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A Contingency of Words: Diaries in English by Women in Canada 1830-1915

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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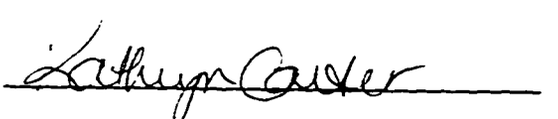

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled *A Contingency of Words: Diaries in English by Women in Canada 1830-1915* submitted by Kathryn Carter in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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For my grandmothers
who were there at the beginning
and for the unborn child
who accompanied me at the end.

Abstract

This dissertation examines unpublished diaries written by women in various regions of Canada between 1830 and 1915. The examples are drawn from archival research in Canadian repositories, and they range from reticent farm logs to more expressive examinations of life in late-nineteenth-century boarding schools. The dissertation is organized chronologically, beginning with the earliest diaries and moving to the late century, but the argument serves to undermine any causal inferences that may be drawn from such an arrangement.

The two central features of the dissertation concern the questioning of privacy and an intersubjective model of reading. The dissertation questions the notion that all diary writing is private and argues that nineteenth-century diary writing is situated in real or imagined communities of readers. Archival researchers and literary or historical interpreters are considered as one of the possible communities of diary readers, and suggestions are made for the reading of diaries. Specifically, the dissertation argues that diaries must be read with attention to the material conditions of their production.

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One of the best things about writing this dissertation is that it brought me into contact with wonderful people who shared my interests and were eager to help me learn more about women's diary writing. Diana Chown introduced me to the Northern Alberta Women's Archive Association. The group of women involved in NAWAA provided encouragement and suggestions from the earliest days of my research. I particularly want to thank Nanci Langford, the current president of NAWAA, for sharing her interest in the diaries of Sophie Puckette. Because of NAWAA, I met Susan Jackel who became one of my supervisors. And because of Susan, I met the researchers who assembled collectively as WASH, a group devoted to the history of Women in Alberta and Saskatchewan History.

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Hjartarson was helpful and attentive at precisely the right moments, and Susan Jackel's was a voice of reason and stability which helped to steer me through various kinds of crises.

Finally, I want to thank my family without whose astonishing love and support none of this would have been possible, and to the Bishops who fed me weekly in body and soul. Perhaps I could have completed this thesis without Russell, but his insightful critiques, his encouragement, and his support kept me sane and brave in ways to numerous to list.

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Introduction: The Merely Personal

I grew up in Paris, Ontario, barely south of the road that Governor John Graves Simcoe proposed in 1793 as "a military link between Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, Lake St. Clair and Lake Huron" and a "deterrent to expansionist American interest in Upper Canada" (Byers and McBurney 7). Paris--first laid out by Hiram Capron in 1831--is located north of a town named after Governor Simcoe, north-west of Brantford, named after Joseph Brant. More specifically, my childhood home is located on a hill overlooking the Grand River, within the six-mile easement that lies on either side deeded to the Six Nations Indian Reserve. The hill behind my house, which slopes down to the river, was once the site of gypsum mines, the principal source for Plaster of Paris, and abandoned mine shafts can still be found there. On the way into town, you can still faintly see the painted wall advertising the Capitol Theatre which provides a fleeting backdrop in Ondaatje's In the Skin of A Lion. Downtown is the Arlington Hotel, and outside of town is the Paris Plains Church, both of which figure more prominently in Ondaatje's novel. Historian Joy Parr, who compares Paris to Hanover, Ontario, in her work The Gender of Breadwinners describes Paris as a "women's town," and describes accurately the social divisions that separated mill-workers in town from the prosperous farmers in the surrounding Brant County area (15, 16). Although I had no idea at the time, she was doing research for this book in 1982 when I began my very first summer job for the Paris Historical Society; she and I were making use of the same resources, working with the same people, but she could see things I could not see about the social divisions in my own town--social divisions that affected (and still affect) my sense of identity--primarily because she had more training than I did, but also because I was immersed in it and because, at the time, I found it hard to believe that history could be where I was.

Throughout my childhood, while I was reading about the Kings and Queens of England, I always hoped there was a rich archeology beneath my feet particular to my place, but I did not know it was there. Most of what I wrote in the paragraph above I learned only after I left Paris. I invented histories at first in long afternoon journeys down the hill to the river, but I encountered family history more directly on my grandparents' farm, which was filled with detritus from five decades of Carters living on land first deeded by Queen Victoria in 1856 to my great-great grandfather, Samuel Carter, a failed California gold-miner and son of a British emigrant. I know this because it is written out in marginalia in an historical atlas of Brant County which my grandmother bought at the local hardware store. Here, then, is a beginning of a history of my place, using the raw materials of geography and history and literature to establish connections and make meanings. In every case, the written words of others inform what I "remember" or know about my past such as the histories of Paris, or the family histories written by my grandmother in the margins of an atlas. Similarly, this dissertation also relies on written words in its attempts to uncover a past dimly outlined in women's diaries. At best, my own history as narrated above and the histories of the diarists' cultures in this study are constructed histories. I impose history on my own narrative of beginnings in retrospect, and it only tells part of the story. Likewise, I am sure that the history I impose on the diarists in this study would only be somewhat recognizable to them.

I want to establish the fact that I am reading from somewhere, just as my diarists are writing from somewhere. Where am I reading from? At least two places, I think: one is rooted in a predominantly white southern Ontario semi-rural small town, a town that harbored terrible prejudices about the natives who lived on the Six Nations reserve. Pauline Johnson grew up near that reserve, not that many in Paris would know who Pauline Johnson was; nor would they know Sara Jeanette Duncan, who hailed from nearby Brantford in its late-nineteenth-century prosperity. Literary knowledge and creative intelligence were not (are not) rewarded by the majority of Parisians unless a

teacher notices some glimmer that makes him or her think that your interests and your knowledge will help you get out of Paris. I grew up knowing that I would get out of Paris. Although no one in my family had gone to university, I knew that I would go and that meant leaving Paris. In fact, I announced in the final year of high school that I would complete a Ph. D. although I really had no idea what that meant; I'd never known anyone who had more than an M.A. It was simply an act of bravado and defiance. And this is the second place from which I write, the place I could only imagine then: the academy to which I have belonged with varying degrees of comfort for the past several years. Although I have spent the last ten years in post-graduate training, only sometimes do I feel like I belong because of Paris. But I wouldn't belong in Paris any more now than I did when I was showing off the knowledge that was sure to get me out.

The two places from which I write mix in sometimes confusing and sometimes productive ways. For example, the theory I have read and my research interests have been influenced not only by my Parisian experiences, but by the voices of my two grandmothers, one a rural school teacher and the other a working-class Scottish immigrant. The rural school teacher left me a legacy of written truths and half-truths about the Carters, the family into which she married. Because of her, I have stories reaching all the way back to Samuel's father, James, who was the first to come to Canada and clear land in 1835; because of her, I know that my great-great-great grandmother was an Englishwoman named Sarah Barance who died in 1848. Although Grandma did not leave many documents about her birth family, who were also Upper Canadian homesteaders (possibly because her father seems to have been some kind of border-crossing con man) she was certainly the principal historian of the Carters. She was active in the Women's Institute, an organization whose importance I did not understand until she was gone. I learned from her that history, including women's history, existed as surely as the barn, as surely as the tobacco fields. Even if it wasn't written in text books, it merely needed to be chronicled. Her voice is an eminently practical one that would reject any

high-sounding theory if not rooted in something concrete and material, and her strength and contributions to her farm inspired my attempt to reclaim farm women's diaries in chapter five.

My maternal grandmother lived in Brantford in a densely-packed city neighbourhood near the train station, which was a beautifully dingy Victorian wreck of a building. She emigrated from Scotland in June 1912 after what I believe was a poor, labour-intensive girlhood in Glasgow, and while she loved to tell the story of arriving in Montreal in June with her winter coat and a budgie in a cage, she just laughed when I told her these stories were important. What I know of her family history is limited to a fragile birthday book meant to keep track of family birthdays. She told few stories of her childhood and kept no other records of self, I'm sure, because she didn't think she was important enough. As a result, what I know of my maternal lineage extends only to her life; beyond that, in her mother's life, there are rumours of suicide shrouded by secrecy and ellipses. Her voice is one that dismisses the significance of women's personal writing and women's history. I think of her when I think of women silenced by history, and certainly part of the rhetorical agenda in this dissertation is to convince her, though she will never know, how very important she was.

Lydia Leone Pursley Carter (1908-1988) and Ellen Davidson Couldrey Scott (1897-1990) are the emotional centres of this dissertation, and their lives helped me to make sense of the lives that are interpreted on the following pages. Just as importantly their lives, and their stories about my ancestors, have always helped me make sense of myself.

I wanted to start with these stories to lay bare some of my personal motivations for writing this thesis, but there is another rhetorical reason why I started with a discussion of what might be considered the "merely personal." You are not supposed to talk about the "merely personal" in a doctoral dissertation, nor ever after, it seems, in the

course of your professional life. Jane Tompkins raises this issue in her article "Me and My Shadow" where she writes somewhat combatively:

> The problem is that you can't talk about your private life in the course of doing your professional work. You have to pretend that epistemology, or whatever you're writing about, has nothing to do with your life, that it's more exalted, more important, because it (supposedly) *transcends* the merely personal .... The public/private dichotomy, which is to say the public/private hierarchy, is a founding condition of female oppression. I say to hell with it. (169)

I start with personal notes about my own life to make explicit the subjectivity of my own reading and to bring my words into collusion with the diarists studied here whose words have not received a great deal of attention because they deal with the "merely personal." I want to be the peer, colleague, or co-conspirator to the diarists studied here as opposed to an "objective" researcher who studies them from above. One way in which I can break down the false barriers between researcher and subject or between public and private is through self-revelation, by exposing that which might be considered personal or private about my own ambivalent reading positions. The quotation from Tompkins suggests a new approach to reading, one which makes explicit the subjectivity of the reader; it figures forth an intersubjective model of reading which I advocate especially in the case of women's diaries and other personal writing. Whether or not I can be successful in my desire to be peer to the diaries studied here is the subject of chapter two.

Tompkins's quotation also raises another point that is central to diary writing as it is explored in this thesis, and that is her questioning of the public/private dichotomy. This study questions the notions of privacy that have been ascribed to diary writing, especially as it was practised in the nineteenth century. Labeling something "merely personal" denigrates not only those self revelatory moments in criticism, but it also works to exclude women's "personal" writing from serious academic study. A great deal of women's diary writing has been considered unimportant because it does not engage with the historical import of its times. Women who witnessed and reported historical events

might find their words taken up by scholars as evidence in social histories; this would rarely be the situation if their writing described a life set apart from significant historical events. Conversely, in other cases where personal writing is equated with private life, the writing tantalizes readers, promising a behind-the-scenes glimpse at the life of a public female figure. In these cases, the diary writing is over-valued as if it were somehow more truthful and authentic than other more public statements. These evaluations are consistent with an assumed opposition between public and private life, which Tompkins calls the public/private dichotomy or hierarchy. Quite rightly, I think, Tompkins says "to hell with it." To hell with a polarization of public and private that serves to underestimate or overestimate the value of women's diary writing.

For the last twenty years, feminist scholars have sought to re-evaluate women's personal writings using a variety of theoretical approaches, and the complexity and variety of their responses contradict the caricature of attitudes towards women's diaries that I draw above. However, as discussions in chapter one and chapter four make clear, some of these studies--despite good intentions--still rely on a public/private dichotomy to ground their arguments, and this poses a problem for diary writing by women in particular: it continues to co-relate women's lives with a private sphere. As Tompkins suggests, this is a founding condition of female oppression; it is especially evident in the nineteenth century when the public/private hierarchy was underwritten by gender ideologies which valorized women's place in a separate sphere. This study seeks to trouble or question common assumptions about the privacy of a woman's diary written in the nineteenth century.

Much of the diary writing from the nineteenth century cannot be considered private. During that time, diaries were often meant to be read by friends and family, and my research has uncovered a surprising number of diaries clearly marked for such a

readership.[1] In the first chapter, I argue that diary writing is dialogic because diaries are always written in real or imagined communities. The following two chapters look at a kind of diary writing explicitly addressed to an audience: the journal letter. Chapter three examines the semi-public journal letters of Frances Simpson and Isobel Finlayson written in the 1830s and 1840s, and I argue that their writing is not private but shaped in response to the imperial agendas of the Hudson's Bay Company and to prevailing attitudes about race, gender, and class. Likewise, the remaining chapters show how the "so-called private" is the subject of a public discourse (York 2). Chapter four speculates about the mid-Victorian gender and class ideologies that helped to secure a public/private dichotomy, and chapter five argues that even the most reticent farm log is engaged in dialogue with a community whose values it shares. Chapter six examines diaries written in a boarding-school setting where students are expected to share their diaries with teachers and where they willingly share them with colleagues. The young diarists in chapter six exhibit in their supposedly "private" writing the ways in which they negotiate public debates about access to education at the end of the century.

Although I see diaries as essentially dialogic, I have excluded letters from this study for practical reasons. The study of letters has a different critical history than diaries. Except in anthologies, critics have rarely been eager to consider diaries and letters together. For me, including letters would have meant undertaking another dissertation, so I've limited myself to diaries. Unfortunately, this has meant the omission of texts that are provocative autobiographical works such as Janice Dickin McGinnis's recent edition of Dr. Mary Percy Jackson's 1929-1930 letters (Jackson was the first woman doctor in the Peace River district of northern Alberta); Haven't Any News: Ruby's Letters from the 50's (1995), edited by Edna Staebler with an afterword by

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[1] For further information, see my bibliography of unpublished women's diaries in Canadian repositories as catalogued in Diaries in English by Women in Canada, 1753-1995 (Ottawa: CRIAW, July 1997).

Marlene Kadar; and Hilda Rose's Stump Farm, a series of letters about settling in Fort Vermilion, Alberta, published in 1928.[2]

There are other omissions in this study. For example, I have focused on diaries written in English and made no systematic attempt to include French Canadian diaries; the "journal intime," a form prevalent in nineteenth-century France which influences present-day French language diaries, has a distinctive tradition which has already received attention in several critical studies.[3] Valerie Raoul summarizes the differences: "the English [diary] often tends more to social comment, external observation and humour" whereas, for the French "intimiste," the problem of representing in words a notion of the internal self "becomes a self conscious part of the text" (Echo/Narcissa 16). That twentieth-century English-language diaries conform more to the model of the journal intime is a plausible argument and deserves more study.

To collect the sampling of diaries from which the examples in this study are drawn, I visited or contacted by mail most of the Canadian archives, museums and repositories; the rest I accessed through on-line facilities or learned about through other secondary sources (and these are listed in the works cited). I visited the Provincial

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[2] Rose's un-archived collection sitting in an attic in Fort Vermilion includes slightly deranged notes once tacked to her homestead door such as "the crow took the baby" written to no one in particular about a non-existent baby. Her fragments and manuscript letters cry out for the kind of treatment Judy Nolte Temple devotes to the fragments left by "Baby Doe" Tabor as explained in "Fragments as Diary: Theoretical Implications of the Dreams and Visions of "Baby Doe" Tabor" in Inscribing the Daily. In addition, the aforementioned Dr. Mary Percy Jackson, writing roughly two years after the publication of Rose's letters, tells her parents in England that she could have written sensational letters like Rose's if she had been willing to lie. What was Rose trying to create in her letters?

[3] The tradition of the "journal intime" was an influence, for example, on the highly popular and melodramatic late nineteenth century diary of Marie Bashkirtseff. For more information about the tradition of French Canadian diary writing and its uses in Québecois fiction, see the two books by Valerie Raoul: Distinctly Narcissistic: diary fiction in Québec. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993, and The French Fictional Journal: fictional narcissism: narcissistic fiction. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980; see also Pierre Hebert's Le Journal Intime au Québec (1988) and his article "Fragments de journaux intimes dans le discours du roman qu'eb'ecois depuis 1980" in Le Roman québecois depuis 1960 , as well as Daphni Baudouin's article "Le Journal Intime feminin québecois au XIX siecle" in Litterature québecoise: la recherche en emergence (1991). Author Anne Dandurand, whose own diary is at the National Archives, has used the form of the "journal imaginaire" in her short stories and the novel Un coeur qui craque (translated as Cracks). For the information about French-Canadian journals, I am indebted to Kathleen Kellett-Betsos at Ryerson.

Archives of Alberta, the Provincial Archives of Ontario, the Hamilton Public Library, the Edmonton City Archives, and the Glenbow. At each archive, I was able to sit down and sift through complete collections attached to women's diaries which often included scrapbooks and other ephemera; I think this examination of the diary in combination with its "extended archive" is invaluable for shedding light on the meaning of diaries, and I discuss this in more detail in chapter one. My reading of Marjorie Saunders's diary in chapter six benefited from the fact that I was able to easily access records about her life in the Provincial Archives of Alberta and in the Edmonton City Archives. Happily, more and more diaries by women are being published. One excellent recent example is Henry and Self: The Private Life of Sarah Crease 1826-1922 (1996). British Columbia historian Kathryn Bridge reproduces the 1880 diary kept by Sarah Crease and prefaces the selection with extensive biographical information; she justifies her project by citing a number of other Canadian historians such as Margaret Conrad and Veronica Strong-Boag on the importance of uncovering women's diaries (14). Although I have read a number of published diaries for this study, I have only worked from published editions in two instances: Elizabeth Simcoe and Kathleen Cowan.[4] In every other case, I am working with original or photocopied archival records.

Many of the archives contacted by mail sent photocopies of their card catalogues or finding aids. I was able, in many cases, to order photocopied samples from the diaries and thereby gain a sense of the writer and her work. More recently, "virtual archives" available on-line (e.g. Bellinton and Avery; CIHM[5]) have helped me overcome vast distances with the aid of technology. Several provincial and university archives are

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[4] Cowan's diary is a typescript published privately by her husband and, although she did not know him at the time of writing, she refers to him among a general group of friends. In the published edition, her husband highlights his name each time it appears no matter how incidental the reference.

[5] See the menu of on-line archives, a web site maintained by Steve Bellinton and Cheryl Avery of the University of Saskatchewan Archives at http://www.usask.ca/archives/menu.html. Another good source is the on-line CIHM (Canadian Institute of Historical Microreproductions) at http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/cihm/cihm.htm.

currently accessible on the internet. While some web-sites offer only information about the hours and location of the archive, others allow researchers to browse an alphabetical catalogue of fonds [the collection of archival materials belonging to any one donor[6]], and the most useful sites allow researchers to telnet into their system and perform keyword searches. This last capability has helped especially in finding women's diaries that are filed under their husbands' names. The database records often contain a description of the fond, its history, and the scope of the collection. British Columbia has been especially speedy and thorough in getting all of their archival records on-line;[7] their system not only culls information about documents from their provincial archives, but also from smaller museums such as the Campbell River Museum or the CFB Esquimault Naval and Military Museum. Alberta is currently co-ordinating the resources from the provincial archives in Edmonton, the Glenbow in Calgary, and a number of smaller museums throughout the province on the Alberta Network of Archives (ANA) database, but it is not yet accessible to remote users.

When quoting unpunctuated diary entries in this dissertation, I have followed a method suggested to me by the practice of diary scholar Andrew Hassam (S to A 18). He inserts five spaces where punctuation should have gone. The optimal placement of spacing can often be deduced in an original by line breaks or other textual markers that do not translate so well into neatly-typed text. Some of the diarists in this study used proper punctuation. Isobel Finlayson and Frances Simpson were fairly scrupulous about punctuation in the fair copies they produced from their original journal letters. However, the farm log of Emma Chadwick Stretch uses random punctuation. Without spaces to indicate sentence breaks, the meaning of her entries can be easily misunderstood, so I

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[6] The glossary to The Rules for Archival Description defines fonds as "the whole of the documents regardless of form or medium automatically and organically created and/or accumulated and used by a particular individual, family, or corporate body in the course of that creator's activities or functions."

[7] The url (universal resource locater) address for the British Columbia Archives and Record Service is http://www.bcars.gs.gov.bc.ca

have organized her entries to read with spaces. Editing or transcribing diaries presents special challenges, and in general my policy is to leave everything as close to the original as possible: that means not correcting spelling mistakes and using the diarist's method for presenting the date which prefaces each entry. Diary interpretation often examines the nuances of spelling, grammar, and punctuation, so it is not helpful to transcribe only the content without regard for these markers of the texts' material production.

While the dismantling of the public/private dichotomy is one of the central arguments of this thesis, there are other agendas at work. This study seeks to add to a growing body of literature about women's diaries and letters of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many of the existing studies concentrate on British and American diaries, so this project not only adds Canadian diaries to the mix but aims to discover if there is anything uniquely Canadian about them. Looking for the "uniquely Canadian," as one historian points out, does not necessarily mean insisting on a difference from British and American models. The "major task, surely," he writes, "is to analyze the manner in which externally derived ideas have been adapted to a variety of local and regional environments, in such a way that a body of assumptions uniquely Canadian has been built up; and to trace the changing context of such assumptions" (Wise 12). His comments echo those of Robert Kroetsch in his essay "On Being an Alberta Writer." What Kroetsch says about the "archeology" of prairie history and the way in which it must be built up through "the particulars of place," through "newspaper files, place names, shoe boxes full of old photographs, tall tales, diaries, journals, tipi rings, weather reports, business ledgers, [and] voting records" (439) applies in a similar fashion to writing a Canadian women's history. Both scholars, writing about very different aspects of Canadian writing and history, emphasize the particulars of place, and indeed I argue that material conditions greatly affect the writing of diaries. The importance of material culture to my investigations of diary writing is explained in chapter one. Specifically, I argue the need to borrow interpretive tools from folklore, anthropology, and material

culture to make our readings of diaries more perspicacious. These tools will be useful particularly in relation to reticent diaries like those of working class and rural women who are under-represented in most diary studies. In each chapter, I attempt to situate the diarist in material culture as well as describing how she may have been influenced by less concrete affective circumstances such as the epistemologies and cultural concepts informing the age in which she lived. I attempt to show that "texts are produced and reproduced under specific social and institutional conditions, and hence, every text including those that may appear to be purely private, is a social text" (McGann 21). This approach is informed by the understanding that historical contextualization does not provide answers but rather shows the site of struggle for ideological hegemony.

This study focuses on diary texts but puts them at the service of women's history. A few comments are necessary on this relationship. Joan Scott writes that first-hand accounts have been politically valuable for historians by producing "a wealth of new evidence previously ignored ... and has drawn attention to dimensions to human life and activity usually deemed unworthy of mention in conventional histories" and, perhaps more importantly, "occasion[ing] a crisis for orthodox history" ("Experience" 24). However, she cautions researchers: "documenting the experience of others in this way has been at once a highly successful and limiting strategy for historians of difference" (24). The central point of Scott's article is to warn against using experience as unquestionable evidence in historical arguments because it further buttresses the claim of referentiality, works within "the epistemological framework of orthodox history" and, most importantly, locates "resistance outside its discursive construction" which serves to "reify agency as an inherent attribute of individuals, thus decontextualizing it" (24-25). Scott's comments offer an insightful starting point because she alerts us to the ways in which first-hand accounts can preclude questions about "discourse, difference, and subjectivity" and encourages readers to "historicize experience," thereby catalysing a critical reflection about the kind of history we produce in our readings (33).

Diaries, in my mind, offer an ideal text with which to historicize experience. Because I see women's diary writing in the nineteenth century as a social act--not "private" at all, but phatic and communicative, diary writing spells out in every entry the processes by which "one places oneself or is placed in social reality and so perceives and comprehends as subjective ... those relations--material, economic, and interpersonal--which are in fact social, and in a larger perspective, historical" (Scott 27-28). This study asks readers to re-conceptualize diary writing, to re-investigate what have been some of the most accepted tenets about diary writing: that it is secret, private, and a repository for emotions. Instead, I argue that diary writing is situated in communities, real or imagined, and cannot be understood without taking into account the intended audience. The researcher becomes part of that audience when he or she undertakes to become part of the diary's community. In R.G. Collingwood's 1946 The Idea of History, which Scott argues was an influential text for several decades, the ideal model of historiography invoked what he saw as the necessary autonomy of the historian. Scott summarizes his stance: "the ability of the historian to 'reenact past experience' is tied to his autonomy, 'where by autonomy I mean the condition of being one's own authority, making statements or taking action on one's own initiative and not because those statements or actions are authorized or prescribed by anyone else'" (28). Scott suggests that this approach obscures the biases and prejudices of the historian: "the question of where the historian is situated--who he is, how he is defined in relation to others, what the political effects of his history may be--never enters the discussion" (28). I espouse a model of intersubjectivity described by Patrocinio Schweickart among others, and I begin this study by attempting to articulate my own place because "such acknowledgments ... implicitly challenge the concept of author that would make of the biographer/ethnographer a disembodied and neutral voice, a universal human subject, outside history, nation, culture, gender, race" (Smith "Who's Talking" 398). The importance of this reflexive approach is discussed in more detail in chapter two.

The two central features of this study, the questioning of privacy and an intersubjective model of reading, are related. Questioning a fascination with the diary's privacy is necessary because one of the dangers in conducting diary studies, one shared by biographical researchers, is an uncritical fascination with particular texts or lives. It is necessary that we, as researchers, acknowledge our own reading positions. Biographer Gelya Frank argues that "in a moral world--by that, I mean a world grounded in human survival--it seems appropriate to expect social scientists and humanists to clarify the values with which they approach their subjects and sources" (205). Without a high degree of self reflexivity in our critical approaches to diaries, we are simply asking the diary to tell us what we want to hear, and we are not then, as researchers, contributing to knowledge or understanding.

Diary writing is contingent upon its initial and subsequent readers, readers who will attempt to make sense of it and to understand its silences, repetitions, and narrative dead ends. Within the diary, each entry is contingent upon the next for meaning. The diary gathers meaning through accrual and not through narrative shaping. In addition, the very survival of a diary text is a chancy thing at best; it too is contingent upon a variety of material and historical factors: did the diarist use cheap paper that quickly crumbled? did she store the diary in a place where mice ate it or water destroyed it? Who found the diary and why did they not throw it out?[8] Finally, how did the diary find its way to an archive and how was it received there? Contingency, meaning the "uncertainty of occurrence ... thing dependent on an uncertain event; thing incident to another" (OED) seems an especially appropriate word to invoke in a discussion of diary writing, the material conditions of its production, and the intersubjective readings performed by its audiences.

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[8] One example of a diary's chancy survival is the 1929-1930 diary of Mrs. Edgar Seebach which was found in a demolished building in Saskatchewan before finding its way to the Saskatchewan Archives Board. Andrew Hassam speculates that the low survival rate of working-class diaries may be due to the cheaper paper used by working-class diarists, the high mobility of working-class settlers, or the poor conditions of the family to which the diary was sent (S to A 12-14).

Because the survival of any one diary is so precarious, this study makes no claims to be introducing a new canon of works. I cannot claim to assemble a representative sampling of diary texts. Like the editors of No Place Like Home who "make no claims to provincial comprehensiveness" (3) because they cannot include the records of women who could "neither read nor write" nor any records from "Indian, Black, or Acadian women" (3), this study also makes no claims to national comprehensiveness. Rather, I realize that to enter into a study of diaries is to give oneself up to the vicissitudes of history, to the misguided but likely well-intentioned acts of archivists who may have kept one woman's diary and destroyed another. As Kroetsch says of the "misguided histories" of the west written by easterners, these too become part of the story, part of the "archeological deposits" (439). The set of texts chosen for this dissertation are not drawn from nor do they comprise an immutable canon of diaries. Instead, they argue for the importance of the "merely personal" as embedded in a contingency of words.

Chapter One

Prodigal Pleasures: Problematics of Defining and Reading Women's Diaries.

This study is about women's diaries written in Canada at various points in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in particular geographic locales, by women of various social positions. When I began, my goal was to examine unpublished diaries written by women with no literary aspirations or expressed literary inclinations. I did not know what I would discover. In 1991, when I began, there were few guides to tell me. Some general studies addressed British and American women's diaries; very little was written explicitly about Canadian women's diaries that incorporated insights gained from research on life writing published in the 1980s. Work by Barbara Powell, Helen Buss, and Margaret Conrad provided some notable exceptions. The goal of this chapter is to explain why I chose to look at non-literary diaries, to set out what I see as the significant features of the diary writing studied here, and to set those observations within the larger field of current British, American, and Canadian studies.

The main points of diary writing that I want to focus on are these: 1) the diary is written in a dialogic mode; 2) the diarist's (real or imagined) community plays a significant role in determining the tone and content of the writing; and 3) diary writing foregrounds the material conditions of its making. All of these issues are inflected by gender. Taken together, these issues do not and cannot present a complete definition of diary writing but focusing on these aspects provokes a number of questions about diary writing that are pertinent at this stage in its critical history. For example: why do we tend to conceive of diaries as monologic and private? What cultural values does that uphold and promote? And in what ways do we need to problematize the scholarly recuperation of women's lives, experiences, and cultures built on primary sources like diaries?

This study proceeds along two axes of investigation. Generally, I put women's diaries in the service of a history of women's cultures in nineteenth-century Canada. In addition, the following chapters explore different reading strategies that may or may not be useful to the interpretation of diaries.

I privilege the term "diary" throughout this study because it has acquired negative connotations of triviality and superfluous intimacy which I want to call into question.[9] I share with humanities researcher Cinthia Gannett a desire to understand how "the term diary [came] to be a marginalized and marked form" (41-42). Unlike Gannett, I focus on significant moments of its marginalization in the nineteenth century, a marginalization which occurred for reasons having to do with gender and social stratification. By leaning towards the term "diary" instead of other possibilities which include (but are not limited to) personal life-writing, private writing, or journals, I am hoping to invigorate debate around the term. In a similar way, Helen Buss resists an urge to re-name autobiography in Mapping Our Selves despite worthwhile alternatives. Admitting that each alternative "teaches me something about the way lives have been uttered," Buss argues instead for "refresh[ing] old terms" such as autobiography because "no matter how powerful a certain culture, the word's very explicit foreignness each time we write it, every time we say it aloud destabilizes it and makes it new again" (14). By privileging the term "diary" I am not invoking foreignness, of course, but rather purposefully using a term that I argue has fallen into disrepute through its association with women. This is an act of reclamation. In particular, I want to know how and why this negatively-marked term came to be associated in the nineteenth century with girls and women and with writing considered forgettable, dismissable, idle, and frivolous.

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[9] The editors of the recent essay collection Inscribing the Daily also prefer the term "diary" although they do not make clear their reasons for doing so. "Diaries" is used in their sub-title, and in their index, under the term "journals," they say simply "see Diaries" (291). Nowhere do the contributors remark on significant differences that would meaningfully distinguish diaries from journals.

The connotations of a "diary" outlined above separate it--if only in the popular imagination--from a "journal." The diary is generally considered to be more quotidian than a journal; the OED entry for "journal" comments that current use of the term usually implies "something more elaborate than a diary." In fact, "diary" and "journal" have no distinguishable practical or etymological differences. Cinthia Gannett interrogates the difference and argues against making a distinction between the more personal or private "diary" and the more public "journal." She writes specifically about the educational application of "writing journals" assigned in composition classes and observes that "the term 'diary' used in these contexts begins to absorb connotations such as 'intimate,' 'too personal,' 'too private,' while the term journal is reserved for the kinds of cognitive and discursive activity appropriate to school" (40). After reviewing the critics, educators, and authors who try but fail to separate the two, Gannett asks "if diaries and journals are clearly such different kinds of writing, why should so many people be at such pains to distinguish between the two?" (41). Yet another diary scholar laments that "perhaps regrettably, one has to acknowledge that it is too late to continue with a distinct notion of two different categories; the words 'diary' and 'journal' are commonly mixed and used interchangeably," and he remarks on the plasticity of a term that can also apply to spiritual account books, desk memorandums, business journals, and farmer's logs (Batts 130). Neither Gannett or Batts can find convincing evidence of a practical difference; nor can distinctions be made on the basis of the words' etymological origins. Diary is related to the word diurnal, from the Latin "dies" for day, and journal stems from the French "jour"; both emphasize the dailiness which is one of the diary's most salient features. Because I see no real difference between the two, I sometimes use them interchangeably; for the most part, I self consciously and rhetorically appeal to the term "diary."

Dailiness, even if the entries are random and intermittent, is one essential criterion by which I judge a diary. For the purposes of this study, a diary is a document that is not retrospective but written at intervals in the midst of the actual experience, whether that

experience is a whole life, a journey, an illness, or a courtship. Of course, diaries do not always coincide with a life event, and many simply record what happens to the diarist for several days or months after she receives a diary as a Christmas or birthday gift. I have read a wide variety of diaries in the preparation of this study: they range in size from the brief "honeymoon" diary of Louise Smith Clubine written in the early twentieth century to multi-volume works by Mary Kough Brown and Amelia Ryerse Harris recording life in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Emotional expression ranges from the reticence of Emma Chadwick Stretch's 1859 log of farming to the eloquence of Sophie Puckette Miles's 1903-1908 chronicle of courtship and teaching which unfolds like the well-developed and highly-engaging story that it is.

I have chosen to focus on the diaries of women who did not view their writing as explicitly literary. In some cases, such as the diaries of Frances Simpson and Isobel Finlayson, the writing meets literary criteria despite the diarists' assertions to the contrary. In other cases, such as the farm log of Emma Chadwick Stretch, reticent writing ignores literary notions of artistry. My method of selection, then, has been similar to Andrew Hassam's whose anthology of shipboard diaries by working-class men and women excludes nothing on "the grounds of its 'descriptive qualities and accessibility'" because those terms, in certain cases which he cites, "introduce inappropriate and ill-defined notions of literary value" (xxiii). Like Hassam, I do not seek to construct a literary tradition with the texts presented in these pages.

Why not? Like Hassam, I have noticed that when literary merit is attached to diary writing, it often privileges the writing of middle- and upper-class diarists whose diaries are already over-represented in archival collections and published anthologies. For this reason, he claims that attaching the notion of literary value to diaries is "inappropriate." Like Hassam, I want to remain sensitive to the permutations of class in diary writing. Examining only those diaries written by middle- and upper-class writers presents a problem for those scholars who wish to use diary writing in histories of

difference; the emphasis also works to obscure the full range of diary writing from critical inquiry and therefore skews hypotheses about what motivates diarists to write. Instead of arguing for a literary tradition in diary writing, I turn to a group of texts neglected by literary studies and employ them in the service of a history of women's cultures in nineteenth-century Canada.

Although I do not wish to construct a literary tradition, I will not deny the literary pleasures particular to reading diaries, even in those that are not explicitly literary. First, diaries sometimes do meet literary expectations, and the emotional affect that readers associate with good fiction can also be elicited by diaries. One can become as deeply engaged with and as affected by the plots of diaries as with plots of fictional novels. When this is not the case, readers of diaries are challenged to learn interactive and investigative reading practices that can work to change their aesthetic expectations. In fact, after a reader has learned how to read diaries and is accustomed to reading between the lines of a woman's life narrative, neatly packaged fiction may seem rather boring and predictable. Finally, some passages of diary writing read like found poetry; potent combinations of words placed together in a minimalist arrangement can approach the evocative power of William Carlos William's or Ezra Pound's imagist poetry. The difference, of course, is that the diarists in this study are not aiming for literary effects.[10] The aesthetic aspects of the diary literature presented in this study are more like those found in naïve arts such as quilting or folk painting, but they are no less powerful for that.

The diaries in this study, like diaries generally, are written in a dialogic mode. Diary critic Rebecca Hogan argues that "what appears at first sight to be the most monologic of forms is seen to be ultimately dialogic" (12). Diaries are always written to someone else whether that be God, a future self, a close friend, or an imagined friend.

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[10]At least not in the diaries studied here. Several diary commentators have noted that writers such as Anaïs Nin and Elizabeth Smart used the diary as a place to test out their writerly voices before experimenting in fiction.

For example, Virginia Woolf addressed her diary to a future self; Anne Frank addressed hers to the fictional "Kitty"; religious diarists have addressed God since at least the sixteenth century; and legions of other diarists begin by writing "dear diary." [11] Thomas Mallon reflects on the imagined audience in an autobiographical essay where he muses that his diary is always addressed to a non-specific "you." "You" represents for Mallon the necessity of communication: "someone will be reading and you'll be talking. And if you're talking it means you're alive" (xvii). If the point of a diary is autobiographical, to record the existential "I am," as Mallon argues, then the presence of an "other" is a necessary completion, a mirror, someone to hear the proverbial tree in the forest when it falls.

Whereas most published writing is transactional and "intended to communicate a message to a reader," diary writing has more in common with interactional conversations meant to maintain human relationships (Powell 336). Conversation relies to a great extent on pre-existing shared information, on non-verbal cues, on nuances of meaning. Similarly, diary writing--more than expository writing--depends on an audience for its reception and completion because it is built on assumptions that need to be untangled by an astute or investigative reader.

