

One afternoon in March, I went into the major record stores in downtown area and surveyed the music selection. While many stores are concentrating on Top 40 Music, there were a few surprises. Of the 7 shops I visited, here is a description of their current stock, their prices, and other comments:

1. Kelly's (Jasper Avenue and 100 Street)

-sells almost exclusively commercial rock, with a smidgeon of jazz and folk, a lot of country and western and a token classical record or two. At the time I visited them, their prices for most best selling albums, were around \$3.98—definitely the cheapest in the city. However, their prices seem to vary from week to week, usually averaging around \$4.48 for a hit album. Likely, due to the recent opening of A&A records, they have temporarily reduced their prices.

Most of the non-hit albums sell for around \$5.18. Their folk

city's record shops- viewed

section consists of the big selling "acoustic" albums of the month.

Also, it is almost impossible to order a record from them. Most of their stock is new releases, sent from Vancouver.

2. Melody Lane (Jasper Ave. and 104 Street)

-this used to be the best record shop in town for special orders and obscure records. They have deteriorated quite a bit, however, and their records are now mostly commercial, selling for around \$5.98. They will still order records for you, but you have to pay full list price for them (\$6.29 and up).

There are a few folk records there; I found one Cisco Houston album on the Archive of Folk Music label (\$3.49), plus two Woodie Guthrie records on Tradition (\$3.29).

Millers (101 St., just off 101A Ave.)

-they have no labelled "folk" section, but I found a Doc Watson album (Home Again for \$4.88), a 12 string guitar instruction set (2 records plus book) for \$13.98, a Folk Singer's Guitar Guide (\$8.78), plus a lot of modern singer-songwriter stuff, price ranging from \$4.18 to \$5.50. Also, they got a lot of old rock 'n roll. There's a few cutouts (records deleted from the Canadian catalogue) selling for \$1.98 or less—but most of them seem to be pretty bad.

4. Olympic Music (101 St., just north of Jasper Ave.)

-although this store specializes in easy-listening music you can often find good records for

surprisingly cheap prices (eg. Steeleye Span album for \$3.98), but you have to dig around a bit. Olympic also specializes in deleted albums (eg. Emmitt Rhodes, Jose Feliciano, Roy Acuff, Jake Holmes, etc.) for prices ranging from 49 cents to \$1.98.

5. National Music

-definitely the most improved record store over the year.

Their prices are now fairly competitive (\$4.19 to \$5.19). They have a lot of interesting records in their rhythm and blues, and sacred categories -eg. Lightning Hopkins (\$3.29), Odetta (\$2.98), Snooks Eaglin—on Folkways \$4.98), a 6 record set for 12.98 with Pete Seeger, Ledbelly, Glenn Yarborough, Rod McKuen, Josh White, Big Bill Broonzy, etc.

6. A&A Records (downstairs from the Place for Pants on 101 Street and 101 A Ave)

-they have a fair amount of Arhoolie records (mostly blues) for only \$4.29, plus a few European imports for prices around \$5.09). They're expecting a lot more in and also have a pretty good jazz and classical section.

When asked how long their prices on Arhoolie records were going to be that cheap, they answered that this was their regular price. (I have my doubts, however, since London Records, distributors of Arhoolie, have just raised the wholesale prices on these records). I also asked if they were going to get in any Folkways records. The manager had never heard of the label.

Their prices on most hit and non-hit albums are quite reasonable (\$4.49 and up), with a lot of current releases going for prices of \$3.98, \$3.69, and even \$2.98. If the prices stay this low, and if they improve their folk selection, they could become the best record store in the city.

7. Opus 69 (on Jasper Avenue, 105 Street)

-their selection keeps getting better everytime I come into the place. While the prices are a bit more expensive than Millers or A&A, their selection makes up for this. Also, the staff are quite knowledgeable about most types of music, and are very easy to talk to.

Their Blues section is by far the best in the city. They have divided it into categories of Chicago Blues, British Blues, Texas Blues, Cajun and Southern Dance Music, and Negro Spirituals and Prison Songs. Also, they have some old time country-stringband stuff.

I also found some interesting international Folkways and European stuff; for example, Algerian Berber Music, a 3 record set of Everest called Anthology of Music of Black Africa (\$10.49), a record of Eskimo Songs from Alaska and a 3 record set of Buddhist chants (\$9.58).

Larry Saidman

music notes

BITS & PIECES: Daffodil Records is releasing the *Small Faces* golden hit "Itchycoo Park" from the album "The Autumn Stone"... Don't be overly surprised to see a *James Taylor-Carly Simons* television special in a month... New

Edward Bear single is "Close Your Eyes"... *The Guess Who* out with a new single "Orly" written by Burton... *Neil Young's* recent Vancouver concert was taped for a possible 'live' album... *Steven Stills* married French singer Veronique

in England... A two-hour Sunday night rock show coming up soon on CBC-radio. It'll be a regular feature... Canadian producer *Flo & Eddie's* "Afterglow" single. The tune is an old *Steve Marriott-Ron Lane* song.

