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THE SOCIAL THESIS AND PROSE FICTION

OF RODERICK FINLAYSON

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts in English at Massey University.

JOHN MUIRHEAD

1971
- To My Parents -
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This essay is a study of the inter-relationship of the social thesis and prose fiction of Roderick Finlayson. It will examine the themes which persist in his polemical articles, short stories and novels, the effect of his ethical stance on the aesthetics of his craft, and the degree to which that stance represents, in Allen Curnow's words, "some common problem of the imagination" in New Zealand literature and thought.

Because much of the material used in this essay is rather inaccessible, I have felt it necessary to treat the articles and fiction in some detail, quoting extensively in the endeavour to convey the full range of Finlayson's thought and craft. Since they are of peripheral, rather than central importance to the arguments proposed in this account of Finlayson's work, I have not included discussion of his numerous writings for the School Publications Branch of the Department of Education.

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