Diaries may be written to a real or imagined audience. Throughout the nineteenth century in Britain, Canada and the US, diaries were often meant to be read by friends and family. My research reveals a surprising number of Canadian diaries clearly marked for such a readership. The Bowlus family kept a communal diary of homesteading between 1915 and 1944; the Bowlby sisters of Ontario shared diaries with school friends during the 1860s and 1870s; Ellen and Millie Steele took turns writing to their aunt in their 1830 travel diary; Victoria Anderson and Mary Barnett co-wrote a diary in 1906; and Sophie Puckette's Alberta diary takes up where her sister Maud's leaves off in 1903. Isobel

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[11] Andrew Hassam postulates that in diaries written by those who do not usually write, the formulaic "dear diary" is "a mock address" meant to acknowledge and overcome embarrassment (Sailing to Australia 149).

Finlayson kept a diary in 1840 while she crossed the ocean with Letitia Hargrave, who was keeping a shipboard diary; in her writing, Finlayson imaginatively responded to a diary kept by her sister, Frances Simpson, who made the same journey ten years earlier. Hamilton's Queenie Crerar is given a diary by her mother for her fourteenth birthday in 1887, and the rest of the diary seems to be a dialogue between mother and daughter. Sophia MacNab's 1846 diary, also written in Hamilton Ontario, is also significantly influenced by a mother-daughter dialogue.

The exchange of diaries between family members and friends signals that diary writing was an activity important but not limited to women's cultures. Several nineteenth-century diarists acknowledge reading published men's diaries: Amelia Ryerse Harris reads Pepys and Charles Fulke Greville, the political diarist, and Jane Ellice reads the popular published journals of Sir Walter Scott. Fathers and husbands encouraged diary keeping; they presented their daughters with diaries and co-wrote diaries with their wives. For example, Elizabeth Peters and her husband kept complementary diaries of a trip to British North America in 1830; Mable Stebbing and her husband, Corbit Leland, co-wrote a diary of homesteading in 1913; Eliza Ann Chipman's religious diary was encouraged by a Baptist minister and published by her husband after her death; and Martha Douglas wrote her 1866-1869 diary under the watchful eye of her father, who sometimes wrote in the diary (Iredale 30). The social and familial activity surrounding diaries calls into question what we mean when we label the diary "private writing." It is a label I scrupulously avoid. Even those that are most arguably private often enter into other networks of readers: they end up in archives read by researchers; they are read by family after the death of the diarist. Not a strictly private document, the diary acts as currency in a social exchange about history, about community, about family and friendship.

I omitted anything that called itself a memoir on the assumption that memoirs, like autobiographies, are written retrospectively and have somewhat different formal

properties. What I refer to as a memoir has a connected narrative form and is more usefully classified with autobiographies. By contrast, diary writing portrays what critic H. Porter Abbott terms a reflexive drama. He means that as diarists comment on the act of writing the writing plays a role in the plot, and the narrative of textual transmission is significant in itself (49-50).[12] Memoirs and diaries also differ in terms of imagined audience. Memoirs are often concerned with adjusting, adapting, or justifying the writer's life with respect to a larger social group, and diaries do not perform this retrospective fitting. Women diarists do, however, imaginatively position themselves within a community when they are writing. In other words, diaries are like one side of a conversation imagined to be underway at the moment of writing. This, perhaps, is not terribly surprising in the case of nineteenth-century North American diarists who "were taught reading not according to a literary model but an oral one" (Powell "Discourse and Decorum" 335). The orality of diary writing is revealed in its "interactional" quality, writes diary critic Barbara Powell. The voices in diary writing interact with imagined interlocutors; as a result, "the intimate journal" enacts a "kind of private conversation" (336;337). Elizabeth Hampsten makes a similar point about "voices" in the diaries of working-class American women which Powell acknowledges. Likewise, shipboard diaries written in steerage by male and female members of the working class "seem less literary because their flowing and unbroken syntax is an attempt to capture a conversational speaking voice rather than to construct a sophisticated alternative" (Hassam 14). The conversational mode everywhere apparent in examples from nineteenth-century diaries provided by Powell, Hampsten, and Hassam corresponds to the kinds of writing I uncovered in Canadian manuscripts; therefore, I argue that an important

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[12] This textual self-reflexivity is very much like the "textual condition" described by Jerome McGann. He cites poetry as embodying the textual condition when it "calls attention to itself ... [and] takes its own textual activities as its ground subject" (10).

function of diary writing by women in nineteenth-century Canada is to record and establish connections within an already-known community.

The community integral to diary writing can be religious or secular, and two versions of the diary's history debate this point with differing conclusions about how the function of diary writing has evolved. Scholars who place the origins of diary writing within religious communities speculate that it owes much to theological and philosophical changes developing in the seventeenth century. Quakers re-envisioned the individual's relationship with God, notably in their emphasis that a personal relationship with God was possible without using priests as intermediaries. An unmediated relationship with God, now within the province of the individual, could be developed and expressed in solitary prayer and meditation, forms of spiritual dialogue which could be textually rendered in a personal diary. For this receptive audience, John Beadle wrote in 1656 the first prescriptive manual of diary writing, The Diary or Journal of a Thankful Christian (Gannett 110). Beadle's was only one of a number of prescriptive works about diary writing soon available along with exemplary published journals. Harriet Blodgett, making this point, further suggests that the religious diary was the forerunner of those "preoccupied with inner life" (23). Accentuating the religious origins of diary writing has proven attractive to those who believe the most important function of the contemporary diary to be its monologic narration of interiority. Certainly, religious feeling does inform the content of some introspective texts, but this does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that introspection is inexorably bound to monologism. These diaries engage in imagined dialogue with God.

The religious tradition of diary writing and the formation of the American nation proved to be co-valent. John Beadle suggests that the diary as spiritual ledger had been popular for at least a half century before him (Fothergill 17), and evidence of this appears in the diaries of the Puritan British emigrants who settled in what would become the United States. In 1620, William Bradford and Edward Winslow kept a collaborative

chronicle of the Plymouth settlement as it embarked on its utopian enterprise, and in 1659, Michael Wigglesworth began a spiritual diary (Kagle 13). Spiritual development, transcendent personal growth, and emphatic individualism remain among the most highly-valued traits in American literary traditions of the diary. For example, Margo Culley posits that the American diary has its roots in the spiritual accounts of British Puritan settlers (5), and Steven Kagle, in his initial study of American diaries, remarks on the fortuitous confluence of American ideals and diary writing: "the Puritans, eschewing the use of an intermediary between man and God, turned to the diary as a companion in their spiritual isolation; the pioneer explorers and settlers found the diary appropriate to record the self-sufficient life demanded by the frontier; the Transcendentalists found the diary to be in keeping with their principle of radical self-reliance" (27). Over the course of time, the spiritual origins of the American diary have integrated with secular goals so that contemporary diarists seeking personal transcendence are more likely to sound like devotees of the self or adherents to a religion of liberation through introspection.

A historical narrative showing how the diary originates in religious impulses is speculative, for diary writing has secular beginnings as well. For this reason, diaries can only be traced back to "a murky start" notes Thomas Mallon (42-43). Mallon, for one, begins his explanation of the secular origins of diary writing by tracing diaristic impulses to ships' logs of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, household accounts, and commonplace books, proposing that one of the motivations for diary writing is simply the necessity of recording information for the future (42-43). This practical impulse operates in, for example, the early Canadian explorers' journals and farm logs written in the twentieth century which seem to be absolutely uninflected by religious concerns, such as Sarah Harrold's diaries of 1939-1943, 1950-1951, and 1957-1959, written in the Namao area north of Edmonton. This factual diary was one of the first I encountered when I started my research at the Provincial Archives of Alberta, and, after having read the theories about religious and introspective diaries, I struggled to make sense of one week's

worth of entries that all contained variations on "it's cold and wet. The threshing won't get done." My early archival experience taught me that I must take into account secular motivations to answer why people keep diaries.

At least one critic remarks on the interconnectedness of the religious and secular histories of diaries, noting that "the plotting of the individual or social or institutional life story takes on a new urgency when one can no longer look to a sacred masterplot that organizes and explains the world" (Brooks qtd. in Hassam 52). This still relies on cause-and-effect thinking; arguably, diaries evolved from religious and secular origins simultaneously. For example, Margaret Hoby's diary, written between 1599 and 1605, demonstrates the inextricability of religious and secular traditions in a singular document from the early period.[13] Hoby began writing as a spiritual exercise while growing up in a Puritan household (Blain et. al. 528) but quickly turned her attention to the personal and domestic (Blodgett 29). However, the religious aspects of her diary writing were never completely forgotten. Individual entries describe days begun with "privat praier" before going on to chronicle everyday events and her medical practice (Blain et. al. 528) and so religious and secular content are intertwined even within a single entry.

Questions about the diary's origin, and whether it is religious or secular, may not be and probably will not be satisfactorily resolved (especially when no two diary scholars can agree on what a diary is), but the terms of the debate illuminate an important and often overlooked aspect of diary writing integral to my definition: that it aligns itself with a particular community or culture and holds in common shared values and assumptions with that chosen group. This feature is closely affiliated with the diary's dialogic mode and its conversational proclivities. Taken together, these features accentuate the plurality of voices participating at the scene of diary writing, and this might begin to explain why

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[13] Harriet Blodgett argues that the supposed diary of Lady Grace Mildmay, written between 1570 and 1617, is not daily but "undated meditations and reminiscences" written at a later point for her daughter (26). However, Blodgett is commenting on what is in print, and some evidence suggests that other unpublished writings may still exist.

there has been an uneasy allegiance between diary writing and literary methodologies that give prominence to single, individual authors. I want to consider here why conventional literary analysis has been reluctant to claim such writing as worthy of study; this consideration will move toward explaining, in part, why diary readers like myself have felt compelled to turn to methodologies borrowed from other disciplines such as history or anthropology.

Attempts to open up the field of literary inquiry to include diary writing were sporadic before 1974. An early naysayer regarding the possibility of a diary tradition was William Matthews who compiled important and substantial bibliographies of British, American, and Canadian diaries and autobiographies in 1950 and 1951; he argued that "except for religious diaries and certain literary productions, diaries are mostly written without reference to other diaries and without influence from them, and so the form has no history except in the most general sense" (qtd. in Blodgett 39). Robert Fothergill answered in 1974 with Private Chronicles and an argument for a literary tradition of diary writing urging greater attention to the diary's literary techniques. He saw himself as continuing in the tradition of Lord Arthur Ponsonby, who had written a diary catalogue for Britain (1). Although ground-breaking, Fothergill's study was unable to analyze the implications of gender in diary writing in any sustained way.[14] However, his attempt to bring diaries within the purview of literature by insisting on the literary qualities of selected texts is further proof that diaries had been previously held at arm's-length from capital "L" literature.

Diaries are dialogic in form and sometimes in fact; they are addressed to imagined or real communities; and the language they employ is conversational, interactional, and engaged in the development of human communities. My interested history of diary

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[14] Fothergill focuses mostly on highly literate and literary male diarists but does culminate his tradition with what he calls the exemplary texts of Ivy Jacquier and Anaïs Nin, thereby declaring his allegiance to the self-conscious *journal intime* tradition of literary diary writing; that strand of diary writing, however, is not the focus of the present study.

writing emphasizes its attentiveness to communal concerns and human cultures; let's call this notes toward an anthropology of diaries. I turn to anthropology to smuggle in a vocabulary that can frame diary writing and its relevance to human cultures; that can broaden the scope of critical literary inquiry to account for the popularity and persistence of genres such as oral literature, folk tales, and diaries; and, not least, that can remain sensitive to the human subjects who wrote diaries. Although the diary form crosses cultural boundaries to appear in a great many human cultures, I regard it as a human artifact which can tell us much about the culture of particular places at particular times. It is a text intricately bound to the "then and there" of its composition (Hassam 1). Some of the diaries I investigate in this study might be generally regarded as less expressive poor cousins to literary diaries or autobiographies, equivalent to a grocery list in terms of literary potential. But if we shift the debate away from literary value, another way of approaching diaries begins to emerge.

If the diary is the material trace of an imagined conversation, then it can be argued that the diary is bound on one side by folk tales (as the more crafted expressions of a culture's gossip) and, on the other, by less language-oriented artifacts of human lives such as photo albums and scrapbooks. The folktale, the diary, and the photo album or scrapbook are material traces of a human attempting to place herself in the context of her immediate culture. All three are formulated over time, all involve editing and selectivity, all are integral to the narratives we tell about ourselves as individuals within a culture, and all have a material history unique to them. Therefore, the language of folklore study and the related fields of anthropology and ethnography promise to provide a rich vocabulary to describe the activities and achievements of diaries written without literary goals, written in the midst of and circulating within a specific community or culture.

In particular, I want to borrow from that strand of anthropology that reads human culture as a semiotic field (Geertz 5). Anthropologist Clifford Geertz provides a definition of human culture as consisting of "webs of significance" spun by humans; the

act of anthropological investigation is not, then, scientific in its orientation but "interpretive ... in search of meaning" (5). Geertz elaborates on the similarities between the ethnographer and the literary critic who are undertaking, in his view, similar projects: "doing ethnography is like trying to read (in the sense of 'construct a reading of') a manuscript--foreign, faded, full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations, and tendentious commentaries" (10). The manuscripts I study are not foreign but they are distanced from me by a gulf of time, and otherwise pot-holed with ellipses, incoherencies, and sometimes suspicious emendations; thus my interpretive endeavours benefit from Geertz's insights.

I am not the first to notice how methodologies borrowed from anthropology and ethnography can supplement those from literary studies and history in analyses of diary writing. Helen Buss observes that New Historicism borrows fruitfully from Geertz and the methodology of thick description he espouses. For Geertz, thick description is an interpretive process that uncovers successive layers of meaning within a particular human act. Writes Buss, "'Thick description' allows me ... not to read the markers of literary consciousness, but to read the trace of a human person constructing her identity in her historical, social, cultural and gendered place" ("A Feminist Revision" 86). Andrew Hassam remarks on the confluence of ethnography and diary studies when he warns about treating diaries as cultural artifacts: "like ethnographers, we need to be aware that collecting cultural objects is almost worthless without a knowledge of cultural performance, how the objects were used, and what their cultural function was" (Sailing to Australia 2). The turn to anthropology and ethnography seems a useful choice for scholars who wish to explore the cultural function of diaries as opposed to judging their literary success; indeed, Hassam accuses as irresponsible any diary studies that do not employ such language. Archivists have collected the artifacts; it now depends on others to map out their cultural function and to determine how they are used in historically specific social exchanges.

What connects Buss's and Hassam's concerns and their appeal to the fields of anthropology and ethnography is a sense of accountability and responsibility to the human subjects who were diarists and not necessarily authors (in a literary sense). In addition, both seek to shift the focus of debate from the literary value of diaries to the role of diaries in specific cultures, to see what such texts can tell us about human cultures in specific historical moments. I share with Buss and Hassam a desire to shift the terms of debate, for if literature and its aesthetic appeal is the zenith of a culture's reflections on itself, diary writing can show that same culture in the process of forming itself in language in imagined or real communities of listeners, readers, co-authors, and correspondents. Diary writing can also show the development of the individual within historically-situated discursive fields, in her "historical, social, cultural and gendered place" (Buss 86). Anthropology and ethnography provide a useful vocabulary for this re-configured arena of debate because they are among the fields of study concerned with the evolution and formation of human cultures.

Another component of diary analysis can be provided by material culture, although it is a field of study summarily dismissed by Clifford Geertz. He accuses "believers of 'material culture'" of embracing a simplistic belief that the artifact itself can reveal everything about a human culture" (12). He alleges that material culture expects the physical fact of a violin, for example, to reveal all the nuances and skills of violin playing (12). Those who study material culture respond by saying that they read things as "concrete physical expressions of any social system" (Mayo 11). Admittedly, material culture may be more comfortably affiliated with archeology rather than anthropology, but the issues raised by material culture may apply to diary studies because material culture addresses the twin problems of the "extended archives" and the physical fact of the diary text. The extended archives comprise the non-textual evidence that can be and has been brought to bear upon interpretive readings of diaries such as "scrapbooks, drawing, portraits, samplers, music, gravestones, etc." (Davies 22). Literary researcher Gwen

Davies, for one, draws attention to this phenomenon in her research on eighteenth-century Maritime women writers; she has engaged in considerable archival digging and struggled to find a way to handle the illuminating extra-textual information. Both the extended archives and the diary itself may benefit from attention to their material, physical existence. Cynthia Huff contends that "a picture, postcard, a newspaper account, a pressed flower, a lace handkerchief, a lock of hair ... are as much a part of the diarist's life as is her writing" ("Female and Feminist Genre" 11). Her comments apply specifically to those objects especially selected for inclusion in the diary as mementos. In addition, the type of text chosen for the diary itself is also meaningful, worthy of interpretation and analysis which may further shed light on the human subject who chose for her words an expensive book or taped together some loose-leaf pages, who embellished it, pasted in cookies,[15] invitations, menu plans, theatre programs, dance cards, cruise ship passenger lists, and obituaries, who doodled on the cover, and wrote in it.

Material culture should only constitute one avenue of inquiry into the social system under investigation and must not be taken as an all-encompassing method, but along with bibliography, it can provide a supplementary language for students of archival manuscripts. The vocabulary of material culture helps diary scholars articulate differences between a diary written in a scribbler and a diary written in a book with gilt-edged paper and how those material artifacts inform our understanding of the diarist. For example, Mary Kough Brown's diary, written in large maroon leather-bound volumes, tells me what she thought of her own writing and her desire for its preservation; it also tells me about her class. Further investigation into various forms of personal narratives will smudge the boundaries between texts and other artifacts which can be read textually. Diaries, scrapbooks and photo albums are going to be scrutinized through the lens of semiology, and material culture can enrich discussions by bearing witness to the

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[15] Marjorie Saunders Dingwall's boarding-school diary has a greasy stain and a caption indicating where a cookie once was in her diary.

connections between the "actual and the symbolic" (Huff 11). In this study, I have tried to meet my own demands by remaining alert for evidence of the material culture in which a diary was written. I've indicated where possible what writing tools (like pens and paper) were available to the diarist along with the kinds of imaginative and literary tools she might have had to work with. In addition, each chapter attempts to fold in evidence of material culture and comment on the physical aspects of the text where appropriate.

The fields of ethnography, anthropology, folklore, and material culture have been slow to apply their skills to white folk cultures or to see the Western literary tradition as appropriate for anthropological investigation. Early anthropologists in North America, who were themselves predominantly Anglo European, considered a technological, highly-literate society evidence of cultural maturity; for this reason they saw the oral traditions of other cultures as outmoded artifacts worthy of scientific study, and they disdained within their own culture anything that tended to an oral or communal written tradition because it deviated from the literary tradition of great (singular) authors that supported their own culture's claims to high literacy. Folklorist Pauline Greenhill observes, for instance, that "Ontario's folk traditions went unresearched until very late because the perspective of most central Canadians precluded the possibility of mainstream Anglo Canada having a folk tradition; only backward Maritimers, French Québécois, and non-Anglo ethnic groups did" (xiii).[16] In Canada, anthropological investigations by Diamond Jenness, Franz Boas and others concentrated on native cultures, specifically, and cultures other than "ours," generally, where ours was taken to refer to Anglo-Europeans. For these reasons, the usefulness of anthropology and ethnography as applied to the cultural artifacts of Anglo Canadians has often been forgotten or ignored, but this may be changing. Academic studies in general are beginning to recognize that the fields of inquiry explored by anthropologists and

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[16] Greenhill credits Edith Fowke, author of Tales Told in Canada and Legends Told in Canada, with beginning the work on Ontario folk songs and folk tales.

ethnographers overlap with those generated by students of literature who come to cultural studies recognizing that each researcher descends from an ethnic group and a historically-determined cultural background.[17]

Because I focus on the cultural function of diaries, my study has more in common with diary studies such as those by Buss and Hassam and less in common with those by Matthews, Ponsonby, and Fothergill who seek to establish a literary tradition and this influences my selection of texts. Furthermore, my study is modified significantly by its attention to issues of gender. More interesting for me than the diaries that might attain the stature of capital "L" literature are those by so-called "ordinary" women--diaries of homesteaders, housewives, students, teachers, nurses, and women in religious orders--for the recuperation of their writing contributes to the ongoing attempts to write history "from below," to rewrite social histories that focus on generalizations rather than differences (Maynes 103). Indeed, and generally speaking, once this new body of women's writing has been brought to light, its contours sensitively mapped, and its writing strategies critically assessed, the discoveries that result will contribute to the on-going scholarly discussion of women's role in Canadian history and culture.

A diary can map out a woman's relationship to the culture in which she lived and provide opportunities for the careful reader to see how she engaged with that culture. The great promise of diaries is that they allow new kinds of investigations into women's lives and women's cultures. Feminist historians have recognized in diaries the potential to map women's cultures, but it is an act of recovery beset by the "'sameness versus difference' conundrum that feminists have long faced" articulated primarily about women's relation to men, but also about their relation to other women who are differentiated by generation, race, or class (Scott "Introduction" 3). Many feminist scholars have found a nexus of

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[17] Not only does Clifford Geertz compare the interpretive undertaking of anthropology to that of the "the literary critic" (9) but an upcoming conference at the University of Minnesota entitled "Cross Cultural Poetics" begins its call for papers by announcing that "despite artificial disciplinary barriers, ethnographers and poets have in recent years come to realize how similar their projects are."

agreement in the "continuity of attitudes" (Blodgett 21) presented in women's diaries as it represents or speaks to a certain uniformity of female experience. On one hand, they are right. Some points of identification between a female reader and the female diarist are undeniable; the minutiae of everyday life or the empathy for shared emotions such as loss or longing can join writer and reader across the centuries, and I wholly encourage the efforts of those critics searching for responsible ways to articulate empathetic identification.[18] On the other hand, enthusiasm about reclaiming female voices from the past can lead critics onto treacherous ground. Some feminist interpretation, motivated to challenge "normative history," legitimizes its claims on the "authority of experience" and "the direct experience of others" (Scott "Experience" 24), an undertaking richly nourished by the personal accounts of female lives in diaries. However, this interpretive strategy can elide historical, racial, or class differences. Theorist Joan Scott reminds us that "this kind of appeal to experience as uncontestable evidence and as an originary point of explanation--as a foundation upon which analysis is based ... weakens the critical thrust of histories of difference" (24). For the feminist readings which seek to trace a history of difference, grounding analysis in experience only buttresses notions of referentiality in language (24); this debilitates, in my view, some feminist iterations of a tradition of diary writing as that which embraces and celebrates the authentic expression of female experiences across the ages. Having said this, however, Scott admits in Feminism and History that the tension produced by the "'sameness versus difference' conundrum" (in this case imaginatively grouping together or differentiating women from different historical moments) is a useful and necessary tension:

> [Feminist history] has posited 'women' as a social category that pre-exists history and, at the same time, demonstrated that the very existence of the social category

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[18] Empathy has been named an essential tool in biographical endeavours. Two convincing essays on this topic are anthropologist Gelya Frank's "'Becoming the Other': Empathy and Biographical Interpretation," Biography 8.3 (1985):189-210; and Helen Buss's "A Feminist Revision of New Historicism to Give Fuller Readings of Women's Private Writing," Inscribing the Daily: Critical Essays on Women's Diaries.

> of women varied according to history. I would say that, difficult as it is to live with tension, this is one of those useful and productive tensions worth living with. Feminism has provided focus, commitment, and critical stimulus for those of us who have undertaken to write history from its perspective, while history has provided an important and sobering corrective to the essentialist tendencies of feminist politics. ("Introduction" 5)

Scott's articulation of the contradictions inherent in undertaking a feminist women's history is worth remembering in the context of this study. I espouse a position that I hope contributes to critical acuity rather than expedient scholarship: I am not willing to dismiss either those moments of recognition nor give up the attempt to discern difference because both might be helpful in my interpretive strategies.

Reading Women's Diaries

The debate about women's diaries has centered, for the most part, on the issue of gender and genre. Scholars struggle with various theoretical approaches in an attempt to find interpretive practices that respect the lived experience of the diarist while answering some of the special demands of reading diaries; all remain sensitive to the gendered position of the woman diarist within her culture, and all attend to the feminist implications of recuperating women's texts that might otherwise remain neglected. What follows here is an attempt to characterize the scholarship on women's diaries in both Canada and the U.S. over the past twenty years in order to indicate some investigative possibilities that will be played out in this study.

Early analysts of women's diaries were eager to claim the genre as a particularly female form, or one that best represents the nature of women's lives. For example, in the introduction to a 1974 anthology of women's diary excerpts, Mary Jane Moffat argues that the diary form is an "analogue to [women's] lives: emotional, fragmentary, interrupted, modest ... private, restricted, daily, trivial, formless, concerned with self" (5). The idea of a woman's diary as a particularly feminine form still circulated ten years later when Suzanne Juhasz claimed the journal as a "source and model for feminist art." She saw women's diaries as an outlet for ideas that could not be otherwise expressed in an androcentric culture. Similarly, the psychologically liberating potential of women's diary writing is also examined in separate essays by Jane DuPree Begos and Joanne Cooper in Dale Spender's 1987 "Journal on a Journal" where they argue more generally for its therapeutic value. Although I cannot agree with reductive analogies that equate a woman's text with her life or her person, early forays like these were invaluable for opening up a field of scholarship. They argued that diary writing had been an important

but neglected writing activity for several centuries, and thus began to integrate women's diaries with the realm of literature from which they had long been held at a distance.

The interpretive approaches of Suzanne Juhasz or Mary Jane Moffatt dovetailed with psychoanalytic approaches to autobiographical writing as described in the 1980s by Shari Benstock, Sidonie Smith, or Shirley Neuman, among others. These critics (developing on the work of Carol Gilligan, Nancy Chodorow, and the French feminists such as Luce Irigiray or Hélene Cixous) identified the normative subject of autobiographical writing as male, and the ideal story elicited by the generic demands of autobiography as male-oriented, leading Sidonie Smith, for instance, to state that "women's subjectivity and therefore her text unfold narratively in patterns tied to her different psychosexual development" (13). The fragmented, formless writing in diaries seemed to offer a better place for the narrative exploration of that different psychosexual development than linear autobiographies with their implicit demand for a unified, coherent, and individual (rather than relational) self. Not surprisingly then, a 1989 article by Cynthia Huff lauded diary writing for knowing "no boundaries," for demonstrating a "subversiveness ... that feminist critics have celebrated" (7). The interrogation of the narrative forms of women's personal writing meant that scholars interested in women's autobiography and women's history now had an alternative to viewing such records as merely documentary. They could consider such writing as something other than transparent windows onto scenes in social history. Women's autobiographical forms, including diaries, could be seen as written records incorporating the kinds of rhetorical strategies once thought to be used only by literary writers.

Other analyses that took direction from psychoanalytic theory includes the work of Rebecca Hogan and Valerie Raoul, who have both been rigorous in carefully teasing out what it means when diary writing is labeled as a particularly feminine practice or a genre particularly amenable to women's experiences. Valerie Raoul does not cite Rita Felski, but Raoul's work gains credibility by heeding, in her general approach, Felski's

notion in Beyond Feminist Aesthetics that "it is impossible to make a convincing claim that there is anything inherently feminine or feminist in experimental writing" (5), a category that has been said to include the non-canonical forms of writing in women's diaries.[19] In her 1989 article "Women and Diaries: Gender and Genre," Valerie Raoul contemplates the problem of identifying literary genres as masculine or feminine (57) but comes to the conclusion that diary writing--especially that influenced by the French journal intime--is "more demonstrably 'feminine'... than the novel" (57). Rebecca Hogan revisits 1980s diary criticism, making clear some of the contradictions that arose when scholars tried to map out autobiographical writing as masculine and diary writing as feminine (96). Her 1991 article looks at women's diary writing for evidence of l'écriture feminine (100). Like that of Marlene Barr, who reminded scholars in 1985 that diary criticism ran the risk of separatism if it continued to focus only on feminist interpretations without "derivi[ing] insights from the creative use of ideological differences" (23), the work of Raoul and Hogan stands out for retreating from the early headiness of diary criticism and considering the political tasks scholars were bringing to their readings of women's diaries.

The 1980s also saw the arrival of more book length studies, anthologies, and annotated bibliographies of American and English women's diary writing of the past several centuries. Bibliographies included Cynthia Huff's British Women's Diaries (1985), which annotates selected works; Laura Arskey, Nancy Pries and Marcia Reed's American Diaries: An Annotated Bibliography of Published American Diaries and Journals I: Diaries Written from 1492 to 1844 (1983) and Cheryl Cline's Women's Diaries, Journals, and Letters: An Annotated Bibliography (1989) on American women. Authors of the book-length studies resisted claiming the diary as a feminine form and

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[19] See, for example, Cynthia Huff in "'That Profoundly Female and Feminist Genre': The Diary as Feminist Practice" where she writes: "contemporary feminist critics hint that alleged "lesser" genres such as the diary, because of their multiplicity of modes and views, contain the key to our revision of the canon, to a female aesthetic manifesting 'an emotional texture, a structural expression of mutuality'" (7). Similarly, Suzanne Juhasz explores the journal's potential as a "source and model for feminist art."

instead examined the role of diaries within specific cultures. Lillian Schlissel looked at the diaries of American pioneer women in her Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey (1982). She argued that women's diaries were used to negotiate the change of moving west, and noticed that many women sent their diaries back to family in the east as a way to keep an emotional connection with far distant loved ones. Also in 1982, Elizabeth Hampsten published her book on women's diaries and letters from the mid-western states. Her work insists on the necessity of placing women diarists and their writing within a specific cultural context. In an insightful statement, she maintains that the general principles of reading life writing should be expanded to "particular lives" to "test them out in complicated and interrelated particularities" (28) anticipating later work that would call for the rewriting of history "from below" (Maynes 103). Much of this work developed on Estelle Jelinek's oft-cited works on autobiography published in the 1980s.

By the mid 1980s, Margo Culley published an anthology entitled A Day At A Time: The Diary Literature of American Women from 1764 to the Present (1985) and while she admits to the possibility of useful analogies between psychoanalysis and periodic life writing, she also alerts readers to the importance of the effect of material conditions on the writing of journals: for instance, the space available in commercial diaries might limit what a woman wrote about each day. In her 1988 book on Englishwomen's diary writing entitled Centuries of Female Days: Englishwomen's Private Diaries, Harriet Blodgett argued that using the diary as therapy or as an exploration of psychic interiority is a twentieth-century notion (5), and again in 1991, reminded readers of the New York Times Book Review that "the idea of a diary as frank confessional or consciousness raiser is of recent vintage, ripened by feminism" (24). Blodgett's wish that diary readers not impose present-day concerns on the diary writing of other centuries echoes Rita Felski's concern that scholars "not indulge in simplistic homologies between text and gender but allow for historically specific frameworks to account for interrelations between literature and feminist politics" (9). In their work

throughout the 1980s, Blodgett, Culley, Hampsten, and Schlissel tried to make sense of texts which had challenged them in a number of ways, for diaries demand different reading strategies than fiction, initiate contacts with the written lives of women whose stories have been previously untold, and urge a re-evaluation of methods of historical interpretation.

The questions underpinning these investigations seems to be: how do we read these texts, many of which were never meant for publication, and what do we expect of them? The debate around the practices of reading diaries has proven to be one of the most interesting theoretical tensions between diary literature and feminist politics, and the most convincing work to emerge has suggested that to insist on any one "right way" to read diaries is to miss the point. By 1989, Helen Buss had begun to contemplate various ways of approaching women's personal narratives in an inclusive manner that has come to characterize much of her later scholarship. She remains open to a variety of approaches, testing to see what useful bits can be gleaned from each one. These are not works of fiction after all, and as readers, says Bunkers, we must accord a certain amount of respect to diarists and acknowledge the differences between their life experiences and ours. It engenders an "ethical responsibility not only to recognize the biases inherent in myself but also to consider carefully the ways in which a particular writer's historical and cultural context may have influenced the creation of her text" (16), a point she makes again in later essays. Like Helen Buss, Bunkers advocates cross-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary approaches to reading diaries in "Subjectivity and Self-Reflexivity in the Study of Women's Diaries as Autobiography," as do Barbara Laslett and Ruth-Ellen Boetcher Joeres in their introduction to a selection of two essays on diary writing featuring different disciplinary approaches:

> the following pieces are presented from particular disciplinary perspectives ... In combination, however, they should help us see not only how differently we as feminist scholars may view personal narratives but also how our own interests, concerns, and questions, can overlap and can benefit from one another's thinking about these elusive and often difficult to analyze forms. (309)

In Canada, the first attempt to catalogue published diaries and other autobiographical records was William Matthews's 1951 compilation Canadian Diaries and Autobiographies, containing only eleven women's diaries. In 1965, Vernon Blair Rhodenizer included Canadian women's autobiographies in his summary of Canadian autobiography in Canadian Literature in English, where he mentions three women's diaries: Elizabeth Simcoe's, Anna Winslow's and Susan Sibbald's. In the Winter 1979-1980 issue of Archivaria, John Stuart Batts informs readers about his "Canadian Manuscript Diaries Project" in which he seeks the "Canadian Pepys" (125).[20] To the best of my knowledge, Batts never fulfilled his ambition to "expose an extensive and widely dispersed body of materials by the publication of an annotated listing which describes each diary" (126). In the Canadian context, specifically, it has been nearly impossible to untangle literary interest in diaries from historical interest for reasons explained later in this discussion. Throughout the 1950s, when historical scholars in Canada used women's diaries in their research, they were often treated as transparent windows onto scenes in social history. Excerpted in historical publications, women's diaries were used to uphold accepted notions about gender roles and racial stereotypes.[21] The potential of women's diaries for research was not immediately clear in Canada; the possibility of finding writing of literary interest in Canadian diaries was even less obvious.

By the 1970s, feminist historians began to see new possibilities in these personal documents. Historian Sylvia van Kirk, for example, began using women's diaries and

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[20] Batts would have found a ready answer from the editor of a 1947 publication entitled The Diary of Our Own Pepys: E.W. Harrold's Record of Canadian Life. (Ed. I. Norman Smith. Toronto: Ryerson, 1947). Harrold was associate editor with the Ottawa Citizen and his original diaries ran to over 800,000 words. I. Norman Smith compiled the suggestions of eleven sub-editors and made final decisions about which entries would make it to print (v-vi).

[21] Alice M. Johnson in her 1951 introduction to a published excerpt of Isobel Finlayson's diary in The Beaver praises her for her "amiability and good breeding " and her lady-like disposition; this completely overlooks the racism present in Finlayson's description of Inuit culture, and her complicit participation in the racist agendas of the Hudson's Bay Company of the time.

letters to reconfigure existing histories of fur trading society and to analyze more completely women's role in the development of Canada. Van Kirk's research was part of a larger movement to rethink Canadian history from a feminist perspective, and the 1970s witnessed growing numbers of published bibliographies on women's archival records written generally by historians and authors associated with various archives, designed to help researchers find and access the kind of documents that would further this new feminist research.

During the 1980s, the preliminary work on Canadian women's personal writing was followed by more extensive work, such as Susan Jackel's collection of autobiographical documents relating to Prairie women's history, A Flannel Shirt and Liberty (1982), the Women in Canadian History Documentary Series edited by Beth Light and her collaborators, and Mary Kinnear's and Vera Fast's exhaustive bibliography of primary sources about women in Manitoba (1987). Meanwhile, in the Maritimes, Margaret Conrad, Toni Laidlaw, and Donna Smyth (1988) edited an anthology of Nova Scotia women's letters and diaries which followed on Margaret Conrad's earlier work in Recording Angels: The Private Chronicles of Women for the Maritime Provinces, 1750-1950 (1982). At the same time, critical assessments about women's personal writing began to appear and interest in Canadian women's autobiographical writing grew, as witnessed by several essays in the 1986 collection A/Mazing Space edited by Shirley Neuman and Smaro Kamboureli, the work by Marlene Kadar in Essays in Life Writing (1989), and essays in Re(Dis)covering our Foremothers (1990), the publication of papers delivered at a 1988 conference on nineteenth-century Canadian women writers at the University of Ottawa. These developments contributed to Helen Buss's extended critical analyses of women's autobiographical writing as they appeared in her dissertation (1986), and (after 1989) several articles, a CRIAW paper on Canadian women's autobiography, and an award-winning book-length study entitled Mapping Our Selves: Canadian Women's Autobiography (1993) in which she examines diaries as a form of

autobiography. The traditions of scholarship on women's history and women's personal writing in Canada have been mutually enriching, and further scholarly examination of women's diaries written in Canada promises to add to this intertwined tradition by urging "us to rethink ideas of social class and culture, to re-examine how literature is produced, and to rethink the meanings of historical activity" (Personal Narratives Group 264).

