious contrast between the politicization of a number of leading festivals in the Western European bloc, and the commercial respectability of Moscow, the most bureaucratised and apolitical of the festivals I have attended. Havana is the opposite of this too. Year by year, the spirit of the Havana Film Festival is borne on winds of political feeling that blow from Nicaragua and El Salvador, Chile, Brazil and Argentina. (Perhaps Moscow will be changing now.) I've not yet had the chance to visit Leipzig, but would guess that it is the closest in the socialist countries of Europe to the model of a film makers' forum adopted in Havana, where the politics are anti-imperialist and they count in the award of prizes. But the judging in Havana is more imaginative. The year before last was particularly notable in this respect: the first prize for full-length fiction was shared by the two most audacious films, Paul Leduc's *Frida, Naturaleza Viva* (Mexico) and *Tangos, El Exilio de Gardel* by Fernando Solanas (Argentina); titles significantly difficult to render into English, for the oddity of them-- *naturalesa muerta* is the Spanish for "still life"-- signals their anti-generic quality. Both of them are ambitious, experimental, postmodern in their anti-narrativity, the first based on the paintings of Frida Kahlo, the second on choreographed tango (for which the film itself invents the untranslatable neologism *tanguedia*), allegorical tapestries of representation and exile respectively, which greatly exploit the pleasure, the *jouissance* of vision.

The vibrancy of Havana at its best arises primarily because Latin American cinema is still relatively young. The movement which the Havana Film Festival celebrates was born only in the 50s. When examples first arrived at film festivals in Europe in the ferment of the 60s, it helped to rejuvenate European ideas about cinema and the medium of film: the shock of *The Hour of the Furnaces* at Pesaro in 1968, the encounter of Rocha and Godard, are moments in this history as notorious as the episodes of the Oberhausen Manifesto, the invasion of Cannes, or Godard punching his producer in the nose on the stage of the National Film Theatre in London and stalking out of the premiere of *One Plus One* (a.k.a. *Sympathy for the Devil*). (The producer had over-ruled how Godard wanted the soundtrack at the end of the film; Godard appealed to the audience to leave, pay the price of their tickets to a fund for Eldridge Cleaver--if I remember rightly--and watch the free screening of his own version outside. The London Film Festival was extremely fair about it: they gave people refunds, and provided cables to power Godard's projector).

The New Latin American Cinema has changed since those heady days too, though to say it has lost its sense of direction would be going too far. Principally what has happened is an enormous expansion of production, with many more people producing more work in more formats and more varied circumstances; inevitably there is more diversity. Equally, much of it is rough-hewn with a sense of urgency, but then this was always true. Symptomatically, the movement has discovered its own maestros in directors who have created new paradigms for the movement, like Brazil's Nelson Pereira dos Santos, Cuba's Tomas Gutiérrez Alea, and

HAVANA FILM FESTIVAL

Michael Chanan

In memory of
Jorge Silva

Argentina's Fernando Birri, the last an inspirational eccentric who now directs the new International Film School at San Antonio de los Baños near Havana, which was opened by Fidel Castro during last December's Festival. These figures are not, however, like so many past masters in Europe, played out. In the past few years, Alea has made the notably critical *Hasta cierto punto* (*Up to a Point*), Birri a remarkable documentary portrait of his friend the poet Rafael Alberti, dos Santos a work commanding strength in *Memorias do carcere*. All three are working on new productions.

In this respect when I look back at Europe from Havana, I don't think of Bergman, Antonioni and Fellini, but Buñuel, Resnais, and Wajda. Buñuel the Latin Americans regard as half their own--Havana has commemorated them with a retrospective--and his final European films are indeed the epitome of magical realism, which is why he seems still alive. Resnais they respect, but would criticize as being too cerebral. There are certainly no parallels, unless a new Argentinian film, *Hombre mirando al sudeste* (*Man Looking Southeast*, dir. Eliseo Subiela), a low budget, low tech, low profile contemporary science fiction story with a droll sense of humour. By the way, Argentinian cinema has emerged since the Colonels were ousted as the most impressive body of work in the whole of Latin America, though Brazil still holds its own.

When it comes to Wajda, Cubans have a nagging problem about his political trajectory, but a remarkable new Brazilian film presents an exhilarating lesson in unconscious parallelism: seen at Havana outside competition, and also at the excellent Latin American Film Conference in Iowa last October, Tisuka Yamasaki's *Patriamada* (*Beloved Country*). Dating from 1984 and the months of pre-electoral ferment, she has taken a trio of characters, and using the direct filming techniques which Wajda exploited in his Solidarity films, *Man of Marble* and *Man of Iron*, inserted them into the scenario and scenes of popular agitation of the moment. As in Wajda too, the central protagonist is a young woman journalist. I even thought I saw a visual echo in a shot where she walks away from camera along a corridor with a swinging gait and her bag slung over her shoulder, but at Iowa, Yamasaki herself told me she hadn't been aware of the parallel. Perhaps it is all the more remarkable if the shot is not an homage, for then the parallel exists in the two directors' independent inspiration to establish their relationship to the immediate political environment in this way.

The symbiotic attraction of fictive and documentary reality is nothing new, of course, to Latin American cinema. The Cubans especially have explored the ways they can be made to interlock in crucial earlier films, like Alea's *Memorias del subdesarrollo* (*Memories of Underdevelopment*) and Sara Gomez's *De cierta manera* (*One Way or Another*), films belonging to the current of effervescence which peaked in Cuba at the end of the 60s but was shared throughout the continent. However, the intense creative experimentation of those years, which included the most striking films by directors as different as Glauber Rocha, Humberto Solas, Jorge Sanjines and Miguel Littin, is no longer in evidence, *Frida* and *Tangos* notwithstanding. The paradox is that this is precisely what makes Havana such an important festival. It would be important anyway as a forum of cultural politics, but it has grown in eight years to become the focus of a great deal of fervent hope, the serious desire to recapture the inspirational moment.

I often came away from earlier festivals in Havana feeling that the films were less important individually than the sense of the presence on the screen of a continent hitherto invisible as much to itself as to us. There was an infectious sense of self-discovery. People were more in agreement with the distribution of prizes than at any other festivals I've attended; that was because the juries were representative, and film makers felt judged by their peers. This is still true, but perhaps a turning point has been reached. The Festival last December was the largest ever, with more resources invested in it by the Government than before; the stage management of the awards ceremony at the end is now a cross between a political rally and the Academy Awards. The Festival has been expanded to include video and television (which makes it almost unwieldy; perhaps the sections should run consecutively instead of concurrently). There are more cinemas and viewing rooms in use, with new projectors for both film and video; there are retrospectives as well as competition and market screenings, music and dancing at night and the most marvellously festive atmosphere.

It is ironic, then, that Cuban cinema itself is weaker than, say, fifteen years ago, long before the Festival was thought of. It is mistaken to think this is because the creative force of the Revolution has waned, simply that the film makers in Cuba have lost their *vanguardismo*, above all to the plastic artists (as reported in the recent edition of *Social Text* on "Contemporary Cuban Culture"). In fact, if the Cubans have always been intensely conscious of the power of the media in ideological conflict, today they perceive more clearly the symbiosis between the struggle against external hegemony and the health of the country's internal media. There is new emphasis on the need to develop critical attitudes. Fidel has even recently declared that "just and timely criticism is mightier than a state, mightier than a party!" This was a month before the 1986 Film Festival, at the closing session of the Congress of the Journalists Union in November, where he explained in more prosaic terms that there needs to be more cooperation between journalists and officials of the Party and State. The idea was not to wait for news to turn up but to go out and look for it, find out what was going wrong, follow it up. There is fresh determination abroad in Cuba to grapple with things straight up, suggesting certain parallels with the Soviet Union but independently arrived at. There is a great deal of energy, and a lot of it is focussed on the media. The Film Festival has been co-opted into the general effort, and public attendance at the festival was half a million (an excellent number, especially when cinema attendance in Cuba is falling). It was often front page news, with plenty of coverage on the inside pages too. There were video cameras everywhere, and a closed circuit TV channel for the festival itself, with clips and interviews and news from morning to midnight. Inevitably the Festival is losing the intimacy of its first few years and this time there was less consensus over the prizes. But the exchange of opinions about them in the bars and around the hotel swimming pools, and the debate in the special seminars--the main one last December was on women --was passionate, intense and impressive.

For myself, I was delighted that Julie Christie became the first English winner of a prize at Havana when she shared the best actress award for the title role in *Miss Mary*, and accepted it modestly with four words: "*Muchas gracias, America Latina.*" (This was not so much, on my part, a patriotic response as the brief hope that it might just help to catch some attention for the Festival from the press back home). The Brazilian Fernanda Torres, who shared the prize, deserved it equally for her bravura performance in *Yo se que te voy a amar*, but I liked this film by Arnaldo Jabor a lot less than the Argentinian picture directed by Maria Luisa Bemberg. *Miss Mary*--about an English governess in Argentina in the 30s--is an allegory about social illusions, those of the Argentinian bourgeoisie about English culture, those of the English about Argentina. The other is a piece of self-enclosed experimentalism about a young couple engaged in the battle of the sexes, which would work much better on stage or as a television two-hander. Both were popular, but among different camps.

The top prize was also divided fair-handedly, between the latest film by Humberto Solas, *Un hombre de exito*, and a first feature by the 64-year-old Brazilian director Zuzana Amaral, *La Hora de la estrella*. The former is a moral chronical of political opposition between two brothers, with the emphasis on the opportunist one; unfortunately it is relatively inaccessible to an audience without a good working knowledge of pre-Revolutionary Cuban history, and by those who know, I am told it is open to the criticism that it misrepresents the behaviour of the Cuban *haute bourgeoisie*. It is beautifully shot (Livio Delgado won the award for best cinematography), and includes an exceptional performance by the *doyenne* of Cuban actresses, Raquel Revueltas. The film by Zuzana Amaral is altogether more accessible, a gentle portrait, both moving and humourous, of the cultural deprivation of a young woman from the North East who goes to Sao Paulo in search of work and a husband; an important addition to the work of feminist film makers in Brazil, already the largest group in the continent.

I greatly enjoyed Marcos Zurinaga's *La Gran fiesta*, easily the best movie I've yet seen from Puerto Rico, and again because of its allegorical qualities. The genre is a social drama crossed with a Second World War spy story unfolding together at a society ball, with amorous and political themes and characters intertwined and some pyrotechnic editing. E.G. Marshall appears as Governor Tugwell; the photography is classy; the music marvellous; and there's a brilliant guest appearance by Raul Julia. It was not as popular, however, as the Argentinian film *Hombre mirando al sudeste* directed by Eliseo Subiela, another strongly allegorical essay but (perhaps as befits the country of Borges) a metaphysical one. Hugo Soto and Lorenzo Quinteros play a kind of dual protagonist, the one a long-suffering patient at a mental hospital, a Christ-like figure among the inmates, whom the other, a psychi-atrist, discovers to have a remarkable intelligence quotient. The psychiatrist is kind and humane, his patient benign: humanity split between two different kinds of intellect. The only thing wrong with the patient is his claim to be an extraterrestrial. The portrayal of his special powers climaxes in a virtuoso sequence which impelled the Cuban audience to applause, where the extraterrestrial leads a strangely bacchic dance at an open air concert to the last movement of Beethoven's *Choral Symphony*, and to cap it, mounts the podium and takes the baton from the conductor, with remarkable consequences.

FIDEL HAS RECENTLY DECLARED THAT "JUST AND TIMELY CRITICISM IS MIGHTIER THAN A STATE, MIGHTIER THAN A PARTY!"

At the previous year's Festival, Beethoven's *Choral* cropped up twice, sung in a Spanish version of Schiller's poem (the poem originally entitled *Ode to Freedom*). Once was in Marlene Franca's documentary tribute to the Brazilian liberation priest Frei Tito, whom imprisonment drove to his suicide: it is the anthem in the cathedral at his funeral. The second time was in an anonymous video from Chile, where it was sung on the streets in Santiago beneath the banners of the women proclaiming "*Somos mas*"--"We are more." Though the new Argentinian film is uneven, the orchestra sequence was the most thrilling I saw this year in Havana, symbol of the deep level at which the cultural process is at work in Latin America: the way it ingests the cultural icons of its imperialized past and revalorises them--for a Cuban audience as much as the visiting European.

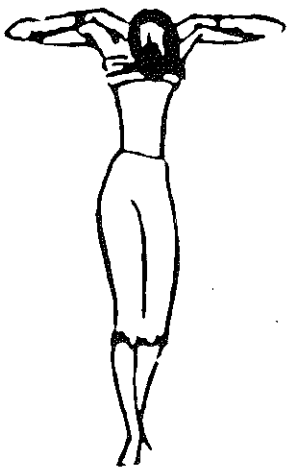
The film which moved me most, however, was Jorge Duran's *El color de su destino*, a Brazilian production about Chileans in exile which left a deep impression on many viewers, but also divided opinion. It is impossible to do justice to such a richly complex film without another viewing. Genre: sort of a coming of age story. Protagonist: an adolescent trying to exorcise the memory of his elder brother killed in the aftermath of the coup against Allende. Subplot: his burgeoning sexuality, relations with girls. Character: sensitive type, with artistic talent. Except that these elements are not hierarchical in the film; they are expertly intertwined, with the narrative rhythms of the French rather than the North American examples of genre. However, it was criticized for its milieu: Chilean exiles don't always live in middle class comfort. I cannot explain its considerable effect without speaking of another film, which didn't manage to reach Havana but was shown a couple of months earlier at the University of Iowa Conference. Marilu Malet's *Journal Inachevée*--she now lives in Québec--is the most extraordinary example I've seen of a genre which Chilean film makers have themselves created, the film of exile, which Zuzana Pick at the Iowa conference perceptively described as quintessentially multilingual (like several films by Raul Ruiz, none of them seen in Havana). This is a deeply reflexive film in the style of a self-observational documentary; the remarkable manner in which the film maker probes the most delicate and elusive aspects of exile behaviour and her relationship with her husband (a Canadian film maker) gains its subtle force from her feminist integrity. *El color de su destino,* which is likewise traced in the clash of comprehension of different tongues, approaches, I think, a similar honesty about adolescent male experience. Both, in any case, are films which deserve to be seen as widely as possible.

At the Iowa Latin American Cinema Conference there was a lively discussion on the question of the identity of the movement. Ana Lopez, Cuban-born film theorist at Tulane University, argued with lucidity that we shouldn't talk any longer of the New Latin American Cinema in the singular, but of the new cinemas in the plural, because that is what the movement, through its very growth, has become. This is signally different from the view of a number of Latin American film critics who don't visit Havana, that the movement only exists in the imagination of political wishful thinkers and it's never really had an identity. Fernando Birri counters with such notions by speaking of the movement as the active desire for utopia, and no one can deny that it's voluntaristic. But that's precisely where it garners half its energy, and the Havana Festival continues to be the place to go and refuel.

***Michael Chanan** is a writer and film maker. He is the author of* The Dream that Kicks *(RKP 1980) and editor of* Twenty-Five Years of New Latin American Cinema *(BFI 1983) and has made a number of documentary films of Latin American Cinema and on music for Channel 4, and the BBC. He is currently working for the Cuban director Tomás Gutiérriez Alea on the feature film* Caliban, *based on Shakespeare's* Tempest.

THE DECLINE OF THE FEMINIST UTOPIAN NOVEL

"Although Margaret Atwood is very aware of the problems and pitfalls of modern society, she offers us little inspiration. She has been "political" for years, yet her politics still lack focus and vision.... Have we not been subjected to enough dooms-day scenarios, as in The Handmaid's Tale? *..." F.de Jong, Letter to* Now *magazine (Toronto), 6-12 Nov 1986.*



HIS LETTER'S complaints about the pessimism of Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* sum up my own first reactions and, on reflection, my response to what seems to be a larger retreat from the feminist utopianism of the 1970s. For most reviewers, establishing a literary context for *The Handmaid's Tale* involves mentioning *Brave New World* and/or *1984*, rather than acknowledging the feminist derived revival of utopian fiction in the 1970s. While such a development may seem understandable in the age of Mulroney and Reagan, it needs some further discussion. In this essay I will briefly describe both the original utopian movement in feminist fiction, as well as the retreat from that position, as a prelude to questioning the relative merits of the implicit political strategies in the two positions. Of course asking such questions implies that as a critic I have the right to talk about works of popular fiction as having a political function. If that isn't what critics should be doing, the goal of social transformation is a dead issue and we might as well join the Conservative Party and start building our bomb shelters. As for taking these novels in such a literal or political way--the opposite of how we are taught to read--it seems foolish and obtuse to ignore the deliberate engagement of these works with feminist issues.

I. THE UTOPIAN MOMENT

The classics of the feminist utopian revival of the 1970s were largely written within the generic boundaries of science fiction and fantasy, and include: Suzy McKee Charnas, *Motherlines* (1979); and Sally Gearhart, *The Wanderground* (1978); Ursula K. LeGuin, *The Dispossessed* (1975); Marge Piercy, *Woman on The Edge of Time* (1976); and Joanna Russ, *The Female Man* (1975). To these should be added two utopian novels written by men with feminist overtones, Ernest Callenbach, *Ecotopia* (1975) and Samuel Delany, *Triton*, (1976).

Like *The Handmaid's Tale*, Sally Gearhart's *The Wanderground* also portrays a backlash against the growing strength of women and gays. But here the backlash prompts "the revolt of the Earth herself": outside the city men suddenly become impotent, while machines and mechanical devices no longer function. Although the men establish a patriarchal police state in the cities, the core of the novel is the evocation of a utopian world of the women in the countryside. This focus on the depiction of new societies organized around egalitarian and cooperative principles is characteristic of all of the above novels, although some go further than just describing the utopian society by raising questions about the possibility of utopia (in Delany and LeGuin), or by concentrating on the transition to the new society (in Russ, and in Piercy).

Because they emphasize the changed lives of their characters and describe the alternate societies which would make new patterns of behaviour and interpersonal relations possible, these works provide the reader with an experience, however limited, of what a better world, beyond sexual hierarchy and domination, might look and feel like. It is worth mentioning, too, that their political effectiveness is enhanced for the very reasons that they are often ignored by mainstream critics. Written primarily within the context of popular fiction, they are able to reach beyond the already converted to touch a wide audience.

However, with one exception to which I shall return, this utopian moment seems to have ended. More recent fictions no longer give us images of a radically different future in which the values and ideals of feminism have been extended to much of the planet, but depressing images of a brutal re-establishment of capitalist patriarchy.

II. THE RETREAT FROM UTOPIA

ATTENTION ALL MEN:

The Patriarchal Network is where (straight) men learn about:

** The growing movement of heterosexual men who are refusing to be ripped-off by scheming feminist-golddiggers in palimony, alimony, paternity, property division and child custody & child support schemes (The Men's Rights Movement).*

** The International Patriarchy*

** Patriarchal Spirituality*

** Guidebook to Brothels (Whorehouses) around the world (Live with a foreign girlfriend-for-hire in an apartment for a week or longer).*

DON'T SUBMIT TO A FEMINIST-LESBIAN TAKEOVER. RESIST !!!

Don't delay. Take a Tab and send for Free Information Today"

(Poster removed from telephone pole at the corner of Bush and Fillmore in San Francisco, October 1986)

The transition from utopia to dystopia can be seen in Zoe Fairbairn's novel *Benefits* (1979), which was written in Britain at the end of what I am calling the utopian period. It is set in the near future in the context of Britain's worsening economic plight. All social welfare programmes are suspended except for the equivalent of the "baby-bonus": a "Benefit" which will be paid directly to the mother, but only to mothers who do not work outside the home. However, rather than leading to a strengthening of the family and its traditional values (as intended by the right wing Family Party), the benefit has two related effects which lead the government to conclude that it is a failure: on the one hand, lower income families "breed" as a way of increasing their income; on the other, many women are able, thanks to the Benefit, to live, with other women, outside the system and its embodiment of the nuclear family.

Because they emphasize the changed lives of their characters and describe the alternate societies which would make new patterns of behaviour and interpersonal relations possible, the utopian feminist novels of the 1970s provide the reader with an experience, however limited, of what a better world, beyond sexual hierarchy and domination, might look and feel like.

The government then announces that the Benefit will be withdrawn from "unfit" mothers, namely those who do not live according to traditional family norms. But as Britain's economy continues to worsen, European planners help to implement even more drastic "social planning" experiments: the widespread--and often forced--placement of "contraceptive pellets" in women. When women find ways to remove the pellets, the planners put a contraceptive in the water supply. Women deemed "suitable" for motherhood are to apply at a Women's Centre for an antidote, but the antidote reacts with the contraceptive, producing massive deformities and rendering British women "unsuitable as vehicles for carrying unborn children."

This is not, however, the end of the novel. Although there is a possibility that it may be generations--or never--until British women are again able to bear children, a younger and more militant generation of women argue that this is their chance:

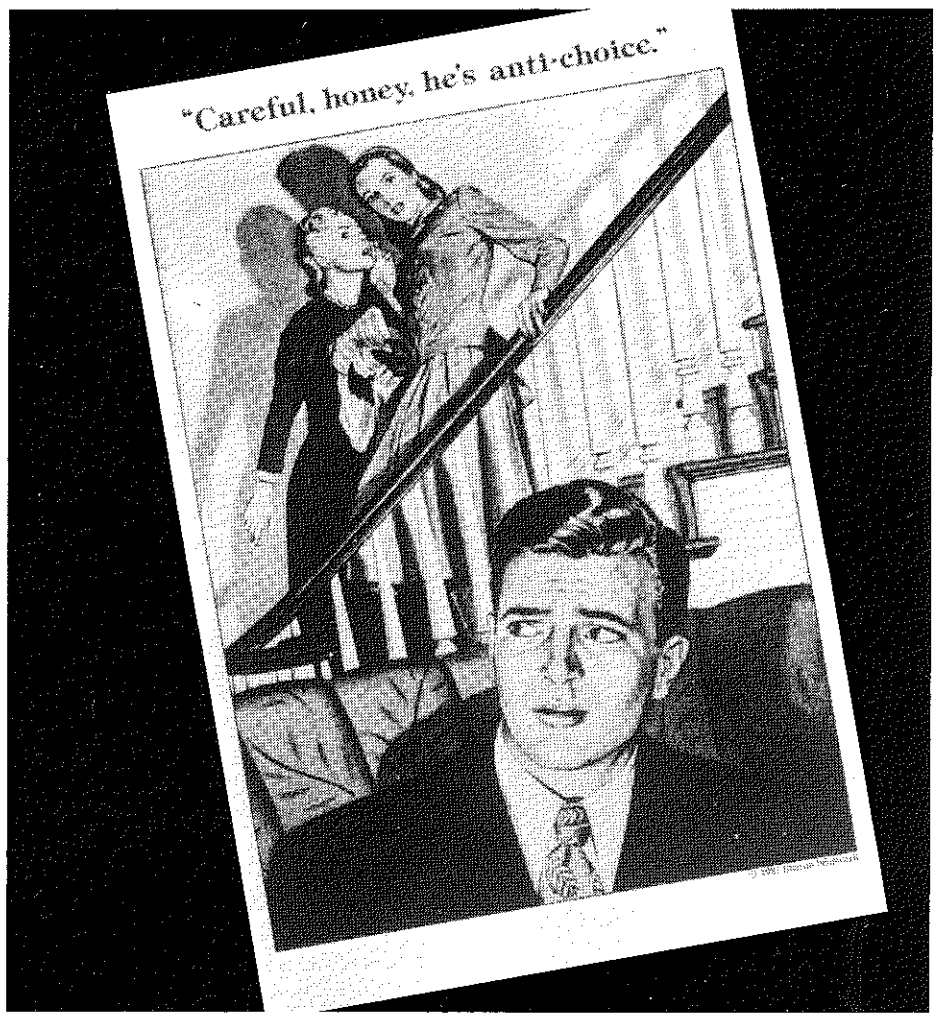
Why should we not build a society in which love and respect are--so to speak--negotiable currency? We have a lot of time, sisters. We have all the time we once spent on our domestic duties. Think of what that means! We have the ultimate bargaining weapon. We will have babies again when we are good and ready; when our society is a fit place to bring them.

From this catastrophe emerges an even stronger committment to the utopian goals of a society which will finally be "a fit place to bring [babies]." *Benefits* is certainly not a utopia; but it does not end in despair either. It demonstrates an increasing bitterness towards the continuing exploitation of women--particularly their unpaid labour in the home--and to governments attempt to control their fertility: "Our women are going to be the first to find a style of life that isn't defined by men having power over us because we have children."

While I cannot adequately review here the various manifestations of the state's attempts to regulate sexuality and fertility, it is increasingly apparent that the struggle of women to gain control of their own bodies and their own fertility is perceived as a critical threat by the Christian right. Even as I write, a number of Conservative MPPs in the Ontario Legislature are opposing legislation which would prohibit discrimination against homosexuals because, in the words of the Rev. William Davis (Scarborough Centre), "the value of the family is being threatened."* The right's preoccupation with protecting "traditional values" at the expense of individual rights and freedoms is explicitly linked to fertility in the comments of another MPP (Noble Villeneuve) who stated that "a ban on discrimination against homosexuals in Quebec has led to a fall in the province's birthrate" (*Globe & Mail*, 27 November 1986).

Atwood's apparent willingness to hold up the present as "better" than any other future may explain the enthusiasm for this novel expressed by many of its mainstream reviewers who ignored the outpouring of feminist utopian writing a decade earlier.

The attitudes expressed in that debate are central to *The Handmaid's Tale*. There, in a near future in which people have become increasingly alarmed by a declining birthrate (explained in the novel as being caused by the various forms of pollution to which we are exposed as much as by conscious decision), the Christian right stages a violent takeover and establishes a theocratic "Republic of Gilead" throughout much of the US. The renewed regulation--"for breeding purposes"--of women's bodies marks the triumph of the Moral Majority and its "family protection" agenda. The "traditional" values of the nuclear family are forcibly reestablished, while



divorce, birth control, homosexuality, and the other manifestations of the "permissiveness" and "moral decay" which characterized the 1960s and 1970s are brutally repressed.

Atwood's bleak vision is tempered, as she has been quick to point out (*New York Times*, 17 February 1986), by Offred's eventual escape; and by the inclusion of a "transcript of the proceeding of the Twelfth Symposium on Gileadean Studies" held more than a century later. These "Historical Notes" are meant to reassure the reader that Gilead will not survive and that North American society will return to something resembling the present. However while the present may be good enough for Atwood, it is not good enough for me, nor for those few dissenting reviewers who have pointed out that the sexist banter of the male "keynote speaker" at the conference is a depressing, and perhaps inadvertant reminder of what is wrong with contemporary society. Atwood's apparent willingness to hold up the present as 'better' than any other future (as the commander tells Offred, "Better never means better for everyone. It always means worse for some...") may explain the enthusiasm for this novel expressed by many of its mainstream reviewers who ignored the outpouring of feminist utopian writing a decade earlier.

Susan Elgin's science fiction novel *Native Tongue* is set in the more distant future of the 23rd century, although its starting point is also the contemporary attacks on women's efforts to obtain social and political equality. Here the reaction leads to the appeal of the 19th amendment (which gave women in the US the right to vote), and a new amendment to the US Constitution (ratified in 1991) according to which "all citizens of the United States of the female gender shall be deemed legally minors." In the future of the novel, the Earth has contacted and now trades with other planets--a development which has led to the rise of a small elite group of translators (called "linguists") made up of twelve families who, because of their discipline in teaching their children to master languages from infancy, have a virtual monopoly on handling negotiations between the Earth and its alien trading partners.

Within this futuristic context, the novel describes life in a linguist family where the women lead an even more exaggerated version of today's double duty: even though they are legally minors and depend on their fathers and husbands, the women are skilled translators with busy professional lives. At the same time, because the linguists are anxious to preserve their monopoly, the politics of reproduction is significant. The linguist women are compelled to marry young (by the age of sixteen), which "[allows] the husband to space his children three years apart and still see that the woman bears eight

infants before the age of forty." What distinguishes this novel from the dystopian future of *The Handmaid's Tale*, at least to many of feminist readers, is that despite this repressive situation the women linguists have developed in the privacy of their "Barren Houses" (where no-longer fertile, they live communally), a uniquely women's language, one which they hope will change the world by changing the way that women look at and construct reality.

Written and published as science fiction, this novel's serious intentions can be seen in the "Editor's Note" at the beginning about the availability of information about the women's language invented in the novel: "We are informed that an early grammar and dictionary of Laadan are available to those interested. For further information, write to Laadan, Route 4, Box 192-E, Huntsville AR 72740, and be sure to enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope."

Although not everyone may agree with my insistence that these three novels are overwhelmingly pessimistic, we can at least agree that their futuristic visions illustrate a frightening and depressing reaction to the gains won over the past two decades. Written from three relatively different literary contexts and from three different countries, they mark an end to the feminist utopianism of the 1970s. There is one significant exception--Ursula K. Le Guin's *Always Coming Home*. But in an entirely different way, it too demonstrates that retreat.

For those of you who are familiar with Le Guin's work, *Always Coming Home* is a return to her roots, both in the sense of her anthropological origins (her parents were anthropologists and her mother, Theodora Kroeber, wrote *Ishi: The Last Stone Age Man* which played an important part in the utopian rediscovery of North American indigenous cultures in the 1960s); and in the sense of similarities with the organization of her earlier *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969). *Always Coming Home* is 525 pages long, and includes a cassette of the music and poetry of the Kesh people. The reader enters the book with a narrative--Part I of the "Stone Telling" (the three "Stone Telling" sections total just over 100 pages)--but this story is soon replaced by the bits and pieces of Kesh oral and verbal culture which make up the book. These include poems, maps, legends, autobiographies, drawings, music, jokes, plays, a glossary and even some recipes. Rather than construct this society using a narrative, *Always Coming Home* is a non-linear collection of information which it is up to the reader to put together, in the manner of a kit.

At the same time, like *The Dispossessed*, the intentions of this book (it is hard to call it a novel for all of the reasons I am describing), the implied reasons for wanting to describe a "people which might be going to have lived a long, long time from now in Northern California," are clearly utopian. Moreover, the happy, pastoral society of the Kesh is contrasted to a patriarchal, militaristic Condor People who can be seen as a figure of our own society and its course toward destruction.

In a lovely valley the Kesh people live and work close to the natural in a way which is obviously satisfying and culturally rich. But this account of their lives is restrained. Le Guin's modest utopianism is unclear about how such a wonderful new Northern California came to be, or what happened to the rest of the world. While this may be quibbling, the earlier 70s utopias I referred to--particularly those of Piercy and Russ--not only depicted the entire planet, but also addressed the issue of how we got there from here. While there is certainly much that is valuable in Le Guin's vision, I prefer novels which answer those questions.

