

- course order 10/1 Man.

March 2, 1989

Audrey McClellan
New Star Books
2504 York Ave.
Vancouver, B.C.
V6K 1E3

Dear Audrey & Lanny & Rolf:

This is a group-addressed letter, so hope none of you minds.

First, thanks, Audrey, for your Jan. 30 & Feb. 8th letters. Re the NOW excerpts & our letter re Reville, Bonnie & I of course are very pleased about the coverage, but our letter speaks for itself, and we stand by it. Reville doesn't agree with our letter - he mainly objects to the timing since NOW did give us a good amount of publicity. Reville understands our criticisms of NOW's apparent classism and feels we "smeared" him along with NOW - unintentionally - but still feels singled out in our letter. Anyway, he's still a friend of mine and he accepts the letter was not aimed at him.

Second, Bonnie & I are very concerned about the relatively slow sales of our book. I told her a couple weeks ago that Rolf told me about 900 copies had been sold as of this January, I believe. We both feel that's very low. I'm not sure what we expected. I personally feel that if 1,000 copies aren't sold in a 6-month period, the book has failed to take off or get public interest & acceptance. Is this a wrong or naive assumption on my part, or Bonnie's? We'd like to know, because we feel that we've done most of the promoting, including specially arranged public events like the press conference (Purcell's Park), the radio interviews (about 4), 1 TV interview (Vision TV, a new multifaith channel in T.O.), and of course the SCM booklaunch which you helped us with, and the OISE reading you also helped us with. (Tape Enclosed)

Still, when we hear that people in the US (like Dr. Lehrmann in NY) could not get a copy from distributor Inland Book Co. in Ct., and some possible delays with Bookpeople in Berkeley, we naturally question whether there's good communication and coordination happening with our book or any other. And Marshall Hryciuk, your trade sales rep in Ontario and the East, phoned me only once, and he did show up at the SCM booklaunch but that's it. He told me he has a lot of other sales responsibilities - besides being a rep for New Star.

We just feel the word about our book is not getting out as widely and effectively as it should by now. Incidentally, The Toronto Star now has a copy and assigned it. (Adachi died, as you may have heard, about 2 weeks ago. Apparently, a suicide.) Good news that The Globe & Mail is definitely going to review it - Lorraine Nichols (name?), social worker, called to say she liked the book and would give us a good review. Maybe in 3-4 weeks from now. But, we still feel the book should be selling better, and we'd like your thoughts or suggestions about improving sales & publicity.

[A Xerox would have helped, but no \$]

Also enclosing copy of promo piece on Szasz, and note his distributor in NY, Libertarian Review Foundation. When I saw and briefly talked with Szasz in Portland, OR last October, he suggested Libertarian as a possible US distributor. I really don't know whether that's a good idea or not, and I believe neither does Bonnie.

I also talked with a small group (12) of nurses - members of the political Nurses For Social Responsibility. They're a left-wing spinoff of the RNAO (Registered Nurses of Ontario - the trade union), and seem to be getting more interested in anti-psychiatry issues, and they generously gave me an honourarium, which I promptly deposited in our book account here. When I talked with ~~2~~ a class of sociology students (undergrads) at York U. last month, the prof (Desmond Ellis) never offered me an honourarium. Too cheap! So, if he or any other staff at York want me to speak again, they'll have to pay me well!!

Lanny, read your article on the DSM-III-R and psychiatric labelling, and really like it. Congratulations for getting published in This Magazine. Gave copy to Bonnie, who's also very critical of the DSM-III. I hope she also writes a critical piece soon about it, whenever she has a breathing space, which is rare. She's coming back to Toronto this summer and not returning to Carleton. We'll be working closer again and still plan to do a book on electroshock in Canada.

As for Phoenix Rising, we're very slow again in getting out our 2nd prisoner issue. No funding of any kind since fall 1987, so things are very very tight, to say the least. I just hope the mag doesn't go under this year. Some of us, including Bonnie, are planning to do some fundraising later this spring, so we'll see. As you know, the feds have already cut back on social/literary funding including less money to Canada Council. Another disappointment, but of course the ~~very~~ greedy-capitalist Tories always find enough to give themselves astronomical salary increases shortly after they're elected of course, and other times. Still, I'm hopeful the mag will survive this year, providing we get a lot of timely support in people & money.

That's it for now. Hope all of you feel we're not being too critical of New Star re our promotional concerns, but it is a worry for us. We've offered these comments in good faith, hoping that with tighter coordination sales will increase soon. And don't forget to keep us posted on latest developments is at all possible.

One more thing. Enclosing copy of special ^{audio} cassette tape of 3 radio interviews promoting Shrink Resistant. Thought you'd want to listen to and keep this good tape. Gave 1 to Bonnie, kept 1 for myself.

Struggle,

Don Weitz

c: Bonnie Burstow.

Saw Stan on TV Ontario re censorship - He's good!

(P.S. Also enclosing my letter to Globe & Mail supporting Stan Persky's fine one - please make copy for him and congratulations to Stan for speaking out! Also thanks for the 3 copies of the Catalogue-gave 1 to Bonnie, other to Phoenix.)

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