

BOOKS

guilty of leaving the reader behind. But her best, absorbingly dramatic and filled with real rhetorical splendor, are seductively readable and impossible to forget.

—Bruce Allen



SATURDAY REVIEW TALKS TO HORTENSE CALISHER

"THE STORY OF SHILTIE EDWARDS AND MILLIE White is too well-known not to repeat. It's the kind even a subtle person will tell, in certain restaurants." Thus begins "The Soundtrack," one of eight "little novels" included in *Saratoga, Hot*. The author, Hortense Calisher, tells the tale of Shiltie and Millie's married life, a life destroyed by career lust and cocaine. Modern problems from an experienced yarn-spinner: Hortense Calisher is seventy-four.

Born and reared in New York City, her youth was spent in museums ("New York kids do that"). Educated at the Hunter College High School and Barnard, Calisher cites the Bible as the most important piece of fiction in her early years. "It greatly influenced my language; I knew it intimately," she explains. Her New York environment was key to her development as a writer. "In New York, we were not learning art, we were learning an attitude toward art. You might not own a painting, but you could look at it."

Calisher has published nine novels to date; a tenth is scheduled for publication in late 1986. She intersperses her novels with collections of shorter works, finding that "the diversity energizes me." Novelists, she feels, approach short works in a special manner, giving each character more of a history and thus more of a present. And each story imposes its own voice: Calisher hears the language as she writes it. She also draws the personalities and physical traits of her characters from the people around her.

She has taught at the University of Pennsylvania, Columbia, Stanford, and in the University of California system. Everything in California, she feels, is "dipped in the movie world, even the intellectuals reach for metaphors in films."

Calisher is eager to discuss her most recent interest, one she shared with her friend the late C.P. Snow: "We all live by the fruits of science, yet we act as though science is somehow imaginary," she says. In *Mysteries of Motion* (1984), Calisher imagined the first civilian trip on the space shuttle. "And that was written long before such a thing was even considered," she adds.

BOB DYLAN: WHAT'S "BLOWIN' IN THE WIND?"

Bob Dylan has us all wondering, to say the least. In 1979, news that he had become a "born again Christian" dropped like a bomb in the music world. His albums—"Slow Train Coming," "Saved," and "Shot of Love"—and his public appearances and interviews seemed to confirm that fact.

Then, with the release of "Infidels," the word was that the "old" Bob Dylan was back...that he had abandoned his Christian stance.

What is the real story? BOB DYLAN: THE MAN, THE MUSIC, THE MESSAGE, a new book by Don Williams just may offer the answer.

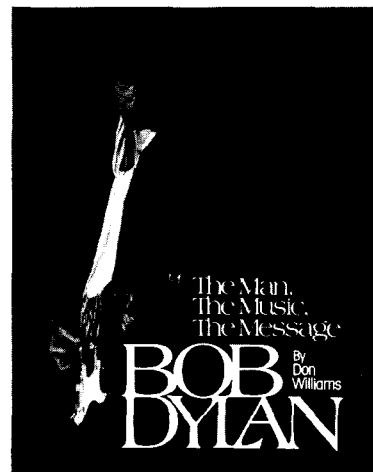
Williams has closely followed Bob Dylan's music from the very beginning, and now takes a compelling look at the "parables" contained in the lyrics of the "Infidels" album, and offers a fresh and in-depth look at

a man whose music—and message—has helped mold a generation of Americans.

If you want to know what's "blowin' in the wind," look for BOB DYLAN: THE MAN, THE MUSIC, THE MESSAGE today. \$12.95, illustrated, at bookstores everywhere.

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And finally you do it for money.*

-Moliere

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You'll Learn From The Pros

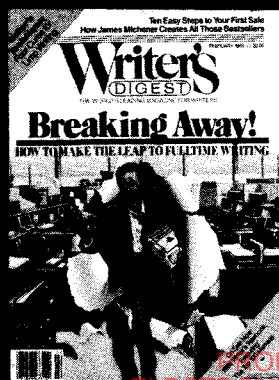
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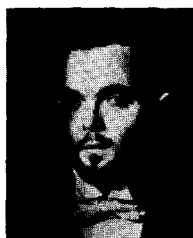
ANNE RAMPLING'S



EXIT TO EDEN A NOVEL

JUDGING A BOOK BY ITS COVER

Saturday Review has selected Mel Odom's design for *Exit to Eden* (Arbor House) as the best recent book jacket art. Odom grew up in Ahoskie, North Carolina. He graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University and attended Leeds Polytechnic Institute for Art and Design in England. Odom has published two collections of his work: *First Eyes*, which was published in Japan, and *Dreamer*, which was recently published by Penguin in America. His work has been exhibited in New York and Japan. Anne Rampling, coincidentally, is one of his favorite novelists.



PRESIDENTIAL POSE

Franklin Delano Roosevelt perpetrated a hoax on the American public and on himself about the true extent of his handicap, according to the book *FDR's Splendid Deception* (Dodd, Mead, 265 pp., \$16.95), to be published on the fortieth anniversary of his death this month.

Written by Pulitzer Prize nominee Hugh Gregory Gallagher, a polio paraplegic, the book makes a strong case that polio was the critical factor that shaped FDR's political and private life. The paralysis was his only experience with defeat.

The book looks at FDR with a unique perspective—as a massively crippled president who led a nation back to strength after it was crippled economically by the Depression and crippled militarily by the attack on Pearl Harbor.

FDR went to elaborate lengths, including building ramps for public appearances, so it would seem that the president could walk and was only a bit lame. However, he could not stand or even hobble without braces and very firm physical support. He turned his four sons into virtual crutches for him.

"Crippled or not, the nation wanted this man, with all his magnificent qualities, as its leader. So an agreement was struck: the existence of FDR's handicap would simply be denied by all. The people would pretend that their leader was not crippled, and their leader would do all that he could not to let them see that he was . . . The nation wanted to believe its Emperor was clothed, and it simply would not hear otherwise."

The press complied in the deception and rarely mentioned the infirmity, even when he "crashed over like a tree" at least three times in public. The most serious fall occurred at the 1936 Democratic nominating convention, but aides rushed to hide him and pick him up, and he delivered his "Rendezvous with Destiny" speech to the cheers of 100,000 supporters.

The book shows one of the world's most powerful leaders in moments of abject physical helplessness, like being stranded in his White House bedroom very late one night, unable to prepare for bed because his valet had fallen into a drunken sleep.

Another time, when the president was