III. UTOPIAN/DYSTOPIAN STRATEGIES

If we don't call the post-feminist bluff we might someday face a situation where NAC and other mainstream women's organizations feel compelled to back- pedal on their support of gay rights and other issues deemed too radical. Perhaps even abortion. It might come one day to be a flagrantly anti-social act for women to wear long hair and pants. The Handmaid's Tale *anybody?*

Susan Crean, "Post-Feminism and Power Dressing: Who Says the Women's Movement Has Run Out of Steam?" in This Magazine *XX, 4 (October/November 1986)*

In the closing years of Reagan's second term there are increasing attempts to roll back the gains of the 70s--developments which may touch us all--despite Atwood's wishful insulation of Canada from the rise of the right in her novel. While it is easy to equate the apparent decline in utopian writing with larger events and to see the novels I've described as ominous signs of what may lie ahead, my concern here is not with the accuracy of such visions, but with their impact: what effects do these more pessimistic works have on readers, particularly when compared to the utopian writing of the previous decade? What are the political strategies which are implicit in works which depict the future and the struggle of women in a pessimistic or cautionary way, as opposed to earlier visions of a future structured by feminist principles and ideals? More bluntly, what serves the building of a new society best? The evocation of images of a better future along with indications of how we get there? Or, at a time of increasing threats, does it make more sense to try to warn people that the battle is far from won?

The argument that we need cautionary tales resembles the familiar critique of utopianism. The move away from utopian writing and the turn to more realistic visions of the future is a way of maintaining our vigilance and anger. The building of a better society does not need images of a better world, this argument goes, but the energy, anger and strategy to change this one. Utopian visions too quickly skip to the alternative, and too quickly forget the intermediate fight.

The very question of reading novels may seem for many activists far removed from the concerns and demands of political struggle. This should not be the case. First of all, because we are all too caught up in the struggles around a single issue, we may in fact be losing touch with larger goals we are working towards. The utopian novels of the 1970s can help to restore that vision. Moreover, in addition to helping focus on our own sense of where we are going, these scornfully overlooked science fiction novels--as opposed to the 'high art' veneer and readers of Atwood's novel--reach a broad spectrum of people, indeed the very people our political activities are designed to touch, as opposed to the "already converted" who are all too often our only audience.

These are the horns of my dilemma, and I have not resolved them for myself. I am not calling for more utopian writing, but for an awareness and attention to what has already been written. On the other hand, I cannot simply dismiss these bleaker visions. In reading them, let us keep in mind the larger threats, and the necessity of resisting the ever more attractive temptation to ease off on our commitments. Let these works, in their bitter reminder of what the future holds for us if the Christian right is able to realize its agenda, help us find the energy to continue our political work and perhaps to go to yet another meeting or demonstration.

What effects do these pessimistic works have on readers, pariticularly when compared to the utopian writing of the previous decade? What are the political strategies which are implicit in works which depict the future and the struggle of women in a pessimistic or cautionary way, as opposed to earlier visions of a future structured by feminist principles and ideals? More bluntly, what serves the building of a new society best?

* Since this article was written Bill 7 was approved in the Ontario Legislature despite the persistent opposition of most Conservative MPPs.

Atwood, Margaret. *The Handmaid's Tale*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1985.

Elgin, Suzette Haden. *Native Tongue*. NYC,New York: Daw Books, 1984.

Fairbairns, Zoe. *Benefits*. London: Virago, 1979.

Le Guin, Ursula K. *Always Coming Home*. NYC, New York: Harper & Row, 1985.

Peter Fitting *teaches French and science fiction at the University of Toronto. He works at the Marxist Institute and is part of the editorial collective at* border/lines.

THE 'FRAMING' OF JACQUES HEBERT:

N UNQUALIFIED BELIEF in the objectivity of news seems to belong to an earlier, more innocent age. To believe that facts and values can be neatly separated and served by media under different categories -- factual news, interpretive commentary -- strikes us now as quaint as the post-war celebration of the "end of ideology." Impartiality in journalism seems as plausible as regarding the problems of government as technical rather than political, viewing the social sciences as value-free and accepting that professionals and managers are neutral in their decisions.

The rise of small, but vigorous "oppositional" culture in the 1960's undermined the existing faith in objectivity and neutral know-how. A critical literature proliferated which argued that much so-called expertise was part of the problem rather than part of the solution. Urban planning was shown to create slums, schools to produce illiteracy, medicine to cause illness. The epistemological status of news also became an object of debate. News, it was argued, does not reflect a reality out there, but is a social construction with its own structural limitations. The question was asked: what kind of knowledge does a news story offer? Within the new critical media sociology there have been three different, but interconnected approaches to mapping the built-in biases in journalism.

The first of these looks at the constraint imposed upon reporting by the news story form itself. The form, it is argued, incorporates its own biases quite independent of the journalist using it. Such practices as personalization, preoccupation with conflict and confrontation, abstracting events from their social and historical contexts, emphasizing ruptures in normal routines and deviant behaviour, all these are to be understood, to quote Graham Knight, "as a function of a particular methodology for knowing and not knowing the world" (1982:34). In addition the expectation that open-ended happenings can be made into news-stories requires the use of standardized narrative devices, including stock characters. News often unfolds like medieval morality plays with an up-dated cast: the Politician, the Activist, the Expert, the Deviant, the Victim.

The second approach focusses on how news is shaped by the routines of the news-gathering process. Through an organizational analysis of the relationship of the media and their sources, yet another pervasive bias is detected: the media depend on established elites for authoritative sources and are therefore biased towards official viewpoints. According to Gaye Tuchman, journalists find the raw material for their stories by observing the world from certain centralized sites. The "newsnet" is cast out every day to haul in the "big fish" that can be caught on the site of legitimate institutions, mostly state bureaucracies: the police headquarters, the court house, City Hall, the Legislature. The information acquired by reporters on these sites relies partly on the records of the organizations, records which are made selectively available to the media. Furthermore, the media itself plays a role in legitimizing these institutions. The placement of reporters on these locations reinforces the legitimacy of the organizations themselves. Tuchman, whose own work is based on observing news production both in newsrooms and television studios, concludes that through this symbiotic relationship with its sources "the activities of American news professionals are geared to maintaining the American political system as much as the work of Soviet journalists is geared to preserving that nation's political system" (1978:99-100).

The third approach -- the one most pertinent to the news analysis offered here -- looks at the substantive ideological assumptions which "frame" news accounts. There is a set of political values, it is argued, which are so deeply embedded in the dominant discourse that they have become "naturalized", invisible. Journalists, like the rest of us, acquire them through their upbringing, and they are, furthermore, reinforced by their colleagues and superiors in the news organization. The news accounts which are judged to be "objective" tacitly incorporate these assumptions.

What are these dominant values? Todd Gitlin, who has studied the framing process through a meticulous examination of the news coverage of the radical student left in *New York Times* and *CBS News* between 1965-70, has suggested that the core principles which form the bedrock of the hegemonic ideology are "the legitimacy of private control of commodity production; the legitimacy of technological experts; the right and ability of authorized agencies to manage conflict and make necessary reforms; the legitimacy of the social order secured and defined by dominant elites; and the value of individualism as the measure of social existence" (1980:271).

There is a set of political values, which are so deeply embedded in the news that they have become "naturalized," invisible.

Newsworthy individuals and groups who are seen to function within this ideological consensus stand a chance of getting the even-handed treatment that professional journalism ethics refers to as "objectivity" or "fairness". At least they are taken seriously enough to become legitimate sources for their side of the story. However, those actions that seem to challenge some key hegemonic principle are not necessarily treated with the same courtesy. Critical media analysis has often focussed on such limit cases, because they offer a chance to make the invisible "frame" visible, thus demonstrating the

The Globe and Mail and the Hunger Strike

SATU REPO

ideological bias in news (Tuchman 1978; Gitlin 1980; Knight 1982). Strikes, demonstrations and protest marches, in particular, often bring out defensive and hostile reactions in the media. They seem to undermine the belief that social problems can be resolved within the existing institutional structures. (And they also go against the notion that violence, even symbolic violence, is only defensible when employed by the state.) Activists who challenge this conventional wisdom often get savaged by the media. If the spotlight is aimed at them, they and their causes are often trivialized or made to appear subversive, sometimes both. An analysis of a recent limit case in a Canadian context is offered here as evidence of how ideological "framing" works in our news media.


'Not party gesture,' Turner says
Liberals distanced from fast
BY CHARLOTTE MONTGOMERY
The Globe and Mail
OTTAWA
Senator's hunger strike draws crowds
BY CHARLOTTE MONTGOMERY
The Globe and Mail
OTTAWA
Jacques Hebert
enator Hebert lies in a sleeping bag in the Se

Hebert had ceased to be a political actor and had become a "problem," a strange abberation, creating unforseen legal and moral dilemmas.

The Globe and the "Unreason" of Senator Hebert

On March 10 1986, Senator Jacques Hebert announced that he was going on a hunger strike to protest the Conservative government's decision to abolish a social program for unemployed youth that he had been instrumental in founding under the Liberal regime 10 years earlier. The government refused to reverse its decision and the Senator remained on a hunger strike for 21 days, spending his days -- and nights -- in the Senate lobby open to the public. He resumed eating only after a voluntary organization was formed by his political allies and supporters, which had the objective of finding alternative sources of funding to keep the program afloat. Needless to say the hunger strike became a major media event. We will examine how the *Globe and Mail*, Canada's national newspaper, "framed" this event, and what effect the framing had on its news-coverage. But first some background information about Senator Hebert.

Jacques Hebert, who was appointed to the Senate in 1983, is a well-known public figure in his native province of Québec. At the age of 62 he has spent more that three decades as a writer, publisher and a political crusader for liberal social reforms. He was a founding member of the influential journal *Cite Libre*, a founder of the reform-oriented newspaper *Vrai*, he has started two publishing houses and is the author of 15 books. While not as familiar a figure in English Canada, he has held many prominent federal appointments. He has spent 10 years as a commissioner of Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunication Commission, and has served as a co-chairman of a Royal Commission on Canadian culture. He is the founder of two federal youth programs, Katimavik and Canada World Youth. Most recently he has acted as a chair of the Special Senate Committee on Youth, which issued its report in February 1986. He had just returned from a cross-country tour publicizing the findings, when he learned that the Conservatives had abolished the 10 year old youth program he had founded.

The Commission report had painted a grim picture. The official unemployment rate for young adults between 15-24 was a prohibitive 17.9%, but the actual figure was judged to be even higher. Some 700,000 Canadian youths were out of work, the report estimated, and the social costs could be measured, in its view, in an alarming increase in alcohol and drug abuse, prostitution and delinquency. The report which concentrated on 25% of youth it judged to be "directionless", called these people a "lost generation". It found the situation "intolerable" and its recommendations outlined a number of social policies designed to alleviate the plight of these young people. Among these was a proposal to create a community service program modelled after Katimavik. Katimavik had in the last decade provided 22,000 unemployed young people with room and board and $1 a day for doing community work across Canada. After completing a nine-month stint, they received a $1,000 honorarium. According to one federally commissioned study Katimavik "graduates" had an unemployment rate considerably below the national average.

Senator Hebert began his hunger strike after he had sent a letter to the Prime Minister, stating that "having exhausted all the usual democratic methods of impressing on your government the state of the crisis that exists in regard to youth, after lobbying tirelessly, but to no avail, for the reinstatement of Katimavik, I have lost confidence in your government's goodwill and seriousness towards this problem." In subsequent interviews the Senator stressed that he was fasting not only to protest the cancellation of Katimavik, but also in order to sensitize the public to the whole problem of youth.

Senator Hebert's hunger strike was a major developing story in the *Globe* between March 11 and April 1st. During this period there were 18 news accounts on the subject, 3 editorials, 5 columns, 9 letters to the editor, 11 newsphotos.

What was unusual at the onset was the amount of commentary generated by this event. The *Globe* seemed anxious to put a clear and unequivocal meaning to this political protest, to "frame" with an explicitness that comes closer to nineteenth century journalism than one has come to expect from a cooler, more detached twentieth century "quality" newspaper. The *Globe* wanted to make it abundantly clear that there was only one important issue at stake here, and that this had nothing to do with the plight of unemployed young Canadians or the demise of Katimavik. The hunger strike had to be denounced because as a tactic there was no place for it in a political democracy. It was a form of protest that could be condoned only when undertaken under regimes that were not democratic in form. It belonged to the "human rights" protests of the Soviet dissidents and oppressed colonial people, struggling for national independence and political rights. In the achieved utopia of parliamentary democracy --already the best of all political worlds -- it could only be a sign of deep irrationality, of subversive intent. It seemed to imply that

Is the judgement the Globe coverage presents on Senator Hebert, then, completely monolithic? What about such journalistic virtues as "objectivity," "balance," "fairness"?

there were pervasive social problems that could not be resolved through the normal democratic process, by governments elected periodically by a popular vote, a thought that the *Globe* found bordered on heresy. The hunger strike, all in all, was seen by the *Globe* as a very menacing "symbolic" act.

In the eyes of the *Globe* editorial writers, then, Senator Hebert through his action had shown himself to be in a state of deepest unreason. His action is compared with a child's temper tantrum: "Mr. Hebert threatens to hold his breath until he turns blue." Former Prime Minister Trudeau is admonished for not dissuading him from his course: "We expected more from a man known for his belief in reason over emotion, and whose influence as a friend and statesman might have moderated the Senator's stand." But this breach of political etiquette was also treated, in a more serious vein, as an ideological threat. The senator was accused of indulging in "high profile intimidation." His act was called a "wrong-headed slight to the essence of parliamentary democracy," and "anti-democratic," and he was accused of "assaulting our civilized democracy as surely as if with a gun or bomb."

The columnists and guest commentators had nothing new to add to this, but the *Globe* must have decided that rhetorical overkill was not out of place in this instance. Ottawa correspondent Jeffrey Simpson devoted three entries to the subject. One was a satire imagining a capital brought to a standstill by everyone going on a hunger strike. Another column proclaims that "parliamentary democracy remains hostage to a twisted logic of a defiant man," and attacks the Liberal Leader Mr. Turner for remaining non-committal: "His refusal to condemn the tactic of a hunger strike is a bizarre abdication of leadership from a self-possessed lover of parliamentary democracy." The third column carries on substantially in the same fashion. The Maritimes correspondent George Bain reiterates: "There is nothing noble in what Senator Hebert is doing. His is the role of the terrorist, a gun to the head of the hostage, saying 'I will kill this person unless you do what I say." Gerald Caplan, a prominent New Democrat, was invited to give his comments, and he heaps more scorn on the fasting Senator. If the Tory Government capitulates to his demands, "it will be a black day for democracy in Canada," Caplan concludes.

What effect did this interpretation of Senator Hebert's protest have on the news stories themselves? To begin with, it determined what was not newsworthy. The *Globe* would not give Hebert the satisfaction of publicizing the issues he thought were at stake here. There were no items dealing with the high unemployment and its social costs. Katimavik itself merited only one confusing account, a review of four evaluative studies which were made to sound so contradictory in their findings that no possible conclusion would be drawn from them about the worth of the program. There were no interviews with either participants in the program or with staff in social agencies that had benefitted from their volunteer labour. Senator Hebert himself, relatively unknown to English Canadians, remained a cipher. There was no background story about his long and illustrious career as a public servant and a writer-activist, nothing that could raise uncomfortable questions about how such a public figure could overnight become a deeply irrational man and a threat to the existing political order.

The news stories that were produced tended to fall into two categories. Some concentrated on the "human interest" aspect. These included descriptions of the spectacle of a fasting Hebert on display in the Senate Lobby with crowds of tourists gawking at him, at times surrounded by youthful supporters, receiving occasional "celebrity" visitors such as the former Prime Minister Trudeau.

Into the "human interest" category could also be fitted the stories about Hebert's health, both physical and mental. There were detailed descriptions about his physical condition, interviews with the doctor whose care he was in, and speculations about how long he could survive without food. Hebert in these accounts had ceased to be a political actor and had become a "problem", a strange aberration, creating unforseen legal and moral dilemmas. As the fast moved into the second week the question was also raised about how long he could be considered to be sound of mind. In a March 20 news item the Senate Speaker is quoted as saying that he is asking his experts to provide legal and medical advice. He expressed concern about what would happen when Hebert became so weak that one could assume that his thinking became "a bit fuzzy." Could he at that point be taken to hospital even against his own will?

The second category of news stories was more political. These accounts stressed the isolation of Senator Hebert. It was made abundantly clear that his lack of faith in the democratic process was not shared by any reputable figure or group. The governing Tories had refused to bow down to his "intimidation". Neither the Liberal

party nor the New Democrats were endorsing this form of protest. There was no French-English split on this issue: the most eminent French Canadian news commentators were said to deplore the Senator's act. It was also made public that two major national lobby groups for youth had urged him to end his fast. While acknowledging that Hebert had received some encouragement from individual Liberal MPs, the accounts stressed that even such personal friends of Hebert as Pierre Trudeau and former cabinet minister Jean Chretien, who were standing by him, supported his individual "natural rights" to act according to his conscience rather than the form his dissent was taking. Chretien -- a moving force behind the voluntary organization established to raise funds to keep Katimavik afloat --is quoted as saying: "The question for me was if one man is willing to die for what he believes in, am I willing to stand up and lend support to save his life and turn it into something positive." In the same issue (April 1) another quote is offered from the Liberal Leader to drive home, once more, just how uncomfortable Hebert's own party was about his protest. "It is not the typically Canadian act," says Turner "Very curious, very strange in our political history. I don't know if I have a right to make a judgement of it."

Thus the news stories directly or indirectly supported the editorial judgement that Senator Hebert was not involved in a legitimate form of political protest, but was acting from some perhaps unfathomable irrational impulse. The accompanying news photos tended to give visual enforcement to this "frame". There were altogether 12 photos of Hebert connected with the hunger strike coverage, and in none of them does he look like a dignified public figure whose political protest one could take very seriously. There is no rational elder statesman here, but rather a frail, emotional, vulnerable individual, visibly getting weaker as the fast continues, raising indeed the question in the mind of the reader as to how long he can be judged responsible for his actions. In many pictures he looks despondent, despairing, almost apathetic, others catch a lighter moment and show him playing with his grandson or joking -- in his stocking feet -- with young supporters. In one picture he looks like he is praying. In three photos he is shown in affectionate interaction with a young child: one does get the impression that he is a compassionate man, who cares about young people. On the other hand, the pictures also convey the visual message that outside his personal influential friends such as Trudeau and Chretien, who each pose with him, Hebert's supporters are young and without any political clout. There are no images here that inspire confidence in Senator Hebert. And none that indicate any groundswell of support. What is missing, for instance, is any photo documentation of the fact that Hebert during this period addressed large crowds of supporters on Parliament Hill.

Is the judgement the *Globe* coverage presents on Senator Hebert, then, completely monolithic? What about such journalistic virtues as "objectivity", "balance", "fairness"? Hebert did have some support in the *Globe* -- in the Letters to the Editor column. Of eight published letters six were sympathetic to the Senator. Several even took exception to the *Globe* view of democracy. On March 22 one contributor asks: "Isn't it clear by now that the Mulroney government is sensitive to political pressure, whether from senior citizens or from U.S. based interests? If Senator Hebert, by taking a very personal action on behalf of unemployed youth, can threaten conservative seats in Québec, it seems to have everything to do with parliamentary democracy." Another correspondent writes on March 27: "Mr. Hebert has every right to take his plea to the people. We are, after all, the ultimate bulwark of those rules and laws that make our political system work," concluding that "By the way, that democracy argument is the same one used behind the Iron Curtain to control dissidents we applaud here in the West."

However, it is one of the two critical letters that is singled out for visual emphasis. A March 19 contribution is boxed in, given a large headline, "Misguided Ploy", and augmented with a photo of a dishevelled looking Hebert lying in his sleeping bag on the Senate floor.

There was also another cautious gesture towards "objectivity." On April 1, after Hebert had renounced his hunger strike, Rabbi Gunther Plaut, a frequent guest commentator, was invited to close off the discussion on the meaning of Hebert's protest. He reserved judgement about the senator, writing, "Mr. Hebert may be a fool, as some say. And then maybe not. Morality, if it comes to play, often wears a foolish coat." However, Plaut does acknowledge that a contradiction can develop between values based on parliamentary democracy and the right of an individual to act according to his conscience. In certain limited circumstances the hunger strike can be used, even in a political democracy, as a legitimate moral and political weapon, Plaut argues. And he maintains that there are no hard and fast rules about this. No matter what poor judgement Hebert might have shown in fasting for Katimavik and the unemployed youth in Canada, he had not, in Plaut's view, committed the ultimate ideological heresy of stepping outside the consensual values that Gitlin referred to as the "hegemonic frame". After weeks of overkill, the case is closed with this faint exoneration.

A subsequent *Globe* news story is worth mentioning as a postscript. On April 14, two weeks after Senator Hebert had disappeared from the media lime-light, the *Globe* ran a story about imminent changes in a federal drug law that would give brand-name manufacturers a 10 year monopoly, with no strings attached, eliminating in many cases, the choice between brand-name and considerably cheaper generic drugs for the public. According to the research, quoted by the *Globe* columnist Hugh Windsor in the same issue, this legislation could raise drug prices by as much as 100 percent. Unlike Senator Hebert's hunger strike, the fact that the federal cabinet was expected to cave in to the demands of the multinational drug companies, to the detriment of what the *Globe* considered "the public good," was not portrayed by the *Globe* -- which was critical of this measure -- as an act that seriously undermined the functioning of parliamentary democracy. It was back to business as usual.

References:

Gitlin, Todd. *The Whole World is Watching*. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1980.

Knight, Graham. "News and Ideology". *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 1982, 8:4, pp. 15-41.

Tuchman, Gaye. *Making News*. New York: The Free Press, 1978.

***Satu Repo** is a Toronto writer and journalist currently teaching Communications Studies at Atkinson College, York University.*

Wealth and Nations:

“ Every time I return to Catalonia I am struck by the feeling of kinship between the situation there and in Québec. ”

THE FIRST TIME I arrived in Barcelona was almost a decade ago on May Day 1978. On that day, the first legal international workers' holiday since the defeat of the Republic nearly forty years earlier brought almost a million people into the streets. Political posters covered almost every visible surface, sometimes brazenly occupying billboards; in the spaces between the various calls to mobilization you could glimpse remnants of automobile or toothpaste ads. Barcelona's broad boulevards were invisible beneath the miles of demonstrators; trade unions, political parties, women's rights groups, neighborhood associations, and even a new gay group carried banners bearing the narrow red and gold Catalan stripes. Slogans were in Catalan. Catalonia's national language had been banned by Franco at the end of the Civil War and even in the years preceding his death in 1975 it was tolerated in only the most limited of circumstances. Demands for national self-determination and social progress were thus poignantly intertwined that day in a manner that underscored all that had been suppressed by the fascists. But for me, they could not help but resonate with another situation that was far more familiar: the national movement in Québec. Of course, this May Day demonstration was larger than anything I had ever seen in Montreal where demonstrations were already gargantuan compared to the rest of Canada. But looking at its composition and enthusiasm, listening to the participants articulate concerns around self-determination, language rights, and almost palpably feeling their sense of national community, it would have been difficult not to have been reminded of the outstanding issues of the day back home. It would be outrageous to compare the historical relations between Canada and Québec to the impact on Spain and Catalonia of the Franco regime, not to mention the horrific war that led to his victory. But there can be no denying that the respective conjunctures initiated by Franco's death on the one hand and the electoral victory of the Parti Québecois on the other forced the central states in question to confront anew and with unmistakable urgency the character of the relationships they wished to maintain with their most formidable national minorities. (In Spain, it should be immediately stated, Catalonia shares this status with Euzkadi, the Basque country). Each conjuncture was born with immense possibilities.

In the intervening years, I have returned to Catalonia only to be struck again by the same feelings of kinship between the situation there and in Québec. But now, the comparisons suggested by visits in the late 70s and early 80s have been reinforced by recent scholarly interest in the dynamics that characterize national communities within developed states. The very possibility for such interest has depended on the emergence of unstable situations in several western countries previously regarded as fully formed "nation-states." While Québec now appears to be a prime example of this phenomenon, modern nationalism emerged there in the 1960s before many comparable situations were volatile. At that time, the discourse appropriated by many Québecois intellectuals to explain the character of national oppression and formulate their own role in ending it was drawn largely from the decolonization struggles in Africa and the anti-imperialist campaigns of Cuba and Vietnam. But with the gradual abandonment of this paradigm generated in the Third World, comparative models that see Québec sharing a problematic with other minority nations of the developed world are receiving more attention. What is so intriguing about looking comparatively at Québec and Catalonia -- and so suggestive for understanding the motor forces of national consciousness -- is that today's national concerns are similar despite radically divergent economic and political histories.

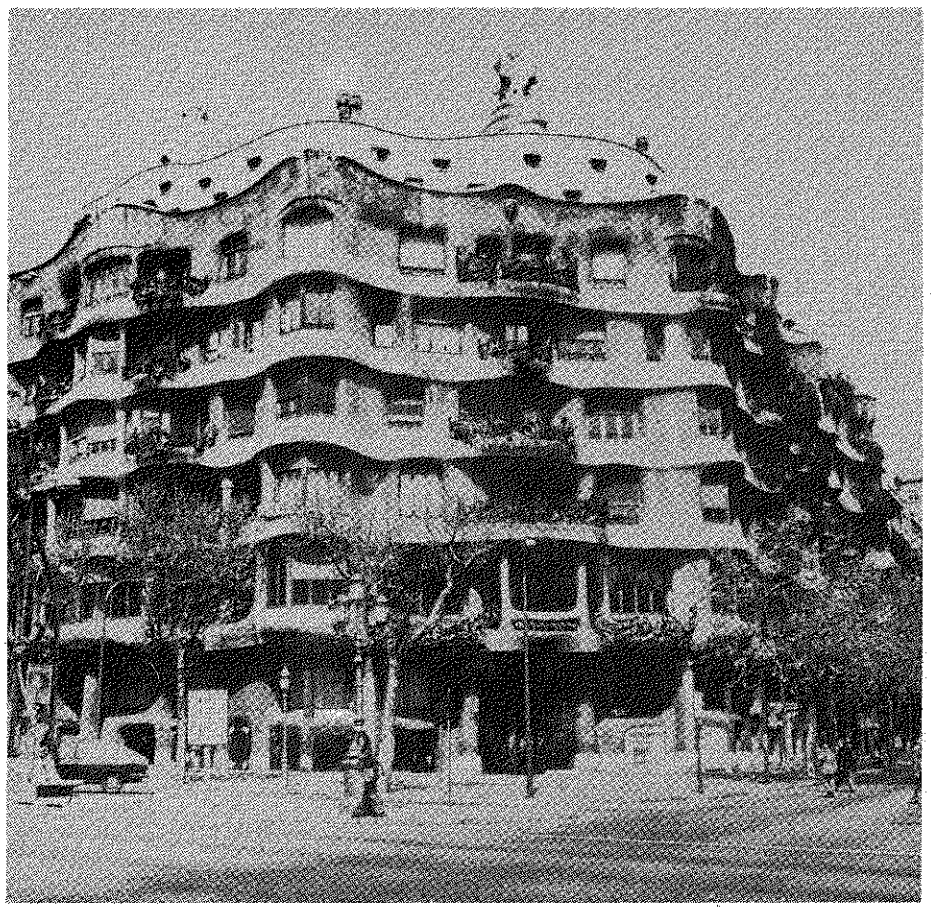
Modern Nationalism in Quebec and Catalonia

Robert Schwartzwald

By the time Samuel de Champlain established his *Habitation* at Québec in 1608, Catalonia had already known several centuries of highly sophisticated constitutional government, one which many historians consider to have been the most advanced in medieval Europe. The strong bonds that joined the Kingdom of Catalonia's four provinces did not disappear when it entered a confederation with the Kingdoms of Aragon and Valencia. Nor did the subsequent unification of the crowns of Aragon and Castille in 1478-79 produce such a result. On the contrary, feelings of distinctiveness tended to strengthen as Catalans found themselves forced to bail out what they perceived as an impossibly mismanaged central state in the period following the colonial conquests in the Americas. An indigenous capitalist class had long made Catalonia among the wealthiest regions of the Iberian peninsula, most often the wealthiest, and in periods of deep crisis the region emerged as the "saviour of Spain." The high level of industrialization, especially in textiles, and the thriving principal port, Barcelona, consistently attracted immigrant work forces from the rest of Spain as well as from underdeveloped southern France. The various urban, rural, commercial, and industrial interests found expression in a representative assembly, the Generalitat. This continuing measure of self-government was the price Catalonia had successfully exacted from the Spanish crown in recognition of its economic importance. It was suppressed, however, after the Catalans were abandoned by their British commercial allies in the Spanish War of Succession. When Britain signed the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713-14, it also spelled the end to formal constitutional identity for Catalonia. This would not be recovered until the 1930s, when the Spanish Republic accepted an autonomy statute presented to it by a revived Generalitat and massively approved by the Catalan people. General Franco, of course, suppressed the statute along with all Catalan institutions following his final victory in the Civil War. Since his death in 1975, however, the Generalitat has been legalized, an Autonomy Statute negotiated, and the Catalan language been granted "co-officiality" in Catalonia along with Castilian. But while this sounds like a happy ending, the current status of these gains is highly problematic. To see how it is that long-cherished aspirations may turn sour just as they seem to be within reach, a telling example may be invoked from the unlikely sphere of urban planning.

One way the new sense of possibility after Franco's death manifested itself in Catalonia was through an energetic program for renewing many of the urban spaces of this highly industrialized region. The level of municipal services has traditionally been higher in Catalonia than in most other parts of Spain due to indigenous wealth and a sense of communal solidarity. Yet, industry has been allowed to develop under the Franco regime in a way that flaunted these standards. Horrible air and water pollution and a lack of urban green space were some of the more obvious results. But since the restoration of democracy, the Catalan Architects' Association, whose building sports a Picasso mural, has led a discussion about urban space through publications, colloquia, and exhibitions. This has already led to some great urban projects, including the extension of Barcelona's famed Ramblas into an esplanade that will rehabilitate the city's old port. Many of the houses and buildings in the turn-of-the-century *modernismo* style identified by most non-Catalans with the architect Antonio Gaudi have undergone cleaning and restoration, while other new urban projects celebrate Catalan artists that have won international recognition. There is a breathtaking new monument to Picasso designed by the modernist artist Antoni Tapies. A giant glass cube, continuously obscured by flowing water, sits provocatively on a broad boulevard adjacent to the *beaux-arts* pavilions of the 1888 Universal

Exposition. Inside the cube, various mementos of the prosperous but smug era when the youthful Picasso lived in Barcelona are thrown together; turn-of-the-century furniture, a piano and other sundry objects are shrouded by banners bearing iconoclastic slogans taken from the artist's cubist and surrealist writings. The monument brilliantly amplifies Picasso's own challenge to the incipient provincialism of the city. At the same time, it is clearly an expression of Catalan pride. The project deftly proclaims its participation in current aesthetic debates without sacrificing its specific cultural referentiality. Not only must the universal be brought to bear critically on the particular, it seems to say, but this is possible in Barcelona because the city and its culture have always been intimately involved with these universal issues. Across town near a bull-ring, an equally exuberant if somewhat provocative monument may be found: a sprawling new park of palm trees, concrete, and covered walkways surrounds a ceramic phallic tower by Joan Miró that is topped off with a characteristic crescent moon.