How does this re-thinking of history take place with the aid of diaries? Well, diaries make possible certain kinds of investigations into non-gendered historical materiality as well as issues in gender and writing by foregrounding the material conditions of diary writing. Men and women diarists often chronicle the act of writing itself. Mary Gapper O'Brien mentions that her ink pot is slipping from side to side as she writes on board a ship; Sophie Puckette writes about the new pen she is using; and Marjorie Saunders Dingwall tells us how she must write by candlelight. One woman diarist (Katherine Williams, 1877-1947) kept her diary in the back of a school district account book possessed by her husband; this was possibly the only paper in the house, brought there through an official function of her husband's. For women, these material circumstances are inflected by their gender: the act of writing is further limited by gender-specific cultural assumptions about how a woman will use her time and labour. For example, one encounters diary entries which explain why the diarist must stop writing: she is needed in the kitchen, her children demand her attention, or "Joe" needs the light by the window to shave. One wouldn't expect a woman writing in 1812 to tell her husband Joe to forget about shaving until she is done writing. These incidents demonstrate what Margaret Conrad calls a gendered relationship to the issues of time and labour (70) and foreground the important fact that, historically, women have not been able to take for granted the process of "reading, writing or being read" (Bergman 26). Diary writing throws into relief the differences between men's and women's acts of writing, and their different, gendered relationships to the technologies governing the production, reproduction, and dissemination of written texts. More simply put, people's

relation to technology differs from ours at different periods; in addition, women's relationship to the technologies of communication--whether that be pen and paper, typewriter, or the internet--has tended to be different from men's. This suggests to me that one of the most fruitful ways to approach women's diaries is not to extract diaries from the culture that surrounds them but, rather, to consider the situated knowledges exhibited by the writings of each individual woman.

Women's diaries do not provide a ready route through the private diary to the inner consciousness of women in times before ours; instead, diarists name various experiences as "indescribable." Like Bunkers and Buss, I would urge readers who confront the silence of women's diaries to acknowledge their own situated knowledges and thereby avoid imposing present day concerns on those writing in eras before ours. Diaries do not yield information easily, but instead offer the patient reader a way to learn what women can or cannot say about themselves, about what discourses are available to them at given historical moments. The necessary reading process involves the "inventive patience" (4) named by Elizabeth Hampsten in her 1982 study of women's diaries, for these are texts which are riddled with silences.

The "honeymoon" diary of Louise Smith Clubine is a particularly good example of diary silence and narrative flatness. She moved from Toronto to Edmonton to join her new husband in 1914, and her diary describes a honeymoon spent taking a team and wagon to a homestead near Grande Prairie, Alberta. She walked most of the way, and mentions in a later note that she wore out a pair of walking shoes. However, her diary does not chronicle the emotions that contemporary readers might expect in such a journey: no homesickness for family left in Toronto, no fear, no anger at a husband who forgets tools, loses horses, and generally delays the trip. In addition, the modern mind expects, perhaps voyeuristically, a honeymoon diary to contain at least one oblique reference to a sexual experience, and this is never provided by Clubine. In one enigmatic entry, however, she refers to "a crazy man" in a tent next to them, and "all he keeps

saying is Don't torture me. He is a professor and husband of Dr. Higby." This information is delivered in the same flat narrative voice which she uses to record the fact that she "had dinner about 1:30 & did a little washing." The juxtaposition in one entry of the mundane and the insane is what diary critic Rebecca Hogan, quoting Rachel Blau DuPlessis, calls "radical parataxis" (101): elements are conjoined without transitions to indicate their relationship. The gaps in meaning between sentences, and the subsequent gaps in content prompt a flurry of questions: who was this man? why was a professor camping on the Edson Trail? did his wife have difficulty becoming a Dr. Higby in 1914? why does Clubine mention him at all? did she empathize with him, afraid that she too might go crazy? These questions set forth some of the particular problems of reading diaries, problems that can sometimes be overcome by careful reading of the diary itself and, where available, all of the associated primary sources and secondary sources.

The silences and euphemistic language attending descriptions of childbirth exemplify one cultural gap separating nineteenth-century diarists from twentieth-century readers. Although Cynthia Huff reports finding fifty-eight British diaries (of middle- or upper-class women) in which "the majority of women" wrote lengthy descriptions of their pregnancy and childbirth (65), this does not seem to be the case as often in North American diaries of the nineteenth century (though there are exceptions[22]). Harriet Blodgett disagrees with Huff, finding in her survey of British women's diaries that pregnancies are regarded as events, not experiences, until the twentieth century, and that entries about childbirth are usually terse and euphemistically worded (41; 187). English

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22 Two exceptions are the diaries of Amelia Ryerse Harris (diary dates: 1857-1882), who discusses the pregnancies of her daughters and her fears about their deliveries, and the diary of Lucy Ronalds Harris (1868-1895), who also clearly indicates her dread at the thought of death during childbirth. See the introduction to The Eldon House Diaries, Harris and Harris, p. lxxxix. It must be noted, however, that the Harris women lived an upper class life in the well-settled town of London [Ontario] with access to medical help, even though its efficacy was sometimes dubious. Amelia's diary details the horrific death of her daughter in 1860 from puerperal fever aided in its course by the misdiagnosis of a local doctor; see pages 143-156. Beth Light and Joy Parr also provide excerpts from the 1890-1891 BC diaries of Nellie Bailey Bolton that contain "rare entries about the pain of childbirth and problems of breast feeding" (Canadian Women on the Move 133).

Canadian diaries generally display restraint. Emma Dalgety's unacquisitioned and unpublished diary, written at the turn of the twentieth century, fails to mention her pregnancy until, after three weeks of missing entries, she writes: "On Oct. 15th I went to the hospital & the morning of Oct. the 17th our little boy was born." In another example written at the end of the nineteenth century, the pregnancy again is not mentioned, and the birth itself given little fanfare; Nova Scotian Alice Coalfleet writes on 18 July 1887:

> I retired at 7:30 trying to read but other matters require my attention. At 10 o'clock a little stranger makes his appearance. He is very welcome a dear pretty little fellow his little head covered with black hair. (Conrad 17)[23]

The reluctance to name pregnancy is not immediately understood by a reader who expects women's diaries to "say everything"; rather it shows that autobiographical writing can reveal only how the writer "engages with the cultural myths of her particular historical moment, myths that define her relation to ... language and to the self" (Friewald 169).

Silence on bodily issues is evident also in the elliptical written accounts of menstruation. Harriet Blodgett acknowledges that Paul C. Rosenblatt finds Canadian and American diarists using code to keep track of their menstrual periods, but finds that this is not the case with English diaries nor especially with Victorian diaries. She points to three exceptions: Lady Kate Amberly, Hester Thrale, and Virginia Woolf (42). Barbara Powell, in a study of Canadian women's diaries, also acknowledges that very few women talk about this physical fact, but she does point to one exception: the diary of Mary Beatty written between 1895 and 1898. In a scribbler that was used by her husband and later by her son for school exercises, Mary Beatty recorded along with her daily tasks the arrival of a "friendly visitor." Even her husband once noted the fact that Mary was "not very

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[23] Alice Coalfleet's journal is at the Dalhousie University Libraries Archive, and parts of it (including the pregnancy entry) have been republished in Sailing Ships of the Maritimes: An Illustrated History of Shipping and Shipbuilding in the Maritime Provinces of Canada 1750-1925, Charles A. Armour and Thomas Lackey (Toronto: McGraw Hill Ryerson, n.d.) 150.

well" and, at other times, Mary referred to her "sickness." Eventually, Mary shortened her system to code: M.F.A. and M.F.D. stood for "my friend arrives" and "my friend departs" (Powell 342-343). Nineteenth-century American diarist Emily Hawley Gillespie also used code by writing "!!!!!" in the margins each time her period began, and Canadian diarist Elizabeth Smart code named hers "Emily."

Like Powell, I have found few such references in unpublished Canadian diaries, and the those that do exist indicate that even in an ostensibly private venue like the diary, women--including a self-revelatory writer like Elizabeth Smart--resort to euphemistic language to describe their bodily functions. The reluctance to name the menstrual period suggests one or two possibilities. Perhaps the diarists feared that someone else would read their diaries and find out; however, there would be more than one way to deduce a woman's cycle when living with her without resorting to her diary. Indeed, as Lillian Schlissel points out in her work on women's diaries of westward expansion, a lack of privacy about bodily issues would have been the rule rather than the exception in nineteenth-century North America. Rather, the silences and euphemisms around menstruation and childbirth reveal what a woman can and cannot say about her life, and about the experiences of her body, at particular historical moments.

These characteristics of women's diary writing may be as easily deduced through the examination of British or American diaries as they are through an examination of Canadian diaries. Presumably, there would be some similarities of experience if many women are responding to cross-cultural discourses affecting gender ideologies at a given moment. If so, is an analysis of Canadian women's diaries necessary? Francess Halpenny supplies one convincing reason: "it has been customary in Canadian studies to bring within the purview of literary history, at least, if not always literature as such, a good deal of material that originally had a private purpose (such as the records of explorers)" (39), and she identifies the recovery of women's records as necessary and helpful if women are to be included in her Dictionary of Canadian Biography. In

addition, she fingers the reason why it is difficult to separate the literary and historical interests that intersect in Canadian diary studies. Susan Jackel has also speculated about the importance of an autobiographical tradition in Canada:

> Autobiography in its many variant forms and proto-forms has been prominent in Canadian writing since the seventeenth century ... First-person narratives of observation and experience flourished in the form of explorations and travel writing, in reports by missionaries, surveyors, and law enforcement officers and in the steady stream of settlers' accounts that characterized the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The experience common to all immigrants of leaving a known country and culture and finding new ones not simply unknown, but also uncreated, inevitably raised questions of personal and collective identity. These questions found outlets in diaries, journals, and letters home.
> ("Canadian Women's Autobiography" 98)

The documents to which Jackel refers inform the braided disciplines of Canadian literature and history. Our historical documents have infiltrated or inspired or infected our literature from the earliest examples. If, as Halpenny and Jackel rightly contend, private records are an integral part of Canadian studies and literary history, a study of women's diaries can only lead to greater comprehensiveness in a variety of scholarly endeavours.

The primary need for a Canadian contribution to the history of women's diary writing can be winnowed out of a comment by Robert Kroetsch, who, in a different context, comments on an "archeology" of prairie history, discovered through "the particulars of place," through "newspaper files, place names, shoe boxes full of old photographs, tall tales, diaries, journals, tipi rings, weather reports, business ledgers, [and] voting records" (439). We study Canadian diaries because they throw light on specific cultures and specific communities. Kroetsch's methodology can be applied to the "archeology" of women's writing and women's history in Canada, and the metaphor is one used by Helen Buss, too, when she compares the "historian of autobiography" to an archeologist who "mark[s] out a territory for excavation, record[s] the location of each find, contextualiz[es] it in terms of the total site, and thus unearth[s] the neglected, lost areas of human life, untouched by history" (MOS 10). If we are to find the "uniquely

Canadian" aspects of women's diary writing, it is surely found, says historian S. F. Wise in a commentary about determining what is Canadian, by analyzing "the manner in which externally derived ideas have been adapted to a variety of local and regional environments, in such a way that a body of assumptions uniquely Canadian has been built up; and to trace the changing context of such assumptions" (80). The way to examine the cultural activities of women in Canada is through such micro-historical investigations; even though the diary genre did not originate here and is not particular to here, women's diaries offer the ideal building materials of such a Canadian "archeology" as much as they benefit, individually, from analysis which seeks to place them in a highly specific cultural and historical moment. As Margaret Conrad further argues, "it is doubly important that we analyze women's culture as it reproduces itself in specific times and places" (68). It seems especially important to read and assess the personal documents written by the so-called "ordinary" women if we are ever to assess the "lost areas of human life, untouched by history" (Buss 10), or have a complete picture of women's writing in Canada--the world of women's writing surrounding and even supporting a Susanna Moodie or a Margaret Laurence. And it is important to remain sensitive to language issues, to avoid re-instating a notion of language as referential and thereby avoid essentializing about women's "experiences."

I have set out here the basis for a diary investigation that borrows from literary studies, anthropology, material culture, and feminism. Anthropology promises to enrich the language about diaries and explain the persistence of non-literary diary communication; feminism furnishes a language that will help me assess the gendered implications of keeping a diary in nineteenth-century Canada. Like the researchers who contribute to Working Women's Archives, I am searching for the "cross-breed of discourses [that can] play fair with these materials" (Buss and Kadar iii). What I notice is that the non-literary diaries of my study escape generalization: "some of that recalcitrant human matter inevitably seems, instead, to leak out through the cracks of any grand

theory and, thus uncontained, to pose a challenge to totalising claims" (Pierson 79). This chapter does not propose a grand ur-schema to be imposed from the top down on any diary, but offers notes on a general critical direction or thrust. In short, this study examines nineteenth-century diary writing by women in Canada to see what connections exist between the historical moment and the act of diary writing, to see how diaries circulate in, survey, constitute, inscribe, construct, contain, support, and obscure specific women's cultures.

Chapter Two

Impossible Dialogues ? Reading Women Writing Journal Letters

Diary writing takes part in imagined or real dialogues. This chapter and the next look at examples of a kind of diary writing that makes explicit its connection to a reading audience: the journal letter. In particular, I want to compare the dialogue between a journal letter writer and her reader/s with a dialogic model of reading proposed by Patrocinio Schweickart that I advocate for present-day feminist researchers. The point of the analogy is to draw out some of the complications that attend both dialogues. More specifically, my goal in this chapter is to examine the potential of journal letters (and likewise diaries) "as a source of knowledge concerning the construction of female selfhood in the past" (Buss CWA 2); therefore, the explication of reading difficulties is intended to expose some of the ethical and theoretical problems encountered when studying historical subjects through their first-hand accounts.

The journal letter, the specific form of diary writing studied here, is a diary written in installments and explicitly addressed to a particular person or set of persons. Generally, it features periodic diary entries addressed to distant loved ones in the form of an extended letter. The OED defines the term "journal letter" as a "letter written as a diary" and culls examples from fiction and non-fiction written in 1742, 1756, and 1869.[24] Harriet Blodgett states that journal letters, which she describes as "an ongoing, daily dated letter, addressed to a recipient which functioned simultaneously as a diary and as correspondence," were much in evidence throughout eighteenth-century Britain (24).

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[24] The earliest example cited is from Richardson's Pamela where Pamela refers to her "journal-wise letters." In 1756, Jonas Hanway published what he called a "journal letter" (but which was an extended essay on the detrimental social effects of tea) under the title A journal of eight days journey from Portsmouth to Kingston upon Thames (London: H. Woodfall). In 1869, a character in Little Women announces that she "shall keep a journal-letter, and send it once a week."

Material factors contributed to the popularity of the journal letter along with other forms of diary writing in the early nineteenth century. During the first half of the 1800s, the number of literate women rose, and they had greater access to writing materials such as cheaper paper and more convenient pens, both of which would make the very act of writing more likely. By 1812, special booklets called Letts diaries were produced for the express purpose of diary writing, but these were relatively high-priced, catering mainly to middle- and upper-class markets (Hassam 22).[25] Diary writing was not limited, of course, to prescribed blank books, and during the period between 1800 and 1860, the production of paper increased seven-fold (White 60). Production went up; the quality of the paper's strength, finish and regularity improved, and costs went down due to the invention of the Fourdrinier machine, which made larger sheets possible, and by the "introduction of bleaching powder and cheaper kaolin, soda and salt" to the production process (White 60). Another historian of writing materials corroborates these findings, citing evidence that by 1822, eighteenth-century methods of paper making had given way to the "complete mechanisation of [the] paper-making process, and also the substitution, for cheaper papers, of mechanical wood pulp, esparto grass, and similar materials instead of rags" (Whalley 74-75). If paper was less expensive and more readily available by the 1820s, it might have been considered "disposable" and therefore suitable for writing that was considered not terribly important such as writing for general amusement; in general, paper was now more affordable meaning that more than the middle and upper classes might have access to this most basic material.

One had paper, but there was the problem of finding a useful pen. Manufacturers were refining the "portable quill pen," an invention which undoubtedly changed diary writing practices. For example, in the fictional diary novel Madeline set in 1815, the

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[25] Much more valuable work could be done on the kinds of books and scribblers available for would-be diarists throughout the nineteenth century, their various costs, and--in books specifically designed for diary writing--their assumptions about the content that could be expected.

diarist explains that she cannot keep writing for she "shall not find convenience for writing at the inns" (Opie 1:35) and, in another instance, that she "could not journalize while we were travelling" (Opie 1:128), understandable statements if we keep in mind the kind of writing apparatus she would need to make jottings with a traditional quill pen. It is not surprising, then, that an 1827 advertisement for the portable quill pen boasts not only that the pen offers "a saving of full one-third the expence compared with common Pens" but further reminds would-be travellers of the convenience: "these pens are of great value from their compact portability, as fifty or one hundred may be carried in a small box fit for the waistcoat pocket" (Whalley 19). Tellingly, the advertisement ends with an appeal to the new market the manufacturer hoped to entice with these cheaper, more convenient pens: "To ladies and the rising generation, they are a very desirable and useful present" (Whalley 19). Diary critic Andrew Hassam notes that fountain pens were not much in use before the 1880s, and if shipboard diarists did not want to use a pencil, they were forced to contend with pen and ink bottle, making shipboard diaries a special challenge (24).

The material conditions of British emigration during the late eighteenth and nineteenth century favored the journal letter, specifically, as a mode of communication. Andrew Hassam notices the proclivity of the form among male and female shipboard diarists who were not able to post letters home on a regular basis (28). Several examples of settler's diaries from colonial Canada take the form of journal letters. Elizabeth Simcoe (writing between 1790 and 1796), Jane Ellice (1836), Mary Gapper O'Brien (1828-1838), Anne Langton (1833-1846), and Mrs. Langton, Anne's mother (1837)--all of them British travellers or emigrants--choose the journal letter form. One of the reasons for the popularity of the journal letter among British travellers, emigrants, and citizens in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries undoubtedly lies in the advances of the postal system. After 1740, Britain's Royal Mail began to expand until its cumbersome size and necessity to British commerce demanded increased regulation such as the Post

Office Reforms advanced by Rowand Hill in 1837. The Reforms, in turn, led to the arrival of the first adhesive stamp on 6 May 1840 (Griffin 1728).[26] The effect of postal technology on writing practices must be taken into account. Hassam cites an evocative diary entry from the mid-nineteenth century which describes shipboard diarists lobbing their journal letters, attached to lumps of coal, onto a passing ship said to be heading for Cork, Ireland (27). The example is a poignant illustration of the human desire to communicate, but it also suggests the precariousness of communication technologies at the time; however, the arrival of the British Penny Post in 1840 signaled a movement towards regularization. As a result, the volume of mail doubled by the end of the decade, and by 1870 it "had reached 10 times its prereform level" (Encyclopedia Britannica 1073). In the Canadas, the colonial postal system was complicated by its attachment to the British system until it gained autonomy in April 1851 (Griffin 1728). Throughout the early years of the colonial postal system, there was a great deal of concern for the passage of the mail. In the winter of 1848, on her second visit to Canada, Frances Simpson worries about the arrival of the mail in a letter to her sister:

> The last mail had a very long passage, so much so that the most serious apprehensions were entertained for her safety. She, however, did arrive but brought me no letters.[27]

Rather than discourage correspondence in the first decades of the nineteenth century, fears about the reliability of the post seem to have further entrenched the practicality of the journal letter as a response to its vagaries. The journal letter likely provided a practical answer to the slow colonial postal system because a woman could make periodic

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[26] Reliable mail transport was available by 1700; in 1711, the English, Scottish and Irish postal services merged. (Anderson et. al. 269). At this time the recipient had to pay the post, so it was incumbent upon the letter writer to make his delivery entertaining and worth paying for (269). In 1765, "an extensive program of road-building" paved the way for stagecoach mail delivery, and a "carefully regulated postal service--unprecedented for its standards of speed, frequency, and security" evolved in the period between 1765 and 1830 ("Postal Systems" Encyclopedia Britannica 1071).

[27] Letter from LaChine, Quebec, December 12, 1848. HBCA D.6/1 fo. 30-33d.

additions to her serial correspondence and send it off whenever a packet was leaving for England or Europe. After 1850, when the Canadian postal system functioned more smoothly in the east, women wrote more frequent single letters home, a practice which did not result in journal letters.

One might argue that the journal letter has more in common with letters than diaries. Certainly, there is a proximity between this kind of diary writing and epistolary writing which provokes anxiety: when is a diary not a diary but a letter? Andrew Hassam expresses reluctance about differentiating between diaries and journal letters because he dislikes the idea that the difference could rest on something as arbitrary as whether or not the account was posted home (28). Posting home a diary does not make it a letter, he suggests. On one hand, the blurred boundaries demonstrate how "cultural practices rarely divide into clear-cut categories" (30), but the writers of the shipboard journal letters Hassam cites are "all quite clear that a distinction between a letter and a diary can be made" (28). Anne Langton, settling in Fenelon Falls Ontario, is quite clear too, signaling a difference between letters and journals in an 1839 message to her English family: "as this is not a letter but a journal, I must give you something of the doings of the week" (104). Although Langton, among others, attests to differences between letters and journal letters, the journal letter shares at least two aspects in common with other forms of epistolary writing: first, "the extent to which it is colored not by one but by two persons and by the specific relationship between them," and, second, the impossibility of situating the imagined conversation in present time (Gurkin 118; 129). These two aspects of audience and the temporal lag in communication between writer and reader are the focus of the following paragraphs, for one of the complications of the journal letter is that it is underwritten by the desire to connect with an audience but plagued by the impossibility of a real dialogue.

The audience for journal letters was almost always close family and friends. Frequently, the primary audience consisted of other women. For example, many of the

letters published in My Forest Home were written from Frances Stewart to Maria Edgeworth (Zaremba 4). Journal letters could also be addressed to men. Jane Ellice writes for the benefit of her father-in-law (Godsell Letters and Diaries of Lady Durham n. 158-159) and Anne Langton addresses her journal to a brother. In Hassam's study of men's and women's shipboard journal letters, he finds that the primary audience was a mother, often a sister and, less often, a father (34). These intimates formed the immediate audience, but journal letter writers were aware that their texts might circulate in a wider family circle, perhaps even among friends they had never met.[28] Therefore, journal letter writers are highly aware of potential readers and their expectations. Editing was considered normal before these texts were mailed: some passages were removed, and sometimes the journal was thrown out altogether. In an 1837 letter to her son, Anne Langton's mother tells of a "a little journal, or rather a diary of my feelings" she had written "when first embarking on our awful voyage." Looking it over later, she found that "it was such a melancholy catalogue of sufferings and sensations produced by sea-sickness that I thought it better torn and destroyed than distressing poor William with a perusal of it" (10). Mrs. Langton's journal letter functions according to present needs: when she is sick and depressed, she wants to record that reality, and when she is better, the diary no longer has the same pressing importance. Thus, Langton's comments demonstrate how the diary is intricately bound to the "then and there" of its composition

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[28] Women writers aiming for publication also cleverly capitalized on the notion that journal letters might circulate beyond the family circle. Anna Jameson prefaces her Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada (1837) by explaining that it is based on "fragments of a journal to a friend," Ottilie von Goethe, and avows that "it was never intended to go before the world in its present crude and desultory form" (9). However, at the end of the text, Jameson imagines that a readership consisting of the family circle might extend beyond kinship ties to include the native women she met on her travels and the newly-ascended Queen Victoria. Jameson also prefaces the text with a quote from Bettina von Arnim, whose own letter journal Goethes Briefweschel mit einem binde was reworked for twenty years after its original composition before being published in 1835 (Martens 32), and her choice of genre perhaps influenced Jameson's. Katherine Goodman, in her research on German literature, also points out that von Arnim was part of a larger tradition in Germany of women's epistolary autobiography which she traces back to 1797 (318) and claims is a tradition unique to women (317). Certainly Jameson is imaginatively placing herself within a group of writing women including von Goethe and von Arnim. In 1840, von Arnim would publish her letters to Karoline von Günderrode as Die Günderode.

(Hassam 1). In addition, her writing demonstrates how early nineteenth-century journal letter writers were keenly aware of their potential audience and its possible reactions.

Elizabeth Simcoe's now-published journal letter, written between 1791 and 1796, is highly aware of its audience. Her journal is sent to her four daughters in England via Mary Ann Burges who acted as the adviser and correspondent among four women left to look after the children.[29] The creation of this journal letter relied on two diaries. One was used as she travelled, a small notebook "bound in parchment" in which "she made brief notations" (Innis 24). The entries from these field notes were then revised and entered in "perfectly legible" writing into a second diary "kept in large blank books bound in green mottled paper" (24). Throughout her diary are scattered illustrations, "small sketches of buildings and tiny maps" (24). The published journal letter resembles a diary in its daily entries, although we know these were drawn from rough notes and polished into narrative. Her art and packets of diary entries were sent to the children in England (Buss MOS 42).

Simcoe's choice of the journal letter was not unusual. She is described as much "like many ladies of her day ... an assiduous letter-writer" and an obsessive diary writer (Innis 4). In addition, her choice is a practical response to the vagaries of the postal system, for her editor remarks on the shaky lines of communication that linked the Canadas to Britain at this time:

> Letters received were excitedly read and answered in haste so as to catch the returning express. Or letters might be sent by a traveller going to Montreal or New York. At the news that someone was going east--and news passed from house to house with unbelievable speed--pens were hastily taken in hand to send off as many letters as time would permit. (Innis 11)

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[29] Helen Buss, in Mapping Our Selves, and Marian Fowler, in The Embroidered Tent, disagree about the recipient of Simcoe's letters. Fowler, whose work was published in 1982, says that letters were written to Mrs. Hunt, one of the guardians of Simcoe's four daughters left behind in England (20). Buss, relying on a more recent biography of Simcoe (1989), states that the letters are written to one of Simcoe's childhood friends, Mary Ann Burges. Buss explains that Burges acted as the special adviser, aunt and correspondent on a team of four women which included Anne and Mary Hunt, a mother and daughter governess team who were in charge of educating the girls (39).

The mail was more dependable in summer when ships regularly crossed between Britain and Quebec, but in the winter, communication was haphazard. Recall that Frances Simpson worries about the mail in a letter dated 12 December when winter weather made trans-Atlantic shipping less reliable. Simcoe was writing from Quebec some sixty-seven years before Simpson, and her routine of correspondence likewise suffered through bouts of winter irregularities. She writes in a February letter to Burges that she "was disappointed at not hearing [from her] by the November Mail." She continues, "[I] doubt not that you thought (as I did when in England) that there was no communication with Quebec but in summer" (Innis 48). Due to general uncertainty about mail traffic between Quebec and Britain, Simcoe wisely prepared her journal letter in advance and sent off a bundle of diary entries when she could. However, even after a ship arrived and departed, there was still no guarantee that mail would make it back to England. Although she was not taking as much of a chance as the shipboard diarists who hurled their journals onto a passing ship using chunks of coal, the ever-present possibility of ship wrecks alluded to by Simpson meant that she could not assume her journal letter would reach the intended audience. Despite these problems, Simcoe was compelled to communicate with her distant children and to shape and revise diary entries on their behalf.

Like many early-nineteenth-century journal letters, Simcoe omits what twentieth-century readers would label private or personal. There is no information about the birth and death of her daughter Katherine, for example; it is relegated to another letter written to the governess Miss Hunt, who would have to tell the four girls about the death of a sister they had never met (Innis 125). Marion Fowler, in The Embroidered Tent, asks us to read Simcoe's journal for evidence of her growing independence and androgyny in a foreign setting, but Helen Buss notices, with good reason, that this emphasis on androgyny effaces the particular gendering of Simcoe's self-representation (40). Buss improves upon Fowler's critical assessment by examining how Simcoe's concern for her readers, her daughters, entails a balancing act intrinsic to the presentation of female

subjectivity (43). She argues that Simcoe downplays the representation of her own feelings in dangerous circumstances so as not to arouse her daughter's fears. This balancing act, with its acute awareness of reader/s, often exploits expository descriptions to facilitate self-representation. These allow the writer to smuggle in representations of self without seeming self-congratulatory or immodest. Simcoe demonstrates in the following example when she writes about an incident on board the ship: "My servant came to me several times to tell me we were going to the bottom. I told her to shut the door and leave me quiet for the motion of the vessel made me sick" (157). Simcoe stays in her cabin, stoically enduring the frightening event while her servant runs about in a frenzy. Even though Simcoe tempers this description for her readers by adding that sickness, not bravery, forced her to endure alone, the impression of bravery remains to colour Simcoe's self-representation for both the servant (who may or may not be told of the sickness) and the reader.

When Helen Buss examines this passage, she reads it as a displacement of fear and danger onto the hapless servant and describes this strategy as one that "seem[s] to de-emphasize herself and her feelings, [but] actually draws attention to them" (43). I agree. The potential for representing female subjectivity is embedded in the negotiation between the writer's experience, the resulting expository description, and the needs of her readers. It is an encounter between writer and reader mediated through an expository description, but it also uses the eyes of the other--the servant in this case--within the expository description to actually "see" or report on the self presented to the reader. To some degree, the description of the servant is a common upper-class representation. The servant used to focalize the narrative comes from a lower class, alerting us to the interaction of both class and gender affecting representations of self. Often illiterate, the lower-class woman rarely gets to "talk back": few written documents survive to tell of her

experiences.[30] As the example of Elizabeth Simcoe indicates, the writing elicited by a letter journal with its keen awareness of others allows for the creation and representation of self through two interactions of self and other: 1) through a reader who acts as a listening other and 2) through a narrative foil who functions as expository other.

The briefly-examined example of Elizabeth Simcoe begins to demonstrate how the reader awareness of the journal letter elicits and accommodates certain writing strategies in the representation of self that allow for acts of agency. Simcoe covertly presents self in a dialogue of self and other and authorizes herself to speak in response to "the context [she] create[s] for discourse" (Bergman 26). If she fails to "strut and descant the singular self" (Blodgett 63) because, as diary critic Elizabeth Hampsten says, writing of the self "was apparently very difficult and seldom attempted" (64), it is because she creates an autobiographical dialogue instead of an autobiographical monologue. The journal letter, like other forms of diary writing, is "ultimately dialogic" (Hogan 12).

The imagined dialogue maintained in Simcoe's writing mediates the encounter between writer and reader and thereby exhibits one of the aforementioned epistolary features: "the extent to which [the writing] is colored not by one but by two persons and by the specific relationship between them." Simcoe maneuvers her narrative through episodes that may frighten the children in a way that does not alarm them, and she negotiates the cultural distance between herself and her children by writing, in effect, as a translator. She attempts to translate colonial life into terms that her English children

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[30] At least two examples suggest that women in lower socio-economic classes did not choose the journal letter form. Nova Scotian Mary Ann Norris, who grew up in a very modest shack as the daughter of an Anglican missionary, kept an ungrammatical diary between 1818 and 1838 that more closely resembles what we think of as a diary: personal daily entries not explicitly addressed to any audience. Likewise, Louisa Collins's 1815 diary from Cole Harbour, Nova Scotia, is also a more "private" document not explicitly addressed to any particular audience. This may indicate that the two diarists were not influenced by the popularity of journal letters in British culture, but it may simply mean that they had no need to write to distant family because their family was nearby. Journal letters may have been written more frequently by upper-class women (like Simcoe) because they were often in the Canadas on some sort of colonial expedition that provided a worthy subject for the self-consciously crafted writing of a journal letter, and they most likely had family left in Britain who would expect such missives. In addition, their documents may have survived because archivists considered them more valuable documents in the social history of Canada than the less literate diaries of a Louisa Collins or Mary Ann Norris.

could understand. An aesthetic of the picturesque is employed, for instance, to describe the landscape and the people Simcoe meets. Speaking of a burning forest, she says "the flare & smoke interspersed in different masses of dark woods has a very picturesque appearance a little like Tasso's enchanted wood" (72). The term "picturesque" is used in a variety of situations to describe that which she finds aesthetically pleasing.[31] She describes an "Indian Woman ... perfectly wild & witchlike ... in a stormy dark day the waves roaring on the beach near which she stood formed a scene very wildly picturesque" (111). In another entry, she records the appearance of natives using the vocabulary of chiaroscuro, marking their suitability for portrayal according to a European aesthetic: "we passed a group of Indians sitting around a fire near the River which in this dark night afforded a good subject for a picture" (65). On yet another day, she sketches a Caughnawaga Indian to whom she compares "Greek or Roman orators" or "figures painted by the Old Masters" (114). Although some might fault her for transposing a European or British aesthetic onto a new landscape and its people, she was in effect acting as translator for children who had never been here, translating for those separated from her by distance and by culture. Using examples from European art that might be familiar to children in a British setting, Simcoe asks them to imaginatively create scenes they would never see and thereby invites their active participation in reading. This example demonstrates one way in which the journal letter writer asks for help from her reader, "thus demanding a more active reading in which the reader is part of the dialectic" (Buss MOS 56). Just as the children are invited to participate at the scene of reading, present-day feminist researchers who see themselves in dialogue with Simcoe's text are also invited to participate at the scene of reading.

Patrocinio Schweickart speculates in "Reading Ourselves" that some feminist research is motivated "by the need 'to connect,' to recuperate, or to formulate ... the

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[31] Marion Fowler discusses her use of the picturesque (41-43).

context, the tradition, that would link women writers to one another, to women readers and critics and to the larger community of women" (32). Her comments address specifically the reading of fictional literature, but they are highly applicable for those researchers, like myself, who investigate the first-hand accounts of historical figures. These are the researchers who describe themselves as being "in dialogue" with a text and the subjectivity presented therein, who "encounter not only a text but a 'subjectified object'" (36). Schweickart's comments do not condone a utopian merging of researcher and subject, and the caveats outlined in chapter one about feminist research that searches for a nexus of agreement in the "continuity of attitudes" (Blodgett 21) presented in women's diaries still apply. Rather, Schweickart tries to articulate a new approach to reading which can at once be empathetic to the research subject while remaining alert to differences between researcher and subject. She outlines an approach which she calls a dialogic model of active reading, something I want to explore in more detail in a moment.

Given Schweickart's definition of the feminist researcher, one can draw a comparison between the two sets of readers who attend Simcoe's text. For one thing, neither the researcher nor the children are able to interact directly with the writer; the dialogue is imaginary at best. The conversation is one-sided because there is always a temporal lag between the time of writing and the time of reading. A true dialogue in which the interlocutor can interrupt, interject, or correct, is not possible; therefore, although the journal letter writer is motivated by the desire for dialogue, she is inherently aware of its impossibility. The readers, the children, receive diary entries with the trace but not the presence of their mother's voice; similarly, the researcher encounters Simcoe only as a textual representation. The present-day feminist researcher, as another reader separated by a more significant temporal gap, is invited into a seemingly impossible dialogue with Simcoe as an historical figure and with her text "as a source of knowledge concerning the construction of female selfhood in the past" (Buss CWA 2).

An analogy comparing the feminist researcher to Simcoe's children breaks down at a couple of points. A contemporary feminist researcher is not explicitly invited into the text in the same way as the original audience but then journal letters often circulated beyond the originally-mandated audience. In addition, there may be points of connection between the writer and her original audience inaccessible to the researcher who does not share the same personal memories or cultural experiences. Finally, the children could write back to Simcoe and expected or hoped to see her again someday. Despite these differences, the analogy can be instructive for those feminist researchers who see themselves in dialogue with not only a text, but the subjectivity presented therein because the analogy emphasizes a dialectic between the writer and her readers. If researchers see themselves as engaging in dialogue with the text, it means that "the dialectic of control" that manifests itself in some critical work "gives way to a dialectic of communication," and this is a central defining feature of Schweickart's dialogic model of reading (36). It means that the reader has to take a more active role in constructing a reading of the text at hand, and this approach is especially useful for texts like diaries that are pot-holed with ellipses, incoherencies, and sometimes suspicious emendations. Although the approach is ethically and practically sensible, "constructing a reading" is beset by certain difficulties which Schweickart outlines in her description of the "three moments" of dialogic reading. I want to deal with each of these with specific attention to diaries.

