

Mange. . .

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chef more scope than in the usual setting. He seems to have a knack with left-over beef; his "beef stroganoff", "goulash," and "cottage pie" all were delicious, if not precisely classical. I also remember with pleasure a fine Irish stew in casserole and a casserole of left-over pork called "Pork Marengo." Other dishes, such as chicken a la king, hamburgers, grilled fish, and steak, have been pretty much run of the mill. The fish would be improved by the serving of Tartar sauce along side. Vegetables are usually the bete noire of institutional cooking, and they are not often very good here, except when they are used in casseroles or stews. Luckily, the generous juice and salad selections give you other ways of guarding yourself against scurvy and vitamin deficiencies. No special blame attaches to anyone for this; it is simply impossible to cook vegetables properly in the quantities required at a large university. (A couple weeks ago a noble but futile experiment of corn on the cob was tried. My piece came out raw in the middle. It was interesting to see corn chowder appear as the soup shortly thereafter).

For some reason I haven't yet figured out, all the dishes I've tried that really seemed to fail were colored white. A macaroni dish was dreadful. So was a tapioca custard. With one item called "scalloped potatoes" I was simply unable to continue: My only chronic complaint, in fact, is on a white substance, allegedly a food -- though it tastes more like a cross between contraceptive foam and mildew library paste.

I refer to instant mashed potatoes, so-called, a substance transportation of which should be made illegal on bridges and through tunnels, as is the case with explosives and dangerous chemicals.

There, now you've had my gripe for today.

Leonard Cohen as Canadian content

Whether he is coming here to sing or not, Mr. Cohen's novels are about to be reviewed -- unaffected, I hasten to announce, by the fact that I fruitlessly invested \$6.50 in tickets for his concert.

Virtually all of you will know his music and many of you must know some of his poems; I hereby recommend his novels for their perspective, linear though it may be. (The National Film Board's movie on him is also pretty good.)

Of *The Favorite Game* I shall limit myself to saying two things, the one being a paragraph of "appreciation" -- as we so tenderly title our blurbs--and the other being a bit of gossip.

1. Appreciation. Read *The Favorite Game* if for no other reason than that if you wander around intellectual Canada at all you are bound sooner or later to meet hung-up intellectual Jewish boys from Montreal and you might as well now know something about it. (I'm from Halifax myself).

2. Gossip. This is slightly complex, and I'm using it to introduce *Beautiful Losers* which I think is the more significant of the two novels. *Favorite Game*, as well as being in an Avon paperback, is also now published in the like form by McClelland and Stewart "The Canadian Publishers" in their New Canadian Library series and marketed at the non-competitive price of \$2.35.

I have an intense dislike of paying more than a dollar for a paperback, anyway, but McClelland and Stewart prices have always outraged me: Signet, Avon, Bantam, Dell, and even Penguin with a high trans-Atlantic mark-up are usually better buys.

and others have been doing for years in the States.

... AND THE REVOLUTION

But in the end there are better things to be than worthy: I suggest revolutionary, which the book is, both in its final vision of the Revolution, and in its perspective on North American society, which is bound up with the Indian.

Leslie A. Fiedler's *Return of the Vanishing American* speaks of American literature as classifiable into the Northern, the Southern, the Eastern, and the Western. The latter is anything with an Indian in it, not a cowboy as the movies might suggest, and our mythology of the Red Man is complex. In pointing out the re-emergence of Indians in contemporary fiction he relies heavily on Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and on *Beautiful Losers*.

I do not wish to attempt to give a plot summary of *Beautiful Losers*, but it partly involves the search for Catherine Tekakwitha, 1656-1680, an Indian girl who for the Jesuits and others was as a saint. The contemporary part of the narrative is in Quebec of the Sixties. In a petition for Catherine's beatification it says: "Le Canada et les Etats Unis puiseront de nouvelles forces au contact de ce lis tres pur des bords de la Mohawk et des rives du Saint-Laurent."

Purity is not the point, as the frenzied comes in *Beautiful Losers* amply evidence. Most important is the re-establishment of contact with the peoples whose land and way of life we are guilty of destroying. The escape from civilization to the good companion in the wilderness is a major preoccupation of our writing, and the organization of hippies into Indian tribes is a contemporary actualization of this ideal.

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