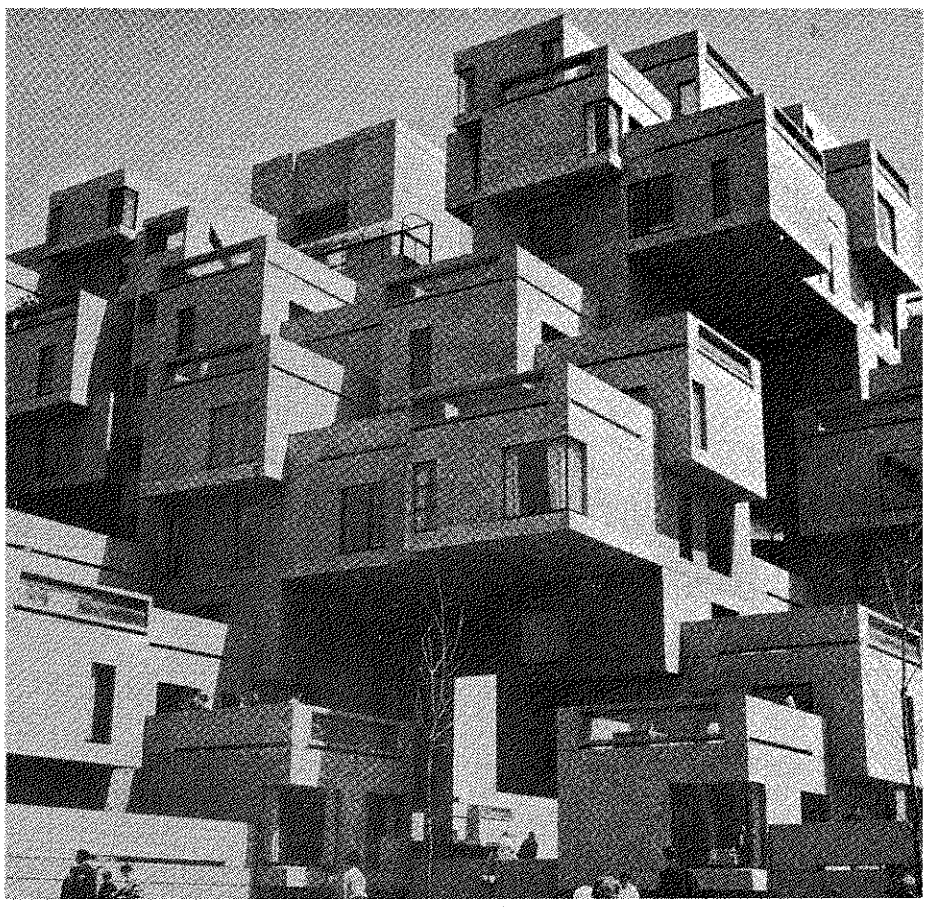
For years, Barcelona's seedy port life, with its transvestites, prostitutes, and sailors on the make, had most graphically set itself against the cautious ambiance of Madrid.

And yet it was only three years ago, as I stood with a friend in the refurbished beaux-arts splendour of the Plaza Real, that he sighed as he said in Castillian, "*Barcelona no es lo que era*," or, "Barcelona isn't what it used to be." For years, Barcelona's seedy port life, with its transvestites, prostitutes and sailors on the make, had most graphically set itself against the cautious ambiance of Madrid. Located deep in the interior of the Iberian peninsula and under the vigilant eye of the reactionary central government, Madrid was "protected" from such unsavoury influences. But with the changes that have taken place in Spanish political life, Barcelona and Catalonia as whole have lost the self-assurance of being the one part of Spain in touch with outside developments. In truth, Madrid has stolen not a little of Barcelona's thunder. It has come into its own as a cultural and intellectual metropolis; and from outside it has been lionized as the capital city of a country that has successfully made the peaceful transition to democracy. Word had it at the time that Madrid had come so far that its left-wing mayor had even declared "una semana del erotismo"! All the differences between the seedy old times and the technocratic new ones could be grasped at once in this proclamation.

The fact is that the democratic governments in place since the death of Franco continue the centralist practices that privilege the "national" capital, but now in the name of modernity instead of tradition. The Cortes -- the Spanish parliament -- still has final control over the funds available to the Generalitat, a poignant reminder that the two capitals are hardly on equal footing. And recently, the central government has shown its determination to assume a leading role among the Spanish, i.e. Castillian-speaking nations of the world. The combined impact of these policies is to encourage the feeling that Barcelona is somehow less international, more provincial than in the past, and that Catalonia as a whole is a recalcitrant society grasping at narrow ethnic interests. To those familiar with the thrust of "official" pan-Canadian nationalism as elaborated in the Trudeau years, this syndrome will not seem strange. The liberal government effectively prevented a meeting of the world's francophone nations for years because it was determined that Québec should have no independent international presence at such a meeting. At the same time, it adopted a relentlessly demeaning attitude toward all expressions of Québecois national aspirations. This attitude reflected a state-centric position that viewed Québec nationalism as a fundamental disruption to its own project. In this way, it had a logic of its own and was not merely reactive. Whether or not minority nations actively pursue their national goals, they are never "let alone;" the status of their relation to the central state is always vectorial, never stable. In this context, the question of winning or losing the initiative becomes all the more crucial.

What seemed to be happening in Catalonia in 1984 reminded me of the frustration many felt in Québec, particularly in Montreal, where the Parti Québecois government was accused of over-organizing the cultural sphere. Like in Québec, the Catalan government's increasing preoccupation with the symbolic seemed to be a defensive response to setbacks in the field of constitutional change. For although national independence was never the issue in Catalonia, the original formulation of the autonomy demand was much stronger than what was eventually secured. Like in Québec, popular mobilizations were taken in hand by government agencies and transformed into an abundance of neighborhood, municipal, and regional "popular festivals." Expressions of "authenticity" that often spilled over into the sentimental and folkloric were common. New public art erected in village squares paid homage to various aspects of popular and traditional culture -- Catalan national dances, for example. Flanking these populist gestures were official government reports on the future of Catalan cultural and educational institutions such as museums, theatres, and universities. And in an uncanny way, even the economic importance of the Catalan *caixas*, or credit unions, and their immense intervention into cultural life brought to mind that of their Québec counterparts, the *caisses populaires*. Both institutions pride themselves on their expressed concern for the welfare of the popular layers of society and are regarded in turn with trust and familiarity.

Under other circumstances, especially if the autonomy process had proceeded well, this mixture of populist and high cultural concerns might have been lived unself-consciously and regarded as "normal." Unfortunately, ten years of unsatisfactory negotiations and compromises with Madrid had produced considerable demoralization. Although Catalans have historically seen themselves as embracing the new, one could sense for the first time a nagging doubt about the possibility of articulating modernity and nationhood now that the official nationalism of the central state claimed to be the legitimate barrier of that mantle.



Catalonia's historical disputes with Madrid over an acceptable level of autonomy produced a situation diametrically opposed to that in Canada, where Québecois have always compensated for economic marginalisation through an exaggerated presence in functionary positions. A fateful example of this proclivity was Pierre Trudeau's own call for so-called "French Power" in Ottawa, a programme which independentist intellectuals viewed as a cynical and diversionary attempt to extend this tendency to the federal level. In Spain, the geographic concentration of the Catalan bourgeoisie and its historical failure to make alliances with other Iberian capitalists left it relatively isolated against the hostility of the centralist government in Madrid. And so, by early in this century, according to political economist Lluis Domenach i Montaner, "the region with the most distinct characteristics from the other Iberias; the one whose language is spoken in a quarter or fifth of Spain; which in the same proportion contributes to the costs of the state; the most advanced, richest, and best related to other civilized countries is scarcely represented in the government of the state." Even toward the end of the Franco regime, none of Spain's senior judges came from Barcelona and only 4% of the divisional chiefs within Spanish ministerial departments came from the city, as opposed to 21% from Madrid.

Indeed, the Catalan situation demonstrates that national aspirations cannot be explained away as a compensatory response to economic underdevelopment. In fact, modern nationalism in Catalonia emerged despite the clout of the Catalan bourgeoisie and in response to its continuing failure to secure the kinds of political arrangements with Madrid that would adequately meet demands for self-determination. Instead, it has been the intelligentsia, especially the literary and artistic community, that has forged alliances with popular layers to prove the mainstay of Catalan national aspirations. Its commitment to this cause has historically differed from the tactical nationalism of the Catalan *haute-bourgeoisie* who have more than once relied upon the repressive apparatus of the state to quell labour unrest within their factories. Well into this century, the central state has excluded the intelligentsia from its institutions and regarded their linguistic and cultural heritage with enmity. This accounts for the particularly tenacious attention of the intellectuals to Catalan national demands. There is good reason for this, as Regis Debray points out in his book dedicated to the "scribe," particularly those involved in writing, teaching or publishing in the national language:

The labour of universalization which is that of the intellectual is always tied to a concrete situation in which the stakes are the very possibilities to express and communicate. To conceptualize the intellectual, it is necessary to conceptualize the history of which he is a product. There is no intellectual in and of himself, just as there is neither a State in general or a universal subject.

Following the abrogation of the liberal Cadiz constitution of 1812, the nationalism of Catalan intelligentsia cloaked itself in the romantic doctrines of the enduring relationships of land, people, and language. Students of traditional Québec nationalism will note that "faith" is not among these relationships. In nineteenth century Catalonia, the Church was not a key guardian of national institutions as in Québec, although elements of it were later to distinguish themselves by resisting the Franco regime and supporting secular demands for autonomy. In fact, the outlawed Generalitat met under the shelter of the Benedictines of Montserrat, the famous abbey and pilgrimage centre overlooking Barcelona.

In Québec, hostile observers have always pointed to the preponderant role played by clerics in articulating nationalist sentiment. It is not uncommon for these same critics to contend that only the outward garb has changed between the messianism of yesterday's nationalists and the secular discourse heard in the modern independence movement. After the defeat of the May 1980 referendum, Pierre Trudeau gleefully boasted that these unrepentant demagogues had ultimately failed in their attempt to manipulate the population. It was as if the intervening twenty years of profound social and cultural changes, characterized in Québec by often intense alliances between teachers, writers, and the general public, had never taken place. In a multi-signature letter to the Montreal daily *Le Devoir* in December 1980,Québec's nationalist artists and intellectuals took issue with Trudeau's argument and gave Debray's general observation a more immediately compelling interpretation. They argued that "whether one calls Québec a national, a people, or a society, [*Québec français*] remains the site from which Québec's intellectuals and artists begin to create. *Québec français* is both the subject and interlocutor of their creation. The erosion of this territory directly compromises their existence and creativity."

Today, the first genuinely broad demonstration of political passion in Québec since the defeat of the referendum concerns protecting the integrity of the Charter of the French Language: "*Ne touchez pas á la Loi 101* !" proclaim the banners hanging from many of Montreal's ubiquitous balconies. Once again the question of language rights has come to the foreground in underscoring the continuing presence of the "national question." Likewise in Catalonia, where the Socialists swept to victory in the first Catalan elections based on a programme that convincingly combined socialist and nationalist demands, linguistic issues figured prominently among the latter. As Catalan sociolinguist Francesc Vallerdó explains in *The Linguistic Conflict in Catalonia*, "Language is the most visible sign of a national community: in addition to carrying through its socially integrating function as a medium of communication, it is the expression of a culture, not understood as a static and homogeneous product, but as a heterogeneous, multiform, and dynamic project. While taking tradition as its point of departure, it embraces the cultural concerns and aspirations of men and women of today."

In both Québec and Catalonia, the current situation suggests little respite for those who feel that there are specific national communities worth defending.

These same words could have, and in effect have been written many times over by proponents of linguistic reform in Québec over the past twenty-five years. Indeed, language and linguistic policy are today areas of common concern in Québec and in Catalonia -- a society where the economic goals of today's Québecois nationalists were long ago superceded. The process of linguistic normalization in Catalonia was initiated by the restored Generalitat and the election of the first post-Franco assembly of Catalonia in 1977. The exceptionally long duration of the dictatorship did much to accentuate the process of linguistic erosion and substitution there. In the years following the Civil War, the once burgeoning Catalan publishing industry was all but shut down, children were taught exclusively in Castilian, and the mass media developed solely in the language of the central state. The enormous waves of immigration to Catalonia from non-Catalan regions also contributed to the proportional reduction of the number of Catalan speakers. According to a study conducted just before the demise of the dictatorship in 1975, approximately 84% of the residents claimed to understand Catalan, only 68% said they could speak it, and a mere 11% claimed they could write it. Obviously, these figures are far more serious than any comparable ones for Québec in the same period. Yet the basic problems associated with protecting the status of the language are familiar: establishing its daily primacy in the public sphere, teaching the language to both native speakers and immigrants, reversing the trend toward seeing it as a socially inferior "dialect" through controls exercised over public institutions and the mass media, and resolving terminological problems that enable the respective languages to meet current needs.

One of the first acts of the Generalitat was to establish the *Direccio General de Politica Linguistica* under the supervision of the Department of Culture. The parallels between the work carried out by the various agencies of the DGPL and those of the *Office de la langue française* in Québec are striking. In fact, the DGPL's White Paper makes prominent mention of the contacts between its representatives and those of the OLF. In September 1982, meetings were held which were described as having been "extremely valuable for the orientation of the activities of the Service." "The General Director," says the report, "maintains intense contact with the directors of all organisms in Québec which undertake tasks related to linguistic policy and scientific work on language: members of the autonomous [sic] government, deputies, directors of the *Office de la langue française*, of the *Conseil de la langue française*, the *Commission de surveillance* which oversees the current application of Bill 101... the Toponymic commission, the Centre for the Study of Bilingualism at Université Laval, and the Centre for Linguistic Studies at Radio-Canada."

In Canada, the excellent terminological work done by the OLF is generally unrecognized, and so notorious was its *Commission de surveillance* under the PQ government that most Canadians likely think that the OLF itself was created by the independentist party to police Bill 101. In reality, the OLF is a product of Jean Lesage's Liberal government of the early 1960s. By taking a longer view, it is clear that the real emphasis has been placed on improving the quality of the language used in public, from government through to advertisers. The difference, of course, is that in the early days the strategy of the OLF was to morally exhort the Québecois to speak "better" French. These highly normative campaigns have never really been abandoned, but under the PQ, the OLF became the state's major interventional arm in creating conditions that legally enforce and socially valorize the use of French. In the process, the French language has been made to appear more "necessary" to immigrant groups, although many still need to be convinced.

In the case of Catalonia, the two major preoccupations confronting the DGPL are "co-officiality" and integrating immigrants. These problems are roughly equivalent to those of bilingualism and immigrant integration faced in Québec, although the responses generated differ somewhat. Both the official and "unofficial" language campaigns in Catalonia look familiar enough to anyone who has lived through the last decade in Québec. Against the spontaneous background of street signs with the Castilian ("Spanish") painted out, there is the ubiquitousness of government advertising promoting the Catalan language. A little girl, Norma (as in "norm"), appears everywhere instructing citizens on the correct use of the language. Today, just about half the Catalan work force is composed of immigrants. Surveys show, however, that these workers have traditionally held positive attitudes toward learning Catalan and accepting it as the official language. Both economic and social factors have induced them to develop these attitudes. Catalan authorities are nevertheless conscious of the need to nurture this good faith, especially during the recent years of economic crisis. In this regard, Vallverdu's assessment of the situation is probably quite representative of the "realist" position: "While it is not possible to complete the process of Catalanisation with expedient measures, it is neither possible to simply allow things to take their "natural" course...It is not a matter of hoping for "bilingualisation" of Catalonia where the two languages would be interchangeable, but rather for the Catalanisation for our society following the only road that is viable today: the mutual respect of inhabitants...A more radical linguistic policy -- which would be possible -- would perhaps lead more quickly to the normalization of Catalan, but its social cost would be incalculable and put into danger the reconstruction of Catalonia in the process."

In the light of these general guidelines, the Catalan authorities concluded that a universal policy regarding Catalanisation would be both unrealistic and unproductive. Integration of immigrants takes place fairly easily in rural areas, while the industrial areas of Barcelona and other towns present a far greater challenge. Thus different policies, objectives, campaigns, and time frames were set for different parts of Catalonia.

As for the Spanish government's interpretation of linguistic "co-officiality," the stress is predictably not on the development or the presence of Catalan, but rather the rights of non-Catalan speakers to continue using Castilian in all public situations. The policy of the central government is seen by many as doing little more than upholding the linguistic status quo rather than cooperating in the process of reestablishing Catalan. The criticisms levelled against "co-officiality" recall those made in Québec about official Canadian bilingualism. The reversals that have accumulated with regard to Bill 101 -- largely through the provisions of the new Canadian constitution and its reinforcement by the Supreme Court -- show to what extent the language issue is a significant barometer for measuring the central state's willingness to redefine its relationship to minority national communities. Here, the attitudes of the former Liberal federal government -- which bequeathed us the Constitution -- and the social-democratic regime in post-Franco Spain are indeed similar.

In fact, Madrid consistently tends to give legislative proposals emanating from Catalonia the most restrictive interpretations possible under the Autonomy Statutes. Catalans first expressed their dissatisfaction with this state of affairs by blaming their own Socialist parliamentarians who had urged "trust" when dealing with Madrid. While the Statute was ratified by Catalan voters, the significant rate of abstention confirmed that these politicians were seen as compromised; they were held responsible for whittling away Catalonia's bargaining position. In the 1980 elections to the Catalan parliament, the Socialists did poorly and a moderate nationalist coalition was elected. And in the wake of the large number of nationalist deputies sent to the Cortes in the Spanish elections of 1982, negotiations with the newly elected Socialist government of Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez became acrimonious on practically every point. Since then the Socialists in Madrid have been charged with banalizing the very notion of autonomy and accepting the policies elaborated by the young technocrats who assured the country's administration in the years following Franco's death. From 1977 until the Socialist victory in 1982, they had formed the governments of Spain through their political party, the Union of the Democratic Centre. In particular, their policy designated fourteen autonomous "communities,"

including Madrid itself! In this way, it evacuated the specificity of the demand for autonomy as it flows historically from distinct national communities such as the Catalans and the Basques. After the failed coup attempt in 1981, the central government bowed to the right wing by stating that the autonomy process had moved too quickly. In consultation with the Socialists, the central government then proposed a "Law for the Organic Harmonization of Autonomies" (LOAPA), which would prohibit one autonomous community from obtaining a right or privilege which is not shared by the others. This formal equality can have disastrous consequences for minority regions. As Louis Sola-Molins has explained in *Le Monde Diplomatique,* "It is not obvious that the Madrilenean autonomous community will want to legislate on the teaching and use of Castilian in its territory with a law comparable to that which the Catalans and the Basques would want in order to safeguard the use of their languages in their territories... In the name of the LOAPA, the central government would intervene to force Bilbao and Barcelona to adapt to Madrid." While recent decisions of the Constitutional Tribunal have curbed some of Madrid's worst excesses, they have also made it clear that attempts to assert the primacy of "regional" languages will not be tolerated.

It is true that the Canadian Constitution accords the provinces rights that far exceed those that presently exist for autonomous regions of Spain. Nevertheless, the extent to which other provinces and the central government itself will be willing to allow any practical consequences to flow from that admission that Québec constitutes a "distinct society" within Confederation -- the current wording of Québec's negotiating position for "signing on" to the new Constitution -- is a wide open question. Many provincial leaders have already declared, *à l'espagnole*, that they consider their own territories to be "distinct societies" too, so they don't see a problem in conceding the wording to Québec. But it is difficult to see how concrete respect for Québec's national rights fits into a scenario of a "commonality of differences." Will the other provinces, for example, be willing to amend a Constitution that defines the language rights of non-francophones in a way that once again could make bilingualism among francophones the *de facto* norm for public jobs in Québec?

In both Québec and Catalonia, the current situation suggests that little respite is in store for those who feel that there are specific national communities worth defending. Those Québecois who expected that economic progress would obviate the basis for national demands should look at the history of Catalonia, whose development demonstrates that such a pattern can never be taken for granted. In fact, despite unequal and even diverse patterns of development, the specific national concerns experienced in Québec and Catalonia today are fundamentally similar. To the extent that those concerns are born out of resistance to operations of delimitation and marginalization on the part of larger central states, their respective responses will have much to learn from each other. At first Catalans may be tempted to look toward Canada for glimpses of a more generous federal system and Québecois toward Spain for a peek at the successes of a minority national bourgeoisie. But in the long run I would suspect they would do better looking at each other, learning from their respective interrelations with their central states. Thus they may plan the political and cultural forms of intervention that will make their collective futures viable.

Reading List

I am indebted to Oriol Pi-Sunyer and Susan M. DiGiacomo of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, whose recent articles have proven invaluable in understanding contemporary developments in Catalonia. I would be happy to provide a bibliography on request. The following monographs are recommended as further reading:

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism.* London: Verso Editions/NLB, 1983.

Debray, Régis. *Le Scribe.* Genèse du politique. Paris: Grasset, 1980.

Departement de Cultura de la Generalitat de Catalunya. *Llibre blanc de la Direcció General de Politica Linguistica.* Barcelona: 1983.

Institut québecois de recherche sur la culture. *Questions de culture #10: L"Etat et la Culture.* Quebec: 1986.

Lores, Jaume. *Catalunya, Politica I Socialisme.* Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1984.

Medhurst, Kenneth. *The Basques and the Catalans.* Minority Rights Group Report No. 9. London: 1977.

Salée, Daniel et al. *Espace régional et nation: pour un nouveau débat sur le Québec.* Montreal: Boréal Express, 1983.

Tiryakian, Edward A. and Ronald Rogowski Eds. *New Nationalisms of the Developed West.* Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1985. See especially Oriol Pi-Sunyer, "Catalan Nationalism: Some Theoretical and Historical Considerations," 254-276.

Vallverdu, Francesc. *El Conflicto Linguistico en Cataluña: Historia Y Presente.* Barcelona: Ediciones Peninsula, 1981.

Some important dates in modern Catalan History :

1931 - Draft proposal of Statute of Autonomy approved by referendum in Catalonia.
1932 - Statute of Autonomy proclaimed in Madrid by the Cortes of the Second Spanish Republic. Reestablishment of Generalitat for first time since 1714.
1938 - General Franco enters Catalonia. Abrogation of the Statute of Autonomy.
1939 - Defeat of the Republic.
1975 - Death of Franco. Juan Carlos becomes King of Spain.
1977 - Spanish parliamentary elections. Socialists win a clear majority in Catalonia. Among their demands, "*català, idioma oficial* " (Catalan, the official language). In Spain as a whole, the Union of the Democratic Centre (UCD) wins the most seats.
1978 - Adoption of new Spanish constitution.
1979 - Referendum on Statute of Autonomy. 88.1% of voting Catalans approve it, but abstention rate is 40.4%
1980 - Elections to Catalan parliament. Socialists lose to nationalist parties. 37.9% of voters abstain.
1981 - Attempted military coup. Members of Cortes held hostage.
1981-1982 - UCD government begins private consultations with Spanish Socialists over "LOAPA," an organic law to "harmonize" the autonomy process.
1982 - Spanish elections. Government formed by Socialist Party under Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez. First Minister of Territorial Administration a lawyer involved in drafting LOAPA project.
1984 - Nationalist Convergencia party wins majority of seats in new elections to Catalan parliament. A stronger performance than in 1980.
As of today the Socialists continue to govern in Madrid.

***Robert Schwartzwald** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of French and Italian at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. He is also Director of the Canadian Studies Program of the Five College Consortium of Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke, and Smith Colleges and the University of Massachusetts. When he is not in New England, he lives in Montreal where he continues his research on the relations between questions of literary (post)modernity and national identity in contemporary Québecois literature. He is a corresponding member of the* Centre de Recherche en Litterature québecoise at Université Laval *and the Vice-President of the American Council for Québec Studies.*


ONE SISTER WAS NORMAL, THE OTHER WAS NOT—
Strange Sisters
ROBERT TURNER
They were both indescribably lovely—
yet one wanted a man's love . . . while
the other craved a woman.
THE SAVAGE NOVEL OF A LESBIAN ON THE LOOSE!
B526F 50¢

From the series:
Conspiracy of Silence, 1987
by Nina Levitt
(Originals 40' x 30', colour prints with photogram)

From the exhibition:
Sight Specific
Lesbians and Representation
OR
Sight Specific
Lesbians and Representation

co-ordinated by Lynne Fernie
A Space, Toronto, March 1987

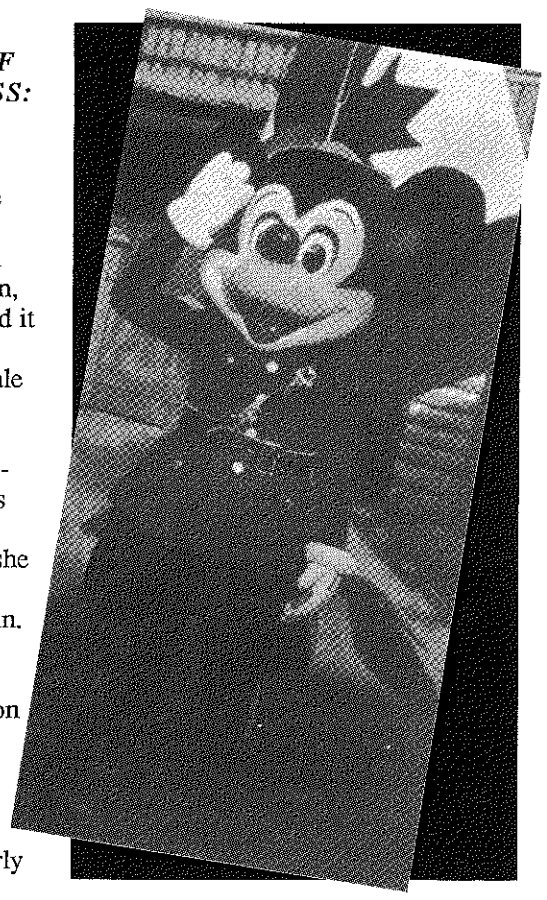
Photo: Peter MacCallum

How Walt Disney infected the design of Expo 86 and why we should all be frightened as Hell about it . . .

Brian Fawcett

FIRST OFF, A MILDLY UNORTHODOX HISTORY OF THE EXPO DESIGN PROCESS:

NOBODY REALLY KNOWS exactly where and when the idea of having a world exposition in Vancouver was born, or from whose mind it was, er, hatched. The original rationale for holding it is equally murky. Probably some mid-level bureaucrat was demonstrating how innovatively he or she could think, and a chain- reaction set in.



What made B.C.'s Social Credit government agree to fund an exhibition is considerably clearer. They saw it as a means of securing a powerful megaproject presence within Vancouver's downtown core. City of Vancouver governments, since the early 1970's, had been moving slowly and steadily to the left, and were taking political positions that were increasing in fundamental opposition to Socred megadeveloper policies. The Socreds purchased a large block of land on the north shore of False Creek from Marathon Realty (then Canadian Pacific's development arm), and formed two crown corporations: B.C. Place Corporation to assemble land for the exposition, and the Expo Corporation itself to build and run the exposition.

The Expo board of directors--headed by multi-millionaire entrepreneur and born-again Christian Jim Pattison--went out and hired a local architect, Bruno Freschi, as its chief architect. He was given the minimal conceptual parameters the management team had in their possession, no real budget limitations, and some slightly more concrete physical perimeters to work with. "Design!" he was told.

For about a year, Freschi and a group of designers he hired to help him did just that. Freschi's designs were somewhat fantastical for the sober-minded Expo Board. More damaging, they were outrageously expensive. Freschi was soon pushed to the design sidelines, although he remained, officially, the Chief Architect of Expo 86 through to the end. His substantive contribution to the site is the Expo Centre, at the east end of the site, and even that building is greatly reduced from its original conception.

Freschi also laid out the rough conceptual blueprint for the Expo site. After he was kneecapped, four basic groups accounted for the design of the fair. These groups are quite distinct in character, mandate and ambition.

1.) The Contract Architects: This group consisted of the twenty-five or thirty architectural firms that designed most of the buildings on the fair site. The majority of those firms were local, although more than a few of them brought in exposition-experienced help for specific tasks. The architects were assigned portions of the site on an unusual ad hoc basis, thus bypassing the more conventional "design panel" selection of proposals one might have expected.

2.) The Expo Design Teams: There were a number of these, constantly reconstituted, and with lots of summary executions along the way. After Freschi was removed, a second wave of designers and architects, headed by Richard Blagborne, tried to find an interface between Freschi's grand ambitions and the limitations laid down by increasingly powerful budget-management teams. In that environment, they carried out the bulk of the site design.

A startling amount of this work was carried out in-house by young and generally poorly-paid graduate architects who were hired for short periods, drained of their creative energies, and then fired. Some big-name architects were brought in, the most prominent of which was New Yorker James Wines to produce Highway 86, the mono-chromatic set-piece of the Expo site.

Finally, after Blagborne was carried off in one of the Expo board's administrative massacres, another wave of designers, headed by Creative Director Ron Woodall and Vancouver architect John Perkins, did the site embellishment that ultimately was the sole element in the entire fair design that made any attempt to integrate the different components.

Blagborne, Woodall and particularly Perkins did some brilliant and courageous work in an increasingly hostile budgetary environment. They also provided about the only explanations of the design process that have emerged. As a class II--or theme related--exposition, they correctly explained, Expo was not primarily an architectural exposition. On other occasions, they argued somewhat cryptically that Expo was a post-architectural exposition, a designation that may yet turn out to be prophetic.

3.) The Exhibit Designers: The exhibit modules that housed the various pavilions were meant to be neutral housing for the fair's "real" content--the exhibits. To cover senior management's growing disinclination toward architectural innovation, Expo spokespersons insisted that the fair's true content was going to be in the exhibits.

That was true in one sense, but misleading in several others. Generally speaking, the exhibits were disappointing--in fact most of the exhibits were a crashing bore. Their content in almost all cases was predictably secondary to the media used to present them.

4.) The Fourth Group: This group ultimately exercised the most powerful design influence, even though it is the most difficult to provide with a clear identity. It consisted of Jim Pattison, the Fair's Board Chairman, President and resident pixie; the right wing economic and political interests residing in the Expo Board of Directors; the budget controllers; Jesus Christ Your Personal Psychological Saviour, and Walt Disney. In a very important sense the various components of this group are more or less interchangeable.

EXPO'S WILD DESIGN ELEMENTS:

Expo's wild design process did contain two peculiar elements that deserve to be noted. They haven't received the attention they deserve, and aren't likely to in the future. A year before the exposition opened, The Expo Board decided that it did not want to fund an internal documentation of its design process. As a consequence, there is no consistent or complete source of documentary data available. A normally politicized procedure would have seen a politically coherent design panel select project proposals from a list of candidates. Such a procedure would have ensured an overall political coherence of design, and quite possibly a unanimity of materials and content.