In the first moment of dialogic reading, Schwieckhart argues, the researcher becomes aware that the imagined dialogue between the reader and the subjectivity in the text takes place only within the reader, and that "there are no safeguards against the appropriation of the text by the reader" (37). In the case of diaries, this is not only a problem of interpretation but a problem of selection and survival. Diaries not considered important are thrown out by descendants or refused by archives, and this reflects historically-situated assumptions about what is historically noteworthy. Although men's and women's diaries have always been considered useful to a variety of historical

investigations, the evaluation and interpretation of women's diaries has been, at times, skewed by older interpretive methods which favor androcentric models of historiography. In other words, women's diaries were saved by archives and read by historians because of what they reflected about men's lives or about moments deemed important by models of historical interpretation that focused on events public, political, militaristic, and male. Carole Gerson reminds literary scholars in a 1993 article that the methods of archival evaluation are vulnerable to the same "questions of selectivity, projection, and subjectivity that" apply to "more self-conscious interpretative activities" ("Locating Female Subjects" 1). Likewise, the interpretation and republication of women's diaries was sometimes influenced by now-outmoded criteria. The editor of Jane Ellice's diary, for example, explains Ellice's relationship to the significant men in her life such as Lord Durham or Edward Ellice, Jane's husband, but relegates to endnotes information about Ellice's birth and death dates, her marriage dates, or her childlessness (Gerson Early Women Writers 7). Similarly, Mercy Ann Coles's adolescent diary is excerpted in several publications mainly because her father, George H. Coles, was associated with the Charlottetown Confederation conference.

Archivists and historians were not alone in bringing assumptions about what is historically significant to the diary. Sometimes the diarists themselves are aware that their writing will be used by history, and many women kept diaries when living in what they perceived to be historically significant moments. Scores of homesteaders seem to have been self-consciously aware that they were living history and used their diaries to record it; by the same token, when women write about issues that they consider not historically significant, they apologize. Anne Langton, for instance, after critiquing the sartorial style of a few local women, apologizes to her brother --the addressee of her journal --for writing a "womanish journal" (128). In these situations, the writing itself, and its assumptions about what is historical, can be used to adumbrate the features of male-centered notions of history as they impinged upon women at the time of writing.

Even if we overcome the problem of male-dominated archival collections by unearthing and concentrating on women's records, there is still a systemic class and race bias. White middle- and upper-class women are generally over-represented in archival collections; therefore any sample group of women's writing or women's experiences based on archival records can rarely claim comprehensiveness. Historian Veronica Strong-Boag urged Canadian archives to reassess their collection policies as early as 1978 in an effort to make accessible historical materials for women from diverse economic and social strata. In "Raising Clio's Consciousness," Strong-Boag cites the "real neglect" of archives to preserve such records "stemming in large part from time-worn classification systems which emphasize the activities of political, military, diplomatic and economic elites" (73). This twenty-year-old call to rescue the records of "women, both prominent and obscure" still has credence and, at the very least, encourages present-day researchers to remain sensitive to the class bias that exists in any sampling of women's archival documents (76). Comments like Strong-Boag's have motivated researchers like myself to choose the subjects of historical investigations with this kind of inclusivity in mind. However, the built-in biases of the archives shows that a genuinely representative sampling may not be possible; in addition, there are potential pitfalls in choosing obscure or "ordinary" women (a definition which tends to refer to those without significant access to economic or cultural power) as research subjects. This brings us to Schweickart's second moment of dialogic reading: the realization that all "reading is necessarily subjective" (37).

I quite consciously wanted to include the diaries of ordinary, obscure, and working-class women among those I studied in order to redress some of the imbalances I perceived in archival collections. Consequently, as I wrote in the first chapter, I became interested in diaries that do not attain the stature of capital "L" literature but those of homesteaders, housewives, students, teachers, nurses, women in religious orders, and travellers, for the recuperation of their writing contributes to the ongoing attempts to

write history "from below," to rewrite social histories that focus on generalizations rather than differences (Maynes 103). However, like Helen Buss, I realize that "as a twentieth-century feminist in rescuing the female subject from the oblivion of the unread archive, I am as capable of malformation as any" ("Constructing" 16). In particular, my research is susceptible to malformation or misreadings precisely because of its attention to the ordinary.

I appeal to ordinariness, in part, to legitimize my claim that I am helping to re-write "history from below" or history from "the bottom up" as Strong-Boag calls it (70), but this in itself may pose a dilemma, according to literary scholar Roxanne Rimstead. Rimstead perceptively analyses some of the latent pitfalls when using the personal testimony of "ordinary" people "in schools of interpretation such as feminist, history-from-below, and Latin American studies" (140). Appealing explicitly to the "ordinariness" of ethnographical or research subjects can be a problem, she says, when their words are taken as "testimony to lived history" (139). Rimstead argues against a research model wherein the "ordinary" woman can be trusted to naïvely report or record her life experience and where the resulting "true" testimony is used to support arguments about women's cultures in specific geographical or historical settings. Her statements touch on the debate about appealing to experience that Joan Scott outlines in "Experience," but more specifically they bring attention to the kinds of "ordinary" subjects who might be exploited in such research.

Theorists Landry and McLean enunciate a possible dynamic between researcher and "ordinary" subject in the worst possible terms: "feminist foraging outside the canon for the increasingly obscure, marginalized and so theoretically or even antiquarianly interesting figures or contexts is a response to culturally imperative desires for the new, the fashionably novel, the previously unexploited" (57). This is a fairly damning indictment. Rimstead is more generous and acknowledges that the recuperation or mediation of the testimonies of ordinary people is frequently based on a well-intentioned

desire to achieve political solidarity with the subject; certainly this is what motivates Schweickart's call to find ways of reading that connect, recuperate, or formulate "the context, the tradition, that would link women writers to one another, to women readers and critics and to the larger community of women" (32). However, Rimstead provides examples to show that the researcher and the subject may not always share political goals or may have totally different perspectives on how to achieve those goals (139-140). This caveat about using the testimonies--written or oral--of "ordinary" people cautions against appropriating their voices for political purposes or professional ends that are ill at ease with their goals. Such warnings are useful because they flag one of the ways in which to problematize the scholarly recuperation of women's voices, experiences, lives, and cultures from primary sources like diaries: even if, as researchers, we think we are doing our research subjects a favour by recuperating their voices, we need to scrutinize our own motivations and remain alert to differences in access to cultural power. Put another way, the relationship between a researcher and subject raises ethical concerns for biographers, ethnographers, and anyone whose task is to handle, with respect, the complex and sometimes contradictory truths in a woman's written or spoken record of her life.

The potentially vexed relationship between researcher and subject receives consideration in Rimstead's article when she ponders whether the attention given to oral histories actually democratizes the subject of history or simply "idealize[s] the role of intellectuals and their power to intervene in lived reality" (140). She articulates a concern that the act of scholarly mediation may distort rather than recuperate the subject of history. Helen Buss likewise wishes to avoid imposing on her research subjects "what Lejeune calls being 'studied from above'" ("Constructing Female Subjects in the Archive" 10)[32] or deforming "the identity being investigated" by disassociating the motives for

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[32] In another more recent article, Buss explains in detail that to study a subject from above puts her in danger of becoming "complicit in what Pierre Bourdieu suggests is a reprehensible act of appropriation of voice: 'the controlled classes do not speak, they are spoken'" ("Listening to the 'Ground Noise'" 202).

writing the document, "the motives for its archival acquisition, and the motives for studying it" ("Feminist Revision" 88). Elsewhere, Buss acknowledges the possibility that the researcher may be imposing on the subject a "fictional/literary construct of another woman's life, rather than a properly theorized cultural study of her personal testimony" ("Listening to the 'Ground Noise'" 202). And critic Janet Gray bluntly raises the issue in yet another way when she asks whether, in reconstructing women's lives, we are looking for sisters or mothers; she argues against any "utopian merging with women of the past" (245). In a case where a researcher imposes her own needs or her own goals upon a text, the act of recovery becomes nothing more than the act of re-covering.

The concerns of Buss, Rimstead, and Gray attest to the "complexity and subjectivity of historical reconstruction ... both the affinity and the distance between history and source" (Ulrich 34). Affinity and distance: the researcher need not overestimate shared similarities *or* differences from the research subject, for as Terry Threadgold asks: "who is the 'other' of whom you want to speak? Does that 'other' really lack all that you have, need your voice? And are you as different from her as locating yourself in 'the knowledge class' might suggest?" In other words, are researchers really doing historical subjects a favour by reclaiming or rediscovering their voices? Are researchers so totally different from the subjects they study? Threadgold's comments suggest that researchers should not condescend or pity research subjects for this too will unbalance interpretive acts. I find these questions particularly provocative because my putative ensconcement within the "knowledge class" has never sat easily with my own perception of my background; rather I feel at once in and out of the knowledge class but simultaneously unable to fit in with the community that I imagine as "home." As a result, I am acutely sensitive to the possible condescension in my interpretive acts. But colluding with the diarists presented in these pages is not always possible either: I find the cultural positioning of some of diarists in this study particularly compelling and familiar while others seem quite foreign and inaccessible.

If my personal confession works to dismantle an easy distinction between the cultural positions of researcher and subject, it also befits the kind of reflexive dialogue that many scholars advocate as an antidote to an under-theorized or unarticulated researcher-subject relationship. Patrocinio Schweickart, Helen Buss, ethnographer Gelya Frank, Suzanne Bunkers, and Sidonie Smith offer some possible re-orientations or re-configurations of the researcher-subject relationship, using terms such as "intersubjectivities" or "reflexivity." In a section on "reflexive contexts" in Mapping Our Selves, Helen Buss muses on the mutually constitutive relationship between a reader and a writer of personal documents, a point she expands in a later essay where she speaks of a "respect for the writer's subjectivity--in other words an ethic of love" ("Feminist Revision" 88). Buss is influenced here by Schweickart's "third moment" of dialogic reading in which the researcher recognizes the need to keep a reading from being totally subjective and attempts to mediate between the context of reading and the context of writing (37).[33] Buss advocates a model of reading, reminiscent of Schweickart's dialectic of communication, that privileges empathy and "listening" over what have been called patriarchal models of analysis, penetration, and mastery (MOS 22-24). The need for empathy when deciphering diaries has been remarked on in an essay by Gelya Frank, and it is a concern which pervades the work of critic Suzanne Bunkers when she discusses her relationship to the women's diaries she studies. Sidonie Smith concurs with these general tenets, condoning "the intersubjectivity of the biographical/ethnographical process, the mutually constitutive process of one subject writing about another subject" ("Who's Talking" 398). What these arguments share is a commitment to maintaining an imagined dialogue between the researcher and her subject.

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[33] In fact, Buss's tripartite reading strategy defined in familiar terms in Mapping OurSelves owes much to Scwheickart's dialogic model. Buss speaks at first of mothering the text, or of being "in intimate conversation with an equal other" but recognizing "its separateness, its own life." She also figures herself as a reader/sister to the text in which she finds moments of affinity with her research subject, and finally, she speaks of being daughter to the text: "shaped, enabled, nurtured in my own growth by another woman's utterance" (26).

Schweickart's third moment and its attention to the contexts of writing alerts us to one other relationship that must be considered with respect to historical figures: the relationship between the subject and her historical period. The study of nineteenth-century women entails some particular complications. The nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries are periods stereotyped in popular imagination as being repressive and particularly difficult for women--except for an extraordinary few who escaped the sturdy bonds of a culture that enslaved so many others. The myth of those extraordinary few is propagated in biographies, for example, where "the nineteenth-century heroine ... remains perforce an exceptional and unusual figure, whose life story explains only itself" (Smith "Who's Talking" 396). Sidonie Smith points to a problem specific to studying historical figures: the relationship between the subject and her historical moment. Indeed, Smith argues that a lack of attention to the historical moment can help to create these exceptional figures of biography: "produced out of the biographer's use of a personal, or individual frame of time" (396). If some biographers have been eager to exempt exceptional nineteenth-century women from historical and cultural forces, other historians and literary scholars have exhibited a vested interest in "reinforcing" historical and cultural forces, "in over articulating their distinctness and in situating them far in the past" (Gray 241). These critical stances are really two sides of the same coin: the desire to dismiss the importance of the historical and cultural setting matches with a desire to over-determine, concretize and thereby allow it to be disregarded. Janet Gray, discussing Victorian gender ideology as one example of a cultural force, articulates an alternative approach:

> We need not handle Victorian gender ideology as if it were a binarist machine that left only a selvage of Victorian women close to a state of authenticity; we can see it as comprising rigidities and plasticities, multiple discourses, practices, negotiations, dialogues and debates, whose intersections constructed places that subjects might occupy with varying degrees of mobility, efficacy and authentication ... [W]e can regard women's culture as both constraining and enabling. (248)

Gray's comments move toward articulating the relationship between a historical figure and the society in which she lived. What kind of subject position does a woman assume within a historical moment? What are the possibilities for female agency? Are her subjectivity and writing completely determined by the social and cultural conditions in which she finds herself? Does diary writing participate in this dialogue? These issues apply not only to individual women but, more broadly, to historical interpretations of women's culture: "we must analyse how a women's culture evolves within a system of unequal relations, how it hides this system's flaws, how it reactivates conflicts, how it maps time and space, and finally how it views its own particularities and its relationship with society as a whole" (Dauphin et. al. 577).

This study espouses the theory that women writing diaries do not only reflect a historical reality that is or was already "out there" but that the very act of writing helps to produce the culture in which they live/d. To explain this point, I return to the example of Simcoe for a moment. Reading diaries is considered a critical problem when there is a gap, silence, or evasion, such as Simcoe's omission of Katherine's death, and these are frequently met with psychological explanations. Helen Buss uses Simcoe's omissions as evidence that women's writing is aware of the needs of others, thereby occasioning a maneouvre she calls female rhetoric: "the inevitable illnesses, danger, and discomforts ... [are] difficult to write home about; they appear in a certain disguise, a female rhetoric " (43). I think that Buss's notion of a female rhetoric can be made even more cogent by unfastening her notion of "disguise" from its unspoken reliance on the psychological concept of repression and the model of reality it implicitly embraces. To say that writing or women adopt disguises implies that there is a repressed or essential reality waiting to be uncovered. The concept of repression, explains theorist Raymond Williams, relies on particular assumptions about the nature of reality: that it is "out there," external, waiting to find reflection in writing (99). Williams offers an alternative approach: "the problem is different from the beginning if we see language and signification as indissoluble

elements of the material social process itself, involved all the time both in production and reproduction" (99). Simcoe's language does not merely reflect a reality (which according to psychological theories, she may portion out in bigger or smaller doses, sooner, later, or never, with affiliated consequences for her psychic health). Instead her writing is participatory; it produces meaning, reproduces social and cultural norms. Using this model, female rhetoric can be seen as participating in the material social process; it produces the woman and her society, and reproduces herself/itself in her cultural forms, including her putatively "private" writing, which can now be seen as part and parcel of a more public culture or society. Society is not "out there" waiting to find reflection in language, but produced by/reproduced in what are supposedly her most "private" acts of writing.

Reading women writing journal letters and other diaries is a dilemma requiring subtlety of interpretation, part of the "inventive patience" cited by Elizabeth Hampsten in her study of nineteenth-century women's diaries (4): it demands a re-evaluation of the relationships between a woman, her society and the cultural forms she creates. The approach I advocate challenges the assumption that society acts as an inert monolith limiting the expression of the female self. Cultural materialist critiques offer a model of a constitutive dialectic between a woman and her society in which each creates and recreates the other; this process is best represented by the trope of correspondence, a dialogue which may be said to emblematize that reciprocal movement. Supporting this approach is an alternative postulation of the relationship between subject and society articulated by Raymond Williams:

> "Society" is then never only the dead husk which limits social and individual fulfillment. It is always also a constitutive process with very powerful pressures which are both expressed in political, economic, and cultural formations, and to take the full weight of constitutive, are internalized and become individual wills. (M&L 87)

Applying Williams's comments specifically to nineteenth-century women's personal writing, I would argue that the challenge of reading such writing is to acknowledge how it simultaneously supports social structures which limit its potential for expressiveness even while it alters, subverts, or exploits existing genres to make room for self-representation.

Women's private writing has proven frustrating to critics when they fail to account for the mutually constitutive process between a woman and her society, for women's writing demonstrates (what seems to some) a curious compulsion to "maintain and renew ... the negative determinations that are experienced as limits" (Williams 87). Diary critic Harriet Blodgett sums up the same dilemma with more brevity: these are "not the diaries of rebels, but neither are they the diaries of slaves" (110). The critique offered above by Raymond Williams, emphasizing the mutuality and reciprocity of the social material process, can be used to show how women's private writing participates in the re/production of a capitalist culture, and why it seldom champions emancipation. Feminist cultural materialists Judith Newton and Deborah Rosenfelt put it more succinctly: they argue against a "tragic essentialism" which casts women as victims to an unchanging and monolithic patriarchy or society, but instead insist that women are simultaneously "victims and agents" at any given moment.

Cultural materialist critique offers a model of a constitutive dialectic between a woman and her society in which each creates and recreates the other; this process is best represented by the trope of correspondence, a dialogue which may be said to emblematize that reciprocal movement. Similarly, Buss views "literary creation as a complex interaction between writer or speaker and audience, each embedded in the specifics of culture, including the specifics of gender, race and class" (7). The dialogue between the woman and her historical moment parallels or is metaphorically represented by the dialogue she imagines with her readers. Journal letter writers create in response to an imagined conversation, and the readers who come later are also invited into dialogue.

This includes later researchers, and for this reason Schweickart's dialogic reading model is especially helpful when reading diary writing. However, Buss's comments alert us, as do Schweickart's warnings about the second moment of dialogic reading, that problems attend this dialogue. Like journal letter writing itself, the dialogue is one-sided; all readings are subjective, and the researchers are influenced by the specifics of their own "gender, race, and class." For this reason, the chapter title asks if these are impossible dialogues. Can researchers ever really describe themselves as being in dialogue with a historical figure or her text? Schweickart answers this question with another question:

> What is at stake in the proposition that reading is impossible? ... It is dangerous for feminists to be overly enamored with the theme of impossibility. Instead, we should strive to redeem the claim that it is possible for a woman, reading as a woman, to read literature written by women, for this is essential if we are to make the literary enterprise into a means of building and maintaining connections among women. (39)

Her answer is that dialogic reading is difficult but necessary. If feminist researchers want to read women's culture in the past, and if we want to read diaries "as a source of knowledge concerning the construction of female selfhood in the past," (Buss CWA 2) we need to be aware of the potential difficulties but must not allow them to stand in the way.

Chapter Three

Imperial Agendas and the Journal Letters of Frances Simpson and Isobel Finlayson.

Frances Simpson, writing in 1830, and Isobel Finlayson, writing between 1840 and 1843, produced journal letters that have become well-known but remain unpublished. The originals are microfilmed and rest in the repository of the Hudson's Bay Company Archives in Winnipeg. In spite of earlier examples of diary writing by women in Canada,[34] this chapter focuses on these journal letters because they have attracted attention from literary scholars such as Helen Buss, who speculates about their value as autobiographical documents, or historians such as Sylvia van Kirk, who uses them as primary sources in her work on women and the fur trade.[35] This chapter demonstrates how the language Simpson and Finlayson use in their journal letters is not unproblematically self-revelatory but attempts to comply with historically specific cultural expectations about gender and class; their journal letters demonstrate in

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[34] Editors Margaret Conrad, Toni Laidlaw and Donna Smyth, in their collection of Nova Scotian women's diaries, provide excerpts from two diaries written before 1830: that of Anna Green Winslow, a privileged young Nova Scotia girl describing her social circle in Boston (1771-1772); and that of Louisa Collins, a young rural girl who frankly details the courtship practices of friends and relatives as well as her own romantic inclinations in 1815. Another writer excerpted in the Nova Scotia collection is Rebecca Byles, who does not keep a diary but writes extensive letters to her aunts between (at least) 1777 and 1785. The letter-journal of Lady Simcoe is another well-known Canadian text written during her stay between 1791 and 1796. Archival research shows twenty-one other diaries written in or before 1830; the earliest of these is written by Nova Scotian Mercy Seccombe between 1753 and 1771.

[35] Some social historians using the texts have treated them as merely documentary, as primary sources providing transparent windows onto scenes in Canadian history (see, for example, Alice M. Johnson's 1951 introduction to an excerpt of Isobel Finalyson's journal). And although Germaine Warkentin has published excerpts from Simpson's journal in her collection of travel writing entitled Canadian Exploration Literature: An Anthology (1993), only Helen Buss and Ian MacLaren have analysed the texts' literary properties. Ian MacLaren examines the journals of Frances and her husband, Governor Simpson, for their portrayals of landscape in his article "Touring at High Speeds: Fur Trade Landscapes in the writings of Frances and George Simpson." Helen Buss has done more extended work, comparing the two journals in her 1989 article "The Dear Domestic Circle: Frameworks for the Literary Study of Women's Personal Narratives in Archival Collection," and giving Isobel Finlayson a prominent place in the introduction to Mapping Our Selves.

microcosm some of the ironies and paradoxes which attend women writing journal letters in this particular colonial experience.

Frances Simpson and her sister Isobel Finlayson carefully documented their visits to the Red River Settlement as the wives of Hudson's Bay men: Simpson wrote in 1830, as one of the earliest British women to make the arduous inland journey by canoe to Fort Garry, and Finlayson wrote during her visit in 1840 with revisions finished by 1843. Both admit to authorial intentions. Frances Simpson tells her readers that this is her "first essay at committing my ideas to paper ... except in the form of a familiar note or letter" (160), but she refrains from naming her text too explicitly. "It is my intention," she explains at the end of the journal, "to continue this narrative (if it deserves that name)" (161). Isobel Finlayson, the more forthright sister, simply names herself "Author." Although they copied and circulated their texts, neither had commercial publication in mind. Like many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century diarists, they stipulated that the journals reach sympathetic friends and relatives. Simpson appeals to friends who "may take the trouble of perusing the foregoing unconnected memoranda" (160), and Finlayson more figuratively addresses "the dear domestic circle, for whose amusement [this notebook] has been written" (185). I call both of these journal letters because they were both addressed explicitly to others.

Like other journal letters, these two exhibit a keen awareness of audience inflected by the need to appear as representations of British culture. While Simpson was under acute pressure as one of the very few white women associated with the Hudson's Bay Company, the need to appear respectable in the new country was important to other travellers and settlers. In her study of literature and society in the Canadas, Mary Lu MacDonald writes, "in a country where wealth could disappear as rapidly as it came, it was more important to be respectable than rich" (11). As MacDonald goes on to suggest, the respectability issue went beyond concerns for personal appearances: "a correct moral attitude" she suggests, "was as fundamental to the idea of nationality in literature as it was

to the maintenance of the social order" (68), and many other journal letter writers visiting the Canadas would have been keenly aware that their conduct represented the morality of England, a morality that some hoped would transplant to Canadian soil. Simpson and Finlayson both display respectability in their journal letters, beginning with a downplaying of their journals' worth. This is a strategy appearing in both men's and women's diaries, according to Andrew Hassam who argues that the "modesty of the claim that the diary is only for self-amusement should be seen alongside the refusal to record fears and anxieties; both were ways in which diaries could be given a tone of self-effacing humility" (37). Humility would be important if the diarist could not be sure who would be reading this journal-letter beyond his or her family, and Hassam's argument is convincing; however, gender differences inflect the modesty and self-effacing content of the journal letters. For women, in particular, the modesty of the form legitimized their claims to authorship and to self-representation. Addressed explicitly to others, Simpson's and Finlayson's journal letters elicit strategies that both inhibit and make possible acts of self-representation.

Simpson's and Finlayson's journal letters, like many others of the time, are fair copies reproduced from rough notes.[36] The closing page of Simpson's journal is dated on the same day as the last actual diary entry; however, the neatness and uniformity of her journal writing alone prove that it could not be the original hastily composed by campfires. Finlayson, by contrast, clearly indicates that she copied her journal in the three years following the last entry of 1840. The last entry, dated at 26 September 1840, is followed by a retrospective narrative which she dates at 1843. It is likely that Finlayson modelled her finished project on Simpson's text, for they bear a striking physical resemblance. Both are written in similar six-inch-by-four-inch notebooks; both

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[36] Andrew Hassam addresses the prevalence of this practice in his work on shipboard diaries (26-27). Further, he dismisses the possibility that fair copies are less "authentic" than the originals: "the ratio of rough copies to fair copies is interesting as an indication of the degree to which diaries were written up but ... it is unworkable as a guide to authenticity" (26).

exhibit careful penmanship and illustrations; both carefully repeat catchwords at the top of the next page. They are very nearly the same length. Finlayson's exceeds Simpson's by a few pages at which time she apologizes for "having already exceeded the limits I had originally intended" (30 September). In content, both accounts begin with a highly stylized and sentimental sketch of the departure from England and family; both narrate the ocean crossing retrospectively; both make allusions to the novels of Sir Walter Scott; and both end with stylistically similar apologia which use identical vocabulary in the repetition of the words "perused" and "indulgence." In an article about these two diaries, Helen Buss argues that Finlayson consciously copied the pattern set by Simpson and tried to outdo her: "[a]t each stage, Finlayson tries to rise one step above her model, giving a lengthier and more elevated opening, supplementing her description of natives with drawings, expressing greater homesickness, giving more romantic descriptions of nature" (16).

Convention seemed to dictate that both journal letters would begin with highly sentimentalized portraits of leave-taking at an English port. Diary scholar Andrew Hassam finds this formulaic opening common to many emigration narratives recorded in journal letters: the "opening is intended to establish the relationship between herself and her audience, and then formally to open the proceedings" (46). One possible reason for the sentimental tone of such openings may be that nineteenth-century upper-class women writers often tried to imitate sentimental novels in their diary writing (Hampsten 27). Sentimentality is evident in both Finlayson's and Simpson's descriptions of leaving England, along with others written around the same time. Simpson writes:

> After taking leave of my dearest Mother and Sisters, my feelings at which time I cannot attempt to describe ... I can scarcely trust myself to think of the pang which shot thro' my heart, on taking the last Farewell of my beloved Father, who was equally overcome at the first parting from any of his children--suffice it to say, that this was to me a moment of bitter sorrow, and one over which in pity to my own feelings I must throw a veil. (2-3)

In a similar fashion ten years later, Finlayson writes: "The hour of my departure at length arrived, and words cannot express the misery of that day ..." (3). She manages to overcome the obstacle and describes her emotions in great detail for an entire paragraph ending with the following:

> ... what pen can describe the moment, when after taking an affectionate farewell of my brothers and sisters, I turned to receive the parting embrace and last blessing of my Mother--of that Mother who had been the guide of my youth, the bosom friend and counsellor of maturer age, and whose devoted and unwearied love had known no change from infancy to the present hour--but I must dwell no longer on this bitter moment, my dear Father for the sake of both, with gentle force drew me from her arms, and without daring to take another look, at all that were dear to me, I threw myself into a corner of the carriage, and covering my face with my handkerchief, gave way to such emotions, as may be felt, but can never be described. (5-6).

In another journal written during the 1830s, Anne Langton's mother writes in a similar manner about a departure scene: "I wish now to banish what is past from my thoughts, and, if I could, the feeling of my last sight and touch of my first born, but the stunning sensation can never be forgotten, and my feeling when the ship cleared the pier head must ever remain as long as memory lasts. It was a call on all my energy and resolution to support an appearance of composure" (10). Undoubtedly, the moment of leave-taking was an emotional one for family members knew that they might never see each other again, but what interests me is how the discourse of sentimentality available to these writers produces such uniformity in their mode of expression.

Simpson, Finlayson, and Langton all follow the model of sentimental writing which "explicitly anchors what is being expressed in the sensory experience, judgement, agency, or desires of the human subject" (Pratt 76), and one of the reasons why they do is because it accords with a cultural script about gender. Sentimental writing from the pen of woman locates authority in an area of knowledge deemed appropriate to women; authority in sentimental writing lies not in any institutionalized, abstract system of knowledge (Pratt 77) but in "the authenticity of somebody's felt experience" (76).

Sentimental writing also denotes class standing. Describing his 1855 pictorial representation of a young couple and their child leaving an English port, which in its content and sentimental appeal is strongly reminiscent of the scenes depicted by Simpson and Finlayson, Pre-Raphaelite artist Ford Madox Brown explains that the emotional tug of his painting "The Last of England" relies on the class of those leaving:

> The educated are bound to their country by closer ties than the illiterate, whose chief concern is food and physical comfort. I have, therefore, in order to present the parting scene in its fullest tragic development, singled out a couple from the middle classes, high enough, through education and refinement, to appreciate all they are giving up, and yet dignified enough in means to have put up with all the discomforts and humiliations incident to a vessel "All one class." (qtd. in Rose 19)

Simpson's and Finlayson's sentimental language is meant to convey the same: that they are educated, respectable women of the middle or upper class with profound ties to their country. It is interesting that Ford Madox Brown specifically locates these ties in written language when he says that the literate are more closely bound than the illiterate (for surely the illiterate classes could *speak* of a love of country) thereby suggesting the way in which patriotic sentiment is the purview of the educated mind, and unwittingly demonstrating how language is conscripted into patriotic agendas.

The example of their similarly styled portrayals of leave-taking illustrates how both Simpson and Finlayson upheld British stereotypes of the educated, middle- or upper-class woman, but in British North America, as some of the earliest white women associated with the fur trade, they found themselves subject to a more complicated mix of assumptions and expectations about their class, race, and gender. Simpson's and Finlayson's journal letters tend to comply with and uphold cultural aspects of British imperialism in the colonized land, and their writing proves especially useful for interrogating the ways in which class and gender ideologies were complicit in the imperial project. The dialogic writing of journal letters tends to uphold cultural hegemonies; in this particular case, the journal letters help Simpson and Finlayson to

maintain their roles as educated women of the British middle class, and thereby help to underwrite an imperial project. The identities constructed in their journal letters are then, in my reading, not a state of being, but social locations with a particular set of (problematic) relationships to the empire. So, Simpson's and Finlayson's journals allow us to read some of the ironies and paradoxes that attend women's roles in imperial history, but they also encourage us to examine the function of women's journals or diaries within British imperialism. Their journal letters are as much a part of the colonial project as are male explorer's diaries and journals in which writing about the possession or surveyance of land and its resources more clearly denotes its connection to colonization, but journal letters also make room for acts of agency and resistance within gender ideologies and imperial projects, for if dialogic writing upholds cultural hegemonies, it also elicits and accommodates certain writing strategies in the representation of self that allows for acts of agency.

Frances Simpson

Frances Simpson's journal letter is remarkable mostly for what it does not say. Simpson had indicated in her leave-taking scene from an English port the need to maintain an air of composure and leave some of the emotions unsaid. The "inexpressibleness" of the moment, if we might call it that, speaks of at least four different things. Her composure shows her to be a woman of class while her ability to feel deeply shows her to be a woman of sensibility; by implication, her father "who was equally overcome at the first parting from any of his children" is also shown to be a man of sensitivity and "good breeding." [37] Diary critic Margo Culley advances two theories about reading the silence of diary writing: on one hand, she writes, the diarist "always knows more about her world than the reader does" and does not need to fill in every detail; on the other hand, silence can also indicate "some implied audience," and she uses Adrienne Rich's evocative phrase "cartographies of silence" to argue that silences can have a pattern and a meaning (19). Presumably, the meaning of that silence emerges in juxtaposition with an intended audience; in the case of Frances Simpson, her silences tell us much about what is expected of her as an English lady entangled in a domestic drama that placed her in an imperial drama.

Simpson came to British North America in 1830 as an eighteen year old who had just married her forty-four-year-old cousin Governor George Simpson. They had met in England when Governor Simpson and his friend J. G. McTavish went on a wife-finding expedition in 1829. Prior to this time, the areas of present-day Canada controlled by the Hudson's Bay Company had been seen primarily as a resource- rich land awaiting British

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[37] I am deliberately and ironically using the term "good breeding" for I hope to show by the end of the chapter exactly how freighted was the British notion of "good breeding" which Governor Simpson attempted to inculcate in the colony through the symbol of his wife, Frances.

cultivation, but not necessarily a full-fledged outpost of British civilization. Governor Simpson consciously decided to change all that by finding a British wife, and he deliberately chose Frances Simpson for her lady-like qualities, hoping that she would be the harbinger of English civilization in Canada. When she arrived, she did indeed arouse obsequious outpourings from career-minded factors such as John Stuart who extolled "the civilizing influence which the presence of Mrs. Simpson would have on the Indian country; she ... heralded improved standards of morality and gentility" (van Kirk 187). Consequently, their marriage was not simply a domestic footnote to fur-trading history, as the important historical work of Sylvia van Kirk makes clear; the marriage was integral to Governor Simpson's promotion of racist and classist ideologies promulgated under the guise of British civilization. With this marriage, he attempted to change long-standing traditions affecting racial relations in the fur trade society.

The marriage of George and Frances signalled a change in the previous pattern of "country marriages" where a British fur trader would live with a native or Métis woman "a la façon du pays." These alliances were not religiously solemnized or legally secured but were understood to be morally binding; moreover, such marriages undoubtedly helped the fur trader whose country wife often had skills that would help him negotiate with Métis and native trappers. The popularity of such unions had pressured the Hudson's Bay Company early on into forbidding relations between its servants and native women because it did not want to support women and children, but by the end of the eighteenth century, the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company were forced to change their policies in the face of competitive recruiting for the skilled French Canadian voyageurs. By 1802, the council at York Factory said native women were "your honor's servants" and acknowledged that they played an important economic role. These marriages were recognized by the Hudson's Bay Company as official contracts and included a provision for ending them, called "turning off," which could be employed if the trader found a new wife or wished to return to England without his native or Métis

wife; such practices indicated, at least, a certain respect for the woman. When the two fur trading companies merged in 1821, the competitive recruiting practices which had first led to a recognition of the importance of native and Métis wives were no longer necessary, perhaps paving the way for Governor Simpson's callous attitude about country marriages and the poor treatment he extended to his own country wives less than ten years later.

Like many other fur traders, Governor Simpson had previously enjoyed at least two country marriages: one to Betsey Sinclair, with whom he had one daughter, and a more long-lasting arrangement with the Métis Margaret Taylor who had given birth to two sons by 1825.[38] The friend who accompanied Simpson to England on the wife-finding mission, J.G. McTavish, had also lived with Métis Nancy McKenzie for several years, and by 1829, had several mixed blood children. Even before Simpson and McTavish had returned from England with their new British wives, they were accused by fur trading society of being hard-hearted in the way they treated their country wives: neither had followed the custom of "turning off," so trouble was brewing even before Frances Simpson and Catherine McTavish arrived as brides (van Kirk 187).

Once in British North America, there is clear evidence that Frances confronted the consequences of her husband's new plan to institute an all-white elite. Although she was spared from meeting the governor's ex-wife Margaret Taylor (historian Sylvia van Kirk believes that Chief Factor John Stuart was in charge of an operation to distract Taylor and keep the two women apart [187]), Frances Simpson saw the painful effects on her friend, the new Mrs. (Catherine) McTavish. J.G. McTavish had told his wife that she would be "expected to act as step-mother" to his mixed blood children (van Kirk 206) and Catherine's first meeting with one of McTavish's daughters, thirteen-year-old Mary, turned out to be particularly uncomfortable:

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[38] Across northern Alberta and the North West Territories (Fort Chipewyan is one example), there are still Métis families bearing the name Simpson who claim to be direct descendants of Governor George, the result of various liaisons he enjoyed while travelling north during the 1820s.

> [McTavish] rose & took her up to his wife, who got stupid, but shook hands with the Miss who was very pretty and mighty impudent ... Mrs. McTavish got white & red & at last rose & left the room, all the party looking very uncomfortable except [her husband] & the girl. [Frances Simpson] followed and found her in a violent fit of crying, she said she knew the child was to have been home that night but thought she would have been spared such a public introduction. [39]
>
> (qtd. in van Kirk 206)

Simpson's appearance in this domestic drama suggests that she certainly knew about the existence of country wives, but she never writes about them nor any related topic in her journal; only in a discussion with Catherine McTavish does she admit, by way of referring to country wives, that "she was always terrified to look about her in case of seeing something disagreeable" (van Kirk 206).

For Simpson to disclose in writing painful information about her marriage or related domestic dramas would not only have been difficult, as it evidently was, but highly unusual. Katherine Goodman, commenting on German epistolary autobiographies of the nineteenth century, reminds us that "for an autobiographer, especially a woman, to identify herself with unhappiness in domestic affairs and to name relatives upon whom she was emotionally and financially dependent as the source of unbearable pain was virtually unheard of--and very threatening" (316-317). It makes sense that Simpson would not write about such things in a journal letter she expected others to read within her lifetime; remember that she is not writing a retrospective autobiography to be read after her death. Her disclosures would threaten not only fur trading society, but in a larger sense, an economic system built upon the foundation of the marital union; Simpson's deference and silence is necessary both for her own financial well being and the smooth operation of the whole system. Frances Simpson's silence about marital

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[39] The original description is in Letitia Hargrave's letters, 35; the following quotation from van Kirk comes from Hargrave's letters 36.

problems colluded with the power structure at work in fur trading society and in an imperial Britain which idealized and allegorized domestic harmony.

