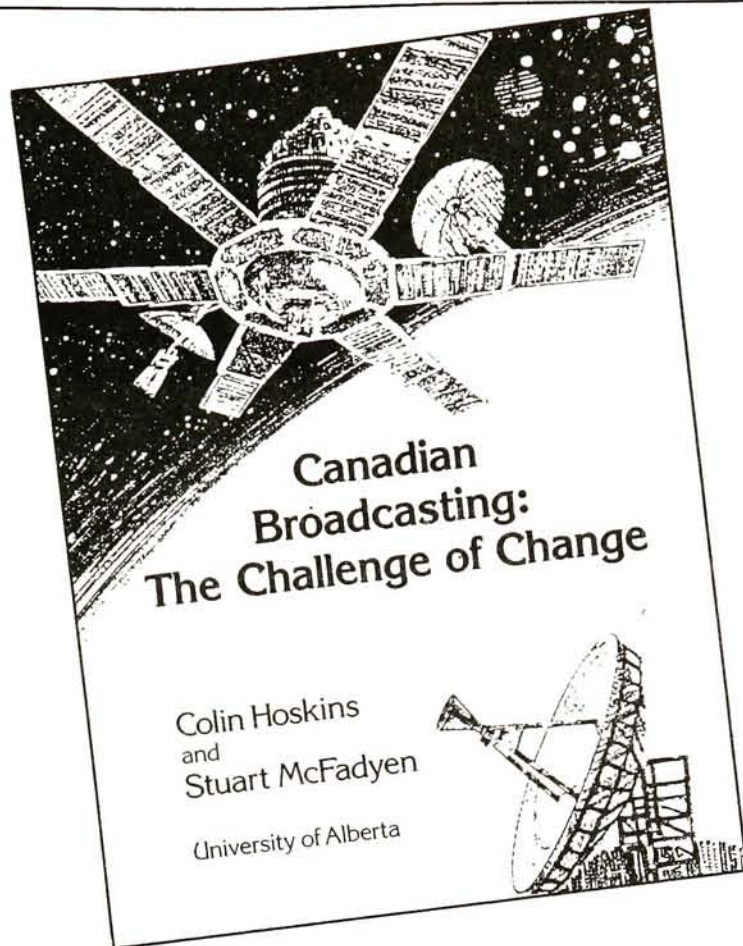


Canadian Broadcasting: The Challenge of Change, Colin Hoskins & Stuart McFadyen, eds., University of Alberta, 1986, 69 pp.



There are at least five levels of discourse operating simultaneously in the Canadian cultural sector and, needless to say, they are all closed to each other. Broadly these discourses are: 1) cultural-criticalesse, 2) nationalist-rhetoricalesse, 3) specialist academesse, 4) policy technicalesse, and 5) bizspeak.

By bringing together elements of discourses 3), 4) and 5) at the November 1985 Challenge of Change Symposium in Edmonton under the co-sponsorship of the U. of A. and ACCESS, the province's educational TV network, and now by publishing the proceedings in the form of the monograph under review, some communicative headway may have been made in breaking down the hermeticism of the policy discourses. Secondly, the papers reprinted here provided an opportunity for academics and broadcasting industry reps to speak with the members of the federal Task Force on Broadcasting Policy in the only symposium of this type organized with Task Force participation on panels and in discussions.

The risk, however, and the pitfall into which this collection tumbles, is that discourses 3), 4) and 5) together, mainly amount to a sort of academic/industry complex; in other words, it all turns into a variant of discourse no. 4. As a result, the collection overall consists basically of the sensible, how-to, problem-solving sort of stuff that policy decisional apparatuses thrive on, but beyond the mandarin is rarely of much interest, literary, historical or general.

Luckily, however, it is not completely seamless discourse and thankfully does include a paper by the notorious Robert Babe of the University of Ottawa, a man whose formidable command of communications policy in Canada strikes terror in the heart of Canada's cable industry. And Babe in "Regulation and Incentives: Two Sides of Any Policy" reminds the Task Force that since 1932 the centre of the Canadian broadcasting system has been "a public broadcasting corporation with a focused, cultural mandate," words that are not the norm in discourse 4 which tends to be culturally neutral.

Similarly Concordia University's Gail Valaskakis makes her own contribution to subverting the neutrality of discourse 4 by reminding her audience that the principles of Northern Broadcasting are to be taken seriously — and not only implemented but actually entrenched in the statutory legislation. In a related vein, David Bai of the University of Alberta, in a plea for more multicultural broadcasting, shows how the largely rhetorical and toothless non-enforcement of Canadian content has paradoxically resulted in a multi-cultural and popular commitment to the cultural aspirations of all Canadians, something which both the policy apparatus and the broadcasting system do not reflect.

On the industry side, Toronto Multi-

lingual Television president Dan Ianuzzi also touts Canadian multilingualism, observing that "Canadians generally need to know more about the world in which they live. The global village must mean more than Calvin Klein, Coca-cola and Joan Collins." For her part, Jasper film producer Wendy Wacko, in an encomium to Telefilm, urges that "if you don't want to see this country Americanized, you have to toast what is going on, stop fighting, and find a way

to work with it and really make it happen."

