



Ear To The Bestsellers

Two weeks into 1977, the Ear is again put to the Ground, and monitors the subterranean noises of the Ten Approaching Bestsellers of the New Year:

*** PAWS:** Peter Benchley will follow up *The Deep* with this blood-curdling story of a giant Royal Bengal Tiger that stalks the outskirts of Calcutta, gobbling up little Bengali children. The city's Police Commissioner refuses to close approaches to Calcutta, and the death toll rises. The flow of refugees into Calcutta is sharply reduced, seriously affecting its economy. In the edge-of-the-seat climax, a tiger expert from the Smithsonian Institute arrives at Dum Dum Airport, and, after an exciting hunt, kills the monster. A book that promises to surpass *Jaws*.

*** 1776:** Gore Vidal will now focus his artillery on the year the Thirteen Colonies gained freedom from the English throne. A sardonic look at the Founding Fathers in which Gore out-Vidals himself, chronicling the feuds that arose between the signatories to the Declaration of Independence. The best chapter of the book will describe the argument between Jefferson, Washington, and Adams, as to who is the author of the famous line "I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man", and the manner in which Jefferson wins. A barbed sequel to 1876.

*** TRIUMVIRATE:** Leon Uris will follow up his *Trinity* with this pioneering foray into the mystique of the East. A gripping story of the life and times of the Indian Jews, and their confrontation, in a fascinating allegory, with the triumvirate of Hindoo gods — Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. Uris will let his imagination roam and his hair down, and have the gods besieging Bombay's largest synagogue. In the end, there will be a conciliation between the warring parties, and the Israelis will decide not to go in for an Entebbe-like operation.

*** WARMTH AND RUST:** Ruth Prawer Jhabvala will write on the humid allure of Cherrapunji, the Assamese town that enjoys the world's most precipitious rainfall. Divided into two parts, the book will narrate the romance between a young British woman in pre-1947 India, and a dashing Assamese tribal chief. The first part will describe the convolutions of their love, and the second will end with the heroine unable to embark on her elopement, the locks of her suitcase, covered with rust, refusing to open.

*** ALL THE CONGRESSMEN'S WOMEN:** A fascinating study of the sex scandals that have been unearthed after the disclosure of the Elizabeth Ray-Wayne Hayes escapade, by the intrepid authors of *All The President's Men*, Woodward-Bernstein. A book that is sure to rock the early complacency of the Carter presidency, and bring in more millions into the Woodstein coffers, and keep Washington psychiatrists' appointment books brimming with errant Congressmen's names.

*** DELIRIOUS:** A twinkling work in the tradition of Susann's *Dolores* that will outline the early and euphoric years of ex-Child Star Elizabeth Taylor, and her later passage through the lives, and the wedding-bands, of Nicky Hilton, Mike Wilding, Mike Todd, Eddie Fisher, Richard Burton, and John Warner. The novel will barrel along in a feverish haste, ending with the estimate that if marriages are truly made in heaven, then Liz, after her hitch-up with seventh husband Warner, must be in her Seventh Heaven.

*** SLAVERY AT NOON:** Dominique Lapierre and Larry Collins will this year write a masterful account of the docking of the first shipload of slaves on American shores—a superb story that will combine the poignancy of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* with the immediacy and the urgency

of *Freedom At Midnight*. A clever presentation of history in storybook style. The authors will no doubt antagonize many American Negros with their supercilious descriptions of the first chain-gang's personalities.

*** THE MONEYLENDERS:** Arthur Hailey will cap his writing career with this brilliant, insightful book on the intricacies of the moneylenders' lives in India. Following close on the heels of *Wheels* and *The Moneychangers*, this book will once again demonstrate Hailey's capabilities as a writer who gets to the root of his subject. Hailey will conclude this study with the decline of the moneylenders in India, and the rise of the banking system. A must in the library of every latter-day *Shylock*.

*** THE DESCENT OF MAN:** Art Buchwald will execute his own follow-up of Bronowski's *The Ascent Of Man* with this side-splitting look at the way we are. Buchwald maintains every delightful twist of his Art, and leads us through a memorable parody. He ends with the opinion that mankind is now in the final stages of its descent into savagery. Desmond Morris is sure to applaud this analysis of our retrogression into simian origins. A book that ought to adorn the shelves of every zoo in the world.

*** HIS STORY:** A sympathetic biography of Kamala Das's husband, and the story of the years he has spent in his wife's libidinous shadow. A book that will bring every Men's Libber into the streets with placards that demand an end to the antics of Kamala Das, Germaine Greer, Erica Jong, et al. His Story will go down in history as a forceful reply to Kamala's *My Story*. After the book is published, of course, the couple might make up, and write the last book in the series—*Our Story*.

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