Larry LeBlanc

weekend- previewed

A real live, honest to goodness, jugband has been formed in the city. It consists of a mandolin, banjo, washboard, guitar, harmonica, and several voices. The group call themselves Joe Jug Band, and consist of Don Lecki, Paddy Byrne, Peter Mitchell, Rob Storeshaw, Terry Morrison, plus an anonymous jug player (sometimes).

Joe Jugband will be playing at the Old Barricade Coffee House (Garneau United Church - 112 Street, 84th Avenue) this

Sunday night. The concert, sponsored by the Edmonton Folk Club, will begin at 8:00 p.m.

Along with the Jug Band will be Sean Richardson, a singer who has sung all over North America and recently appeared on the Russ Thornberry T.V. show. Jim McClennan and Bob Richardson, two very fine guitarists who specialize in Doc Watson style country picking, will also appear.

Admission for the concert is only \$1.00; half price for Folk Club members.



half breed- reviewed

-a new neighbor for Nellie McCClung

While the neo-anarchist-Yippie!-Marcusite new left nod sagely as they pass a joint and mutter revolutionary slogans, there are some Canadians who already live "after the revolution" -Canadian Indians, Metis and halfbreeds.

But as we all know and as Maria Campbell makes agonizingly clear in her autobiography *Halfbreed* (McClelland and Stewart, 1973). Native people do not live in a post-revolutionary euphoria of self-determination.

In her book, Campbell starts with the second Riel rebellion and works her way through poverty, welfare, prostitution and addiction to organizations like Alcoholics Anonymous, the Alberta Native Communications Society and the Metis Association of Alberta.

Not that she has much faith in the "Indian movement". At first, "It was all wonderful and exciting. The meeting halls in the native communities were full and overflowing when leaders came. People didn't kowtow to the white civil servants on reserves and colonies anymore. They started talking back. There was a new feeling of pride and hope everywhere."

Soon, the government, "seeing the handwriting on the wall," phased out its own programme and gave the new native organizations the money. "Not very much," Campbell comments sardonically. "Just enough to divide us again."

"Those of us who saw what was happening and spoke out against it were phased out and branded as communists."

Native organizations are not the only "hope" which experience has discredited, Campbell laments. It was the "welfare" regulations which shoved her into a brutal marriage and dumped her brothers and sisters in foster homes. Government make-work projects made dehumanizing demands on her father and uncles. Schools were racist and cruel—and impossible to attend any way because of the needs of her family.

If the liberal dream of social progress fails, what hope is left for a people who learned the difficulties of armed revolution nearly a century ago?

Campbell offers us no reason for optimism. The only happiness and beauty she shows us are in her childhood: the grannie (Cheechum) who had "everything a little girl's heart could desire", "the most beautiful rooms I have ever known" in which she lived, the reassuring "noise and disorder" of her people.

But that idyllic time is gone. When she returned home as an adult, she found that like herself "the land had changed, my people were gone, and if I

was to know peace I would have to search within myself."

And it is from within herself and from her past that Campbell finds hope.

Like her Cheechum, Campbell "never surrendered at Batoche; she only accepted what she considered a dishonorable truce."

Her grandmother "waited all her life for a new generation of people who would make this country a better place to live in."

Maria Campbell believes that "there is growing evidence" that that generation has come.

"I believe that one day, very soon, people will set aside their differences and come together as one. Maybe not because we love one another, but because we will need each other to survive."

Now, Campbell's criticisms are not new and her hope isn't very substantial. But despite the impression I've created so far, *Halfbreed* does not try to be just a new *Unjust Society*, or even just a new *Rita Joe*.

Most significantly, Maria Campbell has written an autobiography, the story of a

politically aware halfbreed woman, which is at the same time the story of herself, her people, all women, and now and then, humankind.

The first half of the book, recollections of her childhood and of her family is stylistically simple, but vibrantly alive. The description of her later trials is less vivid—perhaps because the experiences themselves involved less of her psyche, perhaps because they happened too recently for her to be able to really understand the emotions involved.

I won't trouble you with the treasures I found in the book. You'll find different ones. Just remember that this is no ordinary "story of my life and times."

And when you have finished reading the book, file it away on the short shelf of Western Canadian autobiography, in the even smaller group of women's autobiography. In fact, put *Halfbreed* right beside *The Stream Runs Fast*. Nellie McCClung would be proud to have Maria Campbell for a neighbour.

Candace Savage