

PAPERBOUNDS

NEW BURLINGTON: The Life and Death of an American Village. By John Baskin. New American Library, 1977. 259 pp. \$2.95

Only recently has historical preservation become a widely held value in America. New Burlington, Ohio, a small farming village between Dayton and Cincinnati, is gone forever. A lake behind a dam built in the early 1970s by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers now covers the streets where its people strolled for nearly 200 years. But New Burlington's ethos survives in the pages of this compelling book compiled during the town's last days by a young writer. He collected poignant photographs to illustrate his tape-recorded interviews with the village's doctors, teachers, preachers, farmers, blacksmiths, widows, auctioneer, telephone operator. (There was only one, Della Wilson. When the dial system came, she left a recording of her voice so the old folks could hear it if they got lonely. It wore out in a month.) Baskin sees no villains, not even the engineers who drowned the town. Is it history? "When I think of history," he writes, "I think of a lady named Abigail Winas who said, 'History is a drunk in the snow with his feet sticking out.'"

ANDRÉ KERTÉSZ: Sixty Years of Photography. Edited by Nicolas Ducrot. Penguin, 1978. 224 pp. \$8.95

At first glance, this collection of black-and-white photographs by a man whose 1927 exhibit in Paris was the first one-man show of photographs anywhere seems to be vaguely imitative of other great photographers (and even painters). Then one realizes that Kertész did it first; the later, more widely known works reflect his. Here is a close-up of a woman's careworn hands (1919); storytelling scenes of Kertész's native Hungary; a

startling 1929 panorama of French rooftops seen through what looks like a window with a bullet hole in it (but was in fact a broken glass plate); stylized nudes; haunting portraits of children, soldiers, customers at a sidewalk cafe, Colette with her mind in her eyes; and Manhattan skyscrapers. Except for a brief introduction, there is no commentary. The pictures speak for themselves. In 1977 they brought the photographer, at 83, the Medal for Distinguished Achievement from the City of New York.

NEW MEANS OF FINANCING INTERNATIONAL NEEDS. By Eleanor B. Steinberg and Joseph A. Yager with Gerard M. Brannon. Brookings, 1978. 256 pp. \$4.95 (cloth, \$11.95)

Traditional ways of financing such international programs as economic development, population control, and global environmental measures are no longer adequate, say the authors of this lucid study. To supplement voluntary contributions from wealthy nations and loans guaranteed by the World Bank and other institutions, they weigh a number of possible new sources of financing: automatic levies on international trade and money transactions, taxes on polluters of the seas, revenues from the exploitation of ocean wealth (including the valuable, shrimp-like krill but excluding common commercial fish and shellfish). Such supranational income could be managed by existing agencies or by new organizations set up for this purpose.

LATIN AMERICAN LITERATURE TODAY. Edited by Anne Fremantle. Mentor, 1977. 342 pp. \$2.25

Borges, Neruda, Gabriel García Márquez: The names, at least, are familiar to most serious U.S. readers. New translations of

their widely acclaimed work appear in Fremantle's anthology. So do selections by many young Latin American poets, novelists, and short-story writers who are talented enough to survive in the shadows of their elders but are often overlooked by translators. Some of the 38 authors are women, frequently brushed aside by critics in the male-dominated Latin culture. Their work seldom if ever reaches North America. Who, for instance, is familiar with Brazilian novelist Clarice Lispector's jaunty Rio de Janeiro housewives or has read *Office of Tenebrae* by Mexico's Rosario Castellanos? Both these writers display a fine talent for evocative prose.

RICH NEWS, POOR NEWS. By Marvin Barrett. Crowell, 1978. 244 pp. \$5.95 (cloth, \$12.95)

In this sixth annual Alfred I. DuPont-Columbia University report on the status of broadcast journalism, Marvin Barrett and 80 regional correspondents focus again on television evening news programs. They discuss the economics of network news and the coverage of business, particularly the question of whether TV news is "antibusiness." (It is, and it isn't.) Walter Cronkite's unfulfilled dream of an hour-long news format gets a chapter, as does Barbara Walter's departure from the *Today* show. Other topics include the Frost-Nixon interviews, political reporting (a perennial), and "live-action" electronic news-gathering. This computerized technology is given a once-over-lightly with passing reference to claims by some critics that it is responsible for the current world epidemic of terrorism, hijacking, and hostage-taking. The books in this series provide the best available summary of the year in TV. Unfortunately, like television itself, they also include much material that seems uncritically selected.

SAUL STEINBERG. By Harold Rosenberg. Knopf (with the Whitney Museum of American Art), 1978. 256 pp. \$10.95 (cloth, \$25)

Long known to *New Yorker* readers as the wry perpetrator of visual tricks and clichés, illegible documents with official-looking seals, and strange, uncannily accurate grotesques of everyday life, Rumanian-born illustrator Saul Steinberg came to the United States (with a faked passport) in 1942 via Italy, Portugal, and the Dominican Republic. His talents were immediately recognized by the U.S. Army, which sent him to China because of his ability to communicate through pictures. This catalog of his recent Whitney Museum retrospective, with 64 pages in color, demonstrates anew his extraordinary profundity as well as his outrageous sense of the artificial: "When I admire a scene in the country," Steinberg explains, "I always look for a signature in the lower right-hand corner." Even his



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self-portraits are less character studies than visual puns on the "eptness and ertness" of drawing itself: "My line wants to remind constantly that it is made of ink."