Governor Simpson's plan to create an all-white elite also meant that his wife dwelt in isolation from other women; he felt she should only associate with women of her own class. In a land where female company was scarce, Frances Simpson was "restricted to those few white women whose husbands possessed social standing" (van Kirk 204). At first, Simpson had enjoyed the company of Catherine McTavish, but they were separated when the Simpsons journeyed through Rupert's Land where Simpson was met with "a worshipful attitude" and "was not introduced to a single native wife" for fear it would sully her ladyhood (van Kirk 186). The worshipful attitude served not only to isolate her but angered many of the Métis and native women who had formerly received respect, as well as their husbands. When McTavish and Simpson would not allow their wives to keep company with the mixed blood or native wives of other factors, the factors were outraged, but Simpson wrote that these emotional consequences could not be helped:

> I ... understand that the other Ladies at Moose are violent and indignant at being kept such a distance, likewise their husbands.... The greater the distance at which they are kept the better.
>
> (qtd. in van Kirk 205)

Frances Simpson was allowed to associate with native women only if they served her in a menial capacity; this led to strange situations such as one time when the former wife of J. G. McTavish acted as of Simpson's servants (van Kirk 205). Simpson's response to this situation is not mentioned in the journal.

Frances Simpson, like Elizabeth Simcoe, finds many things too private to say in her journal letter. Simpson's journal, therefore, does not offer access to an inner self, nor does it record her concerns, anxieties, or hopes; she knows it is a semi-public diary that will circulate among her friends and family, and that she should represent herself as a British lady and dutiful wife to uphold the power structure at work around her. So, she carefully cultivates a blindness to the Governor's faults in her writing. For instance, she

tells of natives coming "to congratulate Mr. Simpson on his return, he being very popular among the Indians on account of treating them with uniform kindness" (114). Readers, and perhaps Simpson herself, are aware of the irony of this statement, knowing that Simpson's new philosophy about suitable wives for British fur traders is wreaking havoc on white-native relations; later, Frances Simpson implicitly contradicts herself when she describes her husband's cruelty to native voyageurs by making them get up at unreasonable hours and beating two of them with a paddle. Interestingly, it is only in Simpson's ambiguous contradictions that we find the seeds of agency in her journal letter; at such times her endorsement of the colonial project mixes with personal accounts that undercut and implicitly question notions of imperial superiority.[40]

If Simpson's silence on these subjects was the product of decorum or "good breeding," it is paradoxical that these were exactly the attitudes which led to her inability to adjust to life at a fur trading fort. Sylvia van Kirk comments on the irony of the situation: "while the fur traders admired the delicate mold in which a young woman such as Frances Simpson had been fashioned, it was this state which jeopardized her ability to accept life in Red River" (193). But this is more than ironic; I think Simpson's silence bears out Margaret Homan's hypothesis that the experiences particular to women's sphere (like pregnancy or childbirth) are "framed as antithetical to women's writing" in the nineteenth century (xi). When women attempt to represent their experiences, Homan writes, they collide with a dominant myth about language, that "women's experiences are unrepresentable and women cannot perform acts of representation" (xi). To me, this suggests that the journal letter is not removed from what Homans would call the androcentic order of symbolic language. In other words, the journal letter does not offer a retreat from more public forms of writing; it is not a place where women can cry out

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[40] I borrow this idea from the introduction to Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance, Chaudhuri and Strobel, 6, where they are talking more specifically about the writing of British women in India and South Africa.

with a feminocentric voice. As a result, Simpson's writing--and in turn her imaginative conception of self--cannot escape from the cultural forces that both serve to bring her to the colony (as the "ideal" wife for the Governor) and imprison her within a set of behaviours deemed appropriate for a British lady. Her journal letter, with its high degree of reader awareness, is shaped as much by cultural expectations as any other kind of writing whether fictive or factual, public or "private."

Acts of representation do indeed vex Simpson for country marriages and the governor's behaviour are not the only issues which go unremarked. From the opening pages, Simpson figures herself as a subject who cannot express much. Comments written about the ocean crossing, described in a retrospective memoir style, are preceded by disclaimers such as "my feelings at which time I cannot attempt to describe," "I can scarcely trust myself to think," "I must now pass over in silence," or " I am at a loss." I first concluded that Simpson consistently avoids placing herself prominently in the narrative because she is expected to act as a representation of morality and civilization, a symbolic role verified by the number of ships and towns named in her honour (including present-day Fort Frances) and therefore despairs about ever assuming a role as representor of her own experiences, for she writes quite early in the journal that "any representation will fall short of the reality" (8). Stock phrases such as "any representation will fall short of the reality" may be a conventional rhetorical gesture in writing by non-professionals, but other examples in which Simpson remains mute are more clearly inflected by gender. For instance, when she begins the daily diary entries of her inland journey on 2 May 1830, she seems to become even more silent and the "I" disappears. Part of this is to be expected from the diary format in which she now writes; it is a type of writing which often takes the subject as already understood in sentences like "left LaChine at 4 a.m. in two canoes" (28). Who or what left La Chine is to be filled in by the

reader.[41] Simpson goes out of her way to conform to a tacit dictum which states that as a woman, she is not to see but be seen, or at least she is not to be seen seeing," and carefully negotiates her way through this cultural dilemma (Pratt 104). As a symbol of British civilization in the newly re-arranged fur trade society, she seems quite keenly aware that she is an object to be gazed upon, not a subject who gazes out. Ironically, however, even though this system elicits a deferral and silencing of female subjectivity, subjectivity is certainly the result of the dialectical process between the writer and her society, the "epiphenomenal product in the self re/production of social and discursive systems" (Giddens qtd. in Felski 55).

Several rhetorical strategies enable Simpson to negotiate the problems of representation and to defer the expression of self; whenever the narrative calls upon her to step forward as a sentient subject and be seen, she summons one of four methods of escape: she uses the plural pronoun "we," buries the "I" in a subordinate clause, attaches only perception verbs to the "I," or defers to the passive voice. The first method, relying on the pronoun "we" attaches to the subject the safety of numbers. Any negative comments are muted using this strategy. It is not only Simpson who is in a bad humour but others as well. For example, she writes: "the morning was exceedingly cold; so that we got from under our blankets in a very bad humour" (58). A second maneouvre results when the "we" acts as a main clause subject, and the "I" appears in a subordinate clause only to qualify her description: "In a short time, we came to the beautiful Rideau Falls, the sight of which equally delighted and amazed me, being the first I had ever seen" (38), or : "About 4 p.m., we called on Mr. McMillan (brother of the gentleman I mentioned as

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[41] For a linguistic approach to this feature of diary writing, see Liliane Haegeman's article "Understood subjects in English diaries. On the Relevance of theoretical syntax for the study of register variation, " Multilingua: Journal of Cross-Cultural and Interlanguage Communication, 9:2 (1990): 157-199. She argues that diary writing is immediately recognizable because it follows certain grammatical rules about what it will omit. The subject is often omitted, she argues, but never the direct object which would indicate a different register of language, that of instructions. She finds, interestingly, that this is not the case with French journal intimes, and she attributes the difference to "cultural constraints" rather than literary ones (189). In other words, there are different literary expectations about the journal intime than the English diary.

being our travelling companion ...) (34-35), or: "he was the most lively and good tempered looking Indian I had met with" (86). In each case, the tacit apology for her lack of experience is used to temper the observations. Examples of this second strategy are too numerous to catalogue, but these few demonstrate how Simpson excuses her own judgements by veiling them in "we" or burying a disclaimer about her own perceptions in the subordinate clause.

The "I" cannot always remain buried in subordinate clauses, of course, but when Simpson's "I" surfaces in the main clause, the attached verbs often indicate states of being rather than activity or judgement:

I was surprised ... (84)
I was highly entertained ... (80)
I experienced the greatest kindness ... (122)
I was delighted ... (138)
I am told .... (147)
I was made happy ... (150)

Rarely does Simpson show herself doing; she is always acted upon by external agents. Alternatively, if she does ascribe any action to herself in either the main clause or the subordinate clause, it has to do with perception. Instead of actively representing her experiences or taking responsibility for her judgements, she figures herself as an empty vessel awaiting information or as a transparent eye-witness:

which I learn ... (50)
before I knew anything ... (54)
every other I have yet seen ... (112)
I must observe ... (143)
I cannot resist showing ... (147)
I have seen none ... (157)

One possible way to categorize Simpson's responses is offered by literary critic Marni Stanley who names four types of travellers' writing in her article "Traveler's tales: showing and telling, slamming and questing." Writers who "show", she says, emphasize representation of the world around them: "the narrating 'I' does not bother to develop a

persona for the narrated 'I'" (53). An alternative approach is "telling" where the writer emphasizes "narration rather than ... representation" (54). The significant difference here is that "the tell-er dares to create a character for herself, a character who assesses, and makes judgements of, what she observes and who is in turn observed and judges by readers and critics" (54). The third type, slamm-ers, is typified by narrators given to "the outrageous and frequently appalling ethnocentric observations that the genre seems to license" (55)--a notable example will appear in Isobel Finlayson's journal--and the fourth category, questers, is reserved for those travellers "who possess both a desire and an ability to learn" (56). Within Stanley's taxonomy of travel narrators, Simpson presents herself primarily as a show-er. To a limited degree, she acts as a "tell-er" in the retrospective memoir that begins the diary, but even there I find the hallmarks of the show-er, the one who does not focus on the narrated "I," because she disguises her own observations as information. Overall, Simpson exhibits the voice of the show-er who hides the narrated "I" and records her own information as passively received information.

A fourth method Simpson uses to excuse herself as narrator from the journal is the use of the passive voice. The passive voice, of course, neatly removes any trace of an active experiencing agent, as in the following examples: "from the upper story are to be seen the fine and romantic Kettle Falls" (40); and "on awaking about 6 O'clock was surprised to find a stranger sitting by me who was formally introduced as Chief Factor McDonell of Timmiskamain [sic]" (53-54). The passive voice proves to be a usefully evasive strategy, not only in self-representation but in the portrayal of others. It allows Simpson to feign blindness to Governor Simpson's faults and avoid directly contradicting statements about the Governor's kindness. Twice Simpson uses the passive construction "the starting signal was given," politely referring to the fact that her husband has once again awakened his travelling companions at 2 a.m., 1 a.m., or midnight to begin their day. When she does think him cruel, she soft-pedals her anger, as in this description of the third rude awakening on 30 May 1830:

> I had scarcely closed my eyes when I was roused by the well-known and (to me) unwelcome signal of "Leve Leve Leve," and found on enquiry, the time to be a few minutes after 12 ... I could not help thinking it the height of cruelty to awake them at such an hour, having a strong fellow-feeling for them, as it was with the greatest difficulty I managed to keep my eyes open and more than once fell on the slippery and uneven ground. (96-97)

She still avoids naming her husband directly, even though he is the one crying "leve, leve, leve." Helen Buss reads this as "ironic good humour," ("DDC" 4) but I find it difficult to substantiate that reading because of the shift in language. The passivity is used to cover for the Governor, not to hide herself as was previously the case; here, finally, she attributes active verbs to herself, to the narrated "I." She thinks; she manages to keep her eyes open; she slips and falls. These are significant departures from the general tone of her journal letter.

In an article in A/B: Autobiography Studies, Kay Cook offers a way of reading Frances' reluctant "I" in which she asserts that the "immersed first person, finally and simply, does not necessarily indicate self-negation" (69). Instead, she argues that "the absence of the first person pronoun in private lifewriting, such as the journal, suggests a textual positioning of a self within an experience, a narrative stance she refers to as "immersion" (66). Cook calls on the earlier work of Felicity Nussbaum to point out that immersion may provide a site from which the subject can "give credence to other ways of self-knowledge" (69), and that diaries may provide a site from which the subject can resist her "domestic, socioeconomic and political positions" or "disrupt authorized versions of experience" (69). Certainly, Simpson's careful negotiation, and her success at avoiding representation of self must be regarded as a kind of knowledge about her culture that has been internalized as individual will. In turn, the use of the active voice in Simpson's journal is perhaps not an anomaly; it may instead point to a strategy of immersion that has been at work all along. To test this theory, I turn to another example where Simpson writes in an active voice, to see whether it provides evidence of other ways of self-knowledge.

There are only three passages where the "I" is active and in a main clause. One is the scene of the midnight awakening; two weeks later, in an entry about mosquitoes, the reader is surprised to find another active-voiced outburst in which Simpson uses the same pattern of syntax and vocabulary: "I confess they absolutely familiarized me to cruelty, as I really felt a satisfaction in hunting them to death by the thousand" (135-136). At first reading, I was puzzled by the fact that Simpson would use the active voice and the term "cruelty" to describe both her husband and the seemingly insignificant mosquito. It may be explained in part by Helen Buss's commentary on the deferral of inexpressible emotion in pioneer women's diaries: "often when a beloved child or parent dies, the diarist hardly notes the passing, but later a detailed description of the grave or a sentimental rendering of a pet's death will indicate the continuing 'inexpressible grief'" (MOS 45); in this case, however, the inexpressible emotion is anger. It would be impolitic and unladylike for Simpson to enrage or blame her husband, so she uses the passive voice and then defers her anger to the hapless mosquitoes, where she can safely name her delight in "hunting them to death by the thousand." And while I want to argue that these outbursts give voice--if only briefly--to another story erased from Simpson's journal, a story about discomfort, hypocrisy, and cruelty, is this necessarily so? Do the mosquitoes give her an excuse to lash out for a moment, or is it a form of apology, a way of saying that the land brings out cruelty in both the governor and herself? The example is not particularly decisive, but allows enough indeterminacy that readers can begin to question both the imperial project and Frances Simpson's acceptance of it. It makes us pause and ask: what exactly was going on there? To what extent did she participate in this agenda? And perhaps the questions are enough.[42]

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[42] The third active-voice passage concerns religion in the new country: "this was the first place of Worship I had seen since leaving Montréal, and I hailed it as a favourable sign of the moral state of the Colony" (117). Simpson again chooses a respectable and non-controversial way to represent herself, invoking the terminology of piety and morality. In a study of women's autobiography, Mary Jean Corbett discusses how religious discourse is particularly amenable to women's life writing because it offers a site for the representation of the exemplary female self (75-79).

The indeterminacy of her text, along with the sentimental description of departure from England grounded in the authority of "the sensory experience, judgement, agency, or desires of the human subject" (Pratt 76), reveal other types of self-knowledge at work in Simpson's writing which are internalized and expressed as individual will. Like other emigrant journal letter writers later in the century, she is not a keen traveller, not an explorer, a missionary or a holiday-maker, and if she was an early participant "in the huge European military, economic and colonial expansion that darkened the world ... [she was] reluctantly so" (Hassam 2). Simpson's ambiguity shows that she does not totally comply with the imperial project; she does not totally resist it either. There is no overt rebellion in this journal letter. Paradoxically, in its attention to cultural mandates, Frances Simpson's journal shows how "women's support has always been crucial to the endurance of patriarchy" (Judith Bennett qtd. in Chaudhuri and Strobel 4). In her cautious deference to gender ideologies--and in her carefully cultivated passivity--Simpson becomes an active accomplice in Governor Simpson's racist agenda.

I turn now to a third, and final, way of reading Simpson's reluctant "I": one which fleshes out the importance of her role as Governor Simpson's wife.[43] She writes from what the post colonial literary critic Mary Louise Pratt calls "the contact zone, a social space where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination" (4). At least two different power relationships are at work shaping Simpson's self-knowledge in British North America and subsequently, her acts of self-representation: one is structured around gender; the other around race. The journal letter, which Simpson knows will be read by others, re-enacts the gender ideologies of British imperialism, and because she does not

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[43] Some of my ideas on this topic found their genesis during a symposium on white women, imperialism, and race, featuring Susan Smith, Department of History and Classics, University of Alberta, 31 January 1996. In turn, she refers interested readers to her article "Whitewashing Womanhood: The Politics of Race in Writing Women's History," Canadian Review of Comparative Literature, 12:1 (March 1995): 93-100. In that article, she speculates that "the study of gendered intercultural relationships may well be the next frontier in women's history" (100).

overtly question those power structures, she reinscribes them in the colonial space and upholds the Governor's agenda of "civilizing" fur trade society. The other power imbalance is structured around race and directly impinges upon her act of writing. Unlike the governor's country wives, Simpson was expected by her friends and family to record her experiences in a new land. Andrew Hassam's research into nineteenth-century shipboard diaries finds that such diaries were not only invited and solicited by British relatives but sometimes published as exemplary tales in newspapers for intending emigrants (1). As an exponent of British morality and civilization, her response to the new world is invited and solicited by friends and family, so any subsequent acts of self-representation are, if not entirely made possible (they partly depend on literacy that she has and others do not), at least invited by that colonial encounter. In addition, one might imagine that her colonial adventure along with her journal letter would serve as a source of identity upon her return to England. This is certainly one of the ironies about women's writing and imperial history: that sometimes white British women come to be imbued with agency and identity they might not otherwise have in situations promoting racist agendas, but as Mary Louise Pratt points out: "women protagonists tend to produce ironic reversals when they turn up in the contact zone" (102). Simpson's journal, its role in the colonial project, and her subjectivity are bound in a complex relationship: her subjectivity emerges in the mutually constitutive process of self and society even when that process involves the maintenance and renewal of "negative determinations that are experienced as limits" (Williams M&L 87); in turn, her negotiation of those negative determinations elicits for her an agency and identity she might not otherwise have.

Frances Simpson's journal letter can be fruitfully read as what Mary Louise Pratt calls a narrative of anti-conquest. Although the protagonist of the anti-conquest narrative is usually a male who looks out "passively on landscape with imperial eyes" (Pratt 7) , who positions himself as one who is seduced or otherwise inveigled to become involved in the colonial space, and who is "surrounded by an aura not of authority but of innocence

and vulnerability" (56), it is only a short mental leap to imagine how a woman could easily assume such a narrative stance, by claiming "an innocence already given to her by her gender" (105). The journal letter helps to announce this innocence. It is a modest form for writing which allows the writer to defer representations of self and elicits a sort of built-in apologetic apparatus for writing that is meant to be read only by friends with "an indulgent eye" (Simpson 160); therefore, the journal letter itself plays an integral role in upholding class and gender expectations. In addition to its appearance of modesty, its dialogic form invites the kind of writing most suitable for sentimental writing which, as Pratt argues, tends to be "resolutely dialogic, seeking out rather than defying local knowledge in contrast with [men's] objectivist discovery rhetoric, whose authority is monologic and self contained" (104). Furthermore, these approaches, Pratt writes, are not truly oppositional but complementary: the dialogic sentimental writing of Simpson's journal letter is "less an antithesis to male rhetoric of discovery and possession than its exact complement, an exact realization of the other side of male values whose underpinnings it shares" (105).

As the example of Frances Simpson makes clear, the journal letter's dialogic form not only invites sentimental writing, but in its appeal to a limited audience--the "friends who may take the trouble of perusing the foregoing ... with an indulgent eye" (Simpson 160)--the journal letter invites descriptions of its writing as that which is passive, reticent, deferential, and modest. In this way, the journal letter provides an exact complement to the male values from which it seeks to distance itself. Simultaneously, and paradoxically, the journal letter also invites the presentation of other types of self knowledge that can begin to challenge or question the stability and uniformity of those ideological agendas.

Isobel Finlayson

Isobel Finlayson, like her sister, negotiates the paradoxes and potentials of her position as a middle-class British subject when she journeys through British North America some ten years later. Finlayson uses both self mockery and unmitigated, often highly biased, judgements to render a portrait of herself--even if that portrait is negative. In this way, she is very unlike her closed-mouth sister, who attempts to act as a transparent eye-witness and who seems afraid to say anything for fear of creating a self-portrait unpleasing to her readers. I prefer Finlayson's account, seduced in part by the more insistent sensuality in her journal found, for instance, in a description of sleeping on buffalo robes and pine boughs.[44] Simpson, by contrast, is very reserved about bodies: sensual or tactile experiences seldom appear in her writing. In this general assessment of Finlayson's writing, Helen Buss and I definitively part ways; she prefers the "plucky boy-like youthful naïveté of the Simpson persona as opposed to the serious, more conservative, perhaps more mature persona of the older Finlayson" (16).

By the time Isobel Finlayson arrived at York Factory, fur trading society had changed so that the pressure to represent British ladyhood was not as great, but it had not disappeared either. Finlayson arrived in the more established fur trading post ten years after her sister, when she was married to Duncan Finlayson in what seemed to be a more warm and companionate marriage.[45] She was older than her sister had been during her trip.[46] Also, Finlayson likely experienced greater interaction with native and Métis

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[44] "Our tent was large and comfortable, and the bed was always made in the center of it, an oiled cloth, impervious to water, was first spread on the ground to preserve the bedding from the damp, over this were laid two large buffalo robes, and then our blankets and pillows"; sometimes one of the native guides "bounded off to the woods to cut down pine brush to strew under my bed to make it softer and more comfortable" (Finlayson 88-89).

[45] Historian Les Harding agrees that "by all accounts" the marriage was "a love match" (65).

[46] Alice M. Johnson puts her age at 31; Helen Buss thinks she was 29.

women because Governor Simpson's earlier experiment in segregation (tried at the expense of Frances) had proven a failure and had pretty much been abandoned by this time. In spite of these changes, Isobel was still made aware that she was a symbolic representation of British womanhood like her sister before her. Isobel, who arrived in British North America with Letitia Hargrave, the Scottish bride of fur trader James Hargrave, was dubbed the "English Rose," and Letitia the "Scots Bluebell" suggesting the women's roles as symbolic representatives of their nations (van Kirk 192).

Unlike her sister, Isobel Finlayson is more likely to position "I" in the main clause; she is forthright in acknowledging her activities. For example, Finlayson describes herself standing on a rock to avoid frogs: "I mounted on a stone, having first dispersed a large party that were serenading each other most melodiously around it, and there I stood like Patience on a monument waiting till the fires were lighted" (146). She presents a scene with her person set in the centre, mounted on a stone. The language could be used to describe a jewel. Finlayson is quite consciously finding humour in the discordance of the ideal and the real: here is the "English rose," a jewel of British civilization, "Patience on a monument," mounted in an uncivilized setting surrounded by frogs. Through humour, she draws attention to the one thing that should not be visible: herself as woman. A similar moment occurs in Anna Jameson's Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada, though the justification is different. Jameson draws attention to herself shooting the rapids at Sault Ste. Marie because she is the first European woman ever to achieve such a feat.

> The canoe being ready, I went to the upper end of the portage, and we launched into the river ... I reclined on a mat at the bottom, Indian fashion, (there are no seats in a genuine Indian canoe;) in a minute we were within the verge of the rapids, and down we went with a whirl and a splash!--the white surge leaping around me--over me.
>
> My Indians were enchanted, and when I reached *home* , my good friends told me I was the first European female who had ever performed it. (461-462)

Jameson figures herself as the centerpiece of this narrative; she is the experiencing centre over whom the waters surge, and she is very proud of the fact that she is the first European female to have shot the rapids. The "I" is certainly not immersed (except in water) nor presented with any attention to modesty. Both Jameson and Finlayson feel that they have license to make visible the one thing that should not be, themselves as active experiencing subjects.

The same strategy of self-representation, however, can also lead Finlayson to highly biased outbursts and causes Helen Buss to label her a "slammer," using Marni Stanley's term to indicate that Finlayson focuses on her own sensibilities to the exclusion of others' points of view. Such a judgement makes it sound as though Finlayson is given only to such outbursts, but there is a more complex pattern of silence and expression at work in Finlayson's journal that reveals a story, like her sister's, of race, class, and gender. Like Simpson, when leaving her parents, Finlayson says that "words cannot express" her feelings because they "can never be described." There is no "pen" that "can describe" the scene of departure, she writes emphatically, employing a metonymy to express her plight. Unlike Simpson, though, the deferral to inexpressibility continues after the sentimental paean to homesickness, and the situations which she can and cannot describe are revealing.

She can, and does, describe at length Inuit hunting a seal in Hudson's Bay. Her description is graphic and lengthy, culminating in the following climax:

> Little did the unfortunate [seal] dream of the fate that awaited it, as it lay calmly sleeping in the warm Sun, on its picturesque island; before the unconscious animal was aware of the approach of its destroyers, it was transfixed with harpoons when the men leaping from their canoes, to the ice, commenced cutting it up, and devouring it almost alive, while many of them went down onto their knees to drink the blood which is considered one of their greatest delicacies. (60-61)

Although the "I" remains submerged during the description, it emerges in a parenthetical afternote that details her own reactions to the scene, which she says was "revolting to the

feelings," or disgusting (61). The absence of the first person pronoun during the descriptions of seal eating in this case does not, as Kay Cook might suggest, offer a point from which the subject can challenge her "domestic, socioeconomic and political positions" or "disrupt authorized versions of experience" (69). Rather, Finlayson's reaction over a scene which she admits she cannot even see with the naked eye (it is being reported to her by passengers with binoculars) marks her as a woman of sensibility and taste.

As the prologue to the previous description makes clear, Finlayson was--as she describes herself--a perversely eager observer of the "gruesome" scene; her British sensibility authorizes an observance of rituals which would otherwise be deemed unsuitable for a lady's eyes. Her sensibility is further revealed in the way that she contrasts her own reaction to that of her maid. As in Elizabeth Simcoe's journal letter, the focalization of events through an expository other (from a lower class) directs the reader to the diarist's own superior reaction in a crisis without stating as much. In the narrative of events leading up to her description of seal eating, Finlayson explains that she had been awakened by "unearthly yells, hootings, and screams" (44) and quickly decides that she must be hearing "Esquimaux." Although she "had been suffering severely from a headache" (44), she struggles to the deck only because her maid asks her to do so:

> my maid ... came running into my cabin, and begged me to try to get up to see "the horrible creatures that had come on board." Whether from curiosity, or excitement, I know not, but feeling myself better, I hastened to join Mrs. Hargrave, and the rest of the party on deck where a strange and curious scene presented itself. (44)

While the maid announces the Esquimaux as "horrible creatures," Finlayson merely declares herself witness to a "strange and curious scene." Buss reads in this passage an "unbridled expression of the very basic emotion of disgust" (11). Well, perhaps, but I think that both journal letters--Finlayson's and Simpson's--have shown that no "unbridled expression" issues forth without the implicit support of their reading audience, and that

Finlayson and Simpson are both keenly aware of whether their value judgements will be accepted. In this case, Finlayson portrays herself as a woman of sensibility; she tempers her description of the death of the "unfortunate" seal "on its picturesque island" by explaining that blubber eating is "considered one of their greatest delicacies." In other words, she attempts to make the narrative manageable for others of similar sensibility.

Finlayson composes this narrative to portray herself in positive terms (as a woman of sensibility), and unlike her uneducated maid who cries out about the "horrible creatures," Finlayson chooses her words her carefully. Her cautiousness suggests, to me, a desire to keep narrative events at a bit of a distance, to maintain the distinction between her British culture and that of the Inuit. If so, her anxieties about the stability of cultural borders can be read as epiphenomenal to travelling, for travellers encountered and tested both physical and cultural boundaries. Andrew Hassam, drawing on the work of Arnold van Gennep, articulates travel in terms of liminal spaces (55) and argues that the act of writing a journal letter promised a way to contain the potential transgressions of boundaries occasioned by travel: "emigrant diarists of both sexes were keen to contain transgression because the transgression of boundaries, be they physical or cultural, posed a threat to the narratability of the journey" (73). In Finlayson's journal letter, she figuratively wrestles with the Inuit in an attempt to bring them under narrative control, to contain the cultural transgressions which they represent. The "Esquimaux" who eat raw flesh destabilize the naturalness of cultural boundaries, so Finlayson keeps her distance by narrating events with caution and elaboration.

Although Finlayson spends some time in her narrative discussing the blubber-eating incident, there are other events which go completely unremarked. During her stay at York Factory, Finlayson writes (with stiff upper lip) that she "had a painful duty to perform in parting with one of [her] servants" (80). It is the same maid who had summoned her to watch the Esquimaux:

> She was a stranger to me when she entered my service, and I must have been quite deceived in the character I received of her, for her conduct on board was such as to determine Finlayson [her husband] to send her back immediately. (80)

However, we get no more details about the incident. When I first read this, I imagined that the maid must have done something truly horrible. After all, Finlayson had already narrated a seal's death complete with flesh and blood. Letitia Hargrave clears up the mystery in one of her letters: the maid was found drinking rum which she had stolen from a crew member. Finlayson's silence on this matter suggests class consciousness. Her ability to discuss a seal kill and her inability to discuss the theft of rum relates, in part, to the race of the offending party. Esquimaux will be Esquimaux, but a British maid is supposed to be, ahem, British. The conduct of the Inuit may be at a safe remove from her own reputation, but the conduct of the maid reflects badly on Finlayson's judgement and challenges a social authority granted to her by class. Pamela Horn's social history of nineteenth-century servitude confirms that employee drinking brought shame to the employer. Horn reports that servants found drinking were eagerly dismissed before news about the misdemeanor could become public knowledge because it reflected badly on the employer (158; 166). The vocabulary of Finlayson's passage, invoking terms of morality such as "character" and "conduct" also support a reading that sees Finlayson as tight-lipped about challenges to her social authority.

Finlayson's writing, as opposed to Simpson's, demonstrates the dangers of overemphasizing the "inexpressibility" in women's writing when it leads to overly sympathetic assessments and overshadows the ways in which that writing oppresses or silences other groups. When, in a later example, Finlayson says she cannot express her joy at the reunion with her husband, she alludes to what she considers is a universal code governing relationships. It is easy, as a reader, to allow the passage to pass unremarked except as a sign of Finlayson's "natural" and universally understood feelings towards her husband. The flip side, or dark co-relative to this discourse of "natural feelings," becomes clear in another episode where Finlayson attempts to persuade an Indian woman

to give up her baby for beads. Her description of what she and a Mr. Boulton call an "experiment" is featured in the same entry as the seal eaters. She first describes Inuit children as repelling even her "natural" interest: "though one naturally experiences a feeling of tenderness or interest for the child ... it was almost impossible to approach these young things for their little hands always held a horrible lump of blubber to their mouths" (54). Clearly, "natural" is culturally defined, and in her next paragraph, she embarks upon an experiment to show that Inuit mothers are not swayed by the same feelings she would "naturally" have for children.

After "it was confidently asserted" by someone on the ship "that the [Inuit] mother would sell her child for the possession of a few beads," Finlayson protests (55). She cannot believe, she says, "that a woman, however savage, could be so hardened to the feelings of natural affections" (55). That the experiment eventually fails in practice is disregarded by Finlayson who takes pains to twist the evidence and show that native mothers are not "natural" in their affections. The experiment begins when Mr. Boulton attempts to trade beads for the child; the mother misunderstands and offers him instead the child's clothing. When at last Boulton takes the child from his mother, Finlayson writes that "the truth suddenly flashed upon her [the mother's] mind" (as if the problem lay in the mother's comprehension and not Boulton's cruelty) and she snatches back her child "from his grasp" (56). Clearly the experiment has failed--the mother will not exchange her baby for beads--but Finlayson adds an epilogue:

> This was no sooner done than she triumphantly held up the empty garment, hoping to get the coveted treasures, but this he pretended angrily to refuse, upon which she hastily threw the rejected dress aside, to offer something else, leaving the poor child without an article of clothing, till her caprice or tenderness, recalled her attention to its unhappy situation. (56-57)

In fact, this "poor child" was nestled in its mother's hood, according to Finlayson's own description, "not leaving the smallest portion of the unfortunate little being in sight" (56). Her narrative makes it sound as if the child had been cast aside to the cold ground, when

in fact it was tucked away in its mother's hood. Finlayson deliberately manipulates the narrative to invoke a sense of the unnaturalness of the natives. The interest in examining these passages lies not in what they say about Finlayson's character, but in how they demonstrate an attitude (and the attendant narrative strategies) that naturalizes and legitimizes the imposition of a British value system in a land peopled by natives, who are regarded as culturally and morally impoverished.

The other instance that remains unutterable for Finlayson is the "inexpressible happiness" she experiences upon being reunited with her husband. Early in the day, she believes his small boat is close to meeting her ship. She writes: "it is needless to describe the joy I experienced upon receiving this intelligence, indeed I could scarcely believe that the happiness of meeting my dear husband once more was soon to be mine" (66). Unfortunately, she is mistaken and must wait several more hours; she prefers to wait in the cabin because she is "averse that our meeting should take place in public" (69-70). Finlayson's description is carefully placed within the parameters of what she considers an acceptable and universal code governing human relations. It is needless for her to describe her joy to those reading the journal letter because they can plug in the appropriate values; her imagined audience exists within the same cultural framework and could be expected to accept the same code governing relationships.

Finlayson idealizes her marriage in writing; if there is any tension--as there surely was between Frances and Governor George Simpson--it does not appear in the journal letter. Explaining why she came to Rupert's Land, Finlayson writes "it was to perform a wife's most sacred and hallowed duty, to follow and share the fortunes of a beloved and affectionate Husband" (2). Later, describing a walk in the forest with her husband, she effuses: "should we be spared to return to our native land, I shall look back to the hours I have passed with him in the solitary wilderness as among the happiest I have spent during my sojourn in the Far West" (143). Regardless of her feelings for her husband, his commitment to the Hudson's Bay Company and her "sacred and hallowed duty" to follow

him meant that she left behind friends and family to whom she would also feel beholden in her role as daughter or sister. On 4 August, for example, she writes with sadness that she is missing her mother's birthday: "I need scarcely say how often my thoughts were with her ... how many fervent prayers were breathed for her welfare and happiness--while I felt convinced that her fond heart was with me on the wide waste of waters" (65).

To resolve the tension brought about by her competing duties as wife, daughter, or sister, Finlayson has recourse to an early nineteenth century idealization of and rhetoric about sisterhood. As historian Janet Todd explains, "the conflicting demands of bourgeois femaleness can in part be reconciled through a friend, a woman, similarly placed, similarly constricted" (306). Letitia Hargrave fulfills such a role during the ocean crossing, and Finlayson laments their parting: "I felt in parting with her I was losing the only female friend I possessed in this land of strangers" (82). The rhetoric of sisterhood in Finlayson's journal letter functions in at least three registers: the literal, the metaphoric, and the dialogic practice of the writing. Its literal importance--in terms of a female support system--is signified by Finlayson's friendship with Hargrave, and was apparently evident even to George Simpson with regard to his own wife. When he realized that Frances Simpson's health was deteriorating and that she would have to return to England, he acknowledged, "she has no society, no Friend, no Relative here but myself, she cannot move about wt. me on my various journeys and I cannot leave her in the hands of strangers" (van Kirk 199).

But sisterhood also offers important metaphoric possibilities in language. It is a subject women were allowed, even encouraged, to speak about; it offered an important safety valve in journal letters, an emotional vent located close to a source of anxiety, which for both Simpson and Finlayson was a sense of themselves as "fair sisters" imported to maintain British civilization in the colonies against the alleged backwash of native women and their ways. Even though Finlayson's sister is not actually with her, Finlayson appeals to her and other female friends rhetorically, textually enlisting them as

"a witness of the conscience, [or] a physician of secret griefs" (Todd 310). Sisterhood, in Finlayson's journal especially, offered a cathectic release in language. For example, the following passage describes Finlayson's arrival at her sister's former home in Red River:

> About five o'clock, we arrived at the lower Fort, which had been my Sister's residence, the last year she remained in this country, but it is impossible to describe the feelings that oppressed my heart at the sight of that spot, which had been her home for many months. It was a beautiful evening, the sun was shining brilliantly upon the water, and the Canadians were singing their liveliest songs to apprize the inhabitants of the Fort of our approach, the scene was the same as in other days, but she (the tender and affectionate companion of my early years, who had formerly given life and cheerfulness to the place) was no longer there and thousands of miles separated us from each other, and after vainly endeavouring to conceal my emotions, my heart at length found relief in a flood of tears.
> (154-155)

The importance of this passage is signalled in the narrative because it is the passage that breaks from the diary proper and helps resume the retrospective narrative of describing York Factory. It gives an excuse to lead into a more descriptive mode comparing the fort as it is in 1843 versus the fort of Simpson's stay in the early 1830s. But this passage is important in other ways, too. It begins with the usual deferral to inexpressibility but quickly belies itself by clearly portraying Finlayson's emotional states. And there is much this passage does not say. Finlayson does not enumerate the many difficulties that Simpson encountered in this place such as her isolation or a pregnancy that nearly killed her. The rhetoric works to obscure actual events while allowing Finlayson to channel her emotions about the conflicting demands of bourgeois femaleness into this intense portrayal of sister-longing and homesickness.

