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All I really need is a song in my heart, food in my belly, and love in my family. - Raffi

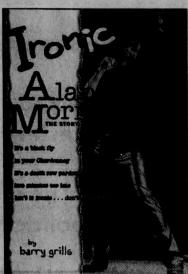
Life story of Alanis Morisette premature, dense and repetitive; reads like diva-worship

Ironic: Alanis Morissette-The Story By Barry Grills Quarry Music Books

DAMIAN PENNY

THE BRUNSWICKAN

In reviewing a book about Alanis Morissette, fairness requires me to admit that I do not ider myself a fan. It's not so much her usic I mind as her overexposure; it seemed like every radio station spent the whole summer playing this woman every ten minutes. After "Ironic" or "You Learn" or whatever eated over and over again for months at a time, I was convinced that nothing could be more annoying. That is, until I plowed through Barry Grill's Ironic, one of the most stultifying biographies I have ever read. This book is the literary equivalent of being stuck in an elevator with a Muzak version of "You oughta Know"



In a way, Grill's book is aimed as much at eptics like me as Morissette's true fans. He is content to tell the story of her rise from er-middle-class kid to child actress to eenybopper pop star to alternative diva- which would have been interesting. Instead, Grills trempts to make some kind of big statement t Morissettes's position as a spokesperson is disaffected generation, and to place her rk in the proper context compared with her

an unadulterated performer who speaks her own mind, bares her soul in her lyrics, and in the process speaks for the anxieties of Generation X- and repeats it, over and over and over, with a few biographical tidbits thrown in. I lost count of how many times the author complains about the rise of the free market and the corporatedominated society, or how many times he babbles bout rock music's role as a societal vanguard. wondered what audience Grills was writing for; even though the cover would suggest a biography aimed at the singer's young fans, the writing is so dense and repetitive that most of them will give up long before finishing it.

are likely to be put off by Grills' journalistic This book is the literary equivalent of being stuck in an

elevator with a Muzak version of "You oughta Know" being played constantly.

skills. He relies heavily on previously-published sources for his biographical material, showing little evidence of any original investigation or interviews. Worse, though, is his way of presenting this information; he quotes from many of these articles at length, repeating their contents for paragraphs at a time. I didn't do an exact count of anything, but I think the quoted material in *Ironic* takes up more space than Grill's own writing.

Missed opportunities abound. Morissette has often pointed to her Roman Catholic upbringing as a source of her angst, yet Grills brushes off as a source of her angst, yet Gruis brushes off the subject in one paragraph. It is mentioned that she never actually received any royalties from MCA for her early dance-pop albums, but the expected investigation into the record company never comes. Worst of all, Grills never seriously deals with the daunting task Morissette focus in coming up with a unconstitled follows up faces in coming up with a successful follow-up to the blockbuster Jagged Little Pill album. The history of rock is littered with artists who couldn't maintain the momentum after a blockbuster recording, but the author says little about how his subject will confront this problem. Strangely, the few biographical details which are provided seem to work against Grills' thesis.

He praises Morissette as the honest voice of a bled generation and attacks critics who claim that she has been aiming for blockbuster musical success since she was a child, that she was supported by upper-middle-class parents who spent a lot of money aiding her early in her career, and that most of her current angst stems from the pressures of being so successful at so not a very interesting one at that- mess are likely to come out of the experience book length. Grills even more skeptical. Ironic, don't you

Parody of Martha Stuart laughs at Queen of **Domesticity**

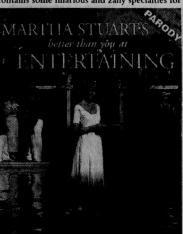
Martha Stuart's Better Than You at Entertaining

Tom Connor & Jim Downey HarperCollins Publishers

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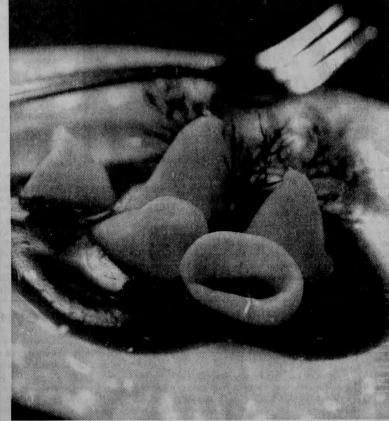
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Ever wondered what to make when the Pope comes visiting? How about an innovative way to have a garden party a la real garden stuff? Well look no more, because the authors of Is Marth Stuart Living? have created a parody of that Queen of Domesticity in Martha Stuart's Better Than You at Entertaining. This book is a hilarious spoof of the various Martha Stuart 'occassion' books that are currently in vogue at tores near you. This particular book highlights home entertainment for regular and rather unusual occassions. Special events such as Circumcision Day, Papal Visits, Christmas and Valentine's Day are all described in rich detail. Martha Stuart's Better Than You at Entertaining contains some hilarious and zany specialties for



(stenciling a coffin design). The humourous Martha Stuart's haute couteu

those special events in ones own home. There context of this book brings about a remarkably are recipes for event foods (Smoked Woodchuck entertaining parody of the woman who exudes for Garden Parties or how about Cocktail domestic resourcefulness. This was an enjoyable Weiners with Swedish Meatballs for book to read and laugh over, as America's Circumcision Days), decorating tips (how to contribution to household affluence powers her work around rigor mortis) and of course what's way through comical situations. Connor and a Martha Stuart book without those handy crafts Downey have captured the funnier side of



ON THE MENU FOR CIRCUMCISION DINNER: CALAMARI TIPS IN RED SAUCE

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Want to get your hands on some wonderful (and free) books? Just answer a few simple questions and you could win five books. Drop your answers, phone number and e-mail address off to Rm. 35 of the SUB.

What books were reviewed in issue 24 of The Bruns? Who are four Canadian authors? Which Canadian book became an Oscar winning movie? (This is the question for dummies)

