

Male writers are penetrating

With the world of big time Canadian literature almost completely dominated by women, it's encouraging to know that men are creating a foothold in the empire of Atwoods and Laurence's. The *Getaway's* Helen Gurley, arranged an interview with Melvin Aesthete, the leader of a group of young male writers who are beginning to write about our country from a male point of view.

Getaway: A lot of people might think that we have enough male writers as it is. Could you shed some light on this issue?

Aesthete: These are the same people who think George Eliot was a man. Does anybody seriously think W.O. Mitchell is a man? He's obviously a woman.

and an old one at that. These so called male writers are just women who have taken on male pen names to cash in on men's liberation. The people who control things from behind the scenes are still women; you don't even get published in the little magazines in this country if you're not female. It's a closed club.

Getaway: What issues do you see as being distinctively male — what is unique about the male perspective?

Aesthete: A male is in tune with the natural world. All that time spent hunting deer and wild fowl lets him flow with rhythms that are organic and real. The man doesn't fortify himself in some sterile kitchen with a micro-wave

oven and the latest selection of electronic wonders. He gets close to the earth, he develops an intuition about things.

Getaway: You really believe there is such a thing as men's intuition then?

Aesthete: Sure there is. There's nothing mysterious about it though; it's just another name for a power that people have when they let themselves be open to experience and discard a lot of the old categories. The male knows when he's going to draw that winning poker hand or when his long shot is going to come in at the track, he doesn't have to calculate, like a woman drawing up a shopping list or calculating the amount of her alimony payment.

Getaway: You are currently working on a new novel about men's consciousness. Could you tell me something about it?

Aesthete: Certainly. It's about a male who tries to break into professional nursing and his struggles to gain the acceptance of the females who control the hospital scene. The hero's a lonely sensitive man, and he has to cope with a bunch of insensitive, callous types who won't admit he's good for anything other than a good roll in the hay.

Getaway: Have you got anything else you're working on for future publication?

Aesthete: Certainly. I'm thinking of doing a novel on how it feels to be a wounded war veteran who hangs around with bull fighters, and another about a man who goes to sea with a bunch of other men to hunt

down a big white whale. I think it's important for the reading public to get to understand the sorts of challenges and pressures a man has to endure. We've always been cast in the role of victims, you know.

Getaway: Have men always been shut out of the writing scene, or have they just been ignored by female historians who write history solely from a female point of view?

Aesthete: There are a lot of male writers who have been ignored. Did you know that Shakespeare was a man, and Dostoevsky, and Homer, Goethe, Chaucer, Tolstoi, Dante and Ovid.

Getaway: Homer? Didn't he live around the same time as Sappho?

Aesthete: You can sneer if you want, Helen, but we've come a long way already.

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Larry Flint

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