
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-critical, 2) nationalist-rhetorical, 3) specialist academic, 4) policy technical, and 5) bizpeak.

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 hermiticism 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 1) and 2) are given too little weight, mainly unto 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 mandarinate 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" 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 aspect of the treatment 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 Multilingual 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 take 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 type, or 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 holds 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

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 Canada, the National Film Board of Canada, the Cinematheque du Canada, and the Centre d'études sur le cinéma. This authoritative catalogue includes bibliographic data on over 2,500 Canadian films produced in Canada, the National Film Board of Canada, the Cinematheque du Canada, and the Centre d'études sur le cinéma. This authoritative catalogue.

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 auteurs' 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).


Leslie Halliwel's encyclopedic knowledge and uncanny taste in matters cinematic are again demonstrated in two new volumes. Halliwel's Filmgoer's Companion (7th edition paperback) carries on the author's life and career, a chronological listing of credits, and appropriate illustrations (Gale, Detroit, $88).

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 Beaucoute, Buster Keaton's The General, DeMille's The Ten Commandments and Love starring Garbo (Abrams, NYC, $14.95).