

nageoires pour le poisson et un visage humain. Les étapes de la transformation sont illustrées de façon simple et graduelle. Ce qui est très important pour que l'enfant voie bien la transformation. Tous les personnages expriment la paix, le bonheur. Ce que je trouve essentiel puisque la naissance et la vie en général doivent être vues de cette manière. *La présence du père dans les illustrations est très importante aussi puisqu'on ne parle pas de lui dans le texte.*

Les enfants seront sûrement satisfaits de ces explications. Si d'autres questions se posent il ne sera certainement pas difficile d'y répondre puisqu'il n'y a rien (ou presque) de plus compliqué à expliquer aux enfants que la naissance. Je pense que lorsque cette question se pose, il est très important d'y répondre et de la bonne manière. Les enfants d'aujourd'hui ne veulent pas se faire répondre; "Tu es trop petit pour comprendre!" Alors pourquoi ne pas sauter sur l'occasion et prendre l'aide qui passe.

Louise Poulin-Carpentier est bibliotechnicienne au Centre de la culture l'Octogone LaSalle, Québec.

SEAS OF TROUBLE

The Atlantic anthology: volume 1/prose, ed. Fred Cogswell. Ragweed Press, 1984. 229 pp. \$12.95 paper. ISBN 0-920304-23-0.

The Atlantic anthology is expressly intended for the use of secondary school students. Materials so designated require careful scrutiny; they must be of a calibre to warrant the time and attention to be focussed upon them; must have sufficient appeal to hold students' attention; and must provide food for thought, speculation and discussion.

Certainly it is desirable that secondary school students be exposed to Canadian writings on Canadian themes, and unquestionably, that they should be made familiar with literary excellence. *The Anthology* accomplishes both purposes. While at first glance the title suggests a strictly regional body of work, the Maritime flavour prevails in only a few of the stories. The common factor in this collection is that of excellence rather than insistent regionalism.

The Anthology is a strong argument in support of the editorial contention that "the short story is the genre in Canada in which the finest work is currently being produced". Bold words, and there will no doubt be some who take issue with the statement: but few if any would question the quality of this praiseworthy collection of short pieces. Unfair to single out one or two personal favourites from among such wealth. Suffice it to say that *all* the stories invite and will richly reward rereading. Twenty-seven short stories are included, appearing in alphabetical order of the authors' surnames. Almost all are con-

cerned with old age, death, disintegration and/or despair. Coincidence? Perhaps. These are without doubt compelling and powerful subjects.

It does seem, however, that somewhat more of a balance would not have lessened the impact of the collection. Weather commentators have been discouraged from dwelling upon the "misery index" as they so delighted to do, emphasizing the discomfort of a humid day, and keeping all sufferers' minds firmly fixed upon it. It was deemed to be in the public interest that the practice be discontinued. This analogy is brought to mind by the 'despair quotient' of the *anthology*. The quality of writing is superb; perhaps the lightest moment in the entire collection is that in which an old woman decides not to commit suicide after all. Not yet.

Is happiness (much less humour) so much less meaningful than decline and decay that it deserves to be ignored? So one might be led to assume. Secondary school students, animal high spirits notwithstanding, are already quite sufficiently a prey to *weltschmerz* and gloomy introspection without any prodding in that direction.

It was the custom at the great triumphs given to successful Roman generals that a slave should ride in the victor's chariot, to whisper in his ear at intervals "You too will die", lest vaingloriously he forget his own mortality. Do the riders in the triumphant chariot of youth really need such an insistent reminder? *Joan McGrath* is a Library Consultant for the Toronto Board of Education.

INDIAN SONG

Windigo: légende indienne, Paule Doyon. Sherbrooke, Naaman, 1984. 53 pp. 4,00\$ broché. ISBN 2-89040-287-8.

Paule Doyon's fictionalised version of the Indian myth of Windigo constitutes a powerful parable of the destruction of the Indian population, first by violent conquest and then, more insidiously, by the inculcation of Western values. The great chief Windigo lives happily with his wife Petite Ourse until she is killed during a tribal war. When he takes as his new wife one of his captives, Honda, it appears that life will continue as normal, but a change is ushered in by the arrival of a symbolic white man, Wasihu. Through contact with Wasihu, the familiar pattern of degradation of the Indian at the hands of white civilisation is operated through firearms and whisky. Gradually, Windigo loses his solitary nobility and becomes a servant of Wasihu, giving him his hunting grounds, his possessions, even his wife Honda. Eventually, Wasihu's ascendancy becomes so strong over Honda and Windigo's two children, William and Milly, that the entire family is induced to leave the world of nature with him and go and settle