

Magazines

The life spans of Canadian magazines vary greatly.

Some live scarcely longer than a fruitfly, many make it through a decade or more and a precious few outlive their founders' children. *Saturday Night*, once a weekly and now a monthly, is Canada's oldest. It was founded in 1887. *Chickadee* is among the youngest, like many of its readers, only three. Between them are journals of fashion, opinion, politics, poetry, news and nonsense.

In this issue of CANADA TODAY/D'AUJOURD'HUI we talk about a few of Canada's magazines and the people who put them out.

Saturday Night

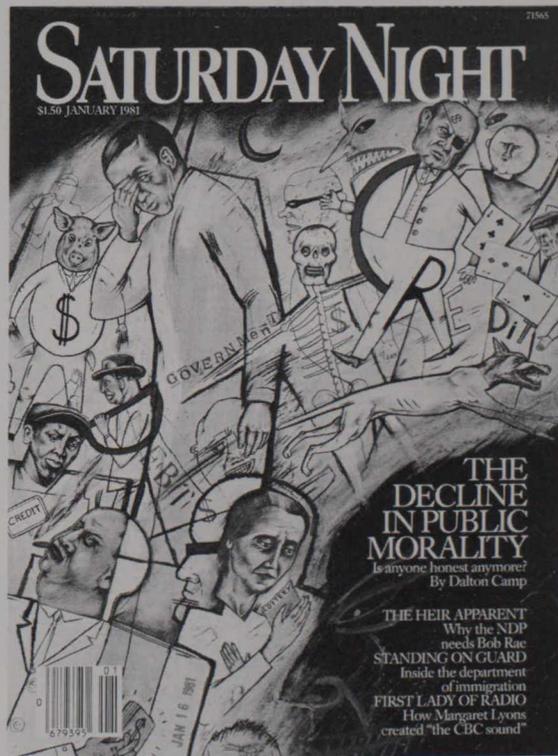
Saturday Night is nice looking without being spectacularly beautiful—sometimes its covers are rendered by artists, sometimes by photographers. It covers a multitude of subjects, it is serious and often spritely and its writers are intelligent, perceptive and informed.

It might remind Americans a little of *Harper's* or *Atlantic*, and in the words of its editor, Robert Fulford, "it shares some attitudes with them and with certain other magazines." Unlike them, it cuts across intellectual lines—if *People* is lowbrow and *Harper's* high, *Saturday Night* is probably high middle.

Some 130,000 people buy *Saturday Night*, which makes it a mass magazine—to match it in terms of the American population, *Harper's* would have to have a circulation of 1,500,000 (instead of its current figure of 325,000.)

Its goals, in Fulford's words, are to "speak to people concerning public life, cultural life—and by cultural life I mean sports as well as books. Our articles range from stories on energy to ones on the careers of provincial political leaders."

As for style, he says, "we do as well as we can." That is pretty good—*Saturday Night* occasionally offers pieces by Mordecai Richler, Margaret Atwood and Robertson Davies (who has been in and out of its pages for forty years), as well as many others who are highly talented if less well known. To get the best, it pays the highest rates in the country, \$500 for short pieces and as much as \$3,500 for blockbusters. It searches its writers out—when Fulford spots an unknown with high



potential he calls him or her up, and, by his estimate, about half of the magazine's best stories last year were by newcomers.