The rhetoric of sisterhood is useful for women writers in this historical moment. It makes room for the expression of strong emotions in a way that is not threatening. Nancy Cott, writing on The Bonds of Womanhood: Woman's Sphere in New England 1780-1835, argues that for most of the early nineteenth century, women "honored the separate sphere, especially when they had sisterhood to secure it" (196). Sisterhood was culturally legitimated and culturally legitimating in that it invited expressions of modesty

in writing. Simpson's appeal to friends who would read her journal with "an indulgent eye" is a way to rhetorically circumscribe the circulation of her writing within a sympathetic audience and show that she is not overstepping her bounds; likewise, Finlayson ends her journal with an extended apology in which she appeals to the "dear domestic circle, for whose amusement it has been written" (185). Here, in the dialogic praxis of writing to a sympathetic sisterhood, both Simpson and Finlayson make themselves visible by appealing to modesty. It legitimates their act of writing, but it is a double-edged sword. As proponents of the domestic circle, they gladly took up the early "Victorian discourse of imperial domestification" (Lootens 249) even though it participates in the advancement of an Imperial agenda, and serves to silence others such as the lower class maid, the Inuit, natives, and Métis women.

H. Porter Abbott, an early analyst of the diary genre, perceptively comments that what the diary genre offers, rather than a constellation of identifiable literary elements, is a strategy of representation. By examining the discursive and rhetorical strategies of representation taken up by Simpson and Finlayson, we can see how these strategies are shaped by political and economic factors, and by the material and cultural conditions in which the women wrote.

Chapter Four

Constructing the Diary's Privacy in Mid-Victorian Britain

In British Columbia in 1995, Karen Vickers was asked to hand over her diaries, written from the age of eleven, to substantiate allegations of sexual assault against her father. One result was the twenty-four-year-old quit writing a diary. They "used to be private and personal to me and they don't seem that way to me anymore," she stated (Bindman A4). Justice Henry Hutcheons, expressing the views of a divided BC Court of Appeal, upheld the sanctity of her private diary. Presumably, Justice Hutcheons sought to protect a young woman who had perhaps already been violated from further traumatic invasions by the court, and he quoted a New York Times column by William Safire in his decision:

> All of us--muckrakers, solons, and would-be diarists--should take a serious look at the rush to break the seal of the self-confessional. Just as our home is our castle, our mind is our citadel of privacy and so should be our mind's most intimate expressions in a personal diary. (A4)

Safire's well-worded but rather heavy-handed statement corrals vocabularies from religion (the confessional), war (the citadel), and patriarchal idealizations of domesticity to argue for the privacy of the diary. The "intimate expressions" in a diary are said to be analogous to a "citadel of privacy" which needs protection from those who would push such expressions into more public circulation. This rhetorical fortress of privacy invokes both the idea of protection against hostile intruders and of possession, as in the phrase "a man's home is his castle." Paradoxically, Safire's staunch defense of the diary's privacy only serves to pique interest in the diary's content and to fuel common assumptions about the diary's truthfulness and authenticity. Vickers's diary is a compelling piece of evidence: it seems to offers the truth because of an assumed a priori privacy. Why would

she lie when writing to no one but herself? Could she be dishonest in her most private moments? The corollary seems to be that the more private a text the more truthful it will prove. In this chapter, I seek to tease out the cultural assumptions that link a diary's privacy to truthfulness and authenticity by looking particularly at mid-Victorian British examples, a time when the privacy of diaries had potent cultural purchase because of an emerging definition of domestic felicity founded on the importance of privacy. Rather than focus on one example, this chapter draws from two Victorian farces and an 1857 court case to make some points about mid-Victorian expectations of the diary's privacy.

In his 1987 article "Some Myths about Diaries," Lawrence Rosenwald contends that we should "begin by noting the myth of the diary as a secret text, since its hold over us is very great" (98). Suzanne Bunkers and Cynthia Huff phrase the problem more subtly in the introduction to a 1996 collection of critical essays on women's diaries, Inscribing the Daily: "because diaries have often been classified as private texts, they challenge us to question the boundaries between public and private" (2). In this chapter, I argue the need to place privacy in its cultural and historical context, or as Rosenwald says, "within the local system of production and distribution" (100). Using this interpretive approach will foster insights into the variety of hopes, fears, and psychological fantasies or projections foisted onto that most mythically private text: the diary.

The concept of a purely private diary is a wish keenly felt by both writers and readers but it does not stand up to scrutiny. I ground this statement in three arguments. First, as argued earlier, diaries are a dialogic form. Second, the privacy of a diary is a moot point once it is in an archive. Note that this does not have repercussions for copyright laws, for my definition of privacy does not impinge on ownership issues but rather concerns the cultural treatment of and attitudes towards a particular set of texts defined as private. Third, diaries are always self-censored and always aware of a potential audience even before they reach the archives. While diary scholar Lynn Bloom

cautions us to beware of texts written within the family circle because "there is no way to rule out self-censorship" (24), Judy Simons offers a more lucid description of the problem, stating that self-censorship is always built in:

> The diary's status as a private text ... is ... highly problematic, as it involves the creation and the projection of a persona that demands recognition and reception. On the one hand, women ... use the personal journal to establish for themselves a literary space in which to negotiate versions of selfhood that both trouble and attract them. At the same time, their reliance on received literary paradigms inevitably compromises the models of subjectivity on which they draw, and the disclosure of an authentic self remains a textual fiction, determined by pre-existing narrative tropes. (262)

Simons would agree with Lawrence Rosenwald who posits that "all our utterances are mediated though our sophisticated or imperfect sense of some public, externally given form" (108). Diary writing cannot be regarded as authentic because artless; it comes with a tacit contract. People know what they are doing and what they are expected to do when they begin a diary, and self-censorship is always present.

Given these hypotheses, I find compelling the argument advanced by Rosenwald who states that when scholars plunge into the debate about privacy, they are setting up a false conundrum: "if we wish to know whether a given diary was private, in the only concrete sense of private--that is, not read by readers other than the author--we have no choice but to find out." The very act of finding out means reading the diary and thereby destroying its purported privacy. "Having found out," he continues, "we can see a diarist's habits of secrecy and revelation in the context of a more general vision of the diarist or diaristic culture" (98). Concluding that the privacy of diaries is simply a myth, he advocates looking at the cultural role played by privacy in particular cultures. His directive shapes the remainder of this chapter.

This chapter focuses on the culture of mid-nineteenth century Britain for specific reasons. At that time, more diaries were being published than ever before, but more diary writers were insisting on the privacy of their writing; this created a conflict between

cultural practices and the cultural ideal. The popularity of published diaries began around the 1820s. The English Catalogue of Books shows double the number of diaries or journals published in the 1820s as in the previous decade; their published numbers reach a high level in the 1830s and stay steady until 1860 when they decline again. By mid-century, fictional diaries feature in Anne Bronte's The Tenant of Wildfell Hall (1848) and Wilkie Collins's The Woman in White (1860). A diary parody called "Pips, his diary" appears in Punch and the London Times throughout 1849. Excerpts from Fanny Kemble's diary appeared in the London Times as early as 1835, and diary critic Harriet Blodgett asserts that Fanny Burney's was the first woman's diary to be published in 1842 (15).[47] Blodgett adds that Burney's diary was published at a time when "spurious diaries purporting to authenticity were a popular form of reading" (6). If the nineteenth century was "the golden age of the diary" as Peter Gay asserts, this golden age was reaching maturity by mid-century (qtd. in Hunter 53).

Not only were diaries popular but critics agree that something about the privacy of the diary changed by mid-century. The 1820s was the decade that coined the term "the wall of private life" (Hunt and Hall 341) and this contributed to the diary's popularity. Events such as the publicized adultery trial of Queen Caroline in 1820[48] or the appearance of the first pamphlets on birth control,[49] meant that a private life, newly defined, was in the limelight of public attention and controversy. At the same time, significant changes were evident in popular women's magazines "consistent with a much narrower view of the role and status proper to women" (White 38) prompting the editor

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[47] Blodgett asserts that Burney's 1768-1839 diary was published in 1842, and her juvenile diary was published as the Early Diary in 1889 (15).

[48] Queen Caroline's trial began 17 August 1820 and was abandoned as a defeat in November of that year. She was allowed to assume her title as Queen, but refused entrance to Westminster Hall on Coronation Day in 1821; she died 7 August 1821. The Encyclopedia Britannica Vol. V, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 11th edition (1910): 380.

[49] Francis Place's 1823 pamphlet "To the Married of Both Sexes" is generally considered the first birth control pamphlet; Richard Carlile's Everywoman's Book appeared soon after in 1826.

of The Lady's Magazine to remark that "women have completely abandoned all attempts to shine in the political horizon, and now seek only to exercise their virtues in domestic retirement" (White 39). A conservative movement was clearly afoot, and although private life was not yet under the scrutiny of a reproving Prince Albert with his Lutheran sensibilities, it was now at least conceptually possible to name a "wall of private life" behind which one might retreat from the world. What happened behind those walls became increasingly interesting to others.

Pepys's diary, decoded and published in 1825, also contributed to the change: according to diary critic Andrew Hassam, the influence (due to the wide-spread popularity) of Pepys's diary was such that nineteenth-century readers, unlike earlier generations, just assumed that diarists should avoid publication (440). Margo Culley summarizes the changes in her 1985 study of women's diaries One Day At A Time. She states that more men than women wrote diaries until the mid-nineteenth century and, until then, both men's and women's diaries were semi-public documents; after that time, she argues, diaries became more private and were more frequently written by women (4). I wondered at first whether her assessment was just an indication that more men's than women's diaries were saved in archives, but my own research attests to the fact that more women were writing diaries by the end of the century.

Margo Culley's observation about the privacy of diaries is echoed by Margaret Ezell in Writing Women's Literary History when she argues that diaries and letters could not be considered private prior to the nineteenth century (35, 57, 140-143). Before the seventeenth century, Ezell writes, both genres had "model texts and formal conventions to be followed" and both (as epistles or spiritual autobiographies) enjoyed circulation outside the family (35). She contrasts these texts to diaries and letters of the nineteenth century which she describes as "the private modes of expression which we use today" (35). A concrete example of increased privacy is cited by critic Cynthia Huff in her descriptive bibliography of British women's diaries: Huff remarks that the diaries of

Marianne Estcourt written between 1841 and 1856 are unusual for the time because "all four volumes ... can be locked" (34). However, Marianne Estcourt also records that she heard a friend's journal read aloud, and in fact, many men and women shared their journals within the family circle. Harriette Andreadis reports that the diaries of western American pioneer women were rarely strictly private documents before the late 1880s (183).[50] Numerous Canadian, British, and American examples show that diaries were frequently exchanged and read aloud, so they can hardly be regarded as totally private documents; rather, at mid-century, diaries are not private in fact but newly private in name.

Naming one's diary as private accorded, in part, with a Romantic conception of subjectivity which advanced a model of the enlightened subject as one who has broken with his environs for a period of introspection, someone who has withdrawn from the world to engage with it more meaningfully. The British concept of Romantic selfhood borrowed, of course, from German romanticism, specifically from Goethe's Die Leiden des jungen Werthers (1774). Goethe's work featured an introspective hero in what critic Lorna Martens argues is the first diary novel (86). Thus, from 1779--the date of Goethe's first English translation--there was a precedent for the imagined correlation between introspective Romantic withdrawal and the diary form. In this way, diaries became attached to the myth that "the inward self can be transparent to introspection" (Rosenwald 101). The pervasiveness of this concept across class lines is indicated in Regenia Gagnier's study of working-class autobiographies: she locates one of the psychological

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[50]Andreadis's work builds on a significant body of research into western American women's diary writing such as Lillian Schlissel's book-length study Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey (1982); Gayle Davis's "Women's Frontier Diaries: writing for good reason" in Women's Studies (14 [1987] 5-14); and Judith Fryer's "The Anti-Mythical Journey: Westering Women's Diaries and Letters" in The Old Northwest (9 [1983] 77-90). In addition, Elizabeth Hampsten's book Read This Only to Yourself focuses specifically on diaries written by women in the mid-west as does Suzanne Bunker's "'Faithful Friend': Nineteenth Century Mid-western American Women's Unpublished Diaries" in Women's Studies (10:1 [1987] 7-17). Transplanted American scholar Eliane Silverman also collected oral histories and private documents relating to the settlement of the Canadian west in The Last Best West, 1984.

and epistemological models for early nineteenth-century representations of selfhood in the introspective Romantic poet persona (56). Ezell and Culley both speculate that the increasing privatization of diary writing and an increased expressivity in women's diary writing owe much to the literary topos of Romantic selfhood.

The role of privacy in the life of the nineteenth-century middle class has been explored by numerous commentators including Raymond Williams who writes in Keywords that late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century industrialization occasioned the semantic shift in which privacy "acquired [its] ... conventional opposition to public" (243).[51] In Williams's interpretation, privacy is seen as a withdrawal from the impersonal forces of capitalism: "in its positive senses [privacy] is a record of the legitimation of a bourgeois view of life: the ultimate generalized privilege, however abstract in practice, of seclusion and protection from others (the public); of lack of accountability to 'them'; and of related gains in closeness and comfort" (243). In Culture and Society Williams connects the changing meaning of privacy with Romantic subjectivity through the figure of the Romantic artist, whose authorial stance changes after "the market" begins to influence the "writer's actual relations with society" (32). He culls examples from Keats, Shelley, and Wordsworth to demonstrate their desire for withdrawal from the "public" (33). A similar theory is advanced by Mary Jean Corbett in her comments on the public / private split in Victorian writing. She argues that nineteenth-century authors fought against "the separation of product from producer that occurs in the capitalist literary marketplace" by appealing to the rhetorical claims of Romantic literary subjectivity (56). Because Romanticism "has as one of its internal necessities an autobiographical impulse everywhere expressed as constitutive of the

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[51] Historian Wendy Mitchinson refers readers to Stephen Kern's Anatomy and Destiny, in which he describes how "the increasing density of European cities resulted in and/or coincided with the desire to have privacy" (101). Social historians like Mary Favret (who looks at the history of the postal system and the bifurcation of public vs. private publishing systems) or Richard Sennett, contend that the polarization of public and private began in the late-eighteenth century.

writing itself," textual self-revelation, says Corbett, allows the writer to figure himself as coterminous with his writing (56).

When the introspection of Romanticism converged with a desire for withdrawal from the "public," diaries--newly named as private--promised a chronicle of the authentic self revealed in introspection and divorced from the commotion of public life. Diaries could not fulfill this promise because the definition of privacy they mobilized was grounded in relation to the marketplace and therefore not truly separate from it. The argument that differentiated diaries from published writing defined the diary's privacy by its arm's-length relation to the market, which served to represent the public, but the definition cannot hold if diaries are published. Diaries did (and do) mingle in the marketplace, so defining a diary as "private" because of its removal from the marketplace does not hold. Even in the case of unpublished diaries, breadth of readership cannot erect a meaningful division between public and private. After all, "how many thousand readers does it take to exceed the family circle and the private correspondence?" asks literary theorist Eva Meyer (85). Her provocative question suggests that the boundary between published and private writing is permeable, a continuum rather than a distinct border.

The mid-Victorians projected onto diary writing their hopes that it could preserve the notions of "intention and privacy" that might protect a man or woman of letters from commercial exchange and from the exploitation of his or her creative labor. Lawrence Rosenwald employs an illustrative metaphor to describe the kind of labor associated with diary writing within the paradigm of capitalist industrialism: "diarists are craftsmen," he writes, "and novelists industrial workers" because "the diary is ... a commodity within its author's power" (100). The imagined division between exploitive and non-exploitive work, and the division of labor integral to separate spheres ideology is further elaborated by Mary Poovey when she describes the binary logic of the Victorian symbolic economy:

> The rhetorical separation of spheres and the image of domesticated, feminized morality were crucial to the consolidation of bourgeois power partly because linking morality to a figure (rhetorically) immune to the self-interest and

> competition integral to economic success preserved virtue without inhibiting productivity. In producing a distinction between kinds of labor (paid versus unpaid, mandatory versus voluntary, productive versus reproductive, alienated versus self-fulfilled), the segregation of the domestic ideal created the illusion of an alternative to competition. (10)

In total, the work of Williams, Corbett, Favret, Meyer, Rosenwald, and Poovey suggests the cultural importance of the diary as a private document; the diary assumed importance because it promised to represent a literary product exempt from the marketplace and to provide evidence of unexploited creative labor. The diary promised to symbolize imaginatively the unpaid, voluntary, self-motivated, self-fulfilling, non-competitive, private work of the literary field; it might also (illusively) demarcate authenticity in writing from that which was denigrated through commercialization, publication, or circulation and thereby distanced from honest self-disclosure.

If "true" diaries, in the manner of Pepys, aimed to remain separate from the literary market, then the increased publication of real and spurious diaries between 1820 and 1850 must have aggravated concerns that such texts were not immune from market forces. Indeed, for mid-century Victorians, the suggestion that diaries might fail to be truly private produced an anxiety which manifested itself in a desire to maintain an artificial but imaginatively necessary border between public and private erected in part on gender ideologies. In other words, commonly-held beliefs about the privacy of diaries acted as a mechanism in the mid-century battles for social authority. As Mary Poovey explained earlier, a social system was consolidating in which the public world, including publication, belonged to men and commercial enterprises, and the private world to women and domesticity. Thus, the figure of woman and her "privacy" were enmeshed in the establishment of a new social and economic order. Women's diary writing symbolized unpaid and voluntary contributions to the literary business; it held the promise of avoiding competition and mitigating anxieties about how capitalism might affect the authentic self by creating a site of writing that seemed to stand outside the

realm of commercial exchange; for this reason, particular cultural pressures were exerted on women who wrote diaries. The court case of Robinson vs. Robinson shows some of these pressures at work.

Extensive coverage was given to the divorce case of Robinson vs. Robinson beginning on 4 December 1857 in the London Times. In particular, the newspaper's attention to Mrs. Robinson's diary provokes questions about the perceived authenticity of diary writing and about the particular consequences for women who undertake diary writing. The story in the Times began quietly. Mr. Robinson, a civil engineer, sued his wife Isabella Elizabeth Robinson for divorce by reason of adultery and won. But the case was back in the courts the following June, and in November 1858 more details of the marriage were reported in the case now known as Robinson vs. Robinson and Lane. Mrs. Robinson had been a widow with an independent income before marrying Mr. Robinson in 1844; in 1850 they met the co-respondent and accused adulterer, Dr. Edward Lane,[52] in Edinburgh and later lived near him in Reading. In 1857, Mr. Robinson "unexpectedly discovered three or four manuscript volumes in her handwriting purporting to be a journal kept by her for a period of four or five years" (LT 27 November 1858 p 11 col a) in which she described her affair with Dr. Lane in the autumn of 1854. Using the diaries as evidence, Mr. Robinson successfully sued for divorce. The case returned to the courts when Dr. Lane, a respected physician and husband, wanted to disavow any involvement with the affair, and a lengthy battle ensued as to the truthfulness of the diaries.

Dr. Lane's counsel attacked the credibility of Isabella Robinson's diary writing using a variety of tactics. Lane testified that the accused had visited him professionally for "a disease peculiar to women" which he delicately suggests might be menopause. When women reach the age of forty five or fifty, Lane testified, "a change takes place in

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[52] According to social historian Michael Mason, Lane was a well-known hydropathologist, and his mother-in-law was Lady Drysdale, mother to George Drysdale, who published the early birth control manual Elements of Social Science (11).

the constitution" that "affects the nervous system" (11 col a). He further claimed that sexual delusions could be associated with this condition. Dr. Lane also accused Mrs. Robinson of being a "lady of considerable literary attainments" (11 col a) and of corresponding with literary men. That she addressed an imagined reader suggested to the lordships that she had literary ambitions for this diary (11 col b), and they pointed as proof to entries in which she contemplated starting a novel. This was argument enough that the diary could not be sincere if the diarist imagined writing for an audience. Ironically, although Mrs. Robinson was accused of seeking literary attention through publication, those accusations brought the diary to the only publication it ever knew.

Mrs. Robinson's counsel responded by arguing that while her language was lyrical, it did not mean that the events recounted in her diary were not true. Counsel argued that Mrs. Robinson showed herself to be a clever woman and not someone suffering from any sexual delusions associated with menopause, especially as the so-called delusions were associated with only one man. The court eventually decided that Mrs. Robinson was fabricating stories. Lane was acquitted of adultery, but this created a legal tangle because the marriage had been dissolved on grounds of an adulterous affair which was now proved false. Whether or not Mrs. Robinson's diary was, in fact, "a tissue of romances from beginning to end" as Dr. Lane asserted, presented a legal challenge. If the diaries were true, it meant that Dr. Lane, a well-known doctor, was lying but that the veracity of diaries as testimony could be relied upon; if not, it meant that Mrs. Robinson was a victim of imagination, and her diaries were not transparent, truthful windows onto the self. This latter choice was unpalatable because it meant that the court had been duped when the case began: it had so bought into the prevalent myth about diaries that it didn't even question their sincerity.

The court's decision reflects, to some degree, mid-century attitudes towards women and sexuality. In The Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes, Michael Mason draws attention to the judges' assessment of Mrs. Robinson's diary as the fantasy of "a

middle-aged woman suffering from uterine disease and unchaste desires" (12). Historian Wendy Mitchinson notes that the prudish attitude towards women's bodies in medical examinations reached its zenith at mid-century. Doctors, she writes, "were reluctant to view the female body and to give an internal examination" (360). In the absence of any real medical data about Mrs. Robinson's alleged condition, even more emphasis would be placed on the cultural assumptions about her body as embodied in language, and this also worked to influence the court. The editors of the Times agreed with the judges, publishing melancholic and lyrical excerpts from Mrs. Robinson's diary to prove that her imagination was out of control. This signified to the public that she was a particular kind of imaginative or literary woman unlike other women who would be more modest in both their behaviour and their diary writing. In addition, the maneouvre worked to bolster Dr. Lane's reputation, and--perhaps more importantly--admitted the possibility that there were, after all, diaries with more unpremeditated sincerity than Mrs. Robinson's. Two consequences resulted: first, women who kept diaries were obliquely instructed by the Times about the kind of diary they should not keep; and second, the myth that a private diary could reveal an authentic self was preserved for yet another day.

Although Mrs. Robinson appealed to the model of Romantic subjectivity that so attracted literary men, the appeal proved disastrous. The Times found it worth noting that Mrs. Robinson was fascinated with the writings of Shelley; Coleridge and Byron also appear in published excerpts.[53] So here is a woman who may be embracing a model of Romantic selfhood in order to make sense of her life and to justify her act of writing in a way which is not socially transgressive, and yet the publication of her private self (publication not sought by her) is met with disapproval. Mrs. Robinson had stumbled across an unwritten rule that she should not participate in Romantic subjectivity even

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[53] Mrs. Robinson was not alone. Cynthia Huff records at least two other British women diarists invoking Romantic poetry, especially that of Byron: Lady Adine Cowper writing between 1857 and 1868, and a Mrs. S. M. Miers writing between July 1850 and June 1860 when she emigrated to Rio de Janiero (Huff 23; 63).

though its seemed amenable to her purposes, and even though she thought it safely contained within her "private" diary. Although nineteenth-century women were encouraged to develop feeling and cultivate the private realm, Romantic subjectivity and introspective diary writing were risky undertakings. The cultural message about women and diaries was not lost on Jane Carlyle, who wrote, only half-flippantly, in a diary entry of 21 October 1855: "I remember Charles Buller saying of the Duchess de Praslin's murder, 'What could a poor fellow do with a wife who kept a journal except murder her?'" (37).[54] A woman's diary at mid-century, and Mrs. Robinson's in particular, raised too many uncomfortable questions about women and writing, about women's private desires (whether they be sexual or intellectual), and about relegating women, desire, and diaries to a private realm from whence they might escape. Because Mrs. Robinson's diary challenged assumptions about women, desire, and the truthfulness of private diaries, it threatened, in the words of Mary Poovey, to "expose the artificiality of the binary logic that governed the Victorian symbolic economy" (10), for if public and private don't hold as a pair of opposites, then neither do gender ideologies underwritten by notions of public and private spheres.

Mary Jean Corbett agrees that women of the period had a far different relationship than men to their private autobiographical writing. Elizabeth Barrett Browning, for example, sent a strongly-worded reply in 1856 to a correspondent who wanted to publish some private letters; she stressed her distaste for the "fashionable diet" of memoirs and personal sketches, and her revulsion at the idea that her family life might be laid upon "the anatomizing table" (57). As Corbett makes clear, the metaphors in this passage

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[54] In full, Carlyle's entry reads: "I remember Charles Buller saying of the Duchess de Praslin's murder, 'What could a poor fellow do with a wife who kept a journal except murder her?' There was a certain truth hidden in this light remark. Your journal all about feelings aggravates whatever is factitious and morbid in you; that I have made experience of. And now the only sort of journal I would keep should have to do with what Mr. Carlyle calls "the fact of things." It is very bleak and barren, this fact of things, as I now see it--very; and what good is to result from the writing of it in a paper book is more than I can tell. But I have taken a notion to, and perhaps shall blacken more paper this time, when I begin quite promiscuously without any moral end in view; but just as the Scotch professor drank whisky, because I like it and because it's cheap." (37)

point to a physical dread of going public: the language is that of "consumption and dissection, as if the passage to the public realm from the private one implied a threat to bodily integrity" (58). She continues: " ... the bodily terror about publicizing the self that Barrett Browning's letter registers indicates a gendered discomfort with public exposure that professional literary men, always already members of a legitimate public body that has its 'home' in the public world, do not explicitly represent" (58). Other commentators, besides Corbett, have noted women writers' different relationship to the shaping metaphors of Romanticism; Corbett's analysis, in particular, shows that Romanticism took its toll not only on women's literary endeavours but on allegedly "private" acts of self-representation. This point has been overlooked by those scholars of women's private writing who employ a definition of the woman's diary as repository for the overflow of powerful emotions.

Mary Jane Moffat is one such scholar whose work tied women's diaries to a Romantic model of subjectivity. Writing in 1974, she argued that diary writing is "an important outlet" for women because, like their lives, the diary is "private, restricted, daily, trivial, formless" (5). Her work draws a troublesome analogy between women's lives and women's texts. More disquieting is the fact that Moffat looks to women's diaries as an outlet for emotions, an answer to a riddle of female subjectivity that has failed to express itself forcefully in the wider society. The success of the search depends on taking for granted the unpremeditated sincerity of diaries, and on accepting diaries as a life record with a kind of psychological transparency. Moffat imposes a Romantic model on women's diaries, claiming them as a place to reconcile "the conflicting demands of love and work in relationship to the authentic self" (5). Similarly, Harriette Andreadis praises the diary as a place where a pioneer woman "can unburden her secret self" (195). Although Moffat and Andreadis formulate these theories of diary writing in an effort to liberate women's voices from non-canonical forms of writing, the theories rely too

heavily on the same assumptions about privacy and diary writing that influenced the British judges in the Robinson case.

Other critics of women's diaries, citing feminist preoccupations, have also been powerfully compelled by and attracted to the "privacy" of women's diary writing. In part, this is because diary writing seemed useful in attempts to recuperate and re-evaluate women's contributions to the domestic or private sphere. It is, but we need to be careful about the way we frame our use of diaries in historical reconstructions, and simply re-instating nineteenth-century terminology can be harmful to such endeavours. For example, in a 1984 article, Suzanne Juhasz argues that "the breaking down of barriers between the private and the public is an essential political act" necessary to diary studies (19). She reasons that public and private are not mutually exclusive terrains, and that mobility between the two places might allow for genuine integration rather than fragmentation by which she means the "privacy" of women's lives might be more properly valued for its public contributions (20) . Her critical stance argues that the personal is political but clearly associates women again with the "private" realm: "women have always written in journals, not only because the journal was often the only kind of writing available to them ... but because private writing is suited to private life" (16). Even though Juhasz hopes to perform a political act by interrogating privacy, her configuration of private and public as two topographical regions (terrains) owes much to the separate spheres ideology of the nineteenth century and does not re-configure it significantly. By extension, such an approach cannot usefully investigate the role of women within a particular culture or historical moment because it colludes with the terms of the original debate.

More recently, in Inscribing the Daily, Lynn Z. Bloom devotes an article to the problem of privacy. She begins, like Bunkers or Huff, by calling into question the diary's privacy: "contrary to popular perception, not all diaries are written--ultimately or exclusively--for private consumption" (23). However, she conceives of the diary form as

"predicated on privacy" (23). An a priori privacy is left unquestioned, and this leads her into a morass trying to discern the "truly private diaries" from those which are more public documents. The truly private, she contends, are those "bare bone works" which "keep records of receipts and expenditures, the weather ... written with neither art nor artifice" (25). She re-invokes the idea that artlessness is equivalent to authenticity. Bloom goes on to suggest that the public diary, in contrast to the "truly private," has wider scope in content and more variation in form and literary technique. Although it may have begun its textual life as a diary not intended for another's eyes, the public diary has subsequently undergone revisions (28-34). Her comments focus mostly on the content of the diary, on whether the diary is a "personal record of private events" or more "public events" (24). Unfortunately, Bloom's article does little to illuminate any of the problems around privacy. Rather, it re-instates the tautology of diary writing which one is supposed to accept as self-evident: private is private.

Andrew Hassam, who arrives at the same conclusion as Bloom without looking specifically at women's diaries, poses the question of privacy as an ethical teaser. In his article, "Reading Other People's Diaries" he asks: what would you do if you were in a library and came across a manuscript diary abandoned on the desk? Would your reactions be different than if the diary was published and in the stacks? In the first case, he suggests that you might turn the diary in to "lost and found." In the second, feeling no compunction, you might begin reading the diary. His engaging and theoretically nuanced discussion considers why we would have such a different reaction in the second case and arrives "at what seems a somewhat self-evident fact, that it is perfectly acceptable to read even the most intimate diary providing it has been published" (441). On the other hand, "the notebook cannot be read because an ethical injunction prohibits the outsider from breaking the secrecy clause, from breaking into the intimate communication the diarist believes she/he is having with her/himself" (441). Hassam does not confront the middle ground: the researcher with an unpublished diary deposited in an archive. And for most

researchers this is precisely the situation. However, because he is primarily worried about legal issues around diary reading (439), he would perhaps expand his notion of "published" to include archival diaries edited or screened by family members before deposit.

Hassam's comments about "breaking the secrecy clause" point to a set of metaphors which employ the language of violation and invasion to describe diary reading under the influence of its alleged privacy. The desire to read that which has not been meant for publication is described as physically compelling. One reviewer confesses, "the reading of diaries, posthumous or not, is a seductive intimate activity" (Perren C9). Elizabeth Podnieks, examining Elizabeth Smart's journals, calls them "irresistible" in spite of Smart's warning in a juvenile diary to "Keep out / Keep out / Your snooting snout" (56).[55] At one level, these responses are generated by the sensual enjoyment of language or by the tactile experience of handling a hand-written text that might be velvet-covered or gilt-edged. However, diary reading is often expressed in physical terms like Hassam's "breaking the secrecy clause" which evoke a sense of invasion: broken locks, violated manuscripts, a page turned against its will. Derrida graphically spells out this particular delight of reading private writing when he speaks of the unpublished letter as a "repository for 'private emotions,'" a confessional form "whose privacy, like virginity, invites violations" (qtd. in Favret 20). For this reason, I am troubled when critics attach privacy to women's diaries to support a search for psychological truths; it too closely resembles a model of scholarship in which the researcher unlocks the hidden mysteries of

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[55] In fairness to Podnieks, she seeks to trouble the notion that Smart's journals are written as strictly private diaries. As she argues, the claim just doesn't hold when we know that Smart revised her diaries and handed them to Alice van Wart for editing. However, I have left this discussion alone because writer's diaries seem to form a special sub-category in the debate about privacy (although the alleged distinction may not stand to scrutiny). As Lynn Bloom asks, what do you do with someone like Anaïs Nin, who was publishing old diaries while writing new ones? What does that do to one's sense of audience in the diary? Bloom asserts "for the professional writer, there are no private writings ... once a writer, like an actor, is audience-oriented, such considerations as telling a good story, getting the sounds and the rhythm right, supplying sufficient detail for another's understanding, can never be excluded" (24-25). By contrast, I think all diaries are shaped by audience considerations whether written by writers or not.

the text in a gesture of power and control. It re-instates a "dialectic of control" instead of the "dialectic of communication" advocated by Schweickart.

The thrill and danger of discovering and reading a private diary, and the particularly gendered consequences, is explored in the mid-century farce My Wife's Diary. In this play, the unwitting honesty of two young wives restores social order and marital harmony, but only on the surface. Although they comply with a domestic ideal and so bring about a resolution, underlying complications generated by the discovery of their diaries are not finally put to rest. T.W. Robertson adapted and translated this play from the French; it was first performed in France in 1843. Part of the appeal of My Wife's Diary for British audiences is its satiric view of French marriages, and its timely London opening capitalized on the attention given to marriages and divorces in the wake of the 1857 Matrimonial Causes Act (Weeks 31; 24).[56] Public interest in divorces was such that the coverage of divorce proceedings had its own sensational paper, the Divorce News and Police Reporter , which began in 1857 (Weeks 20). And in the same month that this play opened, the London Times began covering the Robinson vs. Robinson case.

The play features a potential love triangle thwarted by revelations in two diaries. The wife of the title, Mathilde, keeps a diary for an unmarried friend in which she hopes to catalogue the joys and pleasures of her marriage to an older man; her diary, which runs to eight chapters after three months of married life, is entitled "The Private Diary of a Young Wife for the perusal of her old friend and school fellow," a woman named Amalie (4). At the beginning of the play, Mathilde confides to the diary that her marriage is unhappy and that her husband, Dumont, has asked her to go fishing with one of his old friends who happens to be visiting. The friend, a barrister named Deligny who works on divorce cases and claims to be unmarried, has asked for a romantic "interview." Mathilde goes fishing but only to obey her husband.

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[56] The Matrimonial Causes Act (1857) made it easier for the middle classes to obtain a divorce. Previously, legal solutions to failed marriages were available primarily to the upper classes.

In the same scene, Dumont discovers his wife writing something that she hastily puts away; as soon as she leaves the room, he produces a duplicate key and determines to find out what it is, for he knows she has been writing each day since their marriage. His first fear is that she might have literary pretensions, and when he discovers the manuscript, he cries: "she is an authoress--a bluestocking, and I'm afraid that is not sufficient grounds on which to sue for a divorce" (5). His statement points to some of the anxieties about literary women that attended Mrs. Robinson in her court case. Upon reading the diary, he discovers her unhappiness and her confession about Deligny, and vows to interrupt any potential love affair that may be developing.

While fishing, Deligny does declare his love for Mathilde, but he also tells her a story about her husband that makes Mathilde re-evaluate her feelings and realize that she underestimated her husband. She returns home, records the realization in the diary, and is about to mail it off to Amalie when Deligny intercepts and steals it. Another impassioned interview follows in which Deligny confronts her with her own words and promises to deliver her from her unhappy marriage. At the same time, a diary arrives from Amalie which is intercepted by Mathilde's husband because he thinks it belongs to his wife. It reveals that Amalie is actually married to Deligny, and while she thought him quite wonderful at first, his philandering has taken a toll on her affections. Reading about Deligny's unfaithfulness in Amalie's diary, Dumont reverses an earlier judgement to state that "diaries are a devilish good invention" (12). Eventually, Deligny confronts Dumont with his wife's diary whereupon Dumont confronts and shocks Deligny with Amalie's diary. To Deligny's great surprise that his wife is keeping a diary, Dumont responds: "Oh yes, diary writing seems to be quite the fashion" (13).

In the end, order is restored; Deligny and Dumont stay with their respective wives who both have a truthful picture of their husbands. In this case, the fact that the diaries slip from a network of female friends into a wider readership buttresses the social order even though Mathilde's diary seemed, at first, to threaten marital harmony. Strangely,

however, there are no consequences to the actions in the play: Mathilde never confronts the men about stealing and reading her diary; when it is returned, Mathilde only wants to confirm that her husband has read the last entry in which she declares her true love. No one ever tells Mathilde that Amalie's diary has arrived, so she never learns that Amalie is married to Deligny; we also never see the consequences that would arise if Amalie were to discover her husband's declared passion for her best friend. The resolution primarily addresses the conflict between the two men; their wives' diaries are needed only to end the dispute about Mathilde's affections and to reprove Deligny for his behaviour. Like Mrs. Robinson's diary, its meaning resolved by the men who try to contain it within legal discourse or interpret it in the Times, the significance of Mathilde's and Amalie's diaries is contained and interpreted by two men.

