

subsequently abandoned. Or Eleonora, whose cry "vorrei morire" is identified with the change of scenery from the Roman fantasies to the more concrete environment of her familiar "deep south."

The world of language as a means of communication, or non-communication, in this universe of duality where the image of "another life" is always present or possible depicts the alienated, futile, aimless lives of Moravia's characters. And if the atmosphere which pervades their existence is one of boredom and indifference, of "noia" in a word, then their language remains a faithful mirror of their world.

While these short stories are rather unspectacular nonevents, they unfold in a measured prose characterized by an indulgence in descriptive details and bring us the clear, rapid, lucid somewhat amusing pictures of women of our time, with their conquests and deceptions. It is not necessary to be a Roman like Moravia in order to have empathy with his portraits of women, of passion, jealousy, love, boredom, despair, and cruelty. These unforgetting portraits are images that will not easily cease to trouble the reader.

Anna M. Kinsella

GIOSE RIMANELLI and
ROBERTO RUBERTO, ED.
Modern Canadian Stories
Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1966
(reprint edition). Pp. xxxi, 402.
\$8.95.

Giose Rimanelli's anthology differs, it seems to me, in two important respects from the anthologies of Canadian short-stories in English that preceded it, namely those of Raymond Knister, Desmond Pacey, and Robert Weaver. It is both more pretentious in its editorial apparatus and in its claims for itself, and at the same time the superficiality of its pretensions is displayed both by the bias of its omissions and by the errors of fact or logic contained in its introductory apparatus.

For example, in dealing with Alfred de Vigny's judgment of "the French of Quebec in colonial times," Rimanelli writes as though Acadia and Quebec were one and as though those French and de Vigny were contemporaries: ". . . if Alfred de Vigny judged while being outside the tragic reality of Acadia at that time devastated by internal struggles, religious pressures and a lack of cultural contact with France." In point of fact nearly a century in time separated de Vigny from the Acadia under discussion, and that Acadia was certainly not Quebec!

The degree of Rimanelli's superficiality, however, is best exposed by his treatment of Haliburton and Sir Charles G. D. Roberts as against Stephen Leacock and Duncan Campbell Scott. Rimanelli has the annoying habit in his preface of disposing of writers with a few damning phrases like the following: "Haliburton was a journalist who wrote satirical sketches in Howe's newspaper, *The Novascotian*. They meanwhile have lost a great deal of their humorous fragrance because they were limited to restricted milieu, namely Nova Scotia, and they lack those human and universal qualities that allow a work of art to survive and to project itself beyond its time and the setting that inspired it." Only the most abysmal ignorance of Haliburton's work, literary background, and career could have produced such remarks. And how, after having so dismissed Haliburton, Rimanelli could; patronizing—he is always patronizing when speaking of Canadian literature—praise Leacock and use three of his "sketches" in his anthology as short stories is difficult indeed to comprehend. It is very odd, incidentally, that he should have remarked of Leacock ". . . he is much closer to Mark Twain than [sic] he is to any other [sic] British writer."

Rimanelli disposes of Roberts on the ground that "he was to emerge in the end as a poet rather than a story teller"; at the same time, he uses Duncan Campbell Scott's poetry to enhance his claims as a writer of short stories. Roberts' invention of the animal story is one of the few original achievements in our formal literature, but Rimanelli writes: "In these stories animals move about and think like human beings but without that sacred irony that we find in say, Aesop or La Fontaine, nor do they have that tension of high adventure that we find in Kipling. Hence they founder in the grotesque and the childish and it is

at once very risky and difficult to take them seriously." It is mind-boggling to consider how Rimanelli could conceivably have written the above had he actually read such a Roberts' short story as "The Young Ravens that Call Upon Him." One can only conclude that his familiarity with Roberts' work in prose is about on a par with his knowledge of Haliburton, of the chronology and geography of New France, and other matters of a similar nature. Had, for instance, he really been looking for "that tension of high adventure that we find in Kipling," surely he would have given us one of Ernest Thompson Seton's stories from *Wild Animals I Have Known*.

To give Rimanelli his due, where he has read and liked authors, his judgment and literary taste are excellent, and the body of *Modern Canadian Stories* is composed of very fine stories.

I feel, however, that the predominance of recent twentieth century stories in the anthology, the predominance of Western writers represented, and a congruity of attitude and phrase between the editor's introduction and the foreword from Earle Birney indicate that, as an Italian venturing upon new literary territory, Giose Rimanelli looked for advice from his academic colleagues in British Columbia as to what to read and what not to read and that he followed it. I am one reader who wishes that he had set out on a more eclectic journey of discovery entirely on his own.

Fred Cogswell

JACKSON R. BRYER, ED.
Sixteen Modern American Authors
New York: Norton, 1972. Pp. 673.
\$5.95.

Norton Press has done it again: issued a literary volume which will be massively sold among (primarily) non-specialist university professors and general Arts students. In this case the work, a review of research and criticism updated in 1973 and originally published by Duke Uni-

versity Press in 1969, is, for the most part, an extremely useful reference tool deftly guiding the reader through the tangled forests of criticism and bibliographical data which have grown up around the major American writers of the twentieth century. The best of the essays in the volume by "leading scholarly authorities on the figures they are discussing" point out and annotate the better published bibliographies and biographies (omitting the standard yearly, quarterly, or monthly listings in the basic periodicals), relate the condition of manuscript research, evaluate the existing editions of the author's work, and cull out the best of the criticism in both English and foreign languages—in the most significant instances annotating it carefully. The "figures" covered are Cather, Crane, Dreiser, Eliot (reclaimed) from his British classification in *PMLA*), Faulkner, Fitzgerald, Frost, Hemingway, O'Neill, Pound, Robinson, Steinbeck, Stevens, Williams, and Wolfe. *Sixteen Authors*, greatly expanding the scope of its archetypal predecessor, *Eight American Authors* (1956), is thus itself a timely work of bibliography and criticism collating and synopsizing most of the published materials on modern American literature when the careers of its chief architects are all now complete. Updated surveys of criticism on each of the authors are provided in supplements to the main essays; and the completeness of coverage is indubitably demonstrated in the four page listing of abbreviated periodicals drawn upon in the text.

The essays themselves vary in usefulness and quality. Walter B. Rideout's tracing of the various currents of Sherwood Anderson criticism over a half century is valuable, sensitive, and superb as is Richard Ludwig's annotation of the significant Eliot commentary. The discussion by James B. Meriweather of complex editorial problems throughout the entire Faulkner canon is a masterful, lucid, and very informative piece of writing. Joseph N. Riddle's survey of Wallace Stevens criticism and of the state of biographical research on this writer not only provides a sure guide to the best books and articles representing all the multifarious approaches taken by critics on Stevens, but is also itself a rich, many-faceted study of Stevens' poems. Unfortunately, the same excellence does not mark the essays on Hemingway and William Carlos Williams. Frederick J. Hoffman is too emotional and laudatory of Hemingway to obtain the detached and synoptic over-