

Don Gutteridge.

**THE COUNTRY OF THE YOUNG:
UNITS IN CANADIAN LITERATURE FOR ELEMENTARY
AND SECONDARY SCHOOL.**

Monograph Number Two.

London: University of Western Ontario, 1978.

68 pp. \$3.95.

Don Gutteridge's aim, as expressed in his preface, is to provide curricular units for teaching Canadian literature in three levels of our school system. He employs the terminology of Upper School (grades 12 or 13), Middle School (grades 11 or 12) and Lower School (grades 7 - 10 approximately), and suggests the use of the generic model for the Upper School (Chapter One), the thematic model for the Middle School (Chapter Two) and the language arts model for the Lower School (Chapter Three). The inclusion of the term "elementary school" in the title of the monograph is thus misleading, for although the book titles and activities presented in Chapter Three can be used and adapted by teachers at the upper elementary level (4-6), Gutteridge has by his own definition excluded the elementary school from his design.

In his introduction to each chapter, Gutteridge defines his model, states his objectives, and outlines his criteria for the selection of resources. He furnishes a suitable and varied list of core texts (for use in class with teacher guidance), and complementary texts (for students' independent study and reporting). The author's intention is to propose a practical model to help answer the question of "how" Canadian literature is to be taught. He supplies sample outlines, sample sets of overview questions, and a sample in-depth "teaching unit" on one novel in each of his chapters, with suggestions for class, group, and independent student activities. The quality of the in-depth unit varies from the probing and sensitive study of L. M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* in Chapter One, to the effective but dry treatment of Claude Aubry's *Agouhanna* in Chapter Three, and to the superficial and disappointing basal-reader type of outline for Alice Munro's *Lives of Girls and Women*. The suggestions for complementary student activities are on the whole stimulating, with emphasis on an integrated approach and stress here and elsewhere in the monograph on interpretive and critical thinking.

Certain technical weaknesses are disconcerting: one is the organization of the pages in two columns, each column 6 centimeters across, which disrupts the reading flow; another is the use of quotation marks both for direct quotes from the source text and for certain questions to be posed by the teacher.

A more notable weakness lies in the author's suggestion that one major approach be used for a year's duration. The generic model is not currently held to be a major approach to analysis, either at the secondary or the CEGEP (in

Quebec) or the university level; even the thematic model is considered to have its limitations. The use of more than one approach during any one school year seems then advisable. The language arts model which Gutteridge presents sounds fresh and stimulating, however. It provides a comprehensive base and assumes a cross-disciplinary approach.

A resource which should be used in conjunction with Gutteridge's monograph is the Writer's Development Trust's series of ten guides, which deal with topics such as *Family Relationships*, *New Land/New Language*, *Women in Canadian Literature*, *The North/Native Peoples*, *Coming of Age in Canada*, *Action/Adventure*, *Quebec Literature in Translation*. Gutteridge's work touches briefly upon all these subjects. He also mentions historical perspective, insight into the genesis of a literary work (Earle Birney's comments on his writing of "David") and comparative literature. (*Light in the Forest* by American author Conrad Richter has "been included to allow comparisons to be made thematically with similar Canadian texts." Unfortunately no stylistic comparisons are aimed at, or pursued.) However, the length of the monograph prohibits anything more than a cursory glance at these areas.

The creative teacher of Canadian literature will find certain facets of Gutteridge's quasi-teaching kit helpful. Used as a complementary work in conjunction with other resources, these units will aid teachers in their continuing search to discover, for and with their students, the vibrant core of Canadian literature.

Vicki Zack
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K. A. Hamilton (editor).
CANADA WRITES!
Toronto: The Writers' Union of Canada, 1977.
399 pp. \$2.50.

A brief outline of the circumstances attending the conception and birth of the Writers' Union of Canada provides the preface to this publication and introduces the reader to a gallery of Canadian literary talent. The Writers' Union of Canada is a professional association for published writers whose membership stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific and includes Canadian writers living in the United States, France, Spain, and Germany. Originally the group came together for the advancement of their common interests.

Each of one hundred and ninety-two authors has submitted a photograph and a bibliography; most have contributed a brief biography and a personal comment or note. It is from the fascinating biographies, which reveal the