The token American at the symposium, Stanley Liebowitz of the University of Rochester, speaking on CBC operation costs, makes a bizarre reference to "broadcasters owned by the Canadian Broadcasting System," inadvertently repeating the same confusion of national broadcasting systems that Edmund Wilson, another American, made 30 years ago in his pioneering

study of Canadian literature, *O Canada*.

Of course, this could simply be a typo, of which there are a number in the collection. For example, Vancouver broadcasting critic Herschel Hardin is spelled "Hershal" (p.48).

All in all, then, **Canadian Broadcasting: The Challenge of Change** offers a view of what's currently being said across the range of discourse 4), from perspectives on broadcasting law (Grant Hammond, Peter Lown and John Hylton), community and native broadcasting (André Dubois and Jeff Bear), to *de rigueur* appeals for greater exchanges between academics and broadcasters to assist policy-making (Terry Kerr of the department of Communications). But given how seldom the publics outside the specialized discourses get any sense of the linguistic or decisional processes that impact upon them, the publication of these papers is nevertheless welcome, as is anything that adds to Canadians' knowledge of Canada.

After all, as Robert Babe concludes, citing words from the 1965 Fowler Committee (on Broadcasting) Report that are even more timely today:

"There is no point in asking where the national broadcasting system is going. It will go only where it is pushed by conscious and articulate public policy, or where it drifts if there is no policy. The State is inescapably involved in the creation of a broadcasting system, and should accept responsibility for the powerful agency it has created, so as to ensure that broadcasting serves the people with distinction; for the ultimate test of a society may well be the quality of the artistic and intellectual life it creates and supports."

Michael Dorland •

BOOKSHELF

Film Canadiana 1983-1984, Canada's national filmography, has just been published by the National Library of Canada, the National Film, Television and Sound Archives, the National Film Board of Canada and the Cinémathèque québécoise. This authoritative catalogue includes bibliographic data on over 2,500 Canadian films produced in 1983 and 1984, a variety of useful indexes (subject, director, producer, production company, feature films, coproductions), and an indispensable directory of Canadian producers and distributors with up-to-date addresses and phone numbers for over 1,500 film organizations. (*National Film Board of Canada, P.O. Box 6100, Station A, Montreal, Quebec, H3C 3H5, \$20*).

A well-rounded and instructive book on writing, producing and selling movies for television, Bob Shank's **The Primal Screen** is an experienced professional's advice on all aspects of the game. Rich in personal case histories, it offers clearly written, detailed information and includes Shank's script and production schedule of *Drop-Out Father*, a successful CBS film for television (*Norton, NYC, \$16.95*).

Harold L. Vogel's minutely researched volume, **Entertainment Industry Economics**, analyzes the business end of such major entertainment

enterprises as film, theatre, cable TV, music and the performing arts. His comprehensive survey covers the financing, production, distribution and marketing of leisure time goods and services in the U.S.A. (*Cambridge U. Press, NYC, \$24.95*).

Extensively documented and thoroughly entertaining, **Inside Oscar** narrates the history of the Academy Awards through last year's presentation. Authored by Mason Wiley and Damien Bona, this hefty tome combines factual data and statistics with a running report on each annual ceremony's highlights, dispensing liberal doses of anecdotes, gossip and inside dope (*Ballantine, NYC, \$24.95*).

In **Cahiers du cinéma**, editor Jim Hillier offers a compilation of judiciously selected articles from the French periodical of that name. They spell out the basic theories of the New Wave revolution that brought the *auteur* concept to cinematic creativity, and shifted film emphasis from the visual to the verbal in the works of such directors as Truffaut, Godard, Chabrol and Rivette (*Harvard U. Press, Cambridge, MA, \$22.50*).

Substantial biographical studies of 64 Hollywood screenwriters, including such distinguished names as Woody Allen, Joe Mankiewicz, Waldo Salt, Paul Mazursky, appear in a new volume of

Dictionary of Literary Biography: American Screenwriters — Second Series, expertly edited by Randall Clark. Each entry carries an essay on the author's life and career, a chronological listing of credits, and appropriate illustrations (*Gale, Detroit, \$88*).

Leslie Halliwell's encyclopedic knowledge and uncanny taste in matters cinematic are again demonstrated in two new volumes. **Halliwell's Filmgoer's Companion** (8th edition paperback) carries over 10,000 new and revised entries covering all aspects of the movies — personalities, films, techniques, corporate data and much more. **Halliwell's Harvest** is a re-evaluation of 84 of his personal favorites, such films as *Psycho, Dracula, Grand Hotel, Laura, The Little Foxes* and other gems of the golden age (*Scribners, NYC, \$14.95 and \$12.95*).

The distinctive contribution of painter Batiste Madalena to the art of publicizing film is acknowledged in a superb, large-format volume, **Movie Posters**. It includes reproductions of 39 of Madalena's most striking placards advertising such films as Valentino's *Monsieur Beaucaire*, Buster Keaton's *The General*, DeMille's *The Ten Commandments* and *Love* starring Garbo (*Abrams, NYC, \$14.95*).

George L. George •