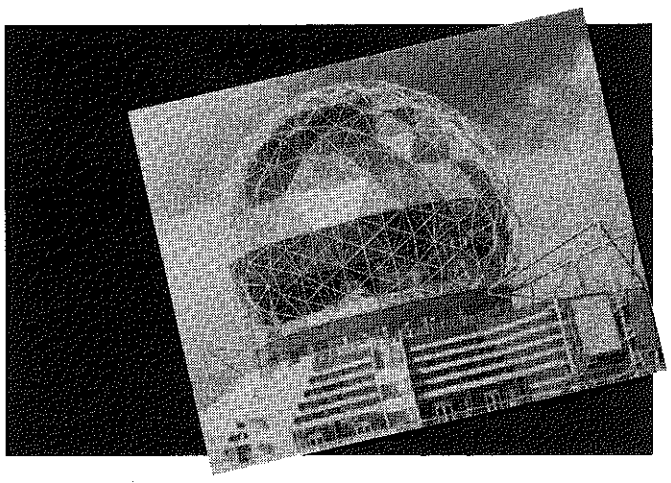
The Expo Corporation simply didn't have time for design selection panels and the result was that there was no consistent design strategy. In most cases, blocks of the site were parcelled out to various architectural firms, who then worked with the Expo design teams, the corporate clients involved, or with the provincial governments that funded the pavilions. The results were mixed, and the process is more revealing than the product.

The succeeding waves of Expo's in-house design teams produced at least one recurrent design element that sets Expo 86 apart from its two immediate predecessors, the 1984 fair at New Orleans, and Japan's Tscuba fair in 1985.

The New Orleans fair offered up just one inter-coherent aesthetic element, the Wonderwall. The Wonderwall was a seamless Disneyfied web of laundered cartoon images meant to cover up infrastructure and to present food and other consumer opportunities. The Wonderwall got a lot of positive attention, probably because nothing else at New Orleans was even remotely worthy. Most of the attention came from architects, who were intrigued by the technical virtuosity it displayed in covering up the weaknesses of an awkward site. The theme plazas at Expo 86 pretty much imitated the design parameters of the Wonderwall, with predictable results. They were spectacular, visually stimulating (from a distance) and essentially without content.

Tscuba was typified by its exhibit modules. Properly looked at (with one eye on the structure and the other on the images revealed by the structure) the modules were black boxes. In fact, they were conventional Butler buildings with shiny, closed outer surfaces. Inside the modules there were entertaining, but ultimately closed technologies--a perfect image of the way Japanese corporations present themselves and their products to the public.

The architectural imagery presented by Expo 86 was quite different from both of these, and considerably less seamless. Partly, this has to do with the absence of a coherent body to govern the fair's presentational aesthetic. The other reason is more interesting. Anyone looking out across the Expo site could have noted a startling dominance of external structure--pipes, gantries, etc. The site embellishment done by John Perkins recognized this, and extended it in a series of thematic tower gates throughout the site. This dominance of external structure lent a curious tentativeness to the site that sharply contradicted the official message. My own speculation is that it was an unconscious registering of the reality most British Columbians face, whether in the overloaded professions or in the dying resource-extraction industries that fuel the B.C. economy. This part of Expo's imagination accurately registered both the uncertainty and the distrust of the smooth entrepreneurial *élan* projected by the rest of the fair.



AND NOW, A MILDLY UNORTHODOX EXAMINATION OF THE FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTUAL DECISIONS MADE AT EXPO, AND THE FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH WALT DISNEY:

A return to Bruno Freschi and the early period of Expo's design leaves us gazing warily at the most spectacular remnant of the fair, the Expo Centre. The Expo Centre is the geodesic Golfball covered by flashing lights that sits right off the end of Georgia Street. Together with the fountain in Stanley Park's Lost Lagoon to the west, it forms a polarity, or dumbbell, in the downtown core. Never mind that the connecting road on the east side of this piece of urban abstraction, the Georgia Viaduct, curves away to the north, away from the Golfball, thus making the dumbbell recognizable only at night, from the air.

The Expo Centre is one of Expo's permanent structures, designed to become an urban legacy. Inside it are a number of high-tech theatres, including an Omnimax, and another, smaller, theatre where people can voice their opinions electronically on what they like and don't like about the presentations they see. It's a spectacular building, but originally it was meant to be quite a lot more spectacular.

Early in the design process, Bruno Freschi commissioned an outrageously expensive short film aimed at selling his concept of the design and purpose of the Expo Centre. A few months before Expo opened, I saw this film, and heard an embittered but carefully politic Freschi outline what he'd had in mind. He'd designed the Expo Centre to have an *external* television screen, and to have it connected to something he called a "teleport", which was, when you cut the techno-rhetoric from what he was saying, a huge satellite receiving dish planted in the middle of False Creek. His demonstration film featured a lot of simple-minded but vividly coloured computer-generated graphics, declaring the geodesic dome model to be a symbol of "universality". Then, as a demonstration of what universality is , the film treated us to several minutes of puerile graphic progressions that probably resemble what Disneyland would appear like to someone on LSD. After watching the film, I couldn't help feeling that it was lucky Freschi had been stopped when he was. His teleport was not built, and neither was the external screen.

I've witnessed the effects of teleports. The last time I was in Hazelton, B.C., which is among the most beautiful landscapes in North America, there were 27 satellite dishes atop houses in the Indian reserve. As a result, the place was deserted. The residents were inside their houses, living half-way between Atlanta and Michael Jackson.

As for the external screen on the outside of the Expo Centre, the legacy it would have provided raises a rather macabre image of the citizens of Vancouver wandering down to the Expo Centre on Friday to watch Dallas or Miami Vice on the big screen, perhaps going inside first to register their electronic opinions as to which programme they want to watch. Some legacy.

Generally speaking, the exhibits were disappointing--in fact most of the exhibits were a crashing bore. Their content in all cases was almost predictably secondary to the media used to present them.

There is no pollution in Disneyland, there is no disease, no mental illness or stress, and absolutely no tooth decay.

Freschi's plans were cut back because they were too expensive, not because the Expo Board disagreed with them. The Expo Centre, both as originally conceived and as eventually built, resembles no other building on the planet so much as the geodesic dome at Disney's EPCOT Center. What Freschi meant by universality, unconsciously or not, was Disneyland. And for the most part, Disneyland is what fueled the imagination of Expo 86, from Jim Pattison down to the most obscure budget gremlins.

SO WHAT IS THIS DISNEY BUSINESS, ANYWAY? A CONSPIRACY?

Start by asking yourself what the content of Expo 86 was supposed to be. The official answer is that Expo 86 was a celebration of Transportation and Communications. Okay. Ask yourself why these need celebration. Then ask yourself just what was it about transportation and communications that the fair actually did celebrate.

The answer you'll get, before too long, is that those questions don't matter. And why are you being so critical, anyway? There is no place for critical consciousness like that in a post-modern "exposition" and no place for it in reality according to Disney.

The Disney imagination has increasingly dominated the post-war expositions. And as its influence has grown, the expository content of the expositions have become either descriptive--as in "Wow, here's a spectacular machine!"-- or purely formal: "an exposition is a celebration of an exposition". Sure, new products and new technologies are tolerated and even encouraged. But only for bulk and glitter. New or critical concepts are not. The medium is the message, and those who object are regarded as party-poops and possibly as dangerous subversives.

Describing Expo 86 as Disney-dominated isn't simply a metaphor. Almost the entire senior administrative staff was hired from Disneyland or from Disney inspired projects. Many of them were trained at Disneyland, and came to Expo from there or from the moving apparatus that the succession of World Expositions has created. As Expo took shape, these people became increasingly powerful. They took control because they were experienced managers of public imagination, and expert financial managers who knew precisely how much buzz could be bought for the available bucks.

STILL NOT CONVINCED?

Being afraid of Donald Duck and his pals may sound silly to most people. There are more easily assignable targets for our paranoia, right? Don't kid yourself. With the possible exception of McDonald's, the Disney corporation is the most pervasive cultural force in this civilization. Look a little more deeply into the Disney imagination, as reflected by the two major Disney installations in California and Florida.

Both depict a simplified world of "positive" expression: a seamless web of beneficent organization and control where almost everything is good and right, and where the few wrongs that do exist are, if not righted, at least revealed in their most positive aspect. Everyone smiles, everyone is happy. The Disneyfied imagination does not admit human environments like those in Cambodia or the Philippines; and train wrecks in Northern Alberta or missile silos buried beneath Iowa cornfields are proscribed. They simply do not exist.

There is no pollution in Disneyland, there is no disease, no mental illness or stress, and absolutely no tooth decay. Nobody is allowed to live out of shopping carts or in tin shacks or cardboard hovels. Such conditions reflect failure, and failure is not admitted. Technology is proposed as the solution to human frailty. Life is perfectly integrated within its material *milieu* , and the individual is moved from positive novelty to positive novelty, each of which is sweet, smooth and entertaining. "Problems?" whispers the subliminal Disney mantra. "We don't have any problems. There are no insoluble problems here."

Like I said, no critical content can be broached within the Disney imagination of reality. To criticize is to be negative. Thus, thematic content replaces it; always celebratory, easy to consume and digest. Disney-land is the cultural adjunct to a strain of capitalism that has become the dom-inant economic force in the world we live in. I call it binary capitalism--Planet of the Franchises. It seeks to create products and concepts which have a generalized appeal that can be duplicated and franchised on a global scale. As such, Disneyland and binary capitalism have become an alternative to the obligatory discourse communities and social contracts which are the bases of most Western democratic institutions. Together they provide the entrepreneurial frisson that nurtures the McDonald's corporation, or the Amway religion, or any of a hundred other leading organizations that make up the post-ideological Right.

The Disney imagination operates in some very direct ways. First, its seamless images degrade the value of what is local and what is particular. More destructively, its franchises draw off 5-10% of the profits to head office, thus removing the internal development and/or risk capital that creates internal growth in a local economy. Hence we are talking, in a very real sense, of the transformation of Vancouver (or any other local economy) into yet another teleport of the Global Village--an economic suburb of Disneyland dependent on external capital for growth and maintenance.

DIDN'T ANYONE OBJECT?

Expo 86 drew opposition from several groups during the design period. Because it downgraded--relentlessly and almost invariably--the value of local talent and industry, it was fought, for a while, by a not very successful alliance of artists, artisans, and their administrative advocates. In the end, enough of these people were co-opted by short term contracts to effectively silence them. The Expo planners, late in the process, even gave the artisans their own crafts pavilion.

Because the Disney imagination refuses conceptual risks of any kind--using both an economic and an aesthetic/litigative rationale--the Disneylanders were fought from within the Expo corporation by a few innovative people who wanted to present unorthodox but educative technological exhibits, such as the plan to have a car crusher on site that would use the crushed vehicles to build an accumulative sculpture. That idea, and others like it, didn't get to first base.

The car crusher idea is not Disneyland-acceptable because it doesn't present a one-sided and seamless view of technology. It is conceptually messy. The technical difficulties involved in presenting the project would have exposed the public not just to the noise and fanfare of a spectacle, but also to the double-edgeness of technological processes. All such proposals were therefore buried by the Disneylanders.

The Disneylanders were also fought by those elements within the operations and design teams that believed that there ought to be some serious content to the exhibit. Richard Blagborne, who is an Egyptologist, managed, I suspect by force of character, to have an exhibit of ancient Egyptian artifacts included. Unfortunately, few other exhibits containing historical or critical content were allowed by the Expo corporation. That was officially left to the national and/or corporate exhibitors, with predictable results.

SO WHY ARE WE SUPPOSED TO BE FRIGHTENED?

Let's be a little more specific. What was the scheme behind Expo's Disneyland design bias, and who or what was it meant to attack? It was the same as that behind all the other components of franchise capitalism: to erect a post-ideological monument to geopolitical globalism, which is to say, to propagandize consumerist values and habits, and to degenerate any other form of consciousness.

Globalist propaganda is of a very specific kind. It does not acknowledge the existence of the Third World, except where the Third World provides sanitized tourist facilities. It does not acknowledge the collusion between technology and military aggression, or the fact that the international community spent 900 billion dollars last year purchasing military weapons.

And it does not acknowledge the technological and political uncertainty that is perhaps our primary global reality. Expo was designed to dazzle us and, ironically, to calm us about the future with a relentless onslaught of sterilized novelty. And that's exactly the effect it had on the vast majority of those who came.

The chief impact Expo 86 had was the one the Disneylanders designed it to have. As such, it was an attack on indigenous cultural and economic practices. Not surprisingly, a startling number of local cultural groups and businesses ceased to exist during the fair. Most of those without a globalist link suffered.

On a slightly larger scale, it isn't an exaggeration to link the current entrepreneurial frenzy in British Columbia to Expo. It is no accident that a series of right wing political victories have followed in its aftermath, nor that the B.C. lumber industry is the site of the most serious attack on the fundamental values of trade unionism in the post-war era. Isn't that the cause for fear?

OKAY, WHAT WERE THE SPECIFIC GOALS? AND WHAT WAS DISNEY'S GRAND MISSION?

Let's go up the scale from the venally local to the globally abstract. First, the Socreds wanted Expo to stimulate the economy on a short-term basis, and to have it serve as a greeting card for incoming capital investment and other entrepreneurial activity. Second, the same government wanted Expo as a springboard to get itself re-elected.

The development community--and in particular the architects and design teams who designed the various components at Expo--wanted a means of securing or enhancing their reputations. And since greater Vancouver is currently facing a development hiatus--it is overbuilt in nearly all sectors--they have tried to use Expo as a catapult out and into international markets. For Greater Vancouver's corporate business, the fair was regarded as an opportunity for a new level of networking and for some short-term profit-taking.

And finally, the Disneylanders wanted Expo to bring Vancouver into the "universality" network--into the mainstream of the Global Village, and under the benevolent supervision of the dictatorship of the Entrepreneurs. Under the EPCOT Dome, in other words.

I'm an optimist, so I won't say that the Disneylanders have succeeded in their mission. In most of the disputed arenas, the results are mixed. The government got itself re-elected, although the B.C. economy is in such a shambles that they may soon wish (along with the electorate) that they hadn't succeeded. Despite the state of the economy, the political right in B.C. is more certain of itself, and more convinced than ever of the correctness of the entrepreneurial model for everything from economic development to interpersonal relationships. Most of them are probably more secure than they used to be that everything is A-Okay in the world, or that its unpleasant aspects can and should be ignored or avoided.

Certainly Expo has changed the outlook of a lot of people in Greater Vancouver, particularly the young. Many of them will probably go to Disneyland itself in the next few years to see the real thing. I've noticed that kids and adults alike have taken to bitterly complaining about any social event that doesn't include a fireworks display.

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE? IS THERE A FUTURE AFTER EXPO?

Expo 86 did not take a serious measure of the future. It had no opinion about it whatever. It was an attempt to secure the present, and to reassure everyone that everything is just fine right now, despite conflicting evidence. It was not an artistic event, and it did not present a coherent set of ideas, artistic details, or architectural features--not, at least, that can be used as a basis for public discourse.

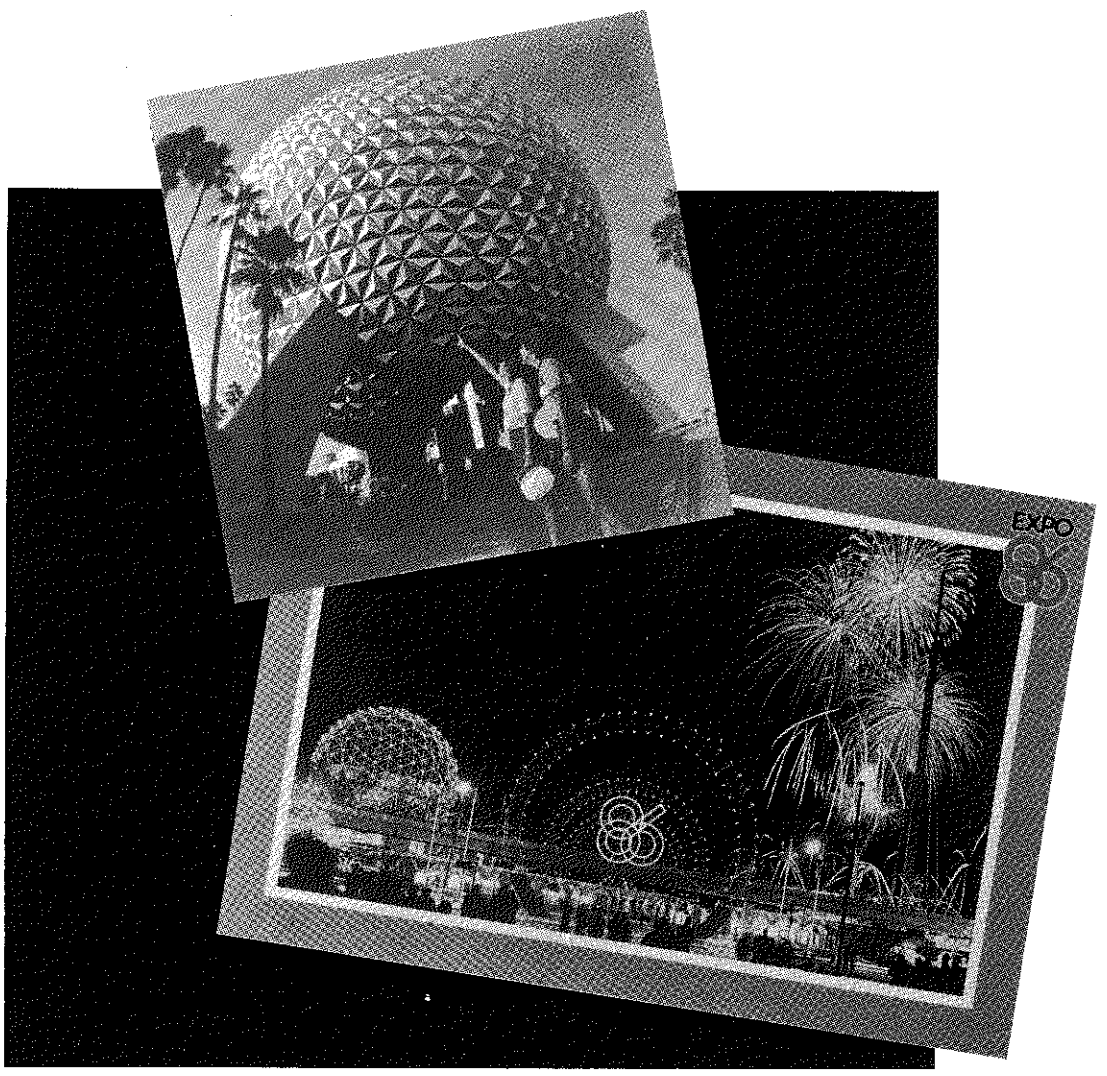
Expo 86 is currently being dismantled. Except for the Expo Centre, the complex around the B.C. Pavilion, and the rebuilt CN roundhouse, everything on the site is scheduled for demolition before July 1987. The facilities that remain will probably become tourist facilities. Certainly they aren't needed by the local community, and they aren't flexible enough in their design to be recycled.

The northeast portion of the site is slated for redevelopment by the site's crackbrained landlord, the crown corporation of B.C. Place, into a combination of retail, office and residential uses over the next few years. But since the development and land costs will be very high, there is unlikely to be much market for any of the proposed components. On the rest of the site, the demolition is unlikely to be completed on deadline, and cost recoveries are far below predicted levels. The exhibit modules, which were supposed to be recycled for community use across the province, turn out to be prohibitively expensive to move, and are simply being torn down, along with the monorail and other site facilities. Six months after the fair ended, Expo isn't very pretty or useful. The western end of the site has no development planned, and seems destined to be derelict for many years.

Our new premier is the proprietor of a third rate Disney debraining facility called Fantasy Gardens. Vancouver City has elected its first right wing government in years. The Disney teleport Bruno Freschi wanted built seems to be in place. There was a party in Vancouver, a very expensive one that brought the city into the suburbs of the Global Village. Its consequences are everywhere, and the citizens of Vancouver are going to be dealing with them for whatever future we are capable of imagining.

***Brian Fawcett** is a writer, teacher and planner. He is currently designing an industrial strategy for the city of York, Ontario. His most recent book is* Cambodia: A Book for People Who Find Television Too Slow.

Expo was designed to dazzle us and, ironically, to calm us down about the future with a relentless onslaught of sterilized novelty.



The Epicenity of the Text: LACANIAN PSYCHOANALYSIS

In previous issues, Border/lines has published several pieces, notably that by Brenda Longfellow in #6, which assume the importance of the French psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan, for the feminist project. In this issue we present an article by Québecois psychoanalyst Charles Levin which expands on the difficulties inherent in this appropriation both in the nature of Lacan's own work and in the manner of its incorporation into the feminist discourse, particularly in the work of Jane Gallop and Jacqueline Rose. Notably, Levin emphasises the centrality of the phallus as the principle of signification in Lacan's work and, by extension, as the "essence of textuality as an epistemology." Thus the Lacanian feminist "is left with the dismal prospect of endlessly displacing the general significance of signification itself, and thus repeating the whole problematic of the Lacanian text." Levin's challenge to French derived feminist theory is the first of a series of theoretical essays that Border/lines will publish on current debates in cultural theory.

Ioan Davies

"In epicene language, as distinct from language imagined as either neutral or androgynous, gender is variable at will, a mere metaphor (Jacobus, p. 49)."

"The author of any critique is himself framed by his own frame of the other....(Johnson, pp. 167, 165)."

The letter as a signifier is thus not a thing or the absence of a thing, nor a word or the absence of a word, nor an organ or the absence of an organ, but a knot in a structure where word, things, and organs can neither be definably separated nor compatibly combined...

Freud and Lacan: the Psychopolitics of Totemism[1]

In circles of social, cultural, literary, and film study -- and among some feminists -- Jacques Lacan has become something of an institution. He is commonly read in isolation from other psychoanalytic writers (Melanie Klein, Hanna Segal, Marion Milner, Edith Jacobson, Janine Chasseguet-Smirgel, to name only a few possibilities, apart from Freud himself, and his immediate circle). Even the best known of Lacan's contemporaries are rarely cited in the arts and social science literature, with the exception of Klein and D.W. Winnicott, who are mentioned very sparingly indeed. On the other hand, Lacan is taken seriously by nearly everyone doing up-to-date cultural or feminist research. And of course he is frequently cited on such matters as metaphor and metonymy, and on the relation of the tropes to the dreamwork. Nobody refers to Ella Sharpe (pp. 9-10, 19-39), who developed this connection in the nineteen thirties.

The reasons for this condensation of psychoanalytic thought into the lone figure of Lacan are no doubt obscure, but they may have to do with the logic of identification. In order for Lacan to embody psychoanalysis, psychoanalysis first has to be reduced to the body of Freud himself. Then, on the basis of a fantasy about the betrayal of this body, Lacan can attempt to re-embody true psychoanalysis (the "return to Freud") in "the name of the father." Thus Lacan appears well situated both to share and to resolve the feelings of ambivalence which anyone approaching psychoanalysis is likely to feel.

Nearing psychoanalysis, especially in the atmosphere of a totemic fantasy such as this, it is easy to feel as if one is entering an already controlled space -- specifically, the authoritarian father's space. Moreover, as Lacan was to point out, the dead father is rather difficult to dislodge from his privileged position in the carefully self-cancelling structure of an obsessional discourse. The deliberate patterns of displacement and deferral in Lacan's *Ecrits* and seminars provide a seductive occasion for the deflection and management of (Oedipal) ambivalence and conflict.

As Jane Gallop suggests in *The Daughter's Seduction* (pp. 33-36), Lacan's appeal to feminists may be related to the way in which he set himself up as "the cock of the walk," a kind of contemporary ally and lover who provides magical access to the feared and admired oppressor to be overthrown. Lacan not only disposes of the master, but resurrects him as well: he is both a rebel and a redeemer, committing and then expiating the crime of desiring to partake in a fantasied omnipotence, such as that so commonly ascribed to Freud himself, and so universally resented in him. Lacan serves, in other words, as a conduit for projective identification onto the father.

The myth of Freud as primitive father is of course fundamental to psychoanalytic politics. If psychoanalysis is the dead body of Freud, then the rituals over his remains -- the vigil against grave robbers, the appropriation and resurrection of the corpus as the body of the analyst himself, sitting at the right hand of Freud -- are as characteristic of Lacanian practice as they are of members of the International. Lacan, however, is neither father, nor son, nor brother, but a kind of trinitarian demiurge -- like Thoth, a doyen of writing, a "god of resurrection... interested...in death as a repetition of life and life as a rehearsal of death....

FEMINIST METATHEORY

Charles Levin

Thoth repeats everything in the addition of the supplement: in adding to and doubling as the sun, he is other than the sun and the same as it; other than the good and same, etc. Always taking a place not his own, a place one could call that of the dead or the dummy, he has neither a proper place nor a proper name. His propriety or property is impropriety or inappropriateness, the floating indetermination that allows for substitution and play (Derrida, 1981, p. 93)."

Unfortunately, this resolution of the problem of Freud's space (his resting place) runs into its own complications, which emerge most clearly in neostructuralist developments of Lacan's thought. Deconstructionist symbolics are immersed in rivalry with the parents, obsessed with creation as a process of dismemberment and annihilation. The theory and practice of textuality have become a sort of allegory about what is stolen from the paradoxical father (the supplement, or name without referent or substance) and from the irretrievable mother (the virgin-hymen-origin, or substance and referent without name). This cosmogony is not exclusively Oedipal: it also draws upon the *Orestia.* In the Lacanian version of that less celebrated tragedy, however, revenge against the mother never seems to be followed by reconciliation with her law, and the taming of Eumenides (primitive superego). The Lacanian father may be an oppressor, but he remains the only source of order, while the mother becomes, in a sense, much more dangerous: she is the betrayer, and this appears to be a feature of Lacan's thinking which persists, not only in the writings of Kristeva (1983, pp. 42-4; Gallop, 1982, pp. 117-8), but even in the anti-patriarchal discourse of Luce Irigaray, as Gallop (pp. 113-5) suggests.

Philippe Sollers is reported to have said that Lacan's political problems arose because he had "run afoul" of the psychoanalytic "matriarchy" (Schneiderman, p. 13). Princess Bonaparte (who ransomed Freud after the *Anschluss*) was not the only daughter (or imaginary wife) of Freud whose authority Lacan disputed. There was also Melanie Klein and Anna Freud herself, who between them presided over English-speaking psychoanalysis for nearly half a century. Implicit in Lacan's denunciation of "ego psychology," and his return to Freud, was the fantasy of a march against domestication, the feminization of psychoanalytic theory. The publication of *Anti-Oedipus* during the heyday of Lacan's notoriety was a development of this, with its virile imagery of the social process, and its picture of Lacan himself as a family-oriented counter-insurgent who emasculated desire by theorizing it as a lack (Deleuze, 1972).

In general, the fact that Freud had a mother gets little play in the Lacanian imagination. But Freud actually seems to have had a privileged relationship with his mother. She had heard a prophecy that he would be a "great man," and told him about it. In some ways, Freud's feeling about his own creation, psychoanalysis, was like his mother's attitude toward him: he thought he had brought something significant into the world. A question -- or a fantasy -- arising out of this is the following: what if reading Freud were a gratification, rather than a mere competition for old space? What if Freud were not only the stern and prohibitive professor-superego, but also a kind of mother, or even what Melanie Klein called the "good breast?" And what if the "conquering hero" of which Jones speaks in his biography of Freud were really psychoanalysis itself (as an opening, as something to be pursued, an adventure), and not Freud the man, or any other man or woman? Perhaps through his text, Freud was also able to say: "This is my space, which I want to share with you; but the world is out there, still to be discovered!" That is a symbolic relation to psychoanalysis very different from Lacan's, though it is not unlike the transference which Gallop managed to develop onto the work that Lacan left behind, in her *Reading Lacan.*

Some Lacanian Themes

An interesting example of Lacan's status in contemporary discourse on culture can be found in Jacqueline Rose's excellent introduction to the volume of essays on *Feminine Sexuality* by Lacan and his circle (Mitchell & Rose, 1982). What is so typical of this essay is not the handling of theoretical issues (which Rose does very well), but the mythogenic rhetoric in which the exposition of Lacan's "re-opening of the debate on feminine sexuality" is couched. Rose rejects the arguments of those, like Jones, Horney, or Klein, who dissented, in one way or another, from Freud's various hypotheses on gender. Yet, in describing Lacan's insight into sexual politics, she only reiterates the original line of reasoning used against Freud's claim that the analysis of the "physical consequences of the anatomical distinction between the sexes" leads to a kind of biological "bedrock"(Freud, 1937, p. 252). Rose insists that it is to Lacan alone (and his discovery of the signifier) that we owe the possibility of a genuine critique of phallocentrism: according to her, Lacan revealed that the indexation of sexual difference on possession or absence of the phallus "covers over the complexity of the child's early sexual life with a crude opposition in which that very complexity is refused or repressed (p. 42). " But nowhere in Lacan is there a discussion of this 'complexity,' or of early sexual life in general, apart from the child's relation to the phallus. One has to turn to writers like Klein or Robert Stoller or Masud Khan if one wants to read about the subtleties of 'pre-Oedipal' sexuality.

The essence of Rose's historical account of the sexuality/gender debate within psychoanalysis lies in the claim that, with the exception of Lacan, psychoanalysts (and psychoanalytically inspired commentators) have "failed to see that the concept of the phallus in Freud's account of human sexuality was part of his awareness of the problematic, if not impossible, nature of sexual identity itself (p. 28)." This is a very broad and somewhat misleading statement which gets its force from two general features of Lacanian theory.

The first is a question of emphasis: it is probably true that the phallus plays a more fundamental and determinant role in Lacanian theory than in any other school of psychoanalysis. The second factor is that Lacan grants the phallus an objective status unusual in post-Freudian theory: it becomes a 'symbolic' universal in the classical sense, acting independently of the body's history and of its associations.

Lacan's recognition of the problematic role of the phallus is perhaps not so unique as Rose makes out. In work which preceded his, Melanie Klein paid a great deal of attention to unconscious processes involving a kind of archetypal phallus like Lacan's. Indeed one might say that the 'thrust' of Klein's exploration of pregenital psychology

The Lacanian father may be an oppressor, but he remains the only source of order, while the mother becomes...much more dangerous: she is the betrayer.

was her insistence that the fantasy of the phallus (and its structural correlate, the superego) is not delayed until the onset of the classical Oedipal situation, as Sigmund and Anna Freud had maintained (Klein, pp. 135-6).

In fact there are striking parallels between Klein's early conception of infantile psychodynamics and Lacan's emphasis on the child's identification with the object of the mother's desire (again, the phallus). However, Lacan's view is based on the idea of a quasi-naturalistic symbiosis between the mother and child -- the classical conception of primary narcissism. The infant lives passively in an objectless state of psychic oblivion whose accomplice, for Lacan, is the mother's invidious desire. According to Lacan, this is a trap from which only the accomplice, for Lacan, is the mother's invidious desire. According to Lacan, this is a trap from which only the symbolic function of the father can save the child, by separating the phallus from the self (castration), and placing it in the objective external order of language, so that the child can be apprised of its own "lack" (e.g., Lemaire, p. 92; Kristeva).

Whereas the Lacanian solution to the psychology of infantile dependency thus appears to be an intensification and objectification of the function of the phallus -- a raising of its status within discourse -- Klein's thinking moves in the opposite direction. Klein stresses the infant's *active* experience of its own desire in aggressive relation to the Other. If the phallus is a term, at the adultomorphic level of language and society, for one of the more primitive conceptions of power, then for Klein the infant does not *identify* with the 'phallus' in the simple classical sense, but actively appropriates it (as an elaboration of the breast and other experiences), in cycles of incorporation and projective identification. In brief, the problem for Klein's infant -- or the 'psychotic' child within us -- is not how to *accept* the allegedly independent role of the phallus in the symbolic order, but how to demystify it. This involves coming to terms with unconscious fantasies of power (which eventually have become displaced onto a genderal sign system playing on presence/absence of the penis). The power fantasies (having to do mainly with omnipotence and retribution), inevitably conceal more profound feelings of envy and guilt which interfere with the infant's capacity to explore, elaborate, and internalize dimensions of pleasurable experience or trust in mutuality (the 'good breast'). Thus, while Klein's work is full of difficulties and by no means suggests that the political problem of 'phallogocentrism' is simpler or less severe than Rose maintains, Klein at least refrains from arguing that the structure of signification as such is grounded in the phallus, or that meaning derives from the body part the mother doesn't have (as opposed to the ones she does, which are of greater interest to the infant anyway). [2]

The justification of Rose's wholesale rejection of all but Lacanian developments of psychoanalysis lies in her contention that Lacan alone recognized that the unconscious "constantly undermines" the sexual subject. Stated in this general way, however, it is difficult to see how a Freudian grasp of the "link between sexuality and the unconscious" can be denied to everyone but Lacan. What *is* in fact specific to Lacan is a claim about the *structure* of the unconscious -- namely, that it is segmented, like a written language, or any other system of inscription, and that it functions according to the laws of association and contiguity. Lacan expanded this claim by suggesting that language and the unconscious -- and by extension, sexuality -- are homologously structured through their common link to an essential process of substitution, or what he often describes, in allusion to a number of competing linguistic models, as 'metonymy.' Substitutability is, of course, a basic property of any unit defined within a digitally constructed system of signification. If the unconscious could be defined as such a system, governed by mechanisms of displacement, then psychoanalysis would be a mathesis, whose subject would be exhaustively describable in terms of linguistic "laws" or geometric and algorithmic graphs.[3] But whenever Lacan specifies the linguistic structures of desire, he merely invokes a semiotic reformulation of the functions of the dreamwork and the structure of compromise formation in symptoms; or adumbrates a discourse model of some feature of superego conflict, like obsessional oscillations and manic flights.

Rose by no means accepts the positivistic interpretation of Lacan's work. But she does adopt its corollary, which is that subjective experience (including the emotional experience of material object relations) is epiphenomenal, and not the proper object of psychoanalytic work. Neither Rose nor Lacan have much to say about signification, which are arranged in systems and patterns either controlling or undermining the illusion of subjectivity. The Lacanian Symbolic is an impersonal structural causality (e.g., Althusser, p. 216; Lacan, 1964, pp. 20-1), which acts externally like a social force. The subject is only decentered in the sense that desire itself cannot really be experienced, except in terms of its effects, which are always organized into orders of signifiers. In this objectivistic conception of the substitution process, therefore, the basic psychoanalytic principle of the decentering of the subject is disconnected from the existential experience of indeterminacy and complexity inherent in subjectivity, and related instead to a quasi-sociological reduction: the subject is decentered for Lacan because it is determined -- because, in other words, it will be fixed in advance. The irony of this is consequently that whenever Lacanian thought attempts to demonstrate the "arbitrariness" of sexual identity, it in practice reinforces an underlying argument for its necessity, by removing the sources of sexual structuration to an ideal region outside the history of bodily experience as psychoanalysis has been able to understand it.

Theoretical Problems

The implications of Rose's sociolinguistic approach to the unconscious emerge clearly from her exclusion of alternative perspectives on the mirroring relationships of early infancy. In a passing dismissal of Winnicott's work, for example, Rose states: "The mother does not mirror the child to itself... she grants an image to the child, which her presence instantly deflects (p. 30)." Rose's point here is essentially an epistemological (or deconstructive) one, namely, that the subject has no originary identity, that the baby doesn't have an 'itself' to be mirrored back to itself by the mother. But this sophisticated (essentially positivistic) vigilance against every hint of essentialism or misplaced concreteness conceals the inability of the Lacanian paradigm to grasp the problem of the infantile subject's (relationship to its own) feelings, and the vicissitudes of the infant's capacity for experience in relation to other bodily subjects. In other words, Rose emulates Lacan's tendency to replace the specificity of individual differences with the generality of a schematism.

Infants have very complicated feelings (ways of experiencing physical needs and sensations, as well as desires and emotions, some of which are observably violent). They also *elicit* an environment -- they are not restricted to the pure reactivity of behavioural psychology and the theory of primary narcissism.[4] All of these qualities of the small child's subjectivity can be intuited, recognized, respected, and accepted by the child's subjects -- or at the other extreme, they can be ignored, denied, or utterly disqualified. Of course, the infant will always have to learn to take others into account more than he or she may wish to -- Freud's reality principle, like Lacan's Symbolic Order, says essentially this. But when the infant's expressivity is systematically disqualified -- or in other words, when the caretaker(s) can only "*grant* an image *to* the child" (as Rose would have it), while being unable "mirror the child back to itself," the survival of the child will come to depend on an inordinate degree of self-repression and reactivity. The schizoid sense of the unreality of one's own being that develops out of this passive survival strategy of the ego is not due solely to the assumption of an illusory or Imaginary identity in a universal "mirror stage," as Rose, following Lacan, maintains, but also to a particular and local disregard for the infant's difference. Whether or not the 'lack' to which Lacan refers is, in the last analysis, an ontological condition, it may also spring from a failure to acknowledge the child as an independent being in its relation with others. The desire for some kind of recognition, by another, of one's distinctness, has nothing to do with the "ideology of the

unitary subject," or with the Western politico-juridical concept of the individual. So while Rose's views are certainly compelling, so are Winnicott's.

Rose's rejection of Winnicott implicitly assumes that the infant is a *tabula rasa* --a being that has to be "granted" an image. This is related to an important tenet of Lacanian theory: that the human neonate is in biological fragments, unable to use the senses, or to relate the senses to each other. This view is based on a misconception which can be traced back to Freud's (1900, p. 588f.) earliest conjectures about infantile states. The baby is pictured as a bundle of unrelated instinctual pressures, without objects, imperiously and impersonally seeking gratification. Lacan continued this tradition with his concept of the *corps morcelé*. Of course, there is a great deal of truth in the model (which Rose stresses so much) of an originary fragmentation. But the truth of part drives and part objects is not biological in the sense of a primary developmental stage leading up to the mirror stage and the acquisition of language. Unintegration is a psychological phase which persists throughout life (Ehrenzweig; Milner; Winnicott). Being in pieces is an aspect of life, we drift in and out of it, and it is probably no less or more "cultural" than "femininity" and "masculinity."

Now, because Freud tended to think of "primary narcissism" as an originary, biologically-determined stage, his model of development placed a great deal of emphasis on the idea that "reality" is something that is gradually *imposed* from without, and that this is what makes us into social beings. In contrast to this, Lacan argued that it is not reality, but "language," that is imposed from without; it is the "system" of lingual differences that turns us into social beings. Both of these points of view need to be taken into consideration, but it would be misleading to conclude that the psychological function of the "Other" is an objective structure (whether of language or reality), rather than the problematic experience of another person.

At the metatheoretical level, there is not a whole lot of difference between Freud's stress on the reality principle and Lacan's emphasis on language. In either case, we are presented with what critics of Marxian economism call the base/superstructure model, and what critics of behaviourism call the "secondary drive" theory of human sociability. The infrastructure is always some version of the classical image of nature (e.g., the allegedly chaotic randomness of the body untutored by language or the reality ego); and the superstructure is always a conventional image of the arbitrariness of culture (in this case, socialization). The ways in which people actually relate to each other are viewed as wholly arbitrary orderings ("symbolic orders," to use Lacan's phrase) imposed upon the body by some reified external agency, usually called 'society' or 'economy.'

The base/superstructure, secondary drive model works itself out in Rose's account of Lacan through a vision of human sexuality as a wholly ideological construction masking the "fragmented and aberrant nature of sexuality itself (p. 28)." Sexuality as we know it, then -- sexuality as constituted in language -- is an arbitrary fusion of disparate bits and pieces of instinctual nature and unrelated psychic experiences into a false identity, a streamlined discourse inflicted on the hapless subject by the Symbolic Order. Of course, there is no doubt that the emotional meaning of bodily experience is extremely plastic, especially in early childhood, when something like polymorphous perversity is more prevalent. However, the Lacanian theory of infancy supplements this with an implicit myth of origins -- that the state of nature is an originary chaos. If one is going to make a biological hypothesis out of sexual indeterminacy (a standard behaviourist assumption), then one also has to take into account the other psychological facts about neonates: their perceptual, emotional, and social capacities. For, as we have already seen, the newborn child is much more coordinated, aware, and sensitive to the external environment than most academicians were prepared to believe in Lacan's day.

The Text and the Anti-Text

The widespread belief that Lacan represents the only critical development within psychoanalysis since Freud has encouraged an overestimation of the arbitrariness of subjective psychosocial experience. Yet the apparent regularities of human sexuality (which tend to be either wildly exaggerated or grossly underestimated) cannot be explained entirely by the hypothesis of an endlessly displaced instinct or signifier. And so the doctrine of essential sexual randomness seeks compensation in an overly systematized, structural-linguistic (i.e., disembodied) conception of the symbolic process.

Lacan was perhaps the only psychoanalytic innovator of his generation not to take advantage of the fact that symbolization begins in the baby's body, rather than with the father's (Symbolic) intervention against the (Imaginary) "mother-child dual unity." His effective exclusion of the intimate role the mother plays, in Western culture, in the child's symbolic and linguistic development led him to pose the question of the psychic significance of the signifying gesture in an original way. Lacan's emphasis on the link between symbolization and the paternal order had the welcome effect of enriching philosophic criticism of the ideal types of linguistic 'meaning' privileged in the rationalist tradition (Irigaray, 1985).

But the deeper influence of Lacan's thought has been to reinforce the Cartesian ontological split on a new level (cf. Gallop, 1985, pp. 59-60;160). Lacanian deconstruction depends, in practice, on a hypostatization of systems: in the Lacanian tradition, 'play' is derived theoretically from that manipulability of the formal elements which make up systems of signification, and not from the symbolizing body. The concrete and irreducible -- what cannot be accounted for on the formal plane of rational codification -- tends to be deduced from logical failures of the ideal type, as revealed through manipulation of the linguistic signifier. From this has developed the technique of deconstruction, which always produces the informal as a by-product or effect of the formal. In consequence, post-Lacanian theory has found itself in the unenviable position of having to derive and to explain the tacit and arational dimension of experience, while treating hypothetical "systems," such as language, as given.

According to Jacqueline Rose, language is always moving in two directions, or functioning in contradictory ways. At the superstructural level, language tends toward the *fixing* of meaning, the fusion of signifier and signified, which entails the "positioning" of the subject in the symbolic order and the imposition of an arbitrary sexual identity.at the infrastructural level, however, language engenders the *slippage* of meaning, which produces the displacement of the subject and what Rose describes as the "constant failure" of sexuality.

The problem with this account is not that it challenges the capacity of a substantive language to name sexuality, but that it reduces sexuality to the insufficiencies and aporias of the signifying process itself. Sexuality becomes the crisis of universal semiosis. The point is not to deny the confluence of sexuality and language, but to show that the axis of Rose's linguistic perspective in the traditional base-superstructure model generates an abstract opposition between form (inevitably failing language) and material (a hypothetical deduction of sexuality as excess or remainder of linguistic systems), which might be termed the dialectic of the text and the anti-text. The orientation of this epistemological framework is a double one. In the beginning, the world can be known only through the text, the order of writing, which is thus in a sense a kind of originary secondarity. Yet the knowledge gained by means of the text is always re-marked by an Other, the invisible and illusive anti-text, which exercises, *sui generis*, a powerfully disruptive influence.

In Rose's more sober terms, this means that sexuality (and by implication, all of our psychosomatic being, or 'body,' in the psychological sense) is a piece of social writing -- a superimposition, or inscription. "For Lacan...there is no prediscursive reality (p. 55)." On the other hand, Rose is saying, there lies concealed beneath (and in a sense within) this observable but arbitrary order of signifiers, a kind of anti-text, which is like a pure *potentia* , a formless plasticity which subsists in the blanks between the marks -- in the margins, gaps and abysses which inhabit the order of discourse, with its invisible plane of discrete elements

Lacan argued that it is not reality but language that is imposed from without: it is the "system" of lingual differences that turns us into social beings.

arranged in systematic relations of opposition. The internal nothingness of this diacritical function, the *absentia* of *différance*, torments every structure imposed on it, and therefore sexuality itself. Thus Rose's astute definition of sexuality (it "is constituted as a division in language, a division which produces the feminine as its negative term (p. 55)") maps precisely onto the formalist opposition between inchoate 'force' (*différance*, desire, power, nature) and the superstructural plane of aleatory effects (the fictional order of human signs). At its Nietzschean best, this dialectic of presence and absence, mark and blank, phallus and castration, text and anti-text, gives Lacanian Rationalism a wonderfully Dionysian turn; at its worst, however, it deteriorates into the terroristic domination of the "simulacrum," the precession of the model, the combinatory, and the code, of which Jean Baudrillard speaks (1976).

Lacanians, ex-Lacanians and deconstructionists have argued interminably about whether the phallus is the penis, or is not the penis, and about whether discourse may after all really be organized around something other than the phallus.

Lacanian Anti-Lacanianism and the Problem of Difference

There has been an endless round of debates about all this. Lacanians, ex-Lacanians, and deconstructionists have argued interminably about whether the phallus is the penis, or is not the penis (e.g., Ragland-Sullivan, 1982), and about whether discourse may after all really be organized around something other than the phallus, some other principle, such as what Samuel Weber (1982) calls the "Thallus," or what Derrida variously termed supplement, hymen, and so on. At stake in all of these debates is the principle of difference -- textual, sexual, and ontological.

One of Freud's greatest contributions was to draw our attention to the extraordinary emotional significance of the human body, and of parts of the body in particular, not least the penis. These parts (which of course include the mouth and anus, and constitute a zonal symbolic quite different from the binary genderal coding which so preoccupies Lacanians) are not only of narcissistic significance to children, but the sites of enormous struggles which sometimes last a lifetime.

As I have argued, when Lacan discusses the phallus, he is engaging the meanings of the body on a somewhat different plane. "...the phallus is not a phantasy, if by that we mean an imaginary effect. Nor is as such an object (part-, internal, good, bad, etc.) in the sense that this term tends to accentuate the reality pertaining in a relation. It is even less the organ, penis or clitoris, that it symbolizes. And it is not without reason that Freud used the reference to the simulacrum that it represented for the ancients.
For the phallus is a signifier whose function...is...to designate as a whole the effects of the signified (1966, p. 285)."

As with the Symbolic, the phallus for Lacan is something abstract, hardly part of the body, or even an experience; it is a metatheoretical function, a digital principle: in structural terms, the differential function of signification; in Gestalt terms (the terms of the mirror stage), the function of the 'figure' (standing out against a ground, but capable of oscillating with it); and in epistemological terms, the function of substitution as an originary condition (the simulacrum), the basic principle of philosophical deconstruction.

The discursive function of the phallus resembles a sort of rationalized version of children's common fantasy about faeces. The wish of the phallic child is that the relations between human bodies of children's common fantasy about faeces. The wish of the phallic child is that the relations between human bodies be simplified into a kind of political economy. In a discursive variant of this, the exchange value would be the signifier, which embodies the condition of serial fungibility. In possession of the idealized (presumably anal) substitutes for the parents' sexual maturity (their breasts and hair, the mysterious insides of the mother's body, the penis, and so on) the phallic child fantasizes a competition with the aggrandized parents, a satisfaction of their desires, a production of babies, even a self-production.

As that which circulates in the form of substitutability (exchange value), the phallus can be neither the metalinguistic nor the metapsychological principle of difference, except insofar as these principles themselves are necessarily simulations. Difference is not a form, it does not circulate -- in other words, it has little to do with the psycho-linguistic ontology which post-Lacanian philosophy has transposed into a theory of textuality. If difference is both significant and originary, then it is unlikely that the phallus, either as a gender sign, or as the *Ursprung* of signification, can have anything *in general* to do with it. Difference is particular. It cannot therefore be systematized, or pinned up on a semiotic grid; which means it cannot be reduced to the general, *formal* principle of the signifier, or to a coded diacritics, or to any of Lacan's "laws" and algorithms of the phallus and the father. But instead of simply abandoning the whole Lacanian paradigm, post-Lacanian thought has become inextricably mired in this problem of reserving difference by universalizing or formalizing it, and then having to rescue difference from the very attempt to save it.

Although difference cannot be thought in terms of the abstract and generalizing (or digital) differences of linguistic and cultural coding, the Lacanian phallus remains an important concept -- not because it is the (dis)seminating 'knot' (*noeud* =penis) from which the textual conscious is unravelled, but precisely because *the phallus is an idealization of desire*. It is a kind of 'defence': a *découpage* of unconscious process, a figural sublimation of desire. Schematically visible (but oscillating and self-consuming), it functions like the preconscious stratum of a splitting process. Perhaps this is what Lacan meant when he said that the phallus "can play its role only when veiled (1966, p. 288)."

The Oedipal termination of infancy represents the linguistic crisis of the psyche: the marginalization of the dream state and unconscious perception. The phallic defense is erected against the potential loss of the diacritical function itself, the dissolution of formal or conscious difference in regression to unintegrated differences, differences without applied structures to hold them in place for consciousness. In the transition from the Imaginary to the Symbolic, the emotional intensity of the infantile body is subordinated to the phallic 'reality principle,' and superceded by the *functions* of differentiation and substitution.

The veiled phallus, the simulacrum, corresponds to the figure-ground problem of Rubin's double profile (cf. Ehrenzweig). The 'signifier' is like the 'right hand' side of the vertical split, the complement of which is the dreaded left hand of castration and death -- the 'abyss.' Like the 'fort' and the 'da' (Lacan, 1953, p. 83), they are both available to consciousness, but mutually exclusive at any given moment. What is intolerable to phallic consciousness is neither the image of power nor the image of nothingness (both manageable idealizations), but the possibility of "dedifferentiation" (Ehrenzweig), the decodifying regression which leaves the psyche defenseless against itself. On the preconscious surface of this undifferentiated difference -- unwilled order (Milner), meaning without theory, body without mind -- the complementary sides of the idealizing split, the 'phallus' and the 'hole,' dance brilliantly back and forth, each reviving as the other fails, never losing themselves in each other.

The problem of idealization, and how it affects human sexuality (as an incorrigible part of it), is an important theme of Jane Gallop's (1985) masterly misreading of Lacan. Gallop approaches the question in the most direct way possible -- through the medium of her transference onto Lacan himself. She works through Lacan's texts in terms of her own impulse to rationalize and split, to idealize and devalue, to double each experience into manageable separate but interchangeable chains of affirmation and negation. A particularly impressive occasion for these reflections occurs in Gallop's encounter with Lacan's famous essay on the phallus.

After some twenty readings, Gallop had noticed that at the top of page 690 of the original French edition of *Ecrits*, the word phallus itself was, inexplicably, not accompanied by the usual masculine article "le," as proper French requires, but by the feminine "La." The ramifications of such a lapsus for a

close reader of Lacan are far from trivial. Like the phallus itself, the word "La" is, according to Lacan, a signifier without a signified. In the seminar "Encore," he frequently crossed out the feminine article when it appeared in conjunction with the word for 'woman,' declaring, "il n'y a pas *la* femme, la femme n'est pas toute (Lacan, 1975, pp. 13, 68)." One can imagine Gallop's readerly delight when she encountered the misprint "*La* phallus" at the very beginning of the page.

"A feeling of exhilaration accompanies my glide from "phallus" to "La." Loaded down with the seriousness of ideological meaning and sexual history, the phallus mires me in its confusion with the male organ. "La" seems to fly above all that in a disembodied ether of pure language, an epicene utopia where "gender is variable at will." But the "La" at the top of page 690 is nearly impossible to read... although I am convinced of the arbitrary relation between signifier and signified, the masculinity of the phallic signifier serves well as an emblem of the confusion between phallus and male which inhere in language, in our Symbolic Order (p. 140)."

In this passage, Gallop traces the two movements of language which Jacqueline Rose described. In the rising (or slipping) phase, the phallus, as signifier, is liberated from the penis, as signified, in order to become the figure of an asexual or perhaps bisexual freedom, the trace of an "epicene utopia." In the falling (or fixing) phase, however, signifier and signified are reconnected, to mark or "fix" the masculinity of the "symbolic order."

Jane Gallop's temptation was to soar. After twenty odd readings of the phallus, her discovery of the misplace "La" makes her feel weightless -- she suddenly inhabits a utopia in which "gender is variable at will." And so it takes all the *avoirdupois* of the penis to bring her back down again.

But Gallop is a brilliant allegorist. There is no question that the penis (or an alleged "symbolic *order*") returns Gallop to her body. Gallop just is her body, and never leaves it. She is never the inhabitant of an "epicene utopia," a "disembodied ether of pure language," where "gender is variable at will." What this clever Lacanian tale dramatizes is that there is no escape into language, that there is no such thing as the "liberation of the signifier," except as a fantasy of absconding from physical existence. The only alternative to embodiment is dismemberment or prosthetic hyper-evolution.

But since Lacanian theory is derived from the phallic significance of language, psyche and culture, Lacanian feminism is left with the dismal prospect of endlessly displacing the general significations of signification itself, and thus repeating the whole problematic of the Lacanian text. Such is the strategy evolved through deconstruction: to grant Lacan's ideal function (often performing under another name than the phallus) such a privileged autonomy as to permanently disjoin it from all play of meaning, all reference to the physical body; or to so generalize the linguistic function of the phallus as to make it mean (or 'fail' to mean) virtually anything. But in either case, the phallic (or formalist) theory of difference only increases the power of the phallus to govern the feminist discourse, while necessarily remaining linked to the genital organs through denial, or repeated denunciations of the confusion between the rarified "Symbolic" and its inevitable referent.

If we take the foregoing as a more or less plausible rendition of what has been going on in radical academic discussion, then the question arises: why is that Lacanianism has become such a successful cottage industry? Why choose Lacan? Perhaps most compelling is the element of carnivalesque mockery which unconsciously drives the public celebration of ideals. The sheer grandiosity of the phallic function in Lacanian discourse is, in other words, virtually indistinguishable from Rabelaisian parody.

But there is another, more dully rationalist explanation. The Lacanian Phallus is, of course, implicated in a primary semantics, an originary loss of meaning, the *Urverdrangung*, which permanently splits the subject from himself, the signifier from the signified, in what Derrida (1981, p. 268) has called "that seminal division." This severance, this primordial absence and abyss, is accepted on the grounds that it is universal: woman no longer stands alone in sufferance of the alleged lack. But this invitation -- the redistribution and equalization of castration -- conceals a revolving door; for immemorial lack is precisely the ground, the metaphysical underpinning, of Lacan's hypostatization of the phallus as the principle of signification in the first place. And that is why the phallus haunts all deconstructive theories of language.

Lacan's arresting ontology of the signifier never traces the movement of desire (as is sometimes claimed for it), but rather the vicissitudes of a defensive displacement of the whole question of the body and the unconscious in the cultural sciences. In this sense, Lacanian psychoanalysis is a salutary intensification of the rationalism of these sciences, a parody of the "linguistic turn," in which all the dead theoretical space of classical Reason, with its ontology of models and its epistemology of the discrete, is finally used up in a kind of self-conscious Hegelian involution.

Sexuality and the subject certainly "fail," as Rose argues, but in a Lacanian universe, they always fail in the same, structurally determinate way, and always in order to return in due time to the same "fix" in the "symbolic order." This kind of simulation of movement is only convincing in a purely textual frame of reference: it enacts an interplay of abstractions: the body reduced to the model of the text, and the rigidity of the text evaded in the etheral pseudo-naturality of the anti-text. We can see in this way that the Lacanian reading of human sexuality never moves outside the circular paradigm of inscription -- even as it slips in that momentary vision of an epicene utopia: for the "disembodied ether of pure language," the vacuum where the phallus can mean everything and nothing, and "gender is variable at will," is not the recovery of desire, or a reaffirmation of the uncoded (or decoded) body -- but only the splitting and projection, the idealization of the text itself. "A configuration of veils, folds, and quills, writing prepares to receive the seminal spurt of a throw of dice" (Derrida, 1981, p. 285). The endless structural play of abstract oppositions we have inherited (signifier vs. signified, mark vs. blank, phallus vs. castration, writing vs. abyss, presence vs. absence, father vs. mother, culture vs. nature) -- none of this is ever disturbed in the slightest, no matter how it is manipulated, because the digital form of splitting is implicit in the code of inscription that Lacan laid down. The 'phallus' is the essence of textuality as an epistemology.

Notes

1. This paper was first presented at Elspeth Probyn's C.C.A. panel on "Feminist Perspectives in Communication," Winnipeg, June, 1986.

2. One of the implications of Lacan's anchoring of the Symbolic in the paternal phallus is that desire itself is conceived in its most fundamental constitution as little more than a displacement of narcissistic envy, since Lacanian desire has its roots in the "desire of the Other," which for Lacan is originally the mother's projection of 'lack.' Deleuze's Nietzschean reading of Lacanian desire as ressentiment is thus entirely appropriate.

3. At a recent conference on "post-structuralism(e)" at the University of Ottawa (1983), the addresses of Ellie Ragland-Sullivan, Jacques Alain-Miller, and Stuart Schneiderman all traded on the medico-linguistic fantasy of Lacan's 'discovery' of the 'structures' of the unconscious.

4. The outlook of experimental psychology has changed in the last ten years, largely as a result of more sophisticated infant research. For psychoanalytically oriented summaries

and interpretations of neonatological research, see Daniel Stern, *The Interpersonal World of the Infant* (New York: Basic Books, 1985) and Victoria Hamilton, *Narcissus and Oedipus: the Children of Psychoanalysis* (London: RKP, 1982). The view of classical and Lacanian psychoanalysis is stated in Juliet Mitchell's review of Hamilton in "Psychoanalysis and Child Development," *New Left Review*, 140 (1983), pp. 92-96.

Selected Bibliography

'DEDIFFERENTIATION,' UNINTEGRATION, REGRESSION:

Ehrenzweig, Anton. *The Hidden Order of Art*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967.

Milner, Marion. *On Not Being Able To Paint*. London: Heinemann, 1957.

Winnicott, D.W. *Playing and Reality*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Pelican, 1971.

METATHEORETICAL STUDIES ON PSYCHOANALYSIS:

Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari (1972). *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Trans. Robert Hurley, et al. New York: Viking, 1977.

Derrida, Jacques. *La carte postale: de Socrate à Freud et au dela*. Paris: Flammarion, 1980.

Dinnerstein, Dorothy. *The Mermaid and the Minotaur: Sexual Arrangements and Human Malaise*. New York: Harper & Row, 1977.

Gallop, Jane. *Reading Lacan*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985.

Irigaray, Luce. *Speculum of the Other Woman*. Trans. Gillian G. Gill. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985.

Johnson, Barbara. "The Frame of Reference: Poe, Lacan, Derrida." *In Psychoanalysis and the Question of the Text*. Ed. Geoffrey H. Hartman Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978, pp. 149-171.

Kofman, Sarah. *The Enigma of Woman: Woman in Freud's Writings*. Trans. Catherine Porter. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985.

Weber, Samuel. *The Legend of Freud*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982.

FEMINISM/LACAN/PSYCHOANALYSIS

Gallop, Jane. *The Daughter's Seduction: Feminism and Psychoanalysis*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982.

Irigaray, Luce. *This Sex Which is Not One*. Trans. Catherine Porter. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985.

Kristeva,Julia. "Within the Microcosm of the 'Talking Cure.'" In Smith, Joseph H., and William Kerrigan, eds. *Interpreting Lacan*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983.

Mitchell, Juliet, and Jacqueline Rose, eds. *Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the école freudienne*. New York: Norton, 1982 [Includes two important essays by the editors and selections from Lacan's *Le Seminaire XX: Encore*.]

Ragland-Sullivan, Ellie. "Jacques Lacan: Feminism and the Problem of Gender Identity." *SubStance* 36 (1982), pp. 6-20.

LACAN:

Althusser, Louis (1964). "Freud and Lacan." In *Lenin and Philosophy*. Trans. Ben Brewster. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971.

Lacan, Jacques (1953). *The Language of the Self: The Function of Language in Psychoanalysis*. Trans. Anthony Wilden. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1968. [Includes a useful and detailed commentary by Wilden.]

---------- (1964). *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Pelican, 1977.

---------- (1966). *Ecrits: A Selection*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Norton, 1977.

---------- *Le Seminaire. Livre XX: Encore*. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1975.

Lemaire, Anika. *Jacques Lacan*. Trans. D. Macey. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977.

Schneiderman, Stuart. *Jacques Lacan: The Death of an Intellectual Hero*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983.

OTHER TEXTS CITED:

Baudrillard, Jean (1976). "The Structural Law of Value and the Order of Simulacra." In *The Structural Allegory: Reconstructive Encounters with the New French Thought*. Ed. John Fekete. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

Derrida, Jacques. *Dissemination*. Trans. Barbara Johnson. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981.

Freud, Sigmund (1900). *The Interpretation of Dreams*. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. 5. Trans. James Strachey. London: Hogarth, 1953-74.

---------- (1937). "Analysis Terminable and Interminable." Standard Edition, Vol. 23.

Jacobus, Mary. "The Question of Language: Men of Maxims and The Mill on the Floss." In *Writing and Sexual Difference*. Ed. Elizabeth Abel. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982, pp. 37-52.

Klein, Melanie (1932). *The Psychoanalysis of Children*. Trans. Alix Strachey. London: Hogarth, 1975.

Sharpe, Ella (1937).*Dream Analysis*. New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1978.

***Charles Levin** is a writer and student of psychoanalysis. He is the translator of Jean Baudrillard's* For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign, *and currently teaches at Dawson College in Montréal.*

ELEMENTA MUSICAE

Trois duos

Claude Debussy	piano
Paul Desmond	saxophone alto
Gustav Mahler	piano
Lester Young	saxophone ténor
Manuel de Falla	piano
Charles Mingus	contrebasse

Présentés par le Musée d'art contemporain dans le cadre de l'exposition Elementa Naturae
Montréal 7 juin – 6 septembre 1987
entrée libre

ElementaeMusicae
by Raymond Gervais

From the exhibition:
Elementa Naturae

Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal
Summer 1987

TWO STORIES FROM ST PIERRE ET MIQUELON

THE STORIES AND legends of a community or a region arise in large measure from their history and from their physical, social and ethnic "space." Thus before talking about the oral narratives of Saint Pierre and Miquelon, I would like to say a little bit about the history and people of the islands --particularly since this tiny French Territory off our coast is so little known.

The archipelago of the Islands of Saint Pierre et Miquelon is composed of a group of islands situated 12 nautical miles off Newfoundland's south coast. The first European eyes to see these islands were perhaps those of the Vikings in the 11th century, or of the Basque whale hunters in the 15th. But the 'official' discovery of the islands was made by the Portuguese navigator Joas Alvarez Fagundes on October 21, 1520. The following year the islands -- along with Newfoundland -- were deeded to him by the King of Portugal (Emmanuel IX) as the archipelago of the "Eleven Thousand Virgins." By 1530 the name "The Islands of Saint-Pierre" had become more common; and on June 11, 1536, on his second voyage to Canada, Jacques Cartier spent six days there and noted the presence of several other ships both from France and Britain. He claimed possession of the islands in the name of François I, King of France.

The three principal islands are Saint Pierre, Miquelon and Langlade. Saint Pierre, the smallest of the three (2511 hectares) is also the most densely settled and owes its name to Saint Peter, the patron saint of fisherman. The name of the largest island, Miquelon (11,458 hectares) comes from the Spanish and Portuguese name Miguel. Since the beginning of the 18th century it has been linked to Langlade (9133 hectares) by the 12 km long isthmus of sand known as "la Dune." Before then, there was a strait between the two islands which was often used by ships. The unreliability of the weather and shifting sands of this strait accounted for more than 600 shipwrecks. It was the carcasses of these ships which gradually fixed and held the shifting sands so that by 1780, the passage was definitively closed. As can be seen by one of the stories which follows this introduction, la Dune and its shipwrecks have a special place in the legends and stories of Saint Pierre et Miquelon.

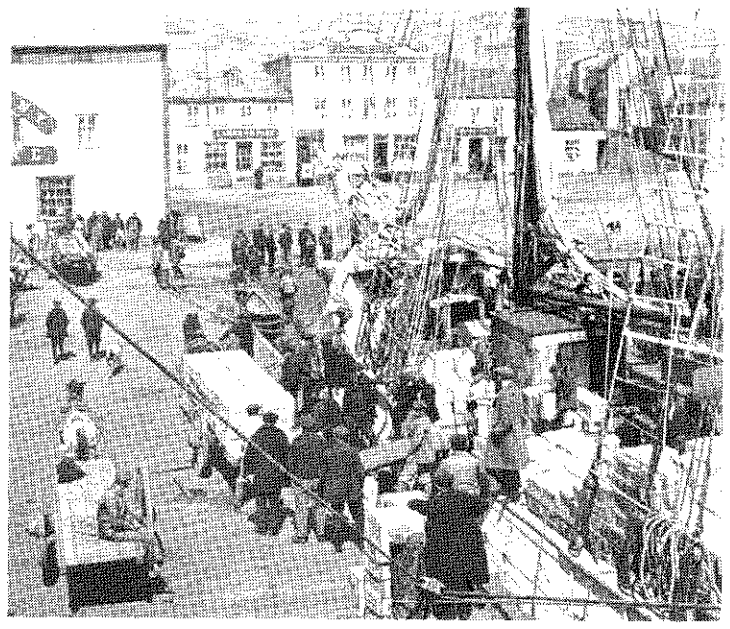
There was no permanent inhabitation of the islands until 1604, and by the early 18th century, there were 300 inhabitants -- compared to 6500 today. At the time, Saint Pierre et Miquelon were closely linked to the French settlements on the South Coast of Newfoundland whose capital, Plaisance, was fortified against the English in 1660. Saint Pierre had its own fortifications ten years later, and the town of Saint Pierre was raided nine times between 1688 and 1713 when the Treaty of Utrecht ceded Acadia, Newfoundland and the Islands of Saint Pierre et Miquelon to England. While France was granted fishing rights in the region, the French settlers from Saint Pierre and Plaisance were resettled to Louisburg on l'Isle Royale, now the island of Cape Breton. This forced eviction lasted for fifty years (1713-1763).

During that time l'Isle Royale became the centre of the French fishery in the Atlantic, and Louisburg replaced Plaisance as an important economic centre. It fell to the British in 1758 and marked the loss of La Nouvelle France. According to the Treaty of Paris (1763), France lost almost all of its Canadian possessions -- including l'Isle Royale -- but regained the Islands of Saint Pierre et Miquelon as a base for French fishermen. A new period of settlement began with Miquelon as the main population centre, with immigrants from France as well as many Acadians. Today the population of Miquelon is roughly the same as in 1767 when the island's 103 families numbered 552 people.

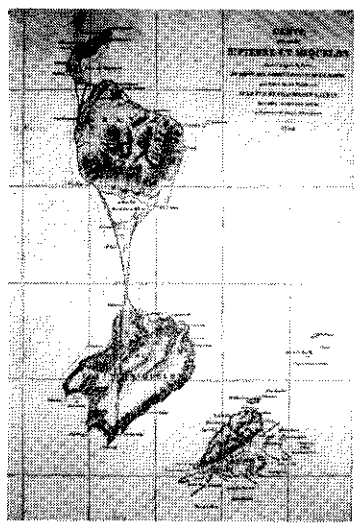
During the American War of Independence, in which France sided with the"insurgents," Britain accused Saint Pierre et Miquelon of serving as an arms depot for those fighting for independence; and it worried about the influence of the archipelago on its own newly annexed French population in Canada. In September 1776 an English squadron commanded by admiral Montague (the governor of Newfoundland) attacked Saint Pierre which was defended by only 31 soldiers and six canons. The 1300 inhabitants were deported to England and the islands were again deserted.

With the Treaty of Versailles in 1783, Saint Pierre was returned to France. Ten years later, following the French Revolution and the subsequent hostilities between England and France, there was another British attack on the islands and a third deportation of the inhabitants, this time to Halifax where they were interned for two years before being repatriated to France. English fishermen from Newfoundland established themselves on the islands where they lived peacefully until 1796 when, in an act of spite, the French admiral Richery, having failed in his attack on Saint John's, sank 80 English fishing boats and leveled the town of Saint Pierre, thus earning him a street name in Saint Pierre.

Thanks to the stubbornness of Talleyrand, the Treaty of Vienna (1816) gave the island back to France. The return took place on June 22, 1816. In a letter dated a few days later, the governor Bourilhon wrote that "the islands were as naked as on the day of their discovery." This is one of the features of the paradoxical history of Saint Pierre and Miquelon: that 300 years after their discovery by Europeans and after almost 200 years of continuous habitation, the islands were as deserted as ever. The lived history and memories of its present inhabitants begins as it were at this point, and yet it had already had a long history.



ROLAND LE HUENEN



The last 150 years have been relatively untroubled, although there has been resentment and demonstrations on the part of the local population about their being governed from afar.

If the islands of Saint Pierre et Miquelon were for more than 200 years the stakes in a struggle between France and England, it is because they are situated in the midst of the richest fishery in the world; cod fishing might be said to have played the same role in its development as did the fur trade in Canada.

The inhabitants of Saint Pierre et Miquelon come primarily from three separate regions and cultures in France: from Normandy, Brittany and from the Basque country, although today the latter two languages are no longer to be heard. The islanders speak a French whose accents are closer to metropolitan France than to that spoken in many French provinces. Their spoken language shows great vitality, and is filled with colorful marine imagery and other local images and expressions.

Until now, I have focused on the historical components as a way of stressing its historical discontinuity which had an important influence on the transmission of oral culture. Exile and destruction tore the islanders from the stability of a tradition which usually leads to popular creation. But with each devastation, with each deportation, the islanders lost not only their hard-earned possessions, but their collective memory, the cultural patrimony which they left behind each time they were forced to leave the islands.

In 1816 peace returned to the islands. But with it came the tentacular workings of a colonial administration. Centralization has only hindered the development and circulation of local popular culture. France is a much more centralized federal system than is Canada, and culture and education are preeminently federal matters in which the particular status or distance from the centre are irrelevant. School teachers and curriculum were imported from France, while the history of the archipelago was not taught in the schools -- a situation which still exists today! Within this framework, the tales of indigenous storytellers were often ridiculed or simply ignored.

This isolation also limits those contacts and exchanges with the outside which are so important for the stimulation and renewal of local folklore -- the contact afforded by travelling players and theatre troupes.

This is not to say however that there is no oral narrative tradition in Saint Pierre et Miquelon, for the book which I have just published with my father (the curator of the museum of Saint Pierre) and from which the following stories are taken demonstrates the contrary. But it must be remembered that this popular literature remains profoundly marked by the ruptures and exiles of its history.

In the book we set ourselves three goals: a work of preservation as well as an aesthetic and sociological task.

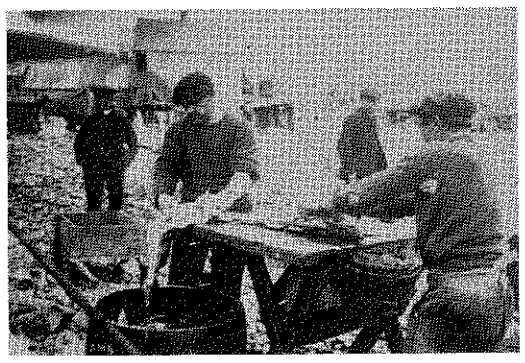
As a work of preservation our book is a collection of stories and legends gathered on the islands, in most cases from the mouths of local informants. At this level we are interested in preserving these simple, humble stories -- which are at times dramatic, at times facetious, sometimes strange and even fantastic, and at times realistic, serious or light, naive or astute -- as instances of a collective cultural identity, of the specific genius of the rocks and earth and surrounding ocean which is Saint Pierre et Miquelon. The stories that we have collected come from three sources. Most come from local informants (from both Saint Pierre and from Miquelon) who were willing to open up their memories for us. These stories were either taped or jotted down, and then used as a thematic and narrative 'canvas' for a later elaboration. A second category of tale is that of the few already existing written texts (some printed). Finally a third category is composed of stories which we had in our archives, including stories and tales known to all the islanders but never written down, or stories told from generation to generation in our own family. In putting together this collection, we have tried to avoid repetition and to present as wide and representative a range of the popular memory as possible, while also showing their formal differences: tales, legends, stories, proverbs, narrative poems, anecdotes, proverbs and expressions linked to religious holidays and to the seasons. This work of conservation seemed all the more urgent to us inasmuch as the collecting and writing down of the creations of the popular imagination had never been undertaken before.

As for the aesthetic dimension of our work, the question of the written presentation of an oral text is a controversial one. One school, primarily developed by ethnographers, maintains that the oral tale must be reproduced exactly as it was spontaneously produced orally. While it is certainly true that a text which remains as faithful as possible to its oral presentation has a truthfulness and authenticity which may gladden the heart of the specialist, it seemed to us that the task of preserving these works of the popular imagination implied as well that they become known by readers who read for the pleasure they find in the text. From this point of view, it must be pointed out that with a few exceptions, the oral performances of most of the story tellers are often dull and colorless; transcribed they are often unreadable. We have thus very deliberately chosen to rework the oral tales we collected, with a larger readership in mind. Reworking, however, does not mean betraying the original material, but to the contrary, it means making it more accessible and more attractive. It was imperative to retain the themes and narrative lines of the original stories even as we applied more literary techniques of representation. In almost every instance, we have developed the original canvas, usually in terms of description. Although literary theory often argues that description has only a secondary role to play when compared to the unfolding of events in a short story, this is not the impression of the reader. For the reader, description is an opportunity to learn about the atmosphere, to meet picturesque characters, and to set them in an historical, social and geographical context which is an important part of the pleasure of reading a short story and the means by which information about the customs and habits of a culture are transmitted.

In terms of the style, it seemed to us important to harmonize the content of the tales, to respect the tone of each and to try to reproduce a "reality effect" which was that of the specific historical epoch in which it was produced. It would have been anachronistic to tell these stories, most of which can be traced back to the last century, in a modern way. The stories themselves determined how they would be told, just as verisimilitude led us to include local expressions and terms. (We have included a glossary at the end of the volume.)

Finally, in sociological terms, through the diversity of theme, genre and tone in these stories, we hoped to help the reader to glimpse -- behind the characters and their imaginary situations -- the collectivity which has produced them and for which these tales and legends serve as a reservoir of cultural values, a repository of beliefs and dreams, of images used consciously and unconsciously to represent the desires and anxieties of a community. Reading the tales and legends produced by the popular imagination of the islanders is not only a voyage into the past, but the beginning of a larger quest for origins. Beneath the fictional veneer of the stories, the attentive reader may become aware of the rules and form through which the social cohesion of a collectivity is maintained and transmitted from generation to generation. For these stories serve as examples for each new generation; they provide guidelines and limits, the signs of belonging of the members of the community. For outsiders these tales are the reflection of a popular wisdom which becomes, by its very difference, because it is not their own, an object of fascination and enchantment.

(Translated by Peter Fitting)



"MARTI GALLAND"

Vivait aux Iles au début de la colonisation française un pêcheur nommé Marti Galland. On raconte que sa femme, désireuse de s'offrir un chapeau, avait vendu au diable l'âme de Marti qui, immanquablement lorsque minuit sonnait, se trouvait changé en bête.

C'était un matin froid d'hiver peu avant l'aube. Tout somnolait sur l'Ile, ou presque. Un homme avançait péniblement, un fanal à la main, dans la petite sente qui reliait à la route la modeste maison de bardeaux dont il avait fait sa demeure. A une heure aussi matinale ce ne pouvait être qu'un manouvrier se rendant à l'ouvrage. Soudain l'homme aperçut, barrant l'étroit sentier rocailleux rendu glissant par la gelée, un énorme chien endormi. Pour libérer le chemin, il décocha dans l'arrière-train de l'animal un coup de pied impatient. Quelle ne fut pas la stupéfaction du passant quand il entendit comme une plainte humaine s'échapper de la gueule du chien et une voix rauque qui disait: "Eh! l'homme, passe ton chemin sans m'importuner dans mon sommeil!"

Epouvanté le manouvrier s'éloigna à toutes jambes et à bout de souffle arriva chez son patron à qui il raconta par bribes sa mésaventure, tout en reprenant son haleine. Ce dernier ne se moqua pas de lui, comme il en avait coutume, et se contenta de dire: "Tu as croisé la route de Marti Galland. C'est un personnage dangereux. A l'avenir tâche d'être plus prudent! Et si tu l'aperçois de nouveau, écarte-toi de son chemin, car il porte malheur à tous ceux qui ont la malchance de le rencontrer."

La seconde aventure attachée au nom de Marti Galland se termina de bien tragique façon. Les années avaient passé sans que pour autant Marti ait pu se libérer de sa lycanthropie. Le terrible sort qui, par certaines nuits de pleine lune, le condamnait à se métamorphoser en bête n'avait point perdu au fil des saisons sa virulence d'antan. Par un soir d'hiver se donnait à l'Ile aux Chiens un bal de grand apparat en l'honneur des chasseurs du lieu qui s'y étaient rendus en costume de chasse, munis de leur gibecière et de leur fusil, symboles de leurs exploits. Marti Galland se trouvait dans l'assistance. Le bal donnait son plein. Les danseurs emportaient dans de gracieux tourbillons de mousseline leurs cavalières à la taille cambrée. S'échangeaient, entre deux figures, des regards languides, une pression de main, une promesse de rendez-vous soufflée d'un air craintif, tandis que la musique invitait à de douces pensées.

Sur le minuit, poussé par une irrésistible compulsion, Marti quitta en grande hâte la salle de bal. Il s'enfuit plus qu'il ne s'en fut. Cette sortie précipitée n'avait guère échappé à l'un des chasseurs qui, pris d'un soupçon, se mit à le suivre. Soudain, médusé, celui-ci vit le physique de Marti lentement se transformer: le corps se tassa, les jambes et les bras se raccourcirent, la tête s'enfla en un groin hideux et là où tout à l'heure il y avait forme humaine on ne reconnaissait désormais qu'un rude molosse aux crocs puissants.

Terrifié le chasseur fit demi-tour, alla précipitamment se saisir de son fusil qu'il avait laissé dans l'antichambre de la salle de danse, ressortit, ajusta le dogue et comme dans un rêve, sous la lumière bleutée de la lune reflétée par la neige, tira. Un hurlement de mort rompit le silence de la nuit, se répercuta à l'intérieur et couvrit de ses lugubres échos les accents joyeux de la musique.

A l'aube, le cadavre du chien avait disparu. Seule une large flaque de sang tachait le grand manteau de neige. Depuis cette nuit-là nul ne revit Marti Galland.

"LA DUNE INFRANCHISSABLE"

C'était encore l'époque où deux gendarmes séjournaient à Langlade pour assurer le service de la poste avec Miquelon et le phare de la Pointe Plate, tout là-bas à l'extrêmité occidentale de l'île. Les quelques fermes établies en ces lieux employaient alors à l'année longue une ribambelle de garçons, car la main-d'oeuvre en ce temps-là était nombreuse et peu onéreuse. Le plus important de ces domaines était situé aux environs immédiats de l'Anse du Gouvernement.

La relève des deux gendarmes avait eu lieu à l'automne. Les deux nouveaux, sanglés dans un pimpant et avantageux uniforme, étaient arrivés de France de fraîche date et se trouvaient peu au fait des habitudes et des traditions du pays. Un jour d'octobre, vers la fin de l'après-midi, la navette de Saint-Pierre mouilla dans l'Anse du Gouvernement. Outre le courrier elle apportait, serré dans des groups de grosse toile scellés d'un cachet rouge, le salaire des gardiens de phare et des fonctionnaires civils de Miquelon. Très zélés les deux gendarmes décidèrent de partir sur le champ, tout en se promettant de faire au passage une halte à la ferme voisine afin de se restaurer et d'échanger avec les fermiers les dernières nouvelles.

"Où diable allez-vous donc en pareil équipage et à une heure aussi tardive?" leur dit tout étonné un valet d'écurie venu leur ouvrir.

"N'avez-vous pas appris l'arrivée de la navette?" répondit l'un des gendarmes. "Il y a du courrier urgent pour Miquelon et nous nous apprêtons à nous y rendre au train de nos chevaux."

"A votre place j'y regarderai à deux fois, répliqua un fermier rougeaud d'un air tout empreint de malice finaude. On ne traverse pas la dune la nuit, pas plus à pied qu'à cheval."

A ces mots les deux gendarmes éclatèrent d'un gros rire et se moquèrent des fermiers et des valets qu'ils traitèrent d'incorrigibles superstitieux et de poltrons.

"Rira bien qui rira le dernier," rétorqua le fermier. "Quoi qu'il advienne vous êtes avertis!"

Sur les dix heures du soir, après avoir lampé un dernier verre de vin, les deux gendarmes quittèrent la ferme au grand galop de leurs montures. Ils chevauchèrent ainsi à tout bride une heure durant en suivant le littoral de la Dune. Soudain les chevaux s'arrêtèrent si brusquement dans leur course que les deux cavaliers faillirent en être désarçonnés. Ils piquèrent des éperons. En vain! Les bêtes demeuraient immobiles sur leurs jambes raidies. Sous la morsure répétée de la molette elles se cabraient, rejetant violemment l'air de leurs naseaux. Les gendarmes donnèrent alors de la cravache. Rien n'y fit! Les chevaux tremblaient du poitrail à l'arrière-train sans avancer d'un pas et continuaient de se cabrer et de hennir comme en proie à une extraordinaire terreur. On aurait dit qu'un obstacle insurmontable leur bloquait le passage. Pourtant rien n'était visible dans l'obscurité à peine rompue par la clarté laiteuse d'une lune blafarde, et rien ne s'entendait que le ressac assourdi de la mer sur le sable et le hennissement effrayé des chevaux.

Alors les deux hommes sentirent comme un frisson les saisir. Cela leur coulait le long des jambes qui devenaient roides commes des membres morts, leur glaçait le sang, leur serrait la gorge comme un carcan d'acier. C'était la peur, la peur hideuse qui se glissait dans leurs os et dans leur chair, l'épouvantable peur, inexplicable, la peur tout court, qui fait basculer la raison et hurler comme une bête. De quoi avaient-ils peur? Ils n'en savaient rien. Ils avaient peur, voilà tout.

Combien de temps cela dura-t-il? Les secondes semblaient des heures et les minutes une éternité. Soudain, comme si un charme s'était rompu, les chevaux firent demi-tour et se ruèrent en sens inverse sur le chemin qu'ils venaient de parcourir un moment plus tôt. Ils allaient à un train d'enfer, emportés dans un élan dont seul peut avoir l'idée celui qui a imaginé ou cru avoir croisé la mort et cherché à la fuir. Cramponnées aux rênes les estafettes de la maréchaussée sentaient leur dernière heure venue. Il suffisait du moindre geste maladroit, de la plus légère rupture d'é quilibre pour que les deux hommes vidassent les étriers et fussent projetés à terre, l'échine rompue. Pourtant, malgré la terreur qui s'était emparé d'eux ils tenaient bon.

Enfin les chevaux ralentirent leur allure et bientôt s'arrêtèrent en hennissant, blancs d'écume, le poitrail et la robe couverts de sueur. Ils étaient revenus fidèlement sur leurs pas et se trouvaient de nouveau dans cette même cour de ferme qu'ils avaient quittée quelques heures auparavant. Les gendarmes se laissèrent choir à terre plus qu'ils n'y mirent pied et se traînèrent plus qu'ils ne marchèrent vers la grosse porte de chêne qui défendait l'entrée du logis. Cette porte qu'ils avaient claquée avec tant de superbe naguère, leur paraissait désormais revêtue d'une insigne qualité: elle était devenue la voie du salut. Aussi y frappèrent-ils avec la détermination que procure parfois la détresse. Au bout d'un moment du bruit se fit entendre à l'intérieur et une voix encore tout enrouée de sommeil s'écria: "Holà! Holà! Un instant! On arrive! Mais cessez ce rafut, vous allez finir par réveiller toute la maisonnée!"

La porte s'ouvrit et le fermier, chandelle à la main, bonnet de nuit de travers, chemise de toile écrue ample comme une houppelande, apparut sur le seuil. A quelques pas derrière lui, se serrait dans une attente prudente le groupe des valets. A peine ceux-ci eurent-ils reconnu les deux malheureux gendarmes que les quolibets se mirent à pleuvoir de tous côtés.

"Mais ce sont nos hardis cavaliers, nos écumeurs de dune! Comme ils ont un drôle d'air! On dirait qu'ils tremblent! Et qu'ils sont pâles! Tremblez-vous messieurs? Auriez-vous rencontré le diable ou l'un de ces esprits malfaisants dont vous vous moquiez tout à l'heure?"

Le fermier écoutait, visiblement amusé, les plaisanteries de ses valets. Puis apitoyé par la mine déconfite des deux gendarmes chez qui la honte commençait à l'emporter sur la peur, il fit taire les railleurs, leur ordonna d'emmener les chevaux à l'écurie et de retourner dans leur grenier. La fermière étendit deux paillasses sur le carreau de la cuisine et les deux représentants de la loi s'y laissèrent tomber pour goûter un repos dont ils avaient grand besoin.

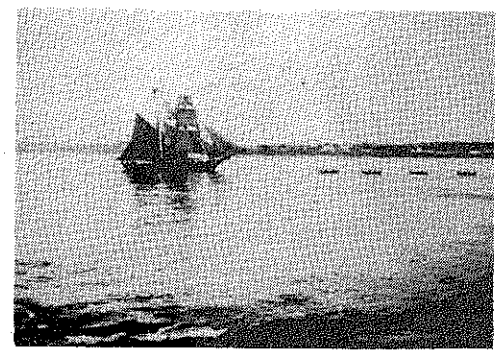
Le matin suivant, à l'heure du déjeuner, ils racontèrent à leurs hôtes leur terrible nuit. Ils n'omirent aucun détail aguerris qu'ils étaient, faute d'émulation propice, à rédiger de longs procès verbaux. Mais il faut dire que ce matin-là leur procès-verbal sortait de l'ordinaire et se passait de la ressource des péremptoires "nonobstant."

Leur repas et leur récit achevés, les deux gendarmes reprirent la route de Miquelon où ils arrivèrent sans encombre en début d'après-midi. C'était une de ces magnifiques journées d'automne où la douceur du jour harmonisait à celle du paysage. La Dune était paisible, étalant sous un soleil roux ses ondoiements dorés. Le ciel d'un bleu limpide se reflétait dans l'azur des flots. Rien ne rappelait l'épouvante de la nuit, si ce n'était au détour d'un *buttreau*, rompant la platitude uniforme du sol, comme un piétinement de chevaux dans le sable.

D'après un récit oral de René Ollivier.

These two stories are taken from Joseph et Roland Le Huenen, *Contes, récits et légendes des îles Saint Pierre et Miquelon*, Moncton: Editions d'Acadie,1985, 200pp. $10.50. This book was awarded the "France-Acadie" prize in France by the Association des Amis Acadiens.

***Roland Le Huenen** is a professor of French at Victoria College, University of Toronto, with a special interest in the novels of Balzac and in travel narratives.*



GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Border/lines is an interdisciplinary, intergenre magazine committed to explorations in all aspects of culture--including popular culture, fine arts, gender, literature, multiculturalism, mass communications and political culture. Although its geographic focus is Canada, this is taken as meaning anything that is relevant to understanding Canadian culture.

Border/lines aims to fill the gap between academic journals and specialist cultural magazines. Our audience is diverse and eclectic; so too are our contributors, drawn from a broad base of writers, cultural producers and animators. Potential contributors should bear this diversity in mind, and try to address cultural issues with spunk, humour and the occasional sideways glance. For example, we would hope that theoretical debates would be opened up to the intelligent but non-initiated reader.

The magazine contains four sections: ***"Excursions"*** deals with specific cultural themes, topics and responses directed towards a non-specialized audience. It does not review shows, but attempts to provide contextualized readings of events, objects and presentations. Length ranges from 100 to 1500 words. ***"Articles"*** range from 1500 to 4000 words and include investigative journalism, critical analysis, theory, visual essays and short stories. ***"Reviews"*** vary in length according to number of books covered and also include review essays up to 4000 words. ***"Junctures"*** presents and debates other magazines, journals and aspects of radio, television or video
that suggest a magazine format.

All work is paid for if authors are free-lance journalists or scholars
without an established, salaried position. Fees vary somewhat from issue to issue, but are at least $50 for short pieces and $100 for long articles. Each contributor will receive three copies of the issue in which their work appeared. It is not possible to provide offprints.

Manuscripts

We welcome new writers, but suggest that potential contributors send an abstract of 200 words before submitting an article.

Manuscripts to be considered for publication should be sent to our editorial address:

91 1/2 Stafford Street,
Toronto, Ontario
M6J 2S1

They should be sent in duplicate, typed on one side of the paper, and
double-spaced with a wide margin (at least 5 cm). Submissions should be titled, and should include a short biography of interest to our readers. All correspondence should be accompanied by a stamped return envelope. If your final manuscript has been typed on a word processor, please send us a copy on disk so as to save our typesetter hours of labour.

Illustrations and other visual material

Writers should send illustrative work with their article, or at least
indicate how it might fit into the large visual environment of border/lines. Visual artists are also encouraged to submit work. Please carefully consider the reproductive qualities of your submissions, as well as the page proportions of the magazine. All photos should be submitted unmounted as black and white glossy prints (as large as possible) showing good contrast and clear definition of outline. Charts, graphs, drawings and so on should be rendered in black ink on good white paper. Captions, photo credits and return address should be typed on an appended sheet of paper. Final design decisions rest with the collective.

Literature Citations

Footnotes are an overused convention and we discourage them. Far more accessible would be a short list of references at the end of an article. If you must use footnotes, they should conform to the formats below:

BOOK

Dylan, Robert Z. From Protest to Jesus: Fragment of an Agon.
San Francisco: Leading Lights, 1985.

CHAPTER IN BOOK OF MULTIPLE AUTHORSHIP

McCartney, Paul. "Money on the Mull of Kintyre", in Lennon, J.,
Harrison G., and Starr, R., eds. Letting it Be. Bermuda: Scam
Press,1970.

THESIS OR DISSERTATION

Postmod, I.M. Necrophilia in the Split Infinitives of Jacques Lacan.
M.A. thesis, York University, 1987.

MAGAZINE OR JOURNAL ARTICLE

Lenz, J., Zoom, Z., and Stieglitz-Leica, G. "Is There Life after the
Image?" Kodakery, vol. 28, no. 6, June 1953.

Because border/lines is a (non-paid) collective, editing is a slow process. Please expect to wait at least six weeks for a reply if you submit a manuscript. Contributors are automatically contacted about suggested revisions.

Duncan Lithography, Collection, Hamilton Public Library

There's no flies on Border/lines.

Border/lines is an interdisciplinary magazine about art, culture and social movements. We publish writing from many different positions, and we're open to artists, musicians, filmmakers and readers.

An indispensable companion to contemporary culture in Canada and elsewhere, **Border/lines** is produced in a large format (which also conveniently doubles as a large fly swatter), and is published four times a year by a Toronto-based collective.

I'm subscribing!

☐ $16.00—individual ☐ $14.00—low income ☐ $25.00—institutions

for 4 issues. Please start my subscription with number _____.

Tax deductible donation: _____
Subscription: _____
TOTAL: _____

Please make cheques payable to 'Borderlines'. Outside Canada, please pay in US dollars only. Air mail rates available on request.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

_____

_____ **POSTAL CODE** _____

SEND TO: border/lines, Bethune College, York University, 4700 Keele Street, DOWNSVIEW, Ontario, Canada, M3J 1P3.

b/l-4

REVIEWS

VOICES IN THE AIR

Howard Broomfield had big ears. For Howard, radio was more than a medium, it was itself an instrument, a voice, a space where voices could sing where elsewhere they could hardly speak. Through Howard's craftsmanship at the studios of Co-op Radio in Vancouver, many voices came together to form the magic that only radio can fabricate--a magic that can transport listeners from time to space. Howard committed suicide in the middle of Expo 86. This one is going out for him tonight.

Not the BBC/IBA: The Case for Community Radio
by Simon Partridge
London: Comedia Publishing Group, 1982.

Nothing Local About It: London's Local Radio
Local Radio Workshop
London: Comedia Publishing Group, 1983.

Shut Up and Listen! Women and Local Radio: A View From The Inside
by Helen Baehr and Michele Ryan
London: Comedia Publishing Group with Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom, 1984.

Rebel Radio: The Full Story of British Pirate Radio
by John Hind and Stephen Mosco
London: Pluto Press, 1985.

From Coast to Coast: A Personal History of Radio in Canada
by Sandy Stewart
Toronto: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 1985.

What actually happens on radio? More specifically, what is actually broadcast to the listener? All of the books above address these questions. All pay attention to how particular kinds of radio sound, while assuming, and illustrating, that the sounds of radio are structured by the social, economic, legal, and political relationships through which radio speaks. Their arguments over the effect of these relationships on radio are primarily empirical--a critical, interventionist empiricism. The books document interventions in radio practice; they are also themselves interventions in the current dialogue about media uses.

An assumption common to these books is that radio's value needs to be defended against its current practice. Its value is seen to be in the unique ways radio communication defines the parameters of the social. All these books argue that such parameters are extended by emergent senses of locality and community and by the participation of women in program production. These parameters are shrunk by those who refuse to use radio creatively. This last argument occurs in the British books as an accusation against the BBC and in Stewart's book as poignant reminiscences of the old days at the CBC.

Beyond these common approaches, there are differences expressed in these books over how the parameters of radio content (and thus of audience construction) should be mapped. "The social" means one thing for community radio organizers, whose practice focuses on increasing the participation of social and community groups in production. It means something else for those animators of pirate radio who rush to import the latest hit records. Pirate radio, ostensibly concerned with contesting legal broadcasting restrictions, is often preoccupied with raising the standard of listener/consumer connoisseurship. It means something different again for Stewart, the historian of Canadian radio, for whom the nation still represents the most desirable site for a community bonded by shared radio programming.

Not the BBC/IBA was published before community radio had achieved even provisional legal status in Britain. Like the other books published by Comedia, Partridge's book is written as a direct intervention in a contemporary, political media debate. Partridge outlines the history of community in Britain and abroad, tracing the political, legal, and social developments that accompanied its emergence between the 1960s and the present. His purpose was to intensify the early 1980s campaign in Britain to license community stations. Since he wrote, it is clear community radio has lost an important battle, if not the war.

By the early 1980s, a number of community radio groups had formed in Britain, but none were licensed to broadcast. Their work was to animate existing community groups (not "audiences," but ethnic or community groups) in production. The Thatcher government squashed the move to license community radio and simply sent the applicants home, despite the heavy economic and political sacrifices such groups had made (by keeping silent, for instance) while preparing their applications. The reason was clear and more or less explicit: community radio programming could not be relied on to assist the current government. While Partridge does not spell out this conclusion, he encourages it. His concise history and analysis of the development of community broadcasting in Britain (and other countries) will not yet have lost its usefulness, since its goal, in Britain at least, has not yet been achieved.

Local radio--radio for a local geographic site, rather than for a social community --is called, in Britain, the "third stream" (the first and second streams being public and private broadcasting). Third stream radio is examined in the Local Radio Workshop's (LRW) detailed and uncompromising study of three "local" stations in London. Local radio developed in Britain as an attempt to counteract the centralized and determinedly non-commercial broadcasting style of the BBC. "Local" participation is mounted through phone-in shows, features on local personalities, and other such devices. In *Nothing Local About It,* the LRW replicates and dissects typical interactions between radio hosts or personalities and the listening audience. The interactions are exposed as artificial simulations of open participation. Typical "participation" is shown to be thoroughly pre-structured by program timing, language, response, and interpretation--in blunter words, by manipulating and bullying. The LRW's study of music broadcasting and its accompanying patter is acute and appropriately savage. But while it raises a number of questions about concepts of local radio, it doesn't answer them. Both this book and *Not the BBC/IBA* contain much practical information for people concerned with the mechanics of radio broadcasting.

In *Shut Up and Listen!* we meet Doreen. "Doreen" is the archetypal character invented by radio programmers to justify the type of programming most often provided for women. In explaining programming decisions, "Doreen" is constantly and uncomplimentarily alluded to: "Doreen isn't stupid, but she's only listening with half an ear, and she doesn't necessarily understand 'long words'..." Shut Up is the most specific of the growing number of demographic mythologies (in this case, the housewife) to appear in recent print.[1] The book is an account of the experiences of several women in organizing as a collective to produce radio programming inside a "local" station in Cardiff, the Cardiff Broadcasting Company. Their task was to actively counter the dominant image of women listeners as passive, domestic, and isolated. The authors document this process through a week-by-week chronicle of program development, which encouraged women's participation through programs on health, childcare, new technology, and other issues. The book includes a study of radio advertising, a discussion of useful program content, and a review of political, legal, social, and cultural issues relevant to the struggle for increased community access to radio.

Rebel Radio is also dedicated to the cause of increased access to radio. Hind and Mosco begin with a "potted history of pirate radio," demonstrating their romantic zeal by starting the story with Marconi. Theirs is a maverick approach to radio: equally enthusiastic about programs dedicated to Jamaican music, "People Against Marxism" (Radio Enoch, from Coventry), and the large number of ethnic communities who have saturated London's airwaves in recent years. Many of the pirate groups have been primarily concerned with ensuring access to a particular musical style; some with the economic advantage of circumventing British broadcasting policy's advertising restriction; others with representing the political views of peace groups, gays, and other activists. *Rebel Radio* is a rich and varied read, with extensive interviews and participant's accounts. The authors argue against the imposition of value judgements or any other form of restriction on access. Their sympathy for pirate radio is rooted in a lively pluralism, and in the insistence that listeners should have access to a wide range of programming choices.

Rebel Radio willingly explores the many conflicts between the groups involved--conflicts over representation (who most validly represents the interests of the Greek community in London?), interference (pirate broadcasters may just as easily interfere with each others' airwaves as anyone else's), copyright and other legal issues (the Musicians' Union, for instance, is unhappy about the loss of fees from pirates), and the role of advertising (the mainstay of the larger, commercial pirate stations who specialize in pop music). Pirate broadcasters of every culture and ideological stripe are allowed to speak for themselves in this book. They offer a vivid sense of the frolics, risks, ambitions, and obstacles encountered by outlaw radio. The book includes appendices on the law and on technical procedures for prospective pirates.

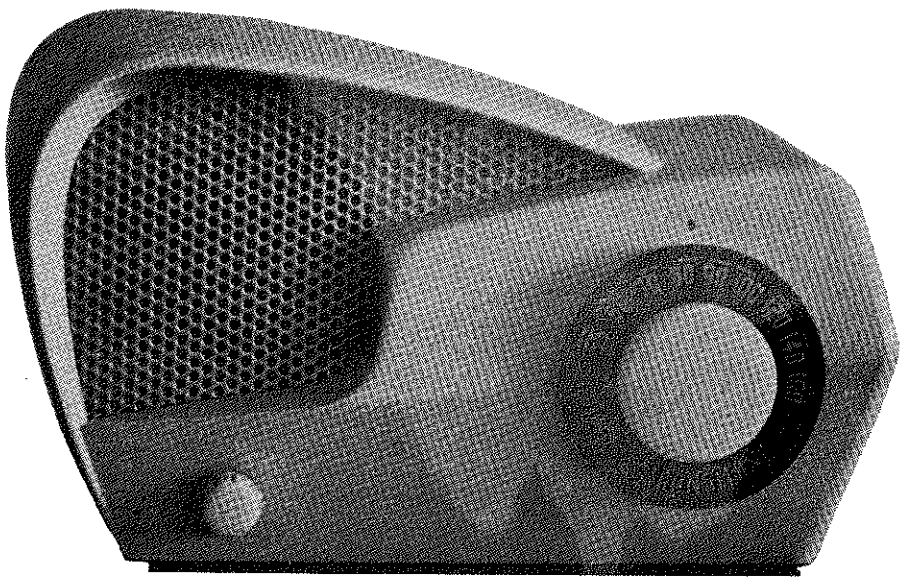
Stewart's book *From Coast to Coast* reflects an urgent need to capture a history of CBC Radio that has threatened to fade as fast as CBC itself. Although the recent birthday celebrations stimulated all sorts of radio reminiscences, Stewart's book stands alone as a document of radio programs, personalities, techniques, and achievements over the past half-century.

From Coast to Coast has a lot of pictures. They show people dressing to the nines to make a studio appearance: the Happy Gang in all their glory, singers, family dramas, teen dances, symphony orchestras, big bands, mining disasters, and all sorts of radio personalities, including that most photogenic of people, Glen Gould. It's ironic, somehow, that these pictures work so effectively in communicating the magic that is radio broadcasting.

Stewart's text is detailed, personable, gossipy, infectious. It's also very moving. The story charges ahead through a medley of chronicles and anecdotes whose aura counteracts the accompanying theme of betrayal and decline. There have been plenty of books about broadcasting in Canada, but hardly any that talk in such detail about the people who produced it. It gives a human face to the CBC as a social construction, a creation, a collective work of art, if you like. The lengthy love affair with radio documented by Stewart is full of joyous, determined, punchy creativity and collaborative enthusiasm--and even risk-taking--which even now refuses to be stifled by the baboon of privatization and cut-backs that threatens to submerge public discourse in the scramble for an exportable cultural economy. There is no lack of present evidence for such stubbornness, fortunately. Those of you interested in our own magical and, I hope, not-so-transient radio history will find this chronicle a likeable feast.

1 A detailed critique of the interaction of demographics and programming policy may be found in Hennion and Meadel's study in the popular music issue of *Media, Culture, and Society*, Vol. 8 (1986), and in my "Regulating Difference: Radio Music and the Regulatory Double Bind," IASPM-Canada Working Paper, 1986.

***Jody Berland** is a member of the* Border/lines *collective and teaches in the Mass Communication Program at Carleton University.*



The Land Called Morning: Three Plays
Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1986.

I can't help but think of the scream/cry of Tantoo Cardinal at the end of Theatre Passe Maraille's production of "Jessica: A Transformation" in the fall of 1986. The play concludes on Jessica's anguished scream of frustration, rage of despair, a scream that she takes inside of herself, a scream that pulls together the fragments of Jessica's lives, a scream that emerges as a cry of self-renewal and self-determination. Somewhere, halfway between scream and cry, caught in the guts and the throat and embodying both the frustration and renewal, lie the three plays in *The Land Called Morning* and perhaps the state of Native theatre and Native culture itself in Canada at the present.

Native theatre seems to be in the midst of a revival of sorts. As in the case of most artistic movements, it seems to sneak up on us, our realization that it exists usually coinciding with its immanent demise. We can only hope that in this case we are naming a youthful artistic presence: both its promise and its necessity are profound. Revival is an apt metaphor since, as we are reminded in Caroline Heath's preface to *The Land Called Morning*, "Sadie Wornstaff of Spirit Song Native Indian Theatre Company in Vancouver, points out that dramatic expression is not new among Native people. Storytelling and pow wows have a strong dramatic element, and the masks and the screens used in potlaches are undeniable evidence of powerful staged events." In the last few years a series of important Native dramas have been staged, and not just in the theatre centres as in the case of "Jessica" in Toronto, but also in places more accessible to Native audiences, as in the production of "Mattonobee" at the Northern Heritage centre in Yellowknife, or the plays included in *The Land Called Morning*.

The publication of three Native plays in The *Land Called Morning* can only be commended. The silencing and marginalization of Native culture has been and continues to be a crucial feature of multicultural Canada. It is, after all, a cultural policy that strips Native culture of its specificity by reducing it to one among many cultural forms that exist in Canada. That these three plays have been published, then, is in itself a noteworthy event and deserves credit. That substantively they are provocative, compassionate, humourous and challenging adds to our pleasure.

"Teach Me the Ways of the Sacred Circle" was written by Valerie Dudoward and has been performed by the Spirit Song Native Theatre Company. It is set in Vancouver and deals with the inner conflict of its protagonist, Matt, who was raised in the city and wants "to have my own office, someday, maybe in False Creek. And a condominium within walking distance. And I'll be a top business consultant to major corporations." Matt is forced to face his Native heritage when he must decide whether or not to accede to his grandmother's wish to have him return with her for the summer to Port Simpson.

"Gabrielle" was created by the Upisasik (little) Theatre of Rossignol School, Ile-à-la-Crosse, Saskatchewan for the centenary of the 1885 Batoche uprising. It is an attempt to rewrite the Riel Rebellion in an updated context, with a woman as leader. The action takes place around Ile-à-la-Crosse: Gulf Oil has decided to initiate a major oil drilling project in the middle of the Metis community's fur block. Gabrielle is drafted by the local Metis to lead the struggle against this project and is forced by an irresponsive southern government to adopt ever more drastic measures.

Finally, "The Land Called Morning," written by John Selkirk with Gordon Selkirk, takes place on a reserve, Montreal Lake, in northern Saskatchewan. The play deals with the struggles of four Cree teenagers to build meaningful lives for themselves on an isolated reservation. One of the characters, Robin, uses his boxing as a ticket to "success" and escape while two of the others, Peter and Anne, are trapped in futility and despair on the reserve.

If we can speak of Native theatre as a genre, a number of interesting strategies and focusses emerge. As in the case of George Ryga's "The Ecstasy of Rita Joe" and Linda Griffiths' "Jessica," there is an extensive use of dreams and memories that serve to bring the past--historical/personal/cultural--into the life of a protagonist. Each of the plays in *The Land Called Morning* uses place in a very careful way to express crucial ideas. Finally, there is a fairly consistent attempt to use elements of traditional Native culture, particularly language and legends but also music, as strategically important to the setting and narration.

The use of dreams is one of the most powerful and most consistent elements in Native theatre. Two of the scenes in "Teach Me the Ways..." are dream sequences. Both of them involve Matt in dialogue with an elder, in the first case his grandfather in the second his grandmother. Similarly, a good deal of "Gabrielle" involves her dialogues with Louis Riel in what may or may not be taken to be dream sequences. In "The Land Called Morning" dreams are less a part of the overall narration, though what is perhaps the central scene of the play is taken up in large part with Anne's description of a dream. Dreams are important in these plays because they allow for a direct expression of the spiritual component of Native culture. They also allow for the past--in the guise of elders or leaders or mythical figures--to speak directly to the present. Significantly in "Gabrielle," as in "Jessica," the status of the dream figure is uncertain. Riel seems to exist, like the mythical figures in "Jessica," simply on another spiritual plane. What we should not lose sight of is the way in which these dreams or spirits are used to bring Native tradition, culture and history to life and give them a voice with which to guide Native people today.

The setting or, rather, the use of place in each of these plays also deserves our attention. "Teach Me the Ways..." takes place in a city, "Gabrielle" in a metis community and "The Land Called Morning" in a reserve. This already speaks to the separate concerns of each: the first to the question of maintaining Native identity in the modern world, the second to the struggle against economic imperialism, the third to the personal struggle against despair. Of at least equal significance, though, is the particular use of place within each story. For example, the story Granny tells in "Teach Me the Ways..." ends as follows: "then the great man tore off half of the tree trunk and placed Granny inside, and then sealed up the tree again. And that tree, that ancient tree, is still standing in our oldest village site." What distinguishes the Native concern for place from regionalism is precisely the way in which the world is inscribed with this kind of historical/mythical meaning. The dramatic tension in this play stems from Matt's indecision over whether to return to Port Simpson with Granny or not: place and identity are firmly intertwined. In "Gabrielle" there is a discussion of blockade as political activity:

> ***3rd Citizen:*** *That's it! We'll block the highway right at the forks...*
> ***2nd Citizen:*** *Right at Rosser Bay! That way their trucks can't go around the road block. There's no ditches to worry about.*
> ***1st Citizen:*** *No!*
> ***3rd Citizen:*** *We'd have to dig up the old Buffalo road, though, in case they tried to go around...*

This use of local place names is important. For a moment, in this play, Ile- à-la-Crosse is its own center. It is not marginal. For a moment its place names--and not just the names but the specific features of each place (the fact that there are ditches at the forks!)--are important, are the stuff of history, of mythology. It represents the struggle of the margin to reinscribe itself, reinsert its specificity, against the totalizing force of the center.

One of the most interesting features of these plays is their use of Native language. In the best of these plays we can hear the grain of a collective Native voice that speaks its experience. "Gabrielle" marks a significant advance in this regard. Much of the play is written in Cree (translations are provided in the published text). As important are those passages that bring phrases, expressions, small bits of the Native subversions of English to us: as in the use of that particular all encompassing "Aha!" that bring northern Manitoba back to me. Much of the written text of these plays is stilted and does not convey the sense, but where it does--and "Gabrielle" is a particularly good example--we are afforded a rare pleasure not to be taken lightly.

The other way these plays express a specific Native voice is through their use of Native culture, particularly music. Both "Teach Me the Ways..." and "The Land Called Morning" end with traditional drumming. "Gabrielle" ends with a song, and unlike "The Ecstasy of Rita Joe" it is one which serves to affirm the play's political message. "Teach Me the Ways..." is a particularly interesting example. The first conflict between Native and non-Native culture in this play is expressed musically when Sam plays a traditional drum song for Matt:

The drum is a circle
The circle is life
Life begins, life ends,
Then it begins again
Like the drum
It begins again.

The drum is the heartbeat
Heartbeat of our Nations
The drum is ancient
The drum is the heartbeat
The heartbeat is living
And it's me and it's you...

This is as good an articulation of the "meaning" of the drum song/dance as one could find. The play uses music, dance, legends and clothes to convey Native culture. Along with the bits of Native language these form a whole that we can call the Native voice. Native theatre, then, can be seen as the dramatic expression of Native voice.

For this reason the play "The Land Called Morning" needs to be called into question. Unlike the other plays in the volume and other Native plays it does not deal with the specifically Native experience. The characters in the play are strongly drawn, probably more so than those in "Gabrielle" and "Teach Me the Ways..." However, it makes little use of Cree culture: the most significant cultural referent in the play is Emily Dickenson, whose poems are read by Anne. A more serious problem is the fact that "success" in the play's terms is equated with Robin's boxing career and trip to the Korean Olympics while failure is associated with staying in Montreal Lake. Success is therefore tied to escape and a non-Native career and lifestyle. While as a message of hope and despair the play makes a powerful statement and one that is important to Native people (as it is to all of us), the characters could easily be non-Natives, the setting any small, isolated community. That may be the intent, to illustrate to Natives and to non-Natives how their lives are not so different as they might assume. In a climate where assimilation is one of the profoundest forces Native people struggle against, such an approach is misguided.

That a Native theatre is emerging/reviving with its own characteristics is a cultural development of profound significance for Canada. The identity and integrity of the country as a whole rests in large part upon the place of Native people and Native culture in it; rest, that is, on the place of the most marginalized, disadvantaged and discriminated against amongst us. The plays in *The Land Called Morning* are not without their weaknesses but inasmuch as they bring the Native voice to us they should not be ignored. The scream of Rita Joe will turn to the cry of Jessica, of Gabrielle, of Matt: "The drum is a circle/the circle is life..."

***Peter Kulchyski** is a graduate student in Political Science at York University in Toronto, and is reading and writing about Native Canadian Culture and Politics.*

The Mother Machine
by Gena Corea
Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1985.

If Freud had been a woman, chances are the words "creation envy" would have replaced "penis envy" in the annals of psychoanalysis. Since the earliest known times men have attempted to compensate for their inability to give birth in some weird and wonderful ways. From ancient times right into the twentieth century, men on almost all continents have practiced *couvade* (from the French word to hatch) when their women gave birth. The custom involved the father simulating symptoms of labour and childbirth. In its extreme forms, the mother returned to her work as soon as possible after giving birth--often the same day, and waited on the father, who remained in bed. In Medieval times, alchemists tried to create life independent of women by combining such ingredients such as boy's urine, blood and sperm. And early scientists and philosophers believed that the sperm itself contained a tiny man, or homunculus, and that the woman's womb was merely a vessel in which that life grew.

But alas, these ideas proved to be merely wishful thinking. Men learned that they contribute 23 chromosomes to the creation of life and little else. Faced with this discovery men might have despaired, but modern science came to the rescue, and offered them new hope for fulfilling their creation envy. First came medicine and the male takeover of childbirth, and more recently came the new reproductive technologies. Through procedures like artificial insemination, In Vitro Fertilization (IVF), and embryo transfer, male technicians have been able to usurp women's procreative powers more fully than ever before. And future breakthroughs which are now in the research stages, such as artificial wombs, cloning, and yes--even male pregnancy, promise to extend this control still further.

In her hard-hitting book, *The Mother Machine*, Gena Corea documents the awesome consequences for women of this takeover. She explodes the myth, widely promulgated by the mass media, that the technologies offer new hope for the infertile. While this myth is extremely seductive for couples who have suffered years of infertility, Corea argues that for the majority of women, the technologies actually bring new despair. At the best IVF clinics, only three out of ten women become pregnant, and of those, close to one third miscarry. Commercial embryo transfer clinics have recently opened in the United States on the basis of only two experimental successes. Nevertheless, the low success rates of these procedures are played down, and the hope is played up.

Corea argues that before the reproductive technologies, a woman could at some point come to terms with her infertility and go on with her life. Now, there's no easy way off the medical treadmill. As long as the technology is there, the infertile woman can tell herself, "Just one more time." Private clinics, which have no incentive to limit the number of times a woman goes through the procedure, sometimes encourage this attitude. In the waiting room of one IVF clinic in Norfolk, Virginia, is a picture of a soaring bird with the message "you never fail until you stop trying."

In my own research, while I was producing a radio documentary for CBC's *Ideas*, I spoke to a number of infertile women who admitted to wishing that the programs didn't exist. One woman in her fourth attempt at IVF told me of the emotional ups and downs women suffer, and how they feel they're on a roller coaster of heightened expectations and dashed hopes. Hopes are raised when a woman is accepted into the program, dashed when the doctor can't get an egg. Raised again when he gets an egg, dashed when it doesn't fertilize or cleave properly. Raised again when he gets an embryo and transplants it into her uterus, dashed when it doesn't implant or she miscarries.

In the process, women are reduced to passive receptacles as doctors manipulate their reproductive cycles through a stunning array of drugs, hormones, blood tests, ultra sound readings and surgical procedures. In fact, women are made so passive through the process that it is extraordinarily difficult to find women in the programs who were willing to speak publicly about their experiences. They are told by their nurses and doctors not to talk to the media, and by and large, they comply. They're dependent on the good will of their doctors to make them pregnant, and they fear that expressing any kind of problem will jeopardize their chances.

Of course, for the women who do give birth, the reproductive technologies are indeed a boon. But Corea argues that the priorities of a medical system that focusses on heroic medical treatments rather than the prevention of infertility are seriously skewed.

The incidence of infertility has more than doubled in North America in the last twenty years. Yet the causes of infertility have never been thoroughly investigated. Researchers know that the IUD, certain drugs and venereal disease have all contributed to the rising rates of infertility in women. They also suspect that environmental and workplace hazards have contributed to infertility in both sexes, but to date, no good epidemiological studies have been done to verify this, and little action has been taken to remedy the situation.

To Corea, this is no surprise. She makes clear the medicine is neither neutral nor benign, but reflects the patriarchal culture that produces it. As a consequence, she believes that reproductive technology increases already strong tendencies in medicine to objectify and dominate women. "The technology is male generated," she writes, "and buttresses male power over women."

Moreover, she argues that in the interests of patriarchy, the technology reduces women to matter. "Just as the patriarchal state finds it acceptable to market parts of a woman's body (breasts, vagina, buttocks) for sexual purposes in prostitution and the larger sex industry, so it will soon find it reasonable to market other parts of women (womb, ovaries, and eggs) for reproductive purposes." Already, the reproductive industry is offering wombs for rent, and fresh and frozen embryos for sale.

Corea's words are strong and uncompromising, and her stance has raised the backs of her critics. Advocates of the new technologies argue that they do bring women new options and choice, but for Corea, choice is invalidated in a society where serious differences in power and authority exist between the sexes.

Besides, those who put their trust in reproductive technology seem to be suffering from a form of amnesia. The new reproductive technologies are an extension of the same medical system that brought women DES, the pill, IUDs, unnecessary hysterectomies and cesarian sections. In the light of this history, there is no reason to believe that reproductive technology is any more benign or woman-centered than earlier technologies.

The Mother Machine is a brave and bold book--well written and well researched. It is especially important at a time when reproductive technology and its commercial exploitation are proceeding more rapidly than our moral, legal and ethical frameworks for dealing with it. If there is a weakness in *The Mother Machine,* it is in its failure to stand back from the issue of women and technology, and examine the nature of science itself. The attempts to reduce woman to her component parts, and to control her reproductive system are a natural outgrowth of a reductionist science which attempts to control and dominate all of nature. At some point we have to ask whether this sort of reductionism doesn't reduce the value of life itself--for both women and men.

Jill Eisen is a producer at CBC

Deep Ecology
by Bill Devall and George Sessions
Salt Lake City: Gibbs M. Smith Inc., 1985.

The Natural Alien: Humankind and Environment
by Neil Evernden
Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985.

Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching
by Dave Foreman
Tucson: Earth First! Books, 1985.

Deep Ecology
Edited by Michael Tobias.
San Diego: Avant Books, 1985.

I know it's wrong, but I tend to judge a book by its cover, or at least by the blurbs. I read the author's bio first, to see what they say about themselves, and then the acknowledgements, to see who their friends are. I confess, therefore, to a certain bias, having read that Dave Foreman is a "river runner, backpacker, birdwatcher and bowhunter". Michael Tobias, "writer/mountaineer/filmmaker" with credits like *After Eden* and *History, Ecology & Conscience*, and that Messrs Devall and Sessions are avid backpackers, rock climbers and students of eastern and aboriginal philosophies.

There is of course nothing wrong in these laudable undertakings. Environmentalism is everything you'd expect from a lively political movement: earnest, unkempt and evangelical, pretentious and portentous, in turn silly, sentimental and serious. But it's been around for quite a while. It is time for deeper consideration of the issues. Another set of readings on the environment, another plea to save this or that, another attack on the evils of industrialism just won't do. We've heard it all before and truth to tell it's becoming a bore.

Neil Evernden is the odd one out in this crowd and not simply because he's a quiet Canadian. He presents a clear, cogent line of reasoning. His is not an easy book, but the cumulative effect is dramatic and immediate. After reading *The Natural Alien,* you understand as well as appreciate the contradiction in wanting to preserve nature while shooting at it with arrows and lenses, or touting wilderness while tromping all over it. This book is a must for any serious student of environmental issues.

It's not that I don't like or appreciate the other offerings. Who hasn't felt the frustrations of environmentalism in recent years? It's more a sense that they are leading nowhere and in the process antagonizing those whose support they seek.

Dave Foreman has written an entertaining handbook for "ecoteurs" that offers an assortment of tactics for disrupting the enemies of the environment. We all damn the developers from time to time. On the other hand one cannot but have reservations when, along with hollow disclaimers about these detailed tactics being "for entertainment purposes only", the author announces that "two good friends--Mr. Smith and Mr. Wesson--are our security agents." Had he read his Evernden, Mr. Foreman might have thought twice about subtitling his handbook "monkey" wrenching.

The two offerings on deep ecology are equally unsettling. Part of it is the subject itself. There is no generally accepted or precise definition of deep ecology. It really amounts to a more philosophical treatment of the issue, concerned with preservation rather than conservation. To the extent that it is possible at all, deep ecologists are committed to developing a non-anthropo-homocentric approach to the environment.

Definitions aside, I confess to some bias against the incoherence of cafeteria collection of essays. And it doesn't help much when Michael Tobias starts off with a silly sentence asserting that "There was never a time when human beings did not appraise the natural world, painfully aware of their own paradoxical position within it." That's simply wrong. There are some good essays in the collection, but they don't add up to anything. I would rather read the better writers at greater length than struggle to figure out what is deeply ecological about this particular grouping that's all over the map, geographically, philosophically and emotionally.

Devall's and Sessions' book *Deep Ecology* is also fragmentary and frustrating. It's hard to disagree with the desire to improve the quality of life rather than raise the material standard of living, but what does this mean or imply? When the authors state that "present ideology tends to value things because they are scarce and because they have a commodity value" or later that "one cannot quantify adequately what is important for the quality of life, and there is no need to do so," the reader is left wondering what to do next.

The trouble is too much generalizing about an issue that cries out for deeper reflection. This is what deep ecology is all about. Environmental issues have become part of the plurality of political contention. Political parties, public interest groups and government ministries promote protection of the environment, but against whom and for what ends? There is a restlessness abroad among those most committed to the movement. There is a sense of deep unease, of unresolved issues that go beyond conventional criticism of the industrial imperative or capitalist acquisitiveness. It is precisely this nagging feeling about environmentalism that Evernden addresses.

The Natural Alien is both analysis and allegory. It's best read as poetry and preferably in one sitting. The book is an appeal to "the perversity of truth instead of the complicity of agreement," a plea for the reality of experience over the certainty of ideology.

Evernden's world is populated by subjects. "The loss of intimacy and immediacy entailed in our achievement of objectivity," he says, "could with some justification be cited as the major motivation for the environmental movement throughout its long history." He rejects conventional industrial imagery that sees life as an amalgam of problems and solutions, a series of obstacles to be overcome or questions to be resolved.

It is not subjects and objects that constitute the world, but relationships. We have become prisoners of "detail perception" at the expense of "meaning perception." We have forgotten or ignored the fact that subjects do not "have" a world view--they are a world view. "Individualism is the religion of solitude," says Evernden. "It is easier to live alone than to learn the constraints and obligations of community life... Only the presence of eternal strangers, whom shame cannot restrain, makes possible the unbroken reign of objectivity in which we pride ourselves."

We are able to manipulate and desecrate nature by objectification, by creating an "us-it" relationship with everything non-human. Nature as object has no intrinsic value. Without value it has no meaning. As with nature, so with humanity. Evernden's plea to re-assert subjectiveness is an appeal to be there, to celebrate the interaction of subjects, to comply and communicate. As such, it has much more in common with aboriginal than industrial society.

The Natural Alien avoids simplistic solutions. The oft-touted need for a new "environmental ethic" is itself a technical fix, "a cultural corrective to congenital deformity." We are the story we create for ourselves. We cannot easily write a new one, but we can listen--and there is always "the possibility that we can become fertile ground for a new start, a new story, and a redefining of our place in the world."

That place is a community of subjects, a place of some familiarity, however fleeting. "In daily interaction there must be a mood of compliance if there is to be a social unity, and some means of communicating mood between members of the community." The context of our lives is the set of relationships to which we are committed. Without relationship, without community, all that happens is a litany of disconnected, meaningless events.

Deep ecology is a search for value and meaning. Resistance to absurdity and atrocity are essential, wherever they reveal themselves. But resistance alone is never enough. The objectification of nature and of each other is the philosophical basis for the ills that motivate environmentalism. A critique of this philosophy and creative alternatives are essential if environmentalism is to have any lasting impact. That is why *The Natural Alien* is by far the most important of these offerings.

***Grahame Beakhust** is a gardener and contributing editor to* Alternatives. *He has taught environmental studies at York University and at the University of Toronto, and currently is a consultant on environment and community at Magna International .*

Noise: The Political Economy of Music

by Jacques Attali
Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1985

First published in France in 1977, *Noise* is available for the first time in English as part of the University of Minnesota Press series, *Theory and History of Literature,* a collection of writings pertinent to current literary and cultural criticism.

As a professor of economic theory at the University of Paris, and a special counsellor to President François Mitterand, Attali's approach immediately diverges from critical theory's insistence that music be understood as simply "reflecting" or following in the wake of social developments. In positing the opposite, Attali brings fresh insights to a critical analysis of music's social role.

His theoretical and philosophical divagations commence with the noises which have constantly accompanied our work and play; the clues this random orchestration provides to an understanding of our social nature and the relationship of noise to the exercise of power.

Music is essentially a herald, indicative of approaching changes in the social forces of production. It has arisen out of historical attempts to shape the natural and social sounds which have been humanity's collective experience of the world. In delineating the development of the political economy of music as four codes or "networks," that of sacrifice, representation, repetition and composition, Attali confirms this function. His networks can be seen as modes of distribution in which the social role of music serves as both social integrator and also as harbinger of subversion. Music has always had a twin element inherent to its character and Attali's argument does not overlook this.

The author succeeds in examining each of these successive stages from the standpoint of music's relationship to changing political economies, providing a commentary that moves between historical detail--the *jongleurs*, position in French society, their evolution into the minstrels with the development of capitalism--and his own metamorphic *mélange* of post-structuralist discourses.

The point of departure for Attali's thesis, the framework through which the networks of musical distribution are discussed and assessed, is contained in a meditation on Brueghel's great painting "Carnival's Quarrel with Lent." The images, the conflicts with polarities depicted here, and the author's interpretations of a "pagan" Carnival and a "capitalist" Lent, in fact serve as a mediation through which the changing character of music's relationship to the politico-economic application of power is examined.

Brueghel's painting as a tableaux for our apprehension of a changing political economy of music is, mostly, daringly effective. Occasionally it is, as well, exceedingly oblique.

In the sacrificial stage, music was heard in all places of labour and was a daily feature of life. Crucially, however, music had a ritual aspect which led to its operation as a simulacrum of the ritual sacrifice of a scapegoat. Attali's accounting clearly demonstrates that music's role as a social integrator was the reconciliation of people to social order and, equally, to efface memory, to make people forget the general violence with which they were surrounded. Simultaneously, it served to stir revolt, fuel passion and subversion, in the expression of the festival spirit signifying humanity's freedom.

A conflict between two social orders--Carnival and Lent, Festival and Austerity, two relations to power--is revealed through Attali's rendering of Brueghel's masterpiece.

"But Brueghel, in his meditation on the possible forms of noise, could not have failed to hear how they hinge on systems of power. He thus outlined everything it was possible to outline; he showed that we must not read into the painting a meaning of history; that we must use it instead to listen to music, which creates a ritual order, then is represented as a simulacrum of order, finally passes over to the side of Lent and is sold like fish, compulsory nourishment (p.23)."

In the stage of "representation," music has become spectacle, attended at specific places. While in the earlier, sacrificial stage it did not generate wealth, here the musicians have become producers, enrolled in a division of labour. In this period the monarchy's exclusive possession of musical performances at court was eventually superceded by the rise of a merchant bourgeoisie, which purchased outright the performing rights of the musicians. Musicians ceased to be itinerant performers in village festivals to become the man-servants of royalty; later they no longer performed exclusively for their lord and master but for many clients, who now purchased a non-exclusive commodity. As representation, music served to enforce belief in the order and harmony newly established by mercantile power.

Attali's stages in the history of music's political economy, it should be noted, are not presented as fixed, immutable categories on vigil as new dogmas of musicological canon. The overlapping nature of these networks is such that the uneven development of music's distribution becomes a succession of "orders," each violated by noises prophetic of a nascent order carried within the old. This analysis is always a refreshing break from the formalistic theories and notions of genius--those inevitably divorced from the social and political realities behind them.

The advent of the ability to record sound, the repetition of the object in mass production, eclipsed music's representational function from within.

This stage of "repetition" encompasses our own era. It contains some of the more trenchant observations on music's position in a technocratic capitalism to have been advanced in some time (excepting selected writings on the social role of music in commodity culture by British music critic, Simon Frith).

Attali states that changes in musical production announced in the process of repetition constitute a whole new political economy, a significant "mutation" of man's relationship to history. Quite accurately, the main efforts of production are seen as no longer inherent to the creation of an object, but as occurring outside it, residing chiefly in the creation and recreation of a demand for the replica. In Attali's framework this is a herald of anonymity, of non-differentiation, and finally of death.

"For death, more generally, is present in the very structure of the repetitive economy: the stockpiling of use-time in the commodity object is fundamentally a herald of death. In effect, transforming use-time into a stockpileable object makes it possible to sell and stockpile rights to usage without actually using anything, to exchange ad infinitum without extracting pleasure from the object, without experiencing its function (p.126)."

The author's final stage of development, "composition," is meant to demonstrate future possibilities inherent within the subversive element always present in music--the emanciatory side which is presently being silenced in the anonymity of commodity culture's repetitive circus. Composition concerns our potential ability to compose music that is a response to this enforced silence, an entry into communication and political practice.

"Today, in embryonic form, beyond repetition, lies freedom: more than a new music, a fourth kind of musical practice. It heralds the arrival of new social relations. Music is becoming composition (p.20)."

This brief, final chapter sheds much light on one of Attali's introductory assertions that "this book is not theorizing about music, but through music." Following well-documented historical observations and penetrating analyses of music's role in our epoch, his stage of composition has all the romantic idealism of a retrospective attempt to re-establish an age of lost innocence. Is Jacques Attali, born in 1943, still enthralled by the "unfinished dream" of the 60s?

This is not a mere anti-sixties slam. Except for some comments on jazz, Attali at no point shows any indication that the popular music of the post-sixties period is anything but the natural outcome of the age of repetition. Repetitive and meaningless noise. "Jimmy" (some things are always lost in translation!) Hendrix, Janis Joplin, etc. all serve as exemplars of an era when the compositional or subversive element in music was at its height.

While that historical period may be much of what Attali claims for it, the relationship of politics to music (of a political awareness and response to the commodification of music) has undergone considerable positive change in the intervening twenty years. Today--in Third World musical influences, critical voices from punk to pop, and musicians' responses to political issues from apartheid to the elimination of farmland by Agri-business--the compositional nature of music is finding expression in areas Attali disregards or views as mere noise, providing further demonstration that the imposed silence of the well-oiled machinery of repetition is indeed doing its job well.

Throughout the book, Attali's prose is often a mix of apostrophic rhetoric combined with metaphoric flourishes. This trans-coding is accomplished in an eclectic post-modern style, which transforms theory from brittle pedantry to an associative exercise in establishing connections between one set of provocative ideas and another. As earlier stated, this makes for fascinating but always difficult reading. Paralleling the thesis on music's twin role as social integrator and subverter, Attali's language also operates on two levels. Often where his analysis calls for precision, apostrophic polarities are substituted, reducing much of the thrust of his argument to the ethereal, utopian postulates.

The final chapter raises a necessary, evaluative, question: has this entire book all been "noise signifying nothing"? Well not quite. Despite its tendency to implode toward the end, Attali's work stands out as an adventuresome analysis of the political economy of music. Its challenge to calcified critical thinking is undeniable. It can only revitalize discussion on the connections between political power, ideology and the role of music in the current cybernetic phase of capitalism's twilight years.

It is out of such explorations as Attali's that the collective freedom to compose may gain a stronger political articulation.

__James Dennis Corcoran__ is working on a book about the jazz scene in Toronto in the 1950s.

A listing of academic, political and cultural events, compiled by DL Simmons, Tom Kemple, Kathleen Kern with special assistance from John Farrell in Vancouver. This section aims to bring together the various events, particularly in Canada, which are not generally publicized. Information to be published in future quarterly issues of border/lines should be sent to us at Bethune College, York University, 4700 Keele St. North York, Ontario, Canada M3J 1P3.

POLITICAL AND CULTURAL EVENTS

ASIAN NEW WORLD -- Vancouver, June. The Video Inn is organizing a major video exhibition to take place in Vancouver during the Asia Pacific Festival. Focus will be on the work of Asian video artists and independent media producers living and working in the new world. Contact: Video Inn, 1160 Hamilton St, Vancouver, BC, V6B 2S5. (604)688-4336.

PRAIRIE RENDEZ-VOUS SCULPTURE SYMPOSIUM -- on the South Saskatchewan Riverbank in Saskatoon, July 5-25. Write the Prairie Sculptors Association, 222-24th Street East, Saskatoon, SK, S7K OK5. (306)664-4494.

TRENT INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF POPULAR CULTURE (TISPOC) -- Peterborough. The Trent Institute for the Study of Popular Culture, an archive based research centre with a focus on post-War North American media development, seeks donations of magazines, music, and video material. Tax receipts available. Contact with fellow collectors and researchers also sought. Write Box 153, Peter Robinson College, Trent University, Peterborough, ON, K9J 7B8.

INDEX/DIRECTORY OF WOMEN'S MEDIA -- The Index/Directory provides a network of existing women's media, ideas women have on the overall issues of restructuring the communications system and aims to increase communication among women nationally and internationally. The directory is available for $12 from the Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press (WIFP), 3306 Ross Place NW, Washington, DC, 200008. (202)966-7783.

TORONTO DISARMAMENT NETWORK (TDN) MOVE-A-THON -- Toronto, 14 June. TDN has organized this event to raise funds for the disarmament movement and your organization. Participants may collect pledges and walk, run, or rollerskate. Call (416)535-8005.

ENVIRONMENT WEEK -- 1-7 June. In honour of World Environment Day (3 June), Environment Canada is sponsoring a Canada-wide Environment Week. Special media programs and promotional materials will be made available. Public meetings will be held to confront such issues as extending the Environment Assessment Act to the private sector. The goal is to organize activities which will stimulate long term popular interest in the environmental movement. Contact your regional office of Environment Canada, or your local environmental group.

WOMEN AND WORDS/LES FEMMES ET LES MOTS -- Vancouver, 9-22 August. Third annual summer school/writing retreat for women, sponsored by West Coast Women and Words. Workshops in fiction theory, creative documentary, playwriting, and poetry. Guest readers. Write or phone: West Word Three, Box 65563, Station F, Vancouver, BC, V6N 4B0. (604)872-8014.

BASKETRY FOCUS 87 -- Toronto, 16-18 October. Twelve international speakers and workshop leaders. Lectures and workshops on contemporary, traditional and native basketry techniques, design style, conservation, materials. Exhibitions. Pre-conference tour. Information: Jean Johnson, 235 Queen's Quay W, Toronto, ON, M5V 1A2. (416)869-8447.

ANIMAL LIBERATION FRONT (ALF) -- Toronto. For the past several months ALF non-violent activity aimed at destroying the property of animal exploiters in Toronto has increased dramatically. Perhaps as a signal to the Front, the police, being aware of this increase in direct action, are treating the recent arrests of five ALF members as might be expected for the most politically "subversive" activity. Charges have multiplied, and legal costs for defense have mounted -- evidence of the State's recognition that property is valued more than life, and "illegal" political action is the most dangerous and immediate threat. In response to this intimidation, fundraising and educational events including films, raffles, concerts, and speakers are being planned throughout 1987 -- joint efforts of the ALF Support Group and the Toronto Animal Rights Defense Group. Write: Freebird, c/o ALFSG (Canada), PO Box 915, Station F, Toronto, ON, M4Y 2N9.

THIRD WORLD ISSUES

SOLIDARITY WITH THE STUDENTS OF EL SALVADOR -- San Salvador, 27 July-2 August. 2nd annual event organized by the Canadian University Students in solidarity with AGEUS (CUSS-AGEUS). Scheduled activities include: observation of a regional conference on the debt crisis in Latin America; a musical and cultural celebration; a march commemorating the 1975 assassination of University of El Salvador (UES) students by government forces; meetings with the Human Rights Commission of El Salvador (non-governmental), the Mother's Committee, AGEUS, the Rector's office of the UES, a refugee camp, and if possible meetings with the American Ambassador and the Minister of Education. Contact as soon as possible: CUSS-AGEUS, PO Box 272, Station M, Toronto, ON, M6S 4T3. (416)536-5556.

PEACE BRIGADES INTERNATIONAL -- is seeking people prepared to live in El Salvador for 1 to 2 years. Needed ability to speak Spanish and willingness to engage in education about non-violence. Contact PBI at 175 Carlton St, Toronto, ON, M5A 2K3. (416)964-1881.

FMLN RADIO FARABUNDI MARTI -- voice of the Salvadorean people in struggle, broadcasts every day from El Salvador at 12:30 and 7:00 pm, at 6.9 MHZ on the 40 meter band. Write: R.F. Marti, Apartado Postal No. 32-80, Managua, Nicaragua, C.A.

COALITION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN GRENADA -- Calgary. In January, the former Attorney General of the United States, Mr. Ramsey Clark, spoke at a meeting organized in cooperation with the University (of Calgary) Community for Central America. His largely first-hand account of events since the murder of Maurice Bishop, the arrest of the 17 members of the New Jewel Movement, and the subsequent American invasion of the island in 1983 left little doubt why the international press has been denied access to the prisoners and the island. Contact the Latin American Studies Committee (LACS), University of Calgary, AB, T2N 1N4. (403)220-6928.

MEDICAL AID FOR PALESTINE -- a non-profit association in support of the Palestine Red Crescent (equivalent of Red Cross) has issued an urgent appeal for contributions to the emergency services needed for the Shatil, Burj-el-barajneh and Rashidiyeh camps in Lebanon. 50,000 residents have been under siege for months, and widespread hunger and starvation has been reported. Their hospital has been bombed and sanitation disrupted. Dr. Fathi Arafat of the Red Crescent urges aid but, as importantly, international moral pressure to be exerted to end this siege and allow food and medicine to move into the camps. Write MAP at 300 Carré St. Louis, Suite 310, Montreal, PQ, H2X 1A5.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC EXPERIENCE -- annually arranges for Canadians to spend a summer living with Dominican families and tapping into an extensive network of contacts and resource people involved in community organizations. Information and insights into the economic, political and social realities of that country may be gained. Contact: Youth Corps, 80 Sackville St, Toronto, ON, M5A 2E5. (416)863-6702.

DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN -- Windsor, 8-10 October. A joint conference organized by the Ontario Cooperative Program in Latin American and Caribbean Studies (OCPLACS) and the Canadian Association of Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CALACS). OCPLACS sessions will emphasize: Alternative models of development; evaluations of contributions by non-government organizations (NGOs); the role of the Canadian government (CIDA, IDRC, IDO, External Affairs). CALACS panels will deal with 6 themes: democratization; cooperative research programs; evaluation of Canadian solidarity activities; multidisciplinary perspectives on Spanish colonization in America; Latin American and Caribbean ethnic organizations and media in Canada. In addition, there will be a major symposium of research focussing on Mexico. Contact: Stuart H. Surlin, Dept. of Communication Studies, University of Windsor, Windsor, ON, N9B 3P4. (519)253-4232, ext. 2910.

CONFERENCES IN CANADA

TORONTO COMMUNITY VIDEOTEC WORKSHOPS -- Toronto, 8 April-26 May. Sessions scheduled: presentation and workshop by Montreal artist and sculptor Nell Tenhaaf; learning computing through logo; desktop publishing. Write or phone TCV at 1179A Queen Street West, Suite 001, Toronto, ON, M6K 3C5. (416)535-8601.

STANDIN' THE GAFF -- Sydney, 20-30 May. Sponsored by the Canadian Popular Theatre Alliance and the International Festival of Popular Theatre. Performers include: Sistren from Jamaica, Aloke Ray of India, Teocayani of Nicaragua, a Southern African group and others. Development educators may apply to a travel fund. Wide range of people invited to attend. Registration forms: Standin' the Gaff, PO Box 1796, Sydney, NS, B1P 6W4.

OUTSIDE THE NUCLEAR CLUB -- Toronto, 10-13 June. An exploration of options for non-nuclear powers in promoting peace and security. Information: Office of the Master, 258E Atkinson, York University, 4700 Keele St, North York, ON, M3J 1P3.

ECOLOGY OF COMMUNICATION -- Montreal, 21-25 May. 37th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association, highlighting jointly sponsored meetings with the Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research International, the Canadian Communication Association, the Québec Communication Research Association, and the International Association for Mass Communication Research. Le Centre Sheraton Hotel, Montréal, PQ.

TORONTO SEMIOTIC CIRCLE -- Toronto, 1-26 June, 1987. 9th International Institute for Semiotic and Structural Studies (ISISSS 87). This year's emphases will be on theories of representation, semantics, feminism, artificial intelligence, human ethology, and semiotics of and in India. Deadline for application is 30 April. Write or phone Prof. Paul Bouissac, NFH 305, Victoria College, University of Toronto, 73 Queen's Park Cr, Toronto, ON, M5S 1K7. (416)585-4456.

LEARNED SOCIETIES CONFERENCE -- Hamilton, ON, 24 May-8 June, 1987. Sessions will be held by the Association for Canadian Studies, the Association for the Study of Canadian Radio and Television, the Society for Socialist Studies, and the Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory, among many others. Also note that the Canadian Society for Hermeneutics and Postmodern Thought will be meeting for the first time as an independent society in a session entitled: The Hermeneutics of Self-Deception: Deconstruction and False Consciousness. Write or phone The Secretariat, Learned Societies Conference 1987, Room 144, Divinity College, McMaster University, 1280 Main St W, Hamilton, ON, L8S 4K1. (416)525-9140 ext. 2577.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PENAL ABOLITION (ICOPA III) -- Montreal, 15-19 June. This 3rd conference will enable ex-prisoners, members of cultural, religious, and community organizations, and members of the legal and academic communities to pool resources in seeking non-repressive responses to problems and social conflicts. ICOPA was born originally of efforts by the Quaker Committee on Jails and Justice. This year's central themes will be: the concept of punishment, its application by the State through law and through the penal system, and abolitionist strategies for the future. Contact ICOPA III, 1030 rue Cherrier, Suite 300, Montreal, PQ, H2L 1H9. (514)522-5965.

INTERNATIONAL MALCOLM LOWRY SYMPOSIUM -- Vancouver, 10-13 May. Write: Sherrill Grace, Department of English, University of British Columbia, 397- 1873 East Mall, Vancouver, BC, V6T 1W5.

CROSS-CULTURALISM IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE -- Ottawa, 14-17 May. Sponsored by the Children's Literature Association, c/o Barbara Garner, Department of English, Carleton University, Ottawa, ON, K1S 5B6.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON STATE-COOPERATIVE RELATIONS -- Sherbrooke, PQ, 31 May-4 June. The conference will bring together representatives of the governmental, university, and cooperative sectors from countries both North and South. Sponsored by the Institut de récherche et d'enseignement pour les coopératives (IRECUS), in collaboration with the Co-operative Union of Canada and Le Conseil canadien de la coopération. Contact Nicole Saint-Martin, Chairwoman, IRECUS, Université de Sherbrooke, Sherbrooke, PQ, J1K 2R1. (819)821-7220.

ACCESS OF DISABLED PERSONS TO RECREATION, LEISURE AND HERITAGE EXPERIENCES -- Waterloo, 10-12 June, 1987. Contact: Sharon Lucky, Project Coordinator, Access Heritage, Heritage Resources Centre, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, ON, N2L 3G1. (519)885-1211 ext. 3906.

ACCULTURATION AND INTOLERANCE: GLOBAL, NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES -- Halifax, 14-17 October. Contact: GIACS, St. Mary's University, Halifax, NS, B3H-3C3.

TALKING PICTURES: A CONFERENCE ON ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY -- Toronto, 15-18 October. Topics for conference events will run the gamut from current critical and theoretical concerns, to the more practical aspects of photographic practice such as exhibiting, publishing, and collecting. Panels, talks and presentations will fall under three groupings: Issues in Contemporary Photography, Systems of Influence, and Points of Crossover. Organized by Photo-Communique Magazine, PO Box 129, Station M, Toronto, ON, M6S 4T2. (416)868-1443.

WOMEN AND WELLBEING -- Winnipeg, 6-8 November. Sponsored by the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAW). Potential topics include health/illness issues, strength, empowerment, abilities/disabilities, peace, economics and employment, marriage, family, and other relationships arts and culture, stress, institutional problems and supports. Emphasis will be placed on a lifespan perspective. The hope is to achieve a conference that will actually enhance the wellbeing of its participants. Write or phone: CRIAW Program Committee, c/o Dr. Katherine Schultz, University of Winnipeg, 515 Portage Ave, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 2E9. (204)949 1653.

WINTER CITIES SHOWCASE 88 -- Edmonton, 15-19 February, 1988. An international exposition and forum on winter's social, cultural and economic possibilities. Contact: Winter Cities Showcase 88, PO Box 1988, Edmonton, AB, T5J 4A9. (403)428-3576.

CONFERENCES BEYOND THE BORDER

MARXIST SCHOLARS CONFERENCE -- Berkeley, California, 12-15 November. Contact: Jack Kurzweil, Electrical Engineering Dept., San Jose State University, San Jose, CA 95192.

WORLD CONGRESS OF COMPARATIVE EDUCATION -- Rio de Janeiro, 6-10 July. The principle theme of this year's (sixth) Congress is "the current world crisis and the changes in education which arise from it in each country and in interrelationships between countries." For further information please contact Conference Travel of Canada Inc., 102 Bloor St. W., Suite 620, Toronto, ON, M5M 1M8. (416)922-8161.

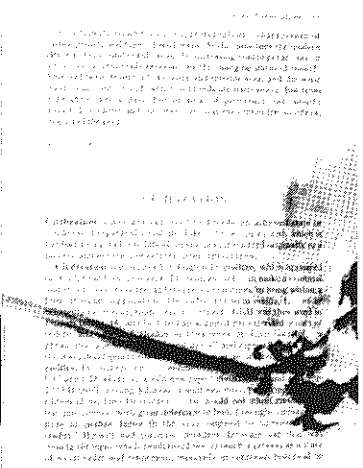
RETHINKING THE TRANSCENDENTAL: THE PHILOSOPHY OF JACQUES DERRIDA -- Perugia, 13 July-7 August. 12th annual session of the Collegium Phaenomenologicum, including four one-week courses and additional seminars and reading workshops. Write: Rodolphe Gasché, Director, Program in Comparative Literature, 638 Samuel Clemens Hall, SUNY at Buffalo, Buffalo, NY, 14260.

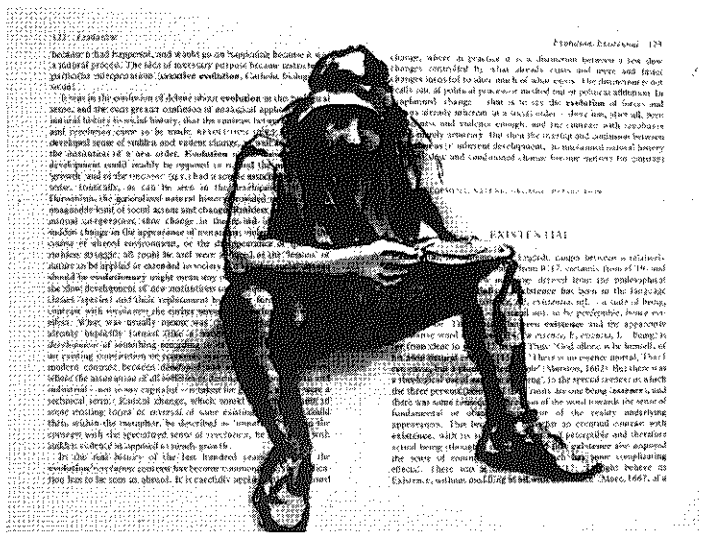
INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON PLANNING AND DESIGN THEORY (ICPDT) -- Boston, 17-20 August. This multidisciplinary Congress aims to disseminate existing knowledge, and to stimulate research and development. It covers theory, methodology, research and practice, integrating the themes and sessions of five concurrent Conferences. Contact James G. Peterson PhD, Conference Coordinator: ICPDT, 3717 East Karstens Drive #4, Madison, WI, 53704. (608)263-6404.

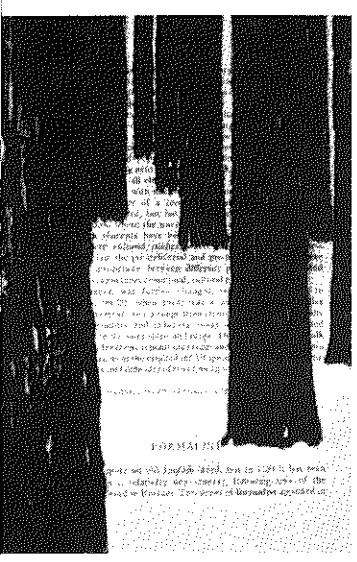
INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT -- Barbados, 31 May-4 June. Working group discussions will be oriented around economic, social and environmental aspects of development in balance with the environment in the Caribbean and worldwide. Write or phone: IAIA 87, c/o 700-789 West Pender St, Vancouver, BC, V6C 1H2. (604)666-2431.

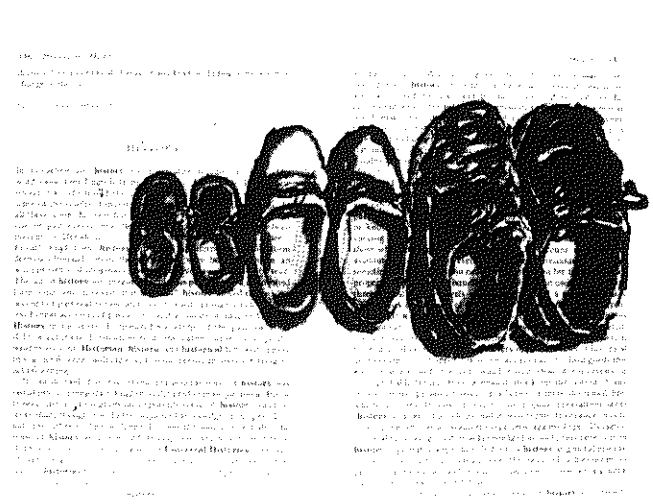
INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICANISTS -- Amsterdam, 4-8 July, 1988. Deadline for submissions and symposia proposals, 31 May, 1987. A multidisciplinary forum in six official languages. Write: 46th International Congress of Americanists, CEDLA, Keizersgracht 395-397, 1016 EK Amsterdam, The Netherlands. (020)5253498.

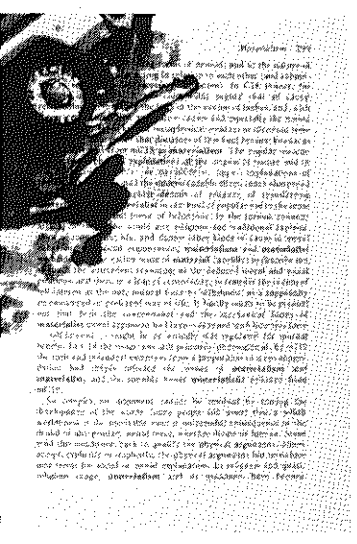
SCANNER

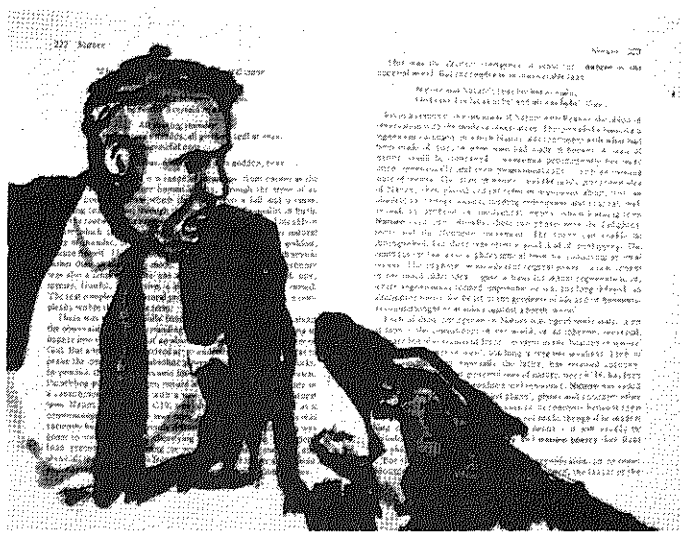


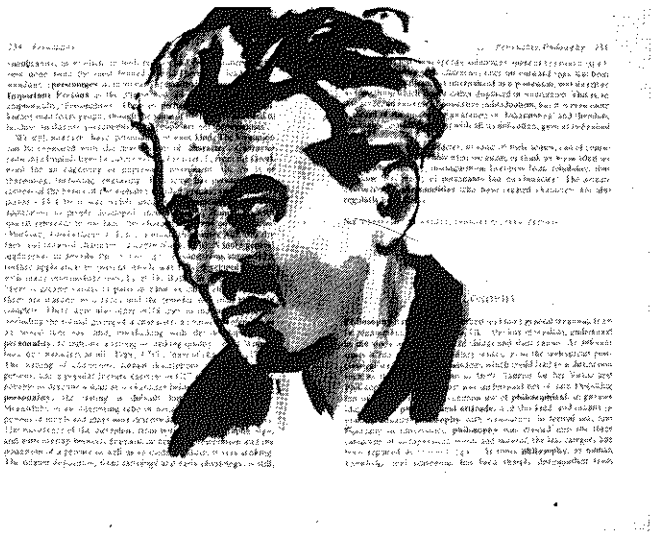












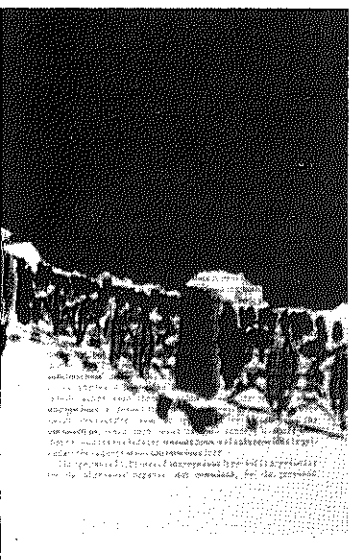


Photo: Tom Moore

Certain Terms: Collection
Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Stringer

dominant. **Historian** remains
Historical relates mainly but not
but **historic** is most often used
destiny. **History** itself retains its
hands, *teaches* or *shows* us most k
every kind of imaginable future.

See DETERMINE, EVOLUTION

HUMA

Humanity belongs to a complex g
humane, humanism, humanist,
in some or all of their senses, parti
for *man* (*homo, hominis*, L – ma
belonging to men).

It is necessary first to understan
and **humane**, which only becam
eC18. Before this **humane** was