

# Renaissance group concerned about literature in Ontario high schools

by Shirley Whittington  
A new Renaissance movement may be in the making.  
Four years ago, Reverend Ken Campbell of Milton, Ontario became concerned about what was being taught to his children. When the high school his youngsters attended permitted four members of the Gay Liberation movement from McMaster University to address the students, Reverend Campbell took a decisive step.  
He mortgaged his home in order to raise money for the formation of Renaissance. Now Renaissance has com-

mitted all over Ontario and across Canada, and Reverend Campbell is currently involved in extending it internationally.  
Mrs. Betty Reade is a Toronto Renaissance representative, and she says the group is concerned with the literature provided for students in high school English courses. "I don't like to be specific about titles," she said, "because that is just dealing with a symptom, but one book which caused a big furor was *Go Ask Alice*. (In diary form, *Go Ask Alice* tells about a 16-year-old girl who unsuccessfully fights drug

addiction, and eventually dies of an overdose. It is couched in typical teenaged language, with occasional four-letter word lapses.)  
Mrs. Reade continued, "They have thrown out all the good things. I don't know why they want to give our kids just the seamy side of life without offering them any hope or beauty."  
Renaissance leaders are also concerned about the philosophies of sex education being taught in public high schools. "For instance," said Mrs. Reade, "they talk about birth control but they

don't talk about moral guidance."  
In Barrie, James Cotter, a teacher at the Military Institute at Base Borden, and the father of eight children has been actively involved in Renaissance. He says, "I don't care what they give them to read in the high schools, but why can't they keep it clean? My daughter is only sixteen years old. How

can it be useful for her to read about explicit sex, trends toward sadism or perversion, and other bizarre subjects, written in four letter words?"  
Cotter is indignant because the language and images presented in some books in high school are "not acceptable" in most Canadian homes. "In fact," he says, "the teachers probably wouldn't speak to their

own children in those terms. Why should they be forced on sixteen year olds?"  
One of the aims of Renaissance is to make parents aware of what kind of material is being used in high school English study courses. "The kids don't tell their parents what's going on. But when parents find out, they react," said Cotter.

Cotter cautioned the Times against portraying him or members of Renaissance as "a bunch of red-necks." He added, "But our kids are captives. Why can't schools keep to a norm that most of us respect?"  
Sex, perversion, dread  
Cotter gave some examples of some of the material used in schools which Renaissance finds objectionable. "There's a

book called *Fifteen Canadian poets* which contains references to explicit sex and perversion. *Duddy Kravitz* is studied in some schools, and the language used in that book is unacceptable in most Canadian homes.  
There are Leonard Cohen poems which deal with dreadful things done to the Jews over the ages. Why should those horrors be forced on the head of

sixteen year olds?"  
Cotter paid tribute to Dr. Ramsay and Dr. Fisher of the Simcoe County School Board. "They are good men, and they run very good schools, but we want to bring their attention to the material that is being used in our schools."  
Mr. W.F. Brown, principal of Midland Secondary School said that Renaissance had

only come to his attention a week and a half ago, and as yet the group had made no specific approach to him or to his school.  
At present, books available for study at MSS include *Duddy Kravitz*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Who Has Seen The Wind*, *Fifteen Canadian Poets*, *Catch 22*, and *A Jest of God*.



Ancio pins Hack

Alderman Sam Ancio pins a button on Town Clerk Bill Hack at the town dinner held Friday at the Midland Legion. Ancio presided as Master of

Ceremonies at the affair, the town's Christmas present to its employees and committee members.

Staff photo

## Seniors get presents

Senior citizens of Tay Township residing in Penetanguishene's Georgian Manor will receive an annual Christmas present from the municipality shortly. Tay Township council passed a motion to send each of the township's citizens residing in the senior establishment in Penetanguishene a \$10 Christmas present.  
The practice, Township clerk Walt Lumsden said, has been carried out for years.  
"I think most municipalities engage in the same recognition of their senior citizens," Lumsden said.



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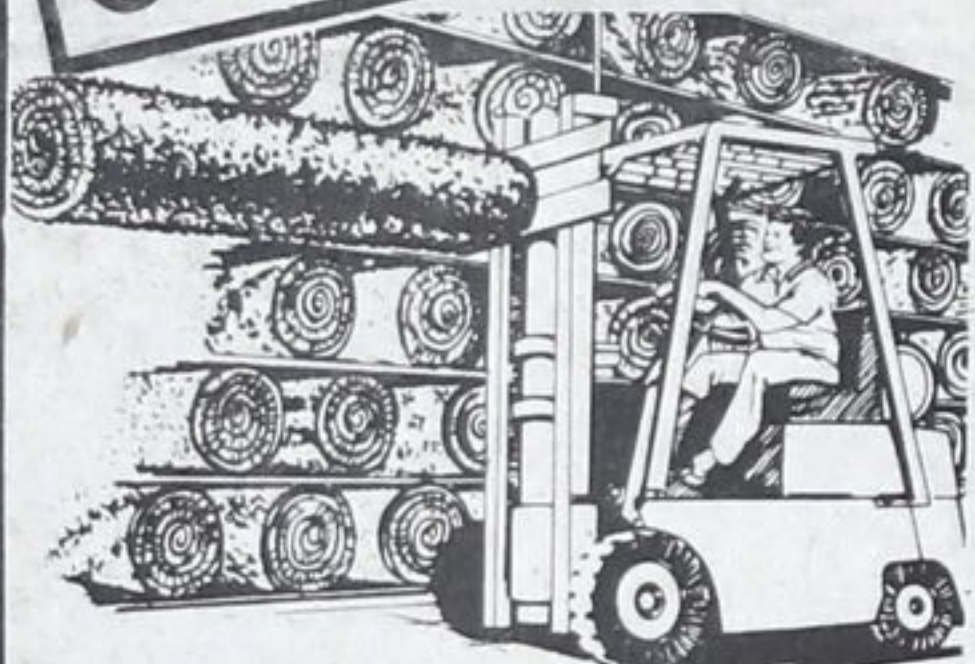
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