Mathilde does undergo a change, but it brings her closer to her husband suggesting, on one hand, that when diaries are socially contained, they offer the rewards of increased intimacy said to be attached to privacy (Williams K 243). On the other hand, this play serves as an object lesson to wives, teaching them that if diary writing is "quite the fashion," as Dumont says, it is a fashion better left alone because of the trouble it might cause. Looming over this play is the threatened dissolution of one, possibly two, marriages, and women's diaries are figured as a sort of Pandora's box; once opened, diaries cannot recapture their loosed words. One commentator notes that nineteenth-century farces usually glorified the domestic ideal and ended with an assertion of the husband's rightful authority over his wife (Fisher 43). Consequently, harmony reigns when the husband asserts his rightful authority over his wife and her diary, but the flip side is that women's diaries such as Mathilde's or Mrs. Robinson's can potentially lay bare the artificiality of mid-century gender ideologies underwritten by notions of solidly differentiated public and private spheres.

I don't want to insist too stridently on the gender issues at work here, although they do exist. My gendered reading is only one possible interpretation of what kind of

anxieties attend the purported privacy of diaries. Andrew Hassam presents the problem of interpretation using Lacanian terminology:

> ... when the text enters the public domain it becomes subjected to the "symbolic" order, where "the author is one reader among others." When a text is published, "its meaning cannot be commanded by the author, but is at large, abroad, in circulation." In the same way that self, according to Lacan, when it enters into language, becomes a unit of exchange outside the control of the subject, so the text, when it is published, becomes a unit in an intersubjective network of readings. (440)

His argument, with quotations from Jane Gallop's Feminism and Psychoanalysis, speaks to anxieties about the fixity of meaning that accrue to contemporary interpretive acts, but the quotation is evocative in other ways for the current discussion. In particular, Hassam frames in Lacanian terms the kind of movement that I see at work in diary writing; he describes how meaning slips from an alleged privacy, knowability, stability, and authenticity into a more public domain where it becomes a unit of exchange outside the control of the originating subject. Therefore, his comments are useful for re-introducing the discussion about the interactions of diaries and the marketplace. While nineteenth-century diary writing explicitly shunned publication and appeared to resist the market system, it became an indicator of class which reinforced a new social structure made possible by industrialization and which, in turn, relied on the idealization of the private and familial. The idea of a "private" diary was enmeshed with a new economic and social order at mid-century. Therefore, one of the anxieties about the public circulation of diaries has to do with maintaining distinctions of class rather than gender. A second farce from the 1850s, Mr. Nightingale's Diary, shows how class distinctions may be troubled when a diary slips out of the control of the diarist into a larger marketplace; it highlights mid-Victorian anxieties about the exploitation of creative labour.

Mr. Nightingale's Diary serves as an object lesson to men who might be keeping diaries. Farces are useful examples, for they delight audiences by lurching into the abyss of complete social chaos but also pulling back in time to reaffirm or re-establish the status

quo. Theatre of the 1850s, in particular, demanded a specific illusion of realism. Richard Sennett argues in The Fall of Public Man that the public of the 1850s demanded the stage tell a truth the street no longer told, by which he means audiences wanted easily to decode the characters on stage by appearance (174). In an era of increasing democratization brought about by the breakdown of class divisions, theatre-goers wanted characters who were easy to "read" unlike the urban dwellers of unknown origin and class standing that they might pass on the street outside the theatre. Sennett finds a curious reversal in this decade: "the divisions between mystery, illusion, and deception on the one hand and truth on the other were in the mid-19th century drawn into a peculiar form: authentic life, which requires no effort of decoding, appeared only under the aegis of stage art" (176). In the 1850s, the search for the authentic was as much a shaping force in public attitudes towards theatre as it was in attitudes towards diaries.

Mr. Nightingale's Diary (written by Charles Dickens and Mark Lemon) suggests mid-century anxieties about the potential break-down in class divisions. Written by Mark Lemon and Charles Dickens, the farce was a smash hit of the 1850s. First published in 1851, it played London, the provinces, Manchester, Birmingham, Bath, Bristol, Sunderland, and Liverpool to raise money for the new Guild of Literature and Art (16). It starred Dickens, Lemon, and Wilkie Collins (153), and critic Leona Weaver Fisher speculates that it was based on a real diary entitled Extracts from Notes of a Journal kept during a Residence of Five Months at Grafenberg, written by a doctor in Malvern. Indeed, the play is set in Malvern (31). It features the sensible young Gabblewig (played by Dickens) winning over his beloved, Rosina, by protecting her father, Mr. Nightingale, from the unscrupulous Slap. Mr. Nightingale is a hypochondriac who details imagined illnesses in a diary; when Slap discovers the hiding place of the diary, he begins to act as personal medical and pharmaceutical adviser to Mr. Nightingale, his credibility established by his remarkably thorough knowledge of Nightingale's symptoms. In the final scene, when the swindle is revealed, Gabblewig / Dickens advises Nightingale to

give up his diary. "Burn that book and be happy," he says (177). However, Gabblewig then relents and asks the audience if Nightingale should be allowed to keep the diary, and in a scripted joint decision, they decide that he may want to refer to it someday, so he should keep it.

Mr. Nightingale's private diary fails to provide the rewards of privacy, specifically the "seclusion and protection from others" named by Raymond Williams (K 243). Moreover, his diary, presenting an admittedly satirical portrait of the authentic self, cannot remain immune from the unscrupulous money-making tactics of Slap, or in a larger sense, from free-market entrepreneurship. The diary's destruction is condoned because it helps to atone for its failure to uphold privacy and to protect the "private" man from market forces but, in addition, its destruction--indeed its destruction before Slap ever found it--would have allowed a larger social narrative about the naturalness of class divisions to continue without challenge. This is to say that the social chaos threatened in this farce is the breakdown of class divisions.

In the 1850s, farces found their largest audiences from among the working class (Fisher 40), and this audience likely reveled in the comic potential of Nightingale's diary as both a symbol of the navel-gazing upper class and as an incriminating text that could bring about its downfall. Because it is farce, social order is re-established in the end: Slap is put in his place, and Nightingale is restored to a position of dignity befitting his class. Gabblewig is the true hero of the play. He defends creative labour and physical frailty from exploitation; he preserves the sanctity of the Nightingale family, protects the upper class against the incursions of young up-start entrepreneurs such as Slap, and tries to warn the audience away from the de-stabilizing possibilities presented by diary writing. The ambivalent ending, in which the diary is not destroyed, shows that the imagined ideal of "private" writing is a necessary fiction exposed but reinstated even at the cost of social volatility. Because the privacy of the diary is so closely associated with authenticity of self, its privacy must be defended when threatened. For this reason, Gabblewig is a

defender of truths held to be self-evident. Although it becomes apparent in the play that the diary cannot maintain its privacy and cannot, in and of itself, protect the man of letters (or anyone for that matter) from commercial exchanges or the exploitation of his labour, the diary must be allowed to have that potential. It must be allowed to maintain an illusion of privacy and authenticity.

The examples in this chapter suggest that in the mid-nineteenth-century, men's and women's diaries were both perplexing and compelling because they represented privacy, and by association a potential for authenticity and truthfulness, which underwrote social institutions and cultural assumptions about the naturalness of gender differences and class divisions. I seek to question the fascination with the "private" and its association with an essential, authentic self to argue instead that the narration of the "private" experience is always already shaped by a more public ideology and that the two are ultimately inseparable. The 1995 Karen Vickers case in British Columbia suggests that diary writers and readers are still influenced by notions of privacy and authenticity of self that attach themselves to diaries. As Vickers admitted, once the illusion of privacy was brought into public debate and questioned, she could no longer keep a diary, and this was despite the fact that the court upheld the sanctity of her private diary; her writing never was made public in any way. The Victorians of the 1850s had a vested interest in believing that diaries could be or should be private because of what it told them about the naturalness of their social structures, their class and gender divisions, and about what it meant to be an "authentic" human being; this is no less true for our own society.

Though the parameters may be different from those of the 1850s, we also expect the diary's privacy to uphold certain cultural or social tenets. In the three cases examined in this chapter, one of the most compelling or horrifying aspects, for the mid-century audience, is the diarist's lack of control over the text as a commodity, its slip out of symbolic privacy into public circulation, and the potential ramifications of this movement on authenticity and truthfulness. William Safire's defence of the diary's privacy gestures

towards contemporary tenets we hold dear, including perhaps a natural and rightful claim to private property, whether that be material or intellectual, and the inviolability of the family home. We are still asked to accept the diary as unquestionably private because that maneouvre promises to ensure truthfulness; the privacy of the diary promises to protect an "authentic self." Therefore, it is not privacy that must be self-evident, but the other "truths" which it protects, such as the potential for human authenticity. As Lawrence Rosenwald notes, "the myth of the veridical diary ... is founded irremovably because founded on a void, founded not on a error of fact but on truths we hold to be self-evident" (101). In conclusion, to say that the writing in a diary could ever be psychologically transparent and not inextricably tangled in the discourses of its historical moment is utopian thinking.

Chapter Five

"The fact of things": A Rural Woman's Diary 1859-1860

In the 1855 entry about diary writing cited briefly in the previous chapter, Jane Carlyle records her decision to veer away from writing about feelings because it stirs up "whatever is morbid and factitious in you":

> And now the only sort of journal I would keep should have to do with what Mr. Carlyle calls "the fact of things." It is very bleak and barren, this fact of things, as I now see it--very; and what good is to result from the writing of it in a paper book is more than I can tell. But I have taken a notion to, and perhaps shall blacken more paper this time, when I begin quite promiscuously without any moral end in view; but just as the Scotch professor drank whisky, because I like it and because it's cheap. (Carlyle 37)

Her remarks suggest that some diarists are motivated to begin "without a moral end in view" in an attempt to record the "facts of things." Why not? It wastes nothing but time and paper, and, in content, it is not nearly so dangerous for a nineteenth-century woman as introspection or Romantic self-posturing. Clearly, however, Carlyle is not writing the kind of ideally spare diary she invokes here. Rather, she comments self-reflexively on the act of writing itself, on the significance (or lack thereof) of writing such a diary, and so sets herself apart from the spare diaries that do record just "the facts of things," such as the diary kept by British emigrant Emma Chadwick Stretch in Prince Edward Island between 1859 and 1860.[57] Stretch used her diary, like many other rural men and women of the nineteenth century, "to record expenditures and calculate profits, as well as to note farm work, weather, and crop yields to aid in planning future seasons" (Motz 134); this popular form was even endorsed by the Canadian Farmer on 15 February 1869 (Crowley

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[57] Emma Ann Chadwick Stretch (1820 - 16 March 1873) is buried at St. Thomas's Anglican cemetery in Long Creek, P.E.I. beside her husband, who died much later in 1896, and a son lost at sea in 1872. (P.E.I. Archives)

n. 160). An analysis of her diary offers an avenue of inquiry into questions about artlessness and aesthetics, about what motivates diarists to record mostly facts, and whether such a diary leaves anything for its readers or, in Carlyle's words, "what good is to result from the writing of it." My purpose is not to argue that the account book diary does, in fact, have a kind of artistry in it but to argue that there is something to be gained in reading it in terms of women's history and biography.

Emma Chadwick Stretch was not the only woman to keep a factual, account book diary. Archival research at Queen's University Archives and the University of New Brunswick shows, for instance, the "diary and expense book" of a Mrs. McLachlan circa 1840 and the 1859-1862 account book diary of Fanny Brigantine Palmer. London Ontario's Amelia Ryerse Harris, whose extensive diaries are now published by the Champlain Society, [58] includes twelve pages of accounts at the back of her 1854-1856 volume (Harris and Harris 40) and her practical daughter-in-law, Lucy Ronalds Harris, records domestic expenses in the diary given to her by her brother-in-law on 1 January 1868 (Harris and Harris 417). One might conjecture that the upper-class Amelia was succumbing to a fashion of the time in her short-lived accounts, but Lucy, a farmer's daughter from Chatham, Ontario, kept up her accounting until 1895 (417). Diarists from rural areas, such as Lucy Harris, seem to take more to the account-book form. Indeed, most North American commentators, such as folklorist Marilyn Ferris Motz or historian Terry Crowley, find evidence of this account-book phenomenon most commonly in the mid-century farm diaries which "were not diaries in the conventional sense but narratives of daily business dealings, weather, sales, and contracts" (Crowley n. 160).

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[58] More significantly, the diaries of Amelia Ryerse Harris, an upper-class matriarch, were an educational tool for her children. She would set out the diaries with her opinion of family events, possible suitors, etc., for the family to read. The editors of her published diary wonder what "were her children's reactions when reading of their mother's almost daily assessment of their relations with the fiancées, husbands, and wives"? (xxv). Written from 1857 to 1882, this is an outstanding example of family management through the publicity of a diary, a didactic text "intended to instruct, sensitize and even direct family members according to Amelia's wishes" (xxv).

Why would the account book diary be particularly attractive at this time? Although Luella Creighton singles out the 1860s as a time of growing religious practice (96) and a number of Ontario and Maritime diaries attest to the religious influence on diary writing at that time,[59] the historical context was such that it emphasized financial accounting as much as spiritual accounting. For example, while the term capitalism had been around from 1792, it increased in frequency at mid-century (OED).[60] To some, capitalism in the Maritimes and the Canadas was seen as a positive force of progress. Two World Expositions in the 1850s and 1860s brought Canadian goods to larger markets. P.E.I. signed a reciprocal trade agreement with the United States in 1855 assuring a market for their goods. Even though the postal services were still not well-established, improved railways and communication in telegraph were evident by the 1850s, and the farm press expanded in the Canadas (Crowley 47). By the 1860s, historian Crowley sees increased consumerism in the form of marketing fairs in Ontario. Land speculation and commodity

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[59]Hannah Chapman Backhouse kept a Quaker diary between 1804 and 1850 when she lived in Upper Canada. Backhouse used it not only to contemplate her relationship with God, but to record her muted participation in social activism with women such as Elizabeth Fry and the Grimké sisters (Backhouse 40; 106). Another well-known spiritual diary of Canadian origin written at the same time as Backhouse's is the aforementioned Eliza Ann Chipman, who began a spiritual journal at the age of sixteen at the urging of a Baptist minister. Three days before she died, she revealed the existence of the diary to her husband, who was also a Baptist minister, and asked him to publish it that it might help others in their spiritual journey. Her diary, written between 20 July 1823 and 6 August 1837 was privately published in 1855 by her husband in Halifax, Nova Scotia, as Memoir of Mrs. Eliza Ann Chipman, Wife of the Rev. William Chipman of Pleasant Valley, Cornwallis and republished in 1989 in an edition by Allen B. and Carolene E. B. Robertson.

Backhouse and Chipman are early examples. More numerous were those diarists responding to religion's resurgent popularity in Upper Canada during the 1850s and 60s such as Lydia Clark Symmes, who kept a spiritual diary in Ottawa in the 1850s (a publication provides excerpts from the years 1857 to 1859); or Catherine Bell van Norman, who wrote in rather self-flagellating terms about her spiritual shortcomings in Hamilton in 1850. Both were published--the latter by an historical society, the former by the United Society of Christian Endeavour--presumably for the spiritual edification of the intended readers. To this day, the role of the diary as an aid to spiritual development is still touted. In 1975, George Simons published Journal for Life: discovering faith and values through journal writing, a series of cassette recordings with booklets and seven instruction cards, and in 1988 and 1989, the Presbyterian Record and United Church Observer both ran articles on journal keeping as an aid to faith (CPI).

[60] In 1845, Disraeli rails against the capitalist who "flourishes" as "we sink lower and lower"; also in 1845, J.S. Mill distinguishes capitalist farmers from labour farmers. In 1867, it is possible to talk of a "capitalist class."

speculation could lead the astute to greater prosperity in this bustling era, but it could also bring ruin.

If the term "capitalism" was gaining currency, so to speak, in the 1850s, it must also have been seen as a fairly chaotic force; by 1857, a world-wide economic crash had been touched off by speculation in US railroad shares (Grun 421). After this event, immigration to Quebec dropped by 60% in 1858 and immigration--to Ontario in particular--did not return to its previous levels for nearly fifty years (Crowley 45). By 1854, land prices in Canada West were rapidly rising (Williamson 17); two years earlier, Ontario had experienced a crisis about the auctioning of arable public lands that helped push the colony towards Confederation (Crowley 42). After this period of prosperity in the early 1850s, Ontario land prices began to plummet due to the recession and the dwindling supply of settlers. Crowley charts the economic uncertainty of 1850s Ontario through family peregrinations recorded in diaries and letters. For example, one Ontario farmer, James Reid, writes to Thomas Reid about the sale of a farm by someone "going to look for better land and nearer a good market" (n. 77). Land prices were a subject of anxiety in Ontario, and in both the Canadas and the Maritimes, disaffected soldiers from the Civil War were heading north and taking jobs that Canadian men might have held (Crowley 46). In Charlottetown of the 1860s, "Yankee soldiers selling trashy books and penny jewelry" were upsetting the residents to such an extent that a bylaw was passed to prevent non-residents from doing business at local markets (Beck 81). An individual's desire to monitor finances in his or her diary, one might speculate, is an understandable reaction to general economic uncertainty. Although the account book diary was not the only type of diary written in the 1850s and 1860s nor even the most popular, it could be seen as one possible response to a general, vaguely-defined economic anxiety and, in fact, a cynic might argue that religious diaries became popular at this time for exactly the same reasons.

The economic climate of the 1860s combined with more general trends of nineteenth- century culture to affect diary writing. For example, if, as Thomas Richards argues, entropy was one of the formative epistemological principles of the nineteenth century (75), and people were wary of the inevitable transition from organization to disorganization it entailed, then account book diaries offered a way to stay organized; they promised to embody "the natural extension of a 'rationally ordered life'" (Gannett 108); they offered a modicum of control in an uncertain world. In a similar speculation, French historian Alain Corbin connects nineteenth-century concerns, accounting practices, and writing habits when he argues that diarists were obsessed with accounting for their time due to "the same fantasies of loss that impelled them to keep detailed household accounts and that engendered certain fears, such as the fear of squandering sperm or of watching life grow shorter with each passing day" (498).[61] Arguably, economic uncertainty would exacerbate those fantasies of loss, and the conservative and practical account-book diaries held thrift, resourcefulness, control, and accountability as nearly religious principles that held out the hope of control and order.

Although popular at mid-century, the account book format was no mere fad of mid-century; such diaries had formal precedents from as early as the sixteenth century and their popularity extends into the twentieth century. Account-book diaries tap into a form of diary writing with rural roots and a very old, secular, tradition that had a time-honoured attractiveness. Thomas Mallon cites the form as one of the earliest kinds of diary writing, along with ships' logs and commonplace books (42-43). Likewise, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, in her analysis of a midwife's diary written between 1785 and 1812, points to an eighteenth-century tradition of daybooks with "running accounts of receipts and expenditures" and printed almanacs designed for daily accounting (8). Folklorist

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[61] Historian Wendy Mitchinson corroborates Corbin's assertion that nineteenth-century men feared squandering sperm, noting that Victorians viewed the body as an economic system: "spending in one area depleted another" (106). She provides a number of medical statements from the US and Canada as proof (107).

Motz, writing about the mid-western states, provides a descriptive summary of the types of commercially-produced diaries available for accounting purposes in the mid-nineteenth century:

> these pocket diaries were designed, as their flyleaves note, for businessmen. In addition to the tables of sunrise and sunset, moon phases and "moveable feasts" that have been included since the sixteenth century in commercially printed almanacs and calendars, these nineteenth-century diaries also indicated the distances between major US cities, current interest rates, postage rates, and other information relating to a national network of commerce. (134)

Although such diaries were ostensibly designed for urban businessmen rather than rural farmers, the form was easily adapted and "served as account books for all aspects of life, recording births, deaths, holidays, and visits as well as expenditures and work completed"(136). The adaptability of such diaries made them attractive, and the form persisted into the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For example, Queen's University Archives holds the account book diary of Mrs. Boothe, a farm wife in Metcalfe Ontario, written between 1897 and 1898. Mary Beatty, homesteading in the Melfort District of what would become Saskatchewan, kept an account-book diary along with her husband, Reg, from 1885-1898 (Powell 342). The Beatty's collaborative diary includes information about weather, farm work accomplished, her menstrual cycle, and seed prices before the book is taken over by a son who uses it for school exercises (Powell 342-343). Nova Scotian Rebecca Chase Kinsman Ells also kept an account-book diary between 1901 and 1906 when her husband went off to the Yukon to search for gold.

That a diary might be unconcerned with feelings and introspection has proven confusing to a number of diary readers. Lynn Bloom, for example, tentatively names such works as "truly private diaries ... bare bones works written primarily to keep records of receipts and expenditures [and] the weather" (25), but she doesn't quite know what to make of them. As I have mentioned elsewhere, I was also confused early in my research by the reticent mid-twentieth-century farm diaries of Albertan Sarah Harrold, who wrote

variations on "It's cold and wet. The threshing won't get done" every day for a week. The rest of her diary is equally unforthcoming. It is a type of diary which troubles notions of motivations and aesthetics, especially if we expect the diary to possess or attain a certain degree of literariness. The character Sarah Maloney, an academic in Carol Shield's Swann, faces a similar problem with the notebook/journal written by the fictional Southern Ontario farm-wife poet Mary Swann, whose work the young professor is attempting to recuperate for her own professional gain. In one passage, Maloney describes the "profound disappointment" she feels when opening the notebook for the first time:

> What I wanted was elucidation and grace and a glimpse of the woman Mary Swann as she drifted in and out of her poems. What I got was "Creek down today" or "Green beans up" or "cash low" or "wind rising." This "journal" was no more than the ups-and-downs accounting of a farmer's wife, of any farmer's wife, and all of it in appalling handwriting. I puzzled for days over one scribbled passage, hoping for a spill of light, but decided finally that the pen scratches must read "Door latch broken."
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> Mary Swann's notebook -- Lord knows what it was *for* -- covered a period of three months, the summer of 1950, and what it documents is a trail of trifling accidents ("cut hand on pump") or articles in need of repair (a kettle, a shoe) or sometimes just small groupings of words (can opener, wax paper, sugar) which I decided after some thought, could only be shopping lists. Even her chance observations of the natural world are primitive, to say the least: "branches down," radishes poor," "sun scorching." (55)

Sarah Maloney reading Mary Swann is in many ways a parodic doppelganger of my own troubled reading of Sarah Harrold. The humour in Shield's passage arises from the conflict between Maloney's expectations and Swann's laconic and unpoetic journals; the humour depends on understanding both that this young professor feels obliged to search out a marginal figure like the fictional poet Mary Swann in order to establish her academic reputation and that these journals pose a threat to her professional duty to make meaning. Theorists Landry and McLean might agree that a project such as reading farm women's diaries is merely "feminist foraging outside the canon for the increasingly obscure, marginalized, and so theoretically or even antiquarianly interesting figures or

contexts" (57). Despite the issues of personal and professional investment, and despite the paucity of language to describe how such diaries work, I think it would be too easy to dismiss the reticent diary of a farm wife from a study of diary writing. Certainly the spare entries of account-book diaries have posed challenges for students of the diary, but I share with Helen Buss a feminist project "to take account of the human subjects who wrote diaries," and this includes those women who were not necessarily motivated to write to express the self. Women's account book diaries offer an avenue into questions of feminist historiography, and how to find a vocabulary to articulate issues of motivation and aesthetics while respecting the lived life of the diarist. Folklore, I propose, offers a useful language and one that does not denigrate the diarists' artistic achievements. This chapter endeavours to articulate some of the pertinent issues through an analysis of Emma Stretch's diary.

Emma Stretch's diary is certainly not the best-known of nineteenth-century P.E.I. diaries.[62] The diary of Mercy Ann Coles, who writes about accompanying her father, George Coles, to the Confederation talks in Charlottetown is one of the better known, excerpted in several contexts because of its relevance to a major historical moment in Canadian history.[63] The reproduction of Coles's diary in articles or historical reconstructions of the Confederation period alerts us to the fact that women's diaries can be, and have been, used to perpetuate androcentric models of historiography. However, the notoriety of the Coles's P.E.I. diary has been eclipsed by the later diaries of Lucy Maud Montgomery written between 1889 and 1921 now garnering attention from

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[62] Although many of the archival diaries in P.E.I. are from the twentieth century, the Alberton Museum archives hold the diaries of Susan Woodman, writing between 1895 and 1896. This diary is cited in Conrad's Recording Angels and an excerpt from December 1895, when Woodman was the mother of two young daughters, is published in David Weale's "Diary of Susan Woodman," Island Magazine, 3 (Fall-Winter 1977): 23-25.

[63] Excerpts have been published in Atlantic Advocate (November 1965): 40-44; also described in Barbara Powell's "Nineteenth Century Young Women's Diaries" Canadian Children's Literature 65 (1992): 68-80. Excerpts also published in Luella Creighton's The Elegant Canadians. (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1967.)

scholars interested in the diary writing of Canadian authors. University of Guelph professors Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston, for example, have edited the journals for publication, and Helen Buss explores the autobiographical strategies at work in Montgomery's journals.

I have deliberately ignored these better known examples and chosen Emma Stretch's diary for its potential to urge us towards feminist historiography in its documentation of the lives of rural women less literate than Montgomery who also contributed to Canadian society. Moving toward this imagined ideal of feminist historiography means, in this context, taking up Elizabeth Hampsten's challenge to test the general principles of reading life writing in one particular life and thereby tease out the "complicated and inter-related particularities" (28). I chose Stretch's diary because it is the kind most often ignored by diary scholars who do not know what to make of its characteristically terse and sometimes uncommunicative entries. Even feminist scholars like Cynthia Huff prefer to read those diaries that "speak to us without the need of a mediator," those that are "accessible" and can be therefore used to levy arguments against "an authority who ... initiate[s] us into the mysteries of the text" ("That Profoundly Female Genre" 6). But surely the rural diary of Emma Stretch is a record of self, at the very least, a record of a life lived; even if it appears opaque at first, one of the challenges of diary reading is to figure out how to reconstruct historical figures from a minimum of information and to assess the risks involved in doing so.

A biographical sketch of British immigrant Emma Chadwick Stretch must start with her brother-in-law, William Critchlow Harris, because if it were not for his sons--Robert Harris,[64] the artist commissioned to paint "The Fathers of Confederation" and

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[64] Biographies of Robert Harris include two by Moncrieff Williamson: Robert Harris: 1849-1919 (1973) and Island Painter: The life of Robert Harris 1849-1919 (1983). In this chapter, I am quoting mostly from the latter, as the first has only sketchy biographical details and much more information about his artistic career. Harris captured visual images of the Donnelly trial and also painted the famous "A Meeting of the School Trustees" (Williamson).

William Critchlow Harris, an architect of some note--there would be no extant histories or biographies with which to trace the twinned movements of the two families as they migrated together to P.E.I. (Boggs 5; Williamson 96). The historical appraisal of Emma Stretch, when it occurs at all, is coloured by her antagonistic relationship with Critchlow; her personality, her behaviour and actions are filtered through the perspective of this highly sensitive and often impractical man in now-published letters. If Emma's diary did not exist, there would be little record of her life except as a minor character living in the shadow of the Harris family.

Generous historians refer to Critchlow Harris as a "dreamer" (Williamson 13), but his published letters reveal a desultory and restless nature given to extremes of optimism and pessimism. As a young man, Critchlow expected an inheritance to secure his life as an upper-class gentleman; it failed to materialize (Williamson 15). He had never wanted to move from his beloved Wales but a lack of business acumen compelled him to look for work throughout England, and finally, in desperation, he turned towards British North America in search of some situation that would support his family. When he made an initial investigative tour of America in 1854, he did not visit P.E.I. He was impressed with Canada West but worried about rising land prices (Williamson 17). He eventually chose the island because he was favorably influenced by a chance encounter with a Newfoundlander who thought very highly of the island, and then he was won over completely by a Charlottetown merchant who happened to be in Liverpool the day that Harris booked his passage (Williamson 13).

Thus it was that Critchlow's whim took two families to their fates in P.E.I., for sometime during the planning, Critchlow had managed to convince his wife's brother, Joseph Stretch, to join them on this economically necessary adventure. On 7 September, the two families left Liverpool on the Isabel (Tuck 5). Joseph Stretch, his wife Emma, and their five children embarked on the voyage with Critchlow, Sarah Stretch Harris, and their seven children, along with a tutor, Mr. Hodgson, and his wife (Tuck 5). They all

shared one cabin, sleeping two and three to a bed (Williamson 13-14) and arrived in Charlottetown on 10 October 1856 (Williamson 19). Critchlow brought with him a spinet piano, "a large dining room table, a handsome Gothic chair, a two-piece chest made of mahogany with brass fittings ... a brass bedstead and a large glass-fronted bookcase" in anticipation of his future career as a gentleman farmer in the new world (Tuck 38); Sarah Harris kept careful account of the journey in a journal letter addressed to her mother (Tuck 39-45).[65]

Within weeks of their arrival, Emma recognized their last minute decision to go to P.E.I. as a propitious turn of events. In an early letter to England, she exclaims: "I quite rejoice at the exchange we have made" (Tuck 47). The two families lived together for a short time until there was a dispute (or perhaps a series of disputes) between Emma and Critchlow. The point of contention is unclear. Emma does not refer to any ill feelings towards Critchlow in her diary written three years later, but she reveals in an early letter to England her opinion of his restlessness: "Critchlow is as unsettled as ever; in fact, I think we shall be obliged to tether him to keep him from setting off to Canada" (Tuck 46), and indeed, in early 1857, Critchlow was already fretting that "It was a bad day's work when I fixed to come to this place ... I ought to have gone to Canada" (Tuck 52). Apparently, some of his complaints about the new country concerned his relationship with Emma. He writes in the same letter: "It is a hard case to be in a strange country without means and friends. Yes, I say without friends, because those relatives that accompanied us have behaved unkindly, particularly the sister-in-law to Sarah" (Tuck 51). Six months later, he is still grumbling about her:

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[65] Sarah Harris presents a muted version of the melodramatic departure scenes evident fifteen and twenty years earlier in the letter journals of Frances Simpson, Isobel Finlayson, and Mrs. Langton. She writes to her mother: "Now that we are beginning to feel a little more settled I will begin to keep a diary ... After we left you all, I felt most wretched, and everything on the vessel being in such a state of confusion, I expected my misery to increase instead of lessening. It seemed almost a hopeless case to think of being able to make ourselves comfortable ... At 10 we all retired to our beds, and rested much better than I expected" (Tuck 39).

> I am afraid you seem to think that I am the cause of all the unpleasantness between Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Stretch and myself. I can conscientiously say that this is not the case ... I shall be civil to him, and do all in my power to help him, but as to his wife, I shall never take any notice of her. (Tuck 61)

The historian who prepared the published edition of Sarah's and Critchlow's letters, Robert Critchlow Tuck (also their great-grandson), explains in an introductory note that the "peppery natures of both Critchlow and Emma" led to inevitable tensions, and the two families were forced to part ways (48).

After the families went their separate ways, they saw each other at twelve or eighteen-month intervals. Critchlow never could settle into any rigorous work, so his family continued to live in penurious circumstances in and around Charlottetown; the Stretches, on the other hand, bought Lot 65 on the banks of the Elliott River, then called the West River, outside the small town of Long Creek and began to prosper in a rural setting.[66] The reversal in fortunes was clear when the Harrises could no longer afford the tutor, Mr. Hodgson, and the Stretches employed him shortly thereafter (Williamson 21; Emma Stretch ms.). An archivist from P.E.I. speculates about the financial situation:

> My feeling is that the Stretches were financially better off than most immigrants to Prince Edward Island. They arrived later than most immigrants (mostly Scottish) in the area, and may have had the means to purchase their lands outright whereas most immigrants leased and then purchased lands through yearly payments to the government. Also Joseph Stretch and Harris had the funds to hire a tutor for their children which is unusual for the time and circumstances in P.E.I. (Stewart pers. corr.)

The Stretches were well off. This is clear from Emma's account book diary which not only charts the progress of their prosperity but shows how Emma contributed to the success.

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[66]The farm, in St. Catherine's county, still stands and is still occupied by Stretches descended from Joseph and Emma (Meacham's Atlas 135-136; Williamson 22).

Emma's diary functioned primarily as an account book and began when she was thirty-nine. It is written in a book with lined pages that had been brought from England (Stewart). Children scribbled and practised forming letters on the back inside cover, in some cases writing over sums added by Emma's hand; there are doodlings on half-empty back pages. Each entry appears to have been written at one sitting, judging by the uniformity of handwriting. Some entries are written in varied qualities of ink; others are written in pencil. The date of each daily entry is written in the left margin with generally the number and weekday only (e.g. 28 Mon); at the top of each page, Emma provides a running header with the month (March 1859) and notes the start of each new month at the appropriate entry as, for example, "April 1st." The last several pages of the diary contain household accounts; the right hand margin provides the proper ruling for a financial ledger. In these tabular accounts at the back of the diary and in marginal annotations throughout the diary, Emma keeps a running tally of what her family buys, what they lend to others, and how much she has on account with local merchants. The accounts are itemized "Tea given on trust," "Mrs. D. McEachern tea a/c," ""Mr. Knight a/c," "Contra Henry Knight," "Contra," and "McPhael's tea a/c." Each separate account is apportioned its own page, many of which are now dog-eared and water-stained. I believe the diary was saved at first as a record of accounts and of yearly work to be consulted as needed; why it survived beyond this immediate function is hard to tell. Archivist Charlotte Stewart writes, "as to why the diary survived--I cannot say for certain, but it appears ... that Mrs. Stretch died at age fifty-three, relatively early, and perhaps the volume was treasured by the family for sentimental reasons."

A typically laconic entry found in Emma's diary is the following from Saturday 2 July 1859:

> Angus McCammon's girl called Josy gave her 8s for mending harrows. Lent Grace Knight a pint of rum. Mr. Hodgson called no letters paid Miss McKenzie 3/ for making Emmeline's frock.

In this example, Emma's diary shows the underpinnings of a female economy at work in mid-nineteenth century rural P.E.I.: Angus McCammon's daughter is collecting money for mending the harrows; Miss McKenzie is paid for her sewing skills; Grace Knight, as usual, is lent a pint of rum for, in exchange, Emma regularly receives butter from the Knights. The fact that Emma borrows butter tells us that, at this point, the Stretch farm has no dairy cows (although she does mention a cash cow calving on 10 May 1859), and that they must rely on the Knights for this most basic staple.[67] In return, Emma exchanges less usual foodstuffs such as rum or tea.

The exchange of rum between Emma and Grace Knight begins to unravel one of the Stretches' survival strategies, revealed by further investigation of the brief phrase "no letters." This phrase refers to the fact that the Stretches await a letter from a British brother-in-law who sends them shipments of tea, which Emma, primarily, uses to barter with locals for domestic work. The following entries from 1859 chart the various ways in which Emma uses tea as payment and exchange:[68]

> 18 April: "Grace Blue here let her have 1/2 lb. of tea took fat etc. to make soap for me also Chad's trousers."
> 23 April: "Grace Blue made me 14 lbs of soap. Paid her 1/9 in tea."
> 27 April: " [G]ave Peggy Blue 2/8 worth of tea to pay Grace for soap"
> 25 May: "Gave Grace Blue 1/2 lb of tea for a pair of socks and 2 collars she remained all night to mind baby for me."
> 30 May: "Donald McFale called and paid me 5/3 for tea."
> 14 July: "Grace Blue brought a doz. eggs and sat a hen. She also got 1/4 of tea paid"
> 7 November: "Blue girls called let them have 1 lb of tea to pay for potatoe [sic] getting"

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[67] Meacham's Atlas shows a pen and ink sketch of the Stretch farm in 1880 with grazing cattle clearly in the foreground (110).

[68] Evidence of Maritime bartering is also found in Mary Bradley's memoir A Narrative of the Life and Christian Experience of Mrs. Mary Bradley published in 1849. The writer, from New Brunswick, set up a loom at her home and exchanged the cloth for "such trade as was suitable for our family's use, which made payment easy to my customers" (qtd. in Conrad, "Sundays," 103).

In exchange for tea, Emma is excused from tasks like sewing, knitting, and baby-sitting; she employs potato diggers; she receives soap and eggs. Selling tea necessitates interactions with neighbours such as Donald McFale. Tea is currency in a black-market or barter economy; it is also an integral part of her social life, for, as other entries show, taking tea with the neighbours is one of Emma's most frequent social events.

In the entry from 2 July 1859, Emma's succinct "no letters" alludes to the fact that she expected a reply from her brother-in-law about the next shipment of tea. Her husband has written at least two letters to his brother. On 22 April, "Joe wrote to his brother Tom" and a son, Chad, posted the letter the very next day. Again on 10 June, "Joe wrote to his brother" reports Emma, and on 12 June, "she took the letters for the post." There are no other letters to which she alludes in the previous four months; although they may also be hoping for family news in other letters, it seems they are waiting to hear from Tom about something. Emma's concern about the letter from her brother-in-law, I believe, means that she does not know when to expect the tea that is her primary method of payment and an income-generating commodity.[69] "No letters" equals no tea nor news of tea. That tea was her most important item of exchange is obvious from the accounts in the back of the diary; in particular, the column headed "Contra" lists those paid with tea. As a postscript, it seems that the tea shipment did not arrive until 5 November when she writes that two friends brought back "goods from Isabel," the ship that plied the waters between England and P.E.I. (the same ship that had brought Emma over). After this shipment of unnamed goods, her accounts record a flurry of tea transactions throughout November.

Importing goods--especially foodstuffs such as tea--for personal gain was a tradition of more than a half century on the island; as one historian explains, the Colonial Forestalling Act of 1780-1785 had been explicitly devised to deter Islanders from gaining a monopoly on any one shipment of goods arriving in port. According to historian E.

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[69] At the end of 1859, we find Emma busy "weighing and putting away the tea," another shipment (23 December).

Boyde Beck, "even a man with modest capital could acquire a short-term monopoly on imported commodities in a colony with limited resources" by buying up all of the goods from one shipment, and the forestalling act sought to eradicate such monopolizing practices (71). In 1855, there was a renewed effort to end such practices and Charlottetown passed a bylaw "Relating to Hucksters and to Prevent Forestalling" (Beck 81) which reiterated that people were forbidden to buy produce and re-sell it the same day. Although the Stretches benefited from their imported tea and seem to be the sole supplier to their community, I am not suggesting that the Stretches were attempting to corner the British import trade on tea, nor could they; by the late 1850s they would have been prevented both legally and practically because in addition to the forestalling laws, increased shipping traffic throughout the 1850s meant that a monopoly would have been difficult to acquire or maintain. What I am suggesting is that Emma's brief phrase "no letters," her unwritten anticipation of the tea shipment, and an account recording tea transactions labeled "contra" allude to a practice which is dimly connected with dodgy trade practices. As late twentieth-century readers, we have to work to uncover the nuances of meaning--the colonial economics and the local commercial and social exchanges--that lie beneath its surface.

The Stretches also barter alcohol to get work done. Emma regards liquor as a necessary and unremarkable lubricant needed to get people working during "frolics," the P.E.I. equivalent to "bees." To accomplish tasks necessary to the farm, Emma provides entertainment which includes, in this example from the second and third of August 1860, a dance with a half gallon of whisky after a spinning frolic:

> Thurs 2 Got a bucket of new potatoes from Angus also 6 eggs and a little flour for spinning frolic tomorrow ...
> Fri 3 Had 7 women spinning for me did 15 skeins Chad went to Farquarsons for 1/2 gallon whisky Hodgsons came up had a bit of a dance in the evening got 6 more qts of berries and 1 do [ditto] for the frolic at Knights.

There is obviously food involved too. The six eggs, flour, and seven quarts of berries are needed for desserts at Emma's frolic as well as the one at Knight's. If men are involved with the frolic, the amount of alcohol increases as it does on 3 November 1860 when Joseph Stretch buys a two gallon keg of rum for a frolic. Sometimes, the hired help gets carried away at frolics or at "raffles," an important social event in nineteenth-century Charlottetown involving dancing and drinking (Marquis 100). And sometimes, they fail to show up for work the next morning. Emma refers to hangovers obliquely, as in "George not here being sick after raffle" (24 February 1860). No moral judgement is passed; one gets the feeling she is making a note merely to be sure to take that day's wages out of his pay. As an indirect observer of these developments through her children, who sometimes went to work summers on the farm, Sarah implies in one letter that the Stretch children are becoming a bit wild and foul-mouthed from rural living.[70] Sarah, who followed the good work of the "Sons of Temperance," was perhaps mortified that rum, whisky, and grog were consumed at the Stretch farm (Tuck 74; 88;117).

Sarah's letters and Emma's diary are useful counterpoints. Sarah's letters not only help to fill in some of the missing context from Emma's spare entries but provide a stark contrast in terms of motivation and literary aspirations. Part of the discrepancy results from the fact that Sarah and Emma are writing two different forms--letters versus diaries--but more importantly, their motivations are different. Folklorist Motz argues that "rural diaries ... [are] distinct from more familiar introspective, or spiritual, diaries" (132).

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[70] Sarah describes a visit from the Stretches and describes how the children have grown; then cryptically, she writes "the youngest boy Hector, is a very nice little fellow, and it will be a sad pity if the others spoil him. They labour under great disadvantages up the West [Elliott] River." In the very next sentence, which starts a new paragraph, she writes:

> You would be shocked if you could hear how common bad language is in this Island. The children of both rich and poor curse and swear almost as soon as they can walk. I am thankful to say that our own children never use an improper word. They are taught the impropriety of it and shun the society of those boys who delight in it. (Tuck 113)

The gap between these two statements suggests to me that recollections of the Stretch boys prompt her diatribe against swearing and allows her to avoid blaming them directly for poor behaviour.

While religious diarists often aspire to literariness, rural diarists write "terse daily accounts of the writers' activities, the natural environment" (133). Emma's flat, close-range writing does not attempt to achieve literariness and therefore does not employ any of the strategies of high literature such as narrative distance, witty observations, or descriptive language.

The accounts written by Sarah and Emma diverge in their presentation of Empire and home. Sarah exhibits a keen sense of Empire totally lacking in Emma's account. Perhaps because she lived so close to Charlottetown, because of the different demands of the letter form, or because of her different aspirations, Sarah writes newsy reports on the excitement surrounding the arrival of the Prince of Wales in August 1860, for example, but Emma does not. In fact, we learn from Sarah that on the occasion of the Prince's arrival, "Joe [Stretch] came to town and brought his children, but not Emma" (Tuck 94). The excitement around the Prince's tour, a major event in both the Canadas and the Maritimes documented in several places (including the Ontario diary of Amelia Ryerse Harris [71]) suggests that the connection to Empire was strong in late-1850s and 1860s Charlottetown. Reportedly, children in the town came home from school "singing Rule Britannia" and calling each other "Colonial" (MacEachern 25). However, Emma was either not interested in seeing a representative of the Empire or--more likely--thought it unnecessary to record it in her diary. Like other nineteenth-century rural diarists, Emma rarely records national or newsworthy events "unless they have an immediate impact" on her life (Motz 136). The representation of Empire was not part of the project of her diary even though, in practice, she lived out the expansionist ideals of the Empire by successfully setting up a home in the colonies.

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[71] Amelia Ryerse Harris comments on the social maneuvering occasioned by the Prince's visit when he arrived in Canada West in September 1860. She remarks on the folly of upper-class mothers, her peers, who were keen to have their daughters dance with the unmarried Prince in the hopes that a romance would blossom (Harris and Harris 168-171). The editors of her diary also enumerate other diary sources which recount the Prince's visit.

In the representation of home and her role as mother, Sarah follows a Victorian script whereas Emma's seeming lack of regard for the well-being of her children, who are most often mentioned as workers, impresses readers as particularly laconic. When, in 1864, Sarah loses her daughter Patty she clothes the event in sentimental regalia and invokes a religious discourse:

> This has been a grievous stroke, but O I feel that it is a hand of love that has removed our dear little one from this world of sin and sorrow. May the affliction be blessed to us all. Our remaining dear ones are well. (Tuck 130)

Her sorrow and her appeal to religion do not strike present-day readers as particularly unusual under the circumstances although the prose stylings may be dated. By contrast, Emma's diary clinically details her baby's recovery from a concussion. In a summary for the week of 23-30 July 1859, Emma reports: "Baby taken bad with his head it is concussion of the brain ... Joe and Mr. Hodgson took the cart to town showed Charlie [the horse] to Purdie preserved rasps Baby no better myself worse." What seems most surprising in these entries to a first-time reader is the lack of emotional affect attached to the description of baby's condition. Here, in their entirety, are the entries for the following week, the first week of August 1859. Observe how baby's recovery is not elaborated in emotional terms:

> Mon Aug 1 Felt dreadfully weak commencing raining which hope will cool the air a little. Alick Lowrie here stumping.
> Tues 2 Felt rather better but fear I've lost my hearing baby no better weaned him altogether. Alick here stumping. Mr. Lamont came for his bridle we fear is lost ordered hind quarter of veal from Mr. McEachern. Mr. Hodgson came up with newspaper.
> Wed 3 Joey brought 16lbs of veal from McEacherns Alick busy stumping paid Mrs. Smith for making pinafores still continues oppressively hot much annoyed at not finding Mr. Lamont's bridle.
> Thurs 4 Alick here Baby worse Hector Blue came to see him.
> Fri 5 took a quarter of lamb from Blues Baby no better Mrs. Weatherby called holidays at the school very hot.
> Sat 6 Alick still busy ploughing with Shaw's horse.
> Sun 7 Hector Blue came to see Baby Chad went to town for medicine Grace Blue sat up with him at night Mr. & Mrs. Hodgson called also D Shaw & Sandy

> Mon 8 Alick here ploughing with Shaw's horse Baby a little better
> Tues. 9 Alick finished ploughing top land with Costello's horse. Mr. Hodgson called. Baby much the same.
> Wed 10 Mrs. McEachern came to see baby who is rather better. Alick here ploughing with Fergus McEachern's horse Emmy and Tom went to take tea with Mrs. McEachern who sent 2 yds of flannel for Baby.

After this entry, we hear little more about baby except for the occasional update on what seems to be a static and chronic condition in which he never gets much better but never worsens either. On 31 March 1860, he is still (or again) "poorly." Only after examining family records from the P.E.I. Archives did I discover that "Baby" was at least two years old at the time; William, born in 1856, went on to lead a full life producing four children of his own, living--it seems--without any major ill effects from his early trauma until his death in 1930.

My first response to this episode was a sense of estrangement. Why was there no developed commentary on her baby's condition, her fears for his health? Did she not care? My first reading was a misreading; the emotional affect is communicated not in content but in the repetition of entries. Repetitiveness within and across diary entries is not only a common formal property of rural diaries but is often a strategy to attenuate emotional intensity. "Like a quilt," Motz writes, "the rural diary is composed of small repeated segments" (140). Words on the page are spare, and each word is asked to bear a burden of meaning: "the very act of recording information on paper, so commonplace today, may have had an aesthetic and a psychological value for those to whom written words were scarce commodities" (138). As a result, rural diary writing signals emotional intensity not by metaphor or heightened figurative language but by quantity: "it tells us more of the same without comparisons" (Hampsten 21). Turning back to the entries around Baby's concussion, we find that it is the dailiness of Emma's concern that makes the episode noticeable, not any adjectives used to describe it. As a result, the overall effect of a rural diary can only be adduced by standing back from individual entries; like a quilt, the entries create "a whole through their juxtaposition with one another rather than

their focus on a common theme or center of interest" (Motz 142). That the week's worth of entries about the baby share a common theme suggests the importance of Baby's concussion.

Another reason for Emma's seeming reticence in the last week of July is that she was suffering from scarlet fever. Sarah's letters from that summer indicate an epidemic of scarlet fever which began in June (Tuck 82-83) and Emma notes in her diary that her husband spent time fishing with Critchlow Harris just when the Harris children were all suffering from the disease (25 June 1859). Although Emma never names her end-of-July illness as such, the seriousness of her condition is evident, first, in the unusual summary entry covering a week's worth of events. This suggests she was too sick to write in her diary the previous week. On the day she revives, when she first writes about Baby's condition, she gets up and preserves raspberries even while she still feels quite ill. The next day, she pays for her burst of productivity by feeling "dreadfully weak"; the day after, she acknowledges that she has lost her hearing from the illness which further suggests, to me, that it was an attack of scarlet fever because deafness was a common side-effect. The severity of her illness also suggests why she weaned the baby "altogether" perhaps fearing the possibility of adding scarlet fever to his concussion. Although it may not have been possible for her to communicate scarlet fever to her son via breast milk, it is hard to judge her level of medical knowledge from her diary.

This extended episode featuring the baby's concussion and the possible scarlet fever corresponds to what Rebecca Hogan sees as one of the defining features of diary writing: that things happen "between entries," not in them (103). The compressed week's worth of entries in Emma's diary and the silence about her illness indicate that a lot is happening in her life. Regardless of Emma's condition or the baby's, life at the farm goes on. Farm hand Alick Lowrie is stumping and plowing; a hind quarter of veal arrives; neighbours call; two different horses are borrowed and a bridle is lost. Emma can barely keep up with the diary and its book-keeping; the raspberries need preserving, and

unexpected expenses (for Baby's medicine and for replacing the lost bridle) are piling up. This week's worth of entries is not, then, a laconic underplaying of baby's illness, as I first believed, because a second closer reading suggests that Emma is overwhelmed. In Andrew Hassam's work on shipboard diaries, he distinguishes two types of silences that threaten a diary: "the silence of 'nothing to report' and the silence of 'unable to write'" (105). In the second case, a diarist may be unable to write due to unfavourable material conditions or to an accumulation of events that overwhelms the possibility of narrating discrete events. In that case, too much to report is as paralyzing or as frustrating as too little to report. The concussion episode in Emma's diary falls into the latter category; there are too many events to narrate. The problem of too much to report translates into problems for later readers some of which are described by historian Ulrich's remarks on the seemingly reticent eighteenth-century diary of Martha Ballard: "the problem is not that it is trivial but that it introduces more stories than can easily be recovered and absorbed" (25). Emma's diary is not reticent, as this example makes clear, but its explication relies on a "universe of humans" (Temple 79) including, in this case, P.E.I. archivists and genealogists, Sarah Harris and her letters, and an investigative reader to assemble even a little of its meaning.

Many stories in Emma's diary may remain undisclosed and un-recovered, but her record of bartering tea or crawling out of sick-bed to preserve raspberries shows how she contributed to the economic success of the farm. Historian Terry Crowley comments that unpublished diaries from nineteenth-century rural Ontario do not show women's involvement in economic matters; rather, they "show farm men and women discussing or working together in deciding on such major purchases as houses or cream separators, but they seldom mention women's involvement in decisions about what crops to plant or other aspects of economic management" (67). Although Crowley does look at farm women's diaries in his study, he may be referring to diaries written primarily by men, for in the tea episode and elsewhere, Emma's business acumen and her network of suppliers

and clients keeps domestic life flowing smoothly in conjunction with a barter economy. Her accounting shows that she is clearly the partner who oversees all domestic work; she manages the economic transactions for the family and keeps track of where the money and the tea go. Therefore, Emma's intelligent and shrewd participation is a necessary part of the farm's success.

The potential for uncovering the economic implications of women's work compels researchers in the fields of women's studies or women's history to find a way of reading account-book diaries, for Emma shows clearly her economic involvement in both her contributed labour and in the record-keeping function of her diary. As Margaret Conrad notes, diaries are only one example of the variety of material that could potentially illuminate women's economic contributions; "evidence of women's activity ... [including] scrapbooks, genealogies, local histories, minutes of meetings, recipes, samplers ... quill baskets, quilts and rugs comprise the material legacy which these women have bequeathed to us and with which we must come to terms" ("Sundays" 100). We must come to terms with these material legacies because they can reveal a side of community building--the participation of women--which is usually obscured or missing. As Laurel Thatcher Ulrich points out, while the male ledgers from an eighteenth-century New England town might show the "external economy" with the regular "debit and credit entries for each customer," Martha Ballard's diary shows what happened to commodities such as flax seeds:

> It not only records when Ephraim Ballard [Martha's husband] planted the flax, but when she and her daughters weeded and harvested it. It not only identifies the male helpers who turned and broke it, but the many female neighbours who assisted her and her daughters with the combing, spinning, reeling, boiling, spooling, warping, quilling, weaving, bucking, and bleaching that transformed the ripe plant into finished cloth. (Ulrich 29)

As Ulrich concludes, "Martha's diary fills in the missing work--and trade--of women" (29) and demonstrates "how men and women worked together to sustain [an] eighteenth-

century town" (30). Likewise, the material legacy of quilts, baskets, or scrapbooks mentioned by Conrad draw our attention to women's participation in domestic economies. Cynthia Huff argues that "the extensive keeping of accounts" in nineteenth-century British women's diaries "shows the scope of women's managerial functions and business acumen" (xxi). As Huff goes on to explain, although these diaries could include comments on "spiritual progress" (xx), they show that women "were often responsible for recording variables such as weather changes, harvest yields, and the acquisition of animals" (xxi). Like her British contemporaries, Emma kept track of how much the family was owed and how much they owed, how many hours of work were performed by hired domestic help, and how much food was coming into the house. Her writing, which reports "just the facts" as Jane Carlyle would say, reveals a substructure of work and labour supporting a mid-nineteenth-century rural P.E.I. community and shows that Emma's participation was an essential part of her family's economic and material prosperity; Emma contributed to the prosperity of the community by contributing to the success of the Stretch farm.

With regard to the issue of motivations, I suspect that--even though they are separated on a continuum of literariness and expressiveness--Emma would agree with Jane Carlyle that she began "without a moral end in view; but just as the Scotch professor drank whisky, because I like it and because it's cheap." Emma wrote--not to justify her existence to future generations--but to remember, perhaps, that ephemeral work such as making yeast, churning, or gathering raspberries for supper had been done even when the evidence of it so rapidly disappeared. The diary preserved evidence of her work and her time spent long after the bread, butter, and berries were eaten. She wrote to remember, and she wrote so that she could consult her diary the following year to find out when they planted crops, or what the weather was like for that time of year, something which would be not immediately obvious in a new climate.

Emma's diary focuses on work and thereby reveals women's contributions to the community; in addition, her diary depicts a particular, historically-situated relationship to that work. Like the twenty-five rural American diaries examined by folklorist Motz, Emma's diary is not "merely [a catalog] of tasks completed" but rather represents "the expressions of rural, pre-industrial concepts of time, place, community, and self" (131). Closer to Stretch is the example of Rebecca Chase Kinsman Ells, whose diary also demonstrates the intersections of rural labour with a pre-industrial concept of time; written between 1901 and 1906, Ells's diary "provide[s] a detailed account of one woman's daily routine on a commercial farm" where her "labour was an essential part of the farm economy and her work affected by the seasonal rhythms of rural life" (Conrad et. al. 205). The representation of time in Emma's diary is ordered in relation to her understanding of work; weekly and seasonal rhythms are more evident than the hourly rhythms of someone working in, for instance, an office setting. Every spring the Stretches planted potatoes, ploughed the fields, fixed the fences, and hauled manure: "Sandy carting manure and harrowing land for potatoes" (6 May 1859); "Wet day cutting potato sets and harrowing land and goose hatched 3" (9 May 1859); "Carting manure cutting sets and firing rubbish on the hill" (12 May 1859). The next year, similar entries record "George busy carting manure set 3 bushels turnbull potatoes" (10 May 1860); "George hauling manure set 3 bushels turnbull and Jennys potatoes" (12 May 1860). Each spring brings the same ritual of work. Nowhere in the diary does Emma record the clock time of a specific task unlike later diarists who entered the industrial work force such as Ella Liscombe. Ella worked for the Bank of Montreal in Nova Scotia in the 1930s and recorded her days by hourly rhythms: "In the bank from 9:00 this morning until 11:30 tonight with an hour off at 6:30 when I went to Aunt Clara's and had shrimps, salad and cake" (Conrad "Sundays" 104). For both Ella and Emma, their written representation of work signals an understanding of their place in the community. Ella knows that, by contract, her time belongs primarily to the bank, but someone like Emma

or Rebecca Ells understands herself as part of a larger community with shared, goal-oriented tasks rather than individual hourly tasks.

Emma's depiction of Sundays are another case in point illustrating how weekly rhythms affect her diary writing; her representation of Sundays also reveal her sense of her place in the community and her sense of identity. When others in her family go to church, and Emma has a chance to, she doesn't (e.g. 3 July 1859). She frequently spends Sundays alone, as on 25 September 1859: "Inclined to be wet at home alone all day." Whether this means alone with her family or completely alone is unclear. She doesn't work on Sundays, so in this way observes the Sabbath, but the taut remark about being alone on a wet Sunday, along with similar entries, suggests that she regarded Sundays as a day apart from the busy community of family and farm help who surrounded her throughout the week. For Emma, Sundays were a day of rest and, possibly, loneliness; however, the change of pace on Sundays gave an order to the week. It was a break in the usual routine worthy of comment in the diary, and sometimes she recorded pleasant diversions: "Took baby down to the beach for a walk Children had a sail in the boat" (18 September 1859). Mostly on Sundays she had little to say. Margaret Conrad finds in nineteenth-century Maritime diaries an idealization of Sundays because it "represented a welcome day of rest from domestic schedules" ("Sundays" 103). It may have been a welcome rest, but Emma's scanty Sunday entries suggest that an interruption in work made it difficult for her to know what to write about. Emma's portrayal of Sundays suggests to me that her identity as presented in the diary was significantly shaped by an identity as a working woman which she embraced. If so, according to Margaret Conrad, she would be like other rural Maritime women who accepted a burden of work because "the tenacity of rural life and the real power of women in rural families--especially in the nineteenth century--gave women a sense of purpose"; indeed, Conrad sees this as the reason for the later arrival of suffrage agitation in P.E.I. (RA 22). Emma's motivations in writing the diary have little to do with spiritual accounting or developing her literary

skills; instead, the diary is used to supplement and record the work that defined her place in the community and that perhaps provided a sense of identity and purpose.

If Emma's diary writing reveals a sense of her place in the community, the writing is, in turn, also shaped by that understanding. Because she sees herself positioned within a larger community, her writing is situated in and in correspondence with values held by the larger group. Her diary writing is not a "truly private" diary simply because it is a "bare-bones" work (Bloom 25). Rather, her diary participates in an imagined dialogue with the community in which it is written. Evidence for this can be found in her factual accounts of childbirth and death. For example, like other rural diarists, she does not "attempt ... to emphasize important occurrences" like death or illness; they are "presented visually on the page as [they are] understood conceptually, as an integral part of life and of the community experience" (Motz 137). In other words, she need not elaborate the significance of every event because it occurs within an accepted framework of community values which she need not explain. Baby's concussion, which receives little emphasis beyond repetition, is one case in point. Emma's presentation of childbirth and death also receive little fanfare. Childbirth is summarily described:

> Mrs. Weatherby confined boy. (29 June 1859)
> Mrs. McFale confined of a daughter churned. (10 November 1859)
> Grace Knight confined. (26 March 1860)

Likewise, death receives minimal attention:

> McEacherns child died. (8 April 1860)
> Mr. Blue died at 12 o'clock at night came on wet. (8 May 1859)

As is the case with the diarists from the American mid-west examined by Elizabeth Hampsten, death occurs without emphasis in diary entries. Hampsten cites a memorably reticent entry from the diary of working-class American Grace DeCou on the day her husband, T.H., dies:

> Sunday. Quite nice. T.H. is no better, just as crazy as ever broke a windowpane with rocking chair. Mrs. Fisher, Mrs. Alexander called, Miss Stanzel came to see my new stove. T.H. passed away this evening at 8 PM. (Hampsten 70)

DeCou's failure to comment on her husband smashing the window with his rocking chair and then adding his death as postscript seems remarkably restrained to twentieth-century readers. Motz would argue that this entry, like the entries of Emma's diary, portrays death as inevitable and unremarkable, as intrinsic as seasons to the ever-evolving life of the community. Emma doesn't bother to explain that the Mr. Blue who died on 8 May was the elderly father of Hector Blue who would later help when her own child fell on his head and of the other Blue daughters, like Grace and Peggy, who were constantly at the Stretches. Emma knows who he is and does not need to explain the significance of the man or his death. Similarly, when the Harrises in Charlottetown decide to fire their unmarried maid who is pregnant, Sarah's letters explain the moral downfall in no uncertain terms (Tuck 67); Emma writes only "Jane left Harris'" (12 April 1859). Generally speaking, there is no need to explain to her imagined reader (whether that is the diarist herself, her family, or her community) the significance of individual entries: their meaning would already be clear and easily understood. Motz comments that the content of rural diaries needs no elaboration since the writer was well aware of community standards and values: "elaboration was not needed since abstracted forms stood for more complex ideas commonly agreed upon by the community but not readily articulated" (145). The brief notations in Emma's diary serve to record a shared and commonly understood experience rather than identify, describe, or transmit the significance of an event to a reader who knows nothing about it.

Because there is no attempt to emphasize particular events in the daily entries of Grace de Cou's diary or in Emma's diary, details seem to proliferate. Events are not ordered hierarchically in order of importance but delivered in a flat narrative voice. On one hand, this corroborates Cynthia Huff's point that what the diary offers is not "about

hierarchy" but about community ("That Profoundly Female Genre" 6). On the other hand, this kind of writing reflects a desire to mitigate the unknown and the unusual. Elizabeth Hampsten writes that working-class women aim "to assert a pattern and to blur distinctions between recurring and unique events" (68); this seems also to be the case with the rural diaries cited here such as Emma Stretch's or Martha Ballard's. Neither woman might be described properly as working class--Ballard was a rural midwife educated in herbalism, and Stretch seemed to arrive in rural P.E.I. with money in hand--but like working-class diaries, these diarists squeeze anything abnormal into a pattern already established in their diaries and this, even more than sexual prudery, is what makes their writings seem so reticent (Hampsten 73). Such is the case with Emma and her baby's concussion. It also typifies the diary of homesteader Louise Smith Clubine who moved from Toronto to Edmonton in 1914 to marry a man with whom she had been corresponding. As they take their "honeymoon" trip along the Edson trail, Louise refers in one enigmatic entry to "a crazy man" in a tent next to them, and "all he keeps saying is Don't torture me. He is a professor and husband of Dr. Higby." This information is delivered in the same flat narrative voice which she uses to record the fact that she "had dinner about 1:30 & did a little washing." Rather than emphasize the odd features of this encounter, Louise struggles to wrest the event into line with other unremarkable events of her day, such as the washing.

Grace de Cou and Louise Clubine offer two examples which demonstrate the careful parceling of details in what may be a desire to keep narrative events under control. Andrew Hassam notices similar proclivities among both men and women who keep repetitive, factual shipboard diaries; he argues that the purpose of such diaries is to assert order in a battle between disruptions to the narrative and "narrative equilibrium" (77). He cites the case of a drunken man intruding into one man's repetitive diary account of wind direction and weather conditions at sea; subsequently, the diarist spends one month fighting to reduce the drunk (who disrupts life on the ship and eventually throws himself

overboard) "to the monotony of a formula," to "a routine item like the direction of the wind" (76). Furthermore, Hassam argues that the "obsession with detail is part of the larger impulse in [such] diaries to arrest transgression" (138). His comments offer yet another way to understand Emma Stretch's diary: if she saw herself as writing in an economically chaotic time in the days before Confederation, in a situation where a successful outcome was not at all certain, she might have been using her diary as a way to mitigate the unknown, as a way to stave off chaos by ordering daily events and financial accounts in her diary. Her motivations for diary writing might well be underwritten by the "fantasies of loss" that Alain Corbin sees at work in other nineteenth-century diaries (498).

The attention to details in the shipboard diaries cited by Hassam and in rural diaries suggests a desire to take control over possibly disruptive narrative elements; furthermore, the profusion of details subverts canonical notions of artfulness. Traditionally, it has been understood that "the more [an] artist turns an impartial eye on detail, the greater the state of anarchy" (Hogan 98); in other words, without selectivity and ordering there is no art. Reticent diary writing is decidedly at odds with the most commonly-held beliefs about artfulness and literariness, and this holds true for rural diaries in which there is a steadfast refusal to privilege any one element over another. Some critics, like Huff, appeal to the language of French feminism in an attempt to explain how women's diary writing works. However, French feminists such as Kristeva are concerned with the singular figure of the avant garde artist and her acts of subversion rather than with collectivities (MacLean and Landry 49). Because Emma Stretch places herself narratively and conceptually within a community, I cannot see her as the subversive lone avant-garde artist. This does not mean, however, that I find Stretch's diary artless. Folklorist Motz advocates reading such diaries as folk art, and I agree that it offers a vocabulary with which to describe the aesthetics of Emma's diary; it accepts the literary naïveté of the writer without denigrating her writing.

Agreeing that many rural men and women used their diaries as a bulwark against the future or as a reference point for next year's work, Motz points to the entries which can have no significance for future work to argue that these rural diaries are not strictly practical but part of a folk aesthetic. Granted, the vast majority of Emma's diary writing is resolutely practical, but when she writes about taking baby to the beach, arguably this has no practical significance for her future life. In an more vivid example, Emma writes "hanged blk cat for thieving propensities" (30 January 1860). Here, she does not record a particularly useful way in which to hang a cat. The word "propensities," from a register of vocabulary unlike the rest of the diary suggests an artistry at work in this entry according with Motz's definition of folk art as that which is "embellished 'beyond necessity'" (139). Moreover, Emma's sentence is "concrete but abstract" (143). As in folk art, the "blk" cat is distilled only to its most "salient features that call to mind a picture of the whole" (143). Such entries, according to Motz, convey their affinity to the same "aesthetic sensibility" that took functional objects such as axe handles or quilts "beyond the strictly functional to achieve an expressive plane" (139).

The perspective from which Emma writes also identifies her work as belonging to a folk aesthetic. Although artists since the Renaissance have sought to achieve the illusion of three-dimensional perspective in their work, naïve artists are "less concerned with thematic unity than with completeness and comprehensiveness"; their stance is "aspective" or "symbolic" (Motz 142;141). Like a folk artist, Emma's angle of vision or her narrative stance is aspective. Writes Motz: "the artist taking such an approach portrays a scene not as he or she sees it at any one point in time but as he or she knows it to be" (141). Similarly, Emma writes of community events as she knows them to be without explaining their significance to outsiders. This is simply to say that there is a principle of artistry at work in Emma Stretch's diary; for this reason, it cannot be considered artless.

Why is it important that Emma's diary should not be labeled artless? Does it mean that I am trying to make room in a literary tradition for her factual writing? No, it is to show that there is a principle of selectivity and editing at work in this text, so someone is making those selections and editions within a cultural framework. It is the "someone" I am interested in, someone who is not a value-free transmitter of history. This "bare-bones" diary, as Bloom would call it, is set within an imagined community whose values it shares and upon whom it relies as an ideal audience. In other words, there is something to be gained from reading factual accounts and that is a partial recovery of a fragment of identity and its cultural context. As I argued elsewhere, the folktale, the diary and the scrapbook are all material traces of a historical subject attempting to place herself within her cultural context. They have the potential to move us towards a recovery of biography and a reconstruction of the historically-situated cultural context in which that subject existed. Emma Stretch's diary allows us to recover some of the material contributions made by strong and active rural women like herself, and her accounts help us reconstruct the barter economy that was integral to the establishment of a nineteenth-century settlement. The condensations and aporia of individual or collected entries alert us to some of her concerns and values. We can begin to suggest the historical framework in which she operated and may even discern some biographical details, but we have to remember that we only approach Emma and her self-representation in the diary "in an endless process of representation," which is to say that we need to be careful about our interpretive claims or the act or recovery becomes no more than an act of recovering (Bullock 5).

Chapter Six

Late-Century Adolescent Diaries: confessions and audiences in educational settings.

This chapter examines a culture which is not necessarily geographically specific but specific to a certain age range of diarists: school-age women. I contend that young women's diaries were encouraged by parents, and later by peers, who exerted significant influences on the diarists as the explicit or implicit audiences. The resulting confessions that were recorded and the "discipline of self" (Hunter 51) that was practiced in diaries had ramifications on the diarists' identities as they emerged in a changing society. This chapter focuses on some of the numerous examples of diary writing by women involved with the education system[72] at the end of the nineteenth and the turn of the twentieth centuries and affords us the opportunity to look into the lives of literate women, usually with class aspirations, to see how their diary writing contributed to their developing sense of self and to their understanding of, and participation in, the new roles available for educated women in post-Confederation Canadian society.

It is generally assumed today that diary writing is a female activity. Many diaries are marketed specifically for women. For example, diary critic Suzanne Bunkers describes one of hers that had "a blue cover with a teenaged girl and boy strolling arm in arm past what looked ... like a stadium" (CC 208). Clearly, the manufacturers imagined a target market of romantically-minded, heterosexual, possibly adolescent women; implicitly, the preferred diary content would have to do with romantic plots. In addition, young men have been known to studiously avoid diary writing. Researcher Cinthia Gannett relates an anecdote about assigning journals to her college composition class in

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[72] In a 1977 article entitled the "Feminization of Teaching", Alison Prentice, highly regarded for her work on the history of teaching, wrote that "statements by women teachers are hard to come by" (62). On the contrary, the diaries and memoirs of teachers and students seem to be quite prolific in Canadian archives and repositories.

the 1980s: "a male student came to my office," she writes, "... and told me he didn't like writing the journal that had been assigned ... He said it was too much like a diary and that the 'girls' did a better job because they kept diaries at home" (ix).[73] This student reveals not only his own distaste for the project but his assumption that "girls" inherently know how to and want to keep diaries. A male antipathy towards what has been characterized as diary writing is evident also at the end of the nineteenth century. In an 1897 Atlantic Monthly article, journalist Agnes Repplier speculates that "little boys have been wont to consider [diaries] a lamentable waste of time ... As a rule, a lad commits himself to a diary, as to any other piece of work, only because it has been forced upon him by the voice of authority" (Hunter 55). Oscar Wilde's 1895 portrayal of Cecily in The Importance of Being Earnest demonstrates some of the shifting currents in late nineteenth-century diary writing. When Algernon asks to see Cecily's diary, she covers it with her hand and responds, "Oh no ... You see it is simply a very young girl's record of her own thoughts and impressions and consequently meant for publication. When it appears in volume form I hope you will order a copy" (1015). Wilde satirizes not only the diary's association with young women but Cecily's aspirations to both privacy and publication, a position which seems untenable. Because of her sex and her age, her diary writing activities are recognizable to the audience.

Diaries written by men and women proliferated after mid-century, signifying increased literacy in general and increased leisure time for women in particular. Peter Gay remarks in his study of the "bourgeois experience" that diaries "became almost obligatory companions to a class endowed with a modicum of leisure" (qtd. in Hunter 53). Diary critics agree, remarking on diary writing in late-nineteenth century as a conventional habit among people of culture; it was associated with a genteel life and an ideology of refinement (Fothergill 34; Culley 4). This late-century development in diary

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[73] Gannett goes on to enumerate some of the differences between male discourse in journals and female (157-162).

writing was coincident with the growth of the middle class after 1859 and the increasing number of servants employed in middle-class homes; consequently, daughters in those houses had more leisure (Hunter 55). Light and Parr, along with other historians, assert that household labour was well entrenched by the 1880s in Canada; by 1891, domestic servants accounted for 41% of the female work force (Leslie 71) which meant that a whole segment of the population, the daughters of middle and upper class families, had little to do at home, certainly less than their brothers.

Mercy Coles, mentioned in the last chapter as a diarist notably associated with the Confederation talks in Charlottetown, was a daughter of leisure. At one point in her diary, Mercy realizes how much work there is to be done at the home of her American relatives who have no servants: "They are making cheese this morning. No servants, here they all do their own work. I am not surprised. Bertie found it so different at our house, when he had half a dozen to wait on him" (qtd. in Powell 74). This entry implies that she is granted more leisure time at home because of her half dozen servants; as a result, she has time to work on her diary. And she was not alone in her leisure time. American advice-writer William Thayer reportedly received a query from a "pert miss" about what to do with her excessive leisure time in 1859. His correspondent asked "how can a girl like me be orderly when I have nothing to order?" And he suggested that she attend to her wardrobes and her rooms (Hunter 55). Another way to learn about order and regular living was through journal writing, according to American children's magazines such as St. Nicholas (55). Diaries were associated more particularly with young women by the end of the nineteenth century and especially with those who had leisure time.

Late nineteenth-century diary writing promised self-improvement through morally-inflected lessons of discipline and obedience. An increasing number of female diarists encountered prescriptions about diary writing in post-1860's advice manuals and

didactic literature which both advocated a particular moral tone.[74] The advice appeared in Britain and the US, but in Canada, specifically, an implacable morality demonstrated even in--or especially in--women's "private" writing was needed to enforce or uphold a certain model of distinctively Canadian femininity understood as critically important to the establishment of a civilized dominion. Advice manuals were only one source of pressure. Educational mandates, parental expectations, and peer pressure combined to influence the kind of diary writing that was considered appropriate in developing women's role in Canada as moral guardians. The proof for this rather involved argument lies in two directions: first, that women were truly expected to act as guardians of Canada's morality late in the century, and second, that diary writing was considered to be morally improving by teachers, parents, and guardians.

Canadian women were led to believe that the job of civilizing the nation rested upon their shoulders. During expansion into the Canadian west, for example, women were explicitly told that they bore responsibility for the nation's culture and morality by the British female traveller Jessie Saxby who wrote in 1890 that western bachelors were "restless, dissