

# New cartoon book stars our own Mig!

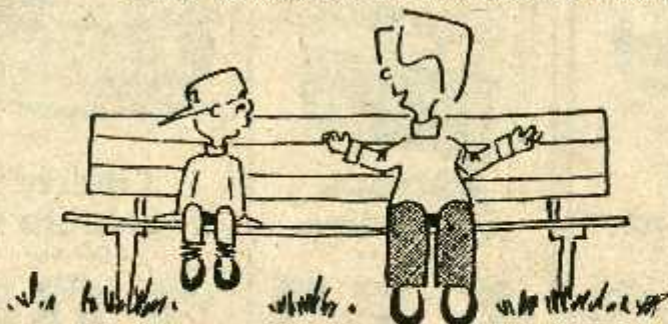
Mig has made it! The character who first appeared in Northern Lifestyle on March 14, 1979, is now a star. The star of an 86-cartoon book. It's a first for Mig's creator, Bernie Poulin, and a first for Laurentian Publish-

ing. Mig is the young fellow with the perceptive punchline. Exploring the adult-child relationship is what Mig is all about, says Poulin. "Mig has always been a political thing with me."

# MIG...

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I KNOW, KID... RAISING PARENTS IS TOUGH!  
BUT YA GOTTA UNDERSTAND... GROWING UP,  
FOR THEM, IS HARD... IT'S LIKE EATING  
LIVER AFTER YOU'VE HAD THE ICE CREAM!...



86 CARTOONS BY BERNARD POULIN/FOREWORD BY MICHAEL ATKINS

the essential nature of children was conceived about six years ago. He began observing children's mannerisms and recording the things they would often blurt out. These "one-liners" are essentially what Mig is based on.

Poulin is constantly on the look-out for things children say that strike a responsive cord. It is now to the point where friends, relatives and readers will supply him with much of his material. Poulin also has a home-grown source in his two children, Elaine, 11, and Valerie, 3. Additionally, Poulin still continues to observe people. He likes to go to the Shopping Centre just so he can observe the interaction between parents and children.

Poulin enjoys doing Mig because he finds it relaxing. Poulin, you see, is a full-time artist and Mig represents a welcome addition to his routine. He feels the release of his first book is noteworthy because it is an indication of the type of support that a working artist can receive. It certainly isn't bad for a man who has had no formal training in art but still makes a living as an artist.

One man Poulin credits with the directions his life has taken is Milton Shaffer who owned an Ottawa Men's Wear store where he worked as a clerk after leaving home when he was 15.

Mig "asks" parents to take a look at themselves and honestly appraise how they are raising their children. Poulin believes that "laughing at our own inadequacies as adults is the first step towards better communication with children." Of course, Mig is also aimed at youngsters who can identify with what the cartoon says.

Mig often hits a raw nerve in some parents. Poulin recently received a letter from a reader who felt that a recent Mig constituted an attack on fatherhood. Such a response pleases Poulin. "That's like a pat on

the back to me," he said.

Mig is based on a youngster named Miguel who Poulin met while employed by the Ottawa Board of Education. Poulin, who worked with children who had learning disabilities, recalls Miguel as a kid "who seemed to have the world by the tail." He seemed totally happy. "He didn't fit our pattern of being an ordinary, every day kid," said Poulin.

The 36-year-old Poulin recalls how he laid the groundwork for his cartoon. The idea of using a cartoon to get across what Poulin hoped was

"He was like a father to me," said Poulin. "He encouraged me, he motivated me." Poulin remembers being told by Shaffer that he was meant to be more than just a clerk in a store. "He encouraged me to go to teacher's college," said Poulin. Shaffer even fired Poulin so that he would take that route.

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# MIG

Get your very own  
AUTOGRAPHED  
BOOK OF MIG  
CARTOONS  
MIG'S ARTIST,  
Bernard Poulin will  
be having auto-  
graph sessions at  
NEW SUDBURY  
SHOPPING  
CENTRE  
Coles Book Store  
Nov. 28,  
11am to 3pm

## ... Miguel

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Despite feeling resentful about being fired, Poulin said he is now so grateful that he even sends Shaffer presents on special occasions.

Poulin and his wife, Marie-Paul, came to Sudbury in late 1978. He loves it here and scoffs at people who say Sudbury has no culture. "Most people who knock Sudbury have never been to Sudbury," he said. As a working artist he finds that Sudbury has almost as many conveniences as a large city. "Three-quarters of the reproductions that have been made of my prints have been made in Sudbury."

Returning to his philosophy on child-parent relations, Poulin noted that children "are not naive and are not innocent like we think they are. They know what's going on." Children like to be told right up front about something and they dislike it if a parent "beats around the bush."

Poulin is opposed to the system of punishments and rewards many parents use on their children because both let the child know who's

dominant. "We haven't reached a level of cooperation with our kids yet," he says. That involves making children realize the "consequences for what they do." He believes parents should fully explain their reasons for an action and not treat the child as if he is unworthy of consultation or incapable of understanding.

Children are humans too, says Poulin. They deserve to be accorded the same respect one would give a fellow adult. "Children should be an integral part of the family rather than just tenants under the roof of the parents."

Mig is the vehicle for getting his philosophy across. While other cartoonists such as Lynn Johnson use humour to impart their message, Poulin says Mig tends to be "more direct, more stinging." He has to be that way because "that's the way reality is."

Mig is on the books at Epic Book Store in the City Centre on Saturday, Nov. 14 from 11 am to 3 pm. The following Saturday he'll be at the Cedar Gift Shop in the Southridge Mall from 11 am to 3 pm. On November 28, he'll be at Coles Bookstore in the New Sudbury Shopping Centre, also from 11 am to 3 pm. Free Mig balloons will be available.