

No. 450-456

Decision of the Indecent Publications Tribunal

IN the matter of the Indecent Publications Act 1963, and in the matter of applications by the Comptroller of Customs for decisions in respect of the following books: *The Pleasure Principle* by Jesse Taylor, *Pretty Thing* by Robert Turner, *Screen* by Barry N. Malzberg, *Soho Whore* by Sheila Foster, *All-Night Visitors* by Clarence Major, *Oracle of the Thousand Hands* by Barry N. Malzberg, and *Eleanore* by Alex Austin, all published by Olympia Press, New York.

There was no appearance of the applicant. Mr Downey, solicitor, appeared on behalf of the publisher's representative and made submissions.

DECISION OF THE TRIBUNAL

THESE 7 books fell into 3 groups. The first 4 lay unrelieved stress on sexual activity at the expense of any development of plot or character. *The Pleasure Principle* can only be said to revel in detailed sexual description and to take delight in several sadistic episodes. *Pretty Thing* is a badly written story of the daughter of a southern state Governor who succeeds him when he cannot succeed himself, and devotes more time to sex in a variety of forms than to the cares of office. *Screen* has an unusual theme—an imagined series of sexual encounters between its narrator and a number of well-known female film stars. *Soho Whore* is supposed to be the memoirs of a London prostitute during and after the war; its concentration on the details of sexual encounter are at the expense of any claim to credibility. Not one of these four books can be considered either to have any literary or social merit or to have been written with any honesty of purpose.

The Tribunal classifies these 4 books as indecent.

In the next 2 books there is still a fairly heavy concentration on the sexual element, but they each have a much more developed story-line and characterisation. *All-Night Visitors* tells of a Vietnam veteran working as a desk clerk in a sleazy New York hotel used principally by prostitutes of both sexes. *Oracle of the Thousand Hands* is apparently the retelling by a man of the (mainly sexual) adventures of his friend D'Arcy; towards the end it seems apparent that it is in fact D'Arcy writing the book himself and that he is in a mental asylum. The writing in both books is on a level superior to the first 4 above, but we consider the explicit sexual detail requires an age restriction.

The Tribunal classifies these 2 books as indecent in the hands of persons under the age of 18 years.

The last book, *Eleanore*, is in quite a different category. Here the sexual element, still fairly strong, seems to take its natural place in the story, which concerns a middle-aged woman who comes to a Mediterranean island as a refuge from the complexities of her past life. The novel tells of her involvement with some of the island people and we learn a good deal about their past lives. The sexual involvement is not given an unduly prominent place, the principal characters are developed in some depth, and the writing has considerable merit.

The Tribunal classifies this book as not indecent.

R. S. V. SIMPSON, Chairman.

13 March 1972.

No. 457-63

Decision of the Indecent Publications Tribunal

IN the matter of the Indecent Publications Act 1963, and, in the matter of an application by the Comptroller of Customs for decisions in respect of the following books: *The Whip Angels* by Selena Warfield, *Frost* by Richard Amory, *Mind Blower* by Marco Vassi, *A Sea of Thighs* by Ray Kainen, *Sextet* by J. Hume Parkinson, *Of Sheep and Girls* by Robert Duffy, *Love on a Trampoline* by Sybah Darrick. All published by Olympia Press Inc., New York.

There was no appearance of the applicant. Mr Downey, solicitor, appeared on behalf of the publisher and made submissions.

DECISION OF THE TRIBUNAL

THESE 7 novels from the Olympia Press are items from the Traveller's Companion Series and, except for *Frost*, have what the editor calls "deceptively plain sober green covers", labelled "for adult readers".

The first 5 books on the list exploit morbid interest in cruelty and perversion. They describe at length with unrelieved salacity and exaggeration a seemingly endless succession of

bouts of sexual activity of the grossest kind. They all have the stamp of commercial pornography and no feature of context, style, or intention that might outweigh or justify their indecency.

The Tribunal classifies these 5 books as indecent.

In the 2 last-named books, though the general style is comparable, there is some irony, some humour, some attempt at a story and at a more balanced view of human beings.

The Tribunal classifies these 2 books as indecent in the hands of persons under the age of 18 years.

R. S. V. SIMPSON, Chairman.

13 March 1972.

No. 464

Decision of the Indecent Publications Tribunal

IN the matter of the Indecent Publications Act 1963, and in the matter of an application by the Comptroller of Customs for a decision in respect of the book *Adam and Eve* by Marcus Van Heller, published by Collectors Publications, California.

There was no appearance of the applicant nor of publisher's representative in New Zealand. Accordingly no submissions were made.

DECISION OF THE TRIBUNAL

THIS paperback novel purports to recount the struggles of a young couple from a small English town to obtain recognition and achieve success in their chosen fields of the Arts in London. In fact this theme is merely camouflage for a succession of descriptions of sexual indecencies and perversions which are recounted in gross detail. The book has no literary merit and the Tribunal can conceive of no one benefiting from it.

The Tribunal classifies this book as indecent.

R. S. V. SIMPSON, Chairman.

13 March 1972.

No. 465

Decision of the Indecent Publications Tribunal

IN the matter of the Indecent Publications Act 1963, and in the matter of an application by Comptroller of Customs for a decision in respect of the book *The Bowdy Tales of Firenzuola* by Agnola Firenzuola, published by Collectors Publications, California.

There was no appearance of the applicant nor of publisher's representative in New Zealand. Accordingly no submissions were made.

DECISION OF THE TRIBUNAL

AGNOLA Firenzuola, an Italian author of the Sixteenth Century, after practising law in Rome, joined the Benedictine Order of monks at Vallambrosa and later became Abbot of Prato. He has been accorded some reputation as a writer, though not the fame of his great predecessor, Boccaccio, or of his friend and contemporary, Pietro Aretino.

The translation of his *Romances* (claimed as "the first in modern colloquial English") is marred by crudeness and has little literary merit. But it cannot be classed as likely to corrupt.

The Tribunal classifies this book as not indecent.

R. S. V. SIMPSON, Chairman.

13 March 1972.

No. 466

Decision of the Indecent Publications Tribunal

IN the matter of the Indecent Publications Act 1963, and in the matter of an application by the Comptroller of Customs for a decision in respect of the book *Mail Order Sex Mart*, anonymous, published by Collectors Publications, California.

There was no appearance of the applicant nor of publisher's representative in New Zealand. Accordingly no submissions were made.

DECISION OF THE TRIBUNAL

ACCORDING to the preface of this book, its purpose is to "examine the effects of sex advertising on the sex life of the country" (U.S.A.). The name of the author is nowhere disclosed, but he claims that over a period of one year he was "able to appraise the impact of sex advertising upon con-