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**BOOKS and REVIEWS**

**The Best of Everything**  
 By Rona Jaffe. New York: Simon & Schuster. \$4.50.

Reviewed by **MARY TURINO**

"The Best of Everything" is a novel about the lives and loves of five working girls in New York City. They come from diverse backgrounds and they meet at Fabian Publications, a Rockefeller Center publishing house responsible for everything from paper-back novels to a religious magazine to a scandal sheet.

What these girls have in common is a desire to be married rather than to be working, and all, but one, have love affairs which are distinguished only in their dullness to the reader.

In trying to handle five life-threads, Rona Jaffe (who is a 26-year-old New Yorker) has done justice to none. She writes in an expository style about mannequins who never do come to life. In manipulating the plots, she gets her characters into ridiculous situations, where they tend to react in unrealistic ways.

**A World of Strangers**  
 By Nadine Gordimer. 312 pp. New York: Simon and Schuster. \$3.95.

Reviewed by **ROBIN BAHR**

Nadine Gordimer was born and raised in South Africa. "A World of Strangers," her fourth book, deals with the divided world of white and black in her native country.

Miss Gordimer is an accomplished writer with the rare ability for telling a consistently smooth and all-absorbing story. More important, she is a writer of deep understanding. In this book she is dealing with an enormous social problem, and her approach reflects an amazing degree of tolerance, sensitivity, and knowledge that can only be acquired by having lived intimately with a problem and having cared deeply enough to understand all its ramifications.

SHE develops character slowly and surely, with the same understanding. You are not told the what and why of their make-up; instead you gradually sense and feel their character through her gentle development.

Toby Hood is a young Englishman who has come to South Africa to work in his father's publishing firm. Coming from a family of professional good-doers, these lives have been dedicated to countless numbers of "Worthwhile Causes," Toby is intelligent, sensitive, but actively disinterested in problems. He wants no more "than that which is left of the privileged life to which I and my kind have no particular right."

AS A CASE in point, let's look at the history of Caroline Bender. She's from Westchester county, graduates from Radcliffe at 20, starts to work in the typing pool at Fabian to forget a broken engagement. Within her first week, she's gone over the head of one of the editors in commenting on a manuscript and before she's 22, she's an "angel!"

Her love affair with the atheistic religion editor, who wants to keep it "moral," ends on a "just friends" basis after their first physical encounter. She drifts thru the fear of dating a "nice" boy; writes for her now-married ex-fiance, has a love affair with him, turns down his offer to move to Dallas as his mistress, and is last seen running off on a wild Las Vegas weekend with a notorious Hollywood actor.

DESPITE its faults, "The Best of Everything" will probably sell well on the strength of its spiciness and the publisher's generous pre-publication advertising campaign.

By CHANCE he meets a young negro, Steven Sitol, whom he immediately likes as a person, not as a cause, and becomes involved in Steven's world of the black man. At the same time he is attracted to a young divorcee, Cecil Kove, whose social world is the small circle of wealthy, sophisticated Englishmen in the area.

The contrasts and similarities between the two worlds form the heart of the book. As Toby drifts back and forth, becoming more deeply involved in each world, we sense the impending crisis in his life. We see the uniqueness of each world and the universalities of all men—black and white, in their most basic needs and desires.

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**The Detroiters**  
 By Harold Livingston. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co. \$3.95.

Reviewed by **JULIE CANDLER**

"You had to knock the no-lament slobs down, keep them down, and keep kicking them when they were down. It was they, or you."

That is the guiding principle of an executive David Manning, author Harold Livingston's main character in "The Detroiters."

Manning is a hero, despite his guiding principle for Livingston pictures the 36-year-old, handsome character as an essentially talented, creative man, thus justifying the struggle to keep the "no-lament" slobs in check.

Livingston, who once worked for a Detroit advertising agency, recounts in his book such typical Motor City operations as the new-model introduction extravaganza for dealers, the preparation of lesser commercials, the "live ones" who buy ad men's lunches, and familiar places like the Chop House, the Penobscot, the Caucus Club.

LIVINGSTON'S story revolves around a typical agency's fighting and plotting to keep a big account. In "The Detroiters," it's the \$24,000,000 account of the fictitious Coronado motors, which hero Manning supervises.

Edson Smith, president of the advertising agency, has the "\$24,000,000 fear" of losing the account which has made him rich.

The shrewd ad man hires Manning to hold the account for him by conincing the nation's popular television personality, Don Tucker, to do a regular TV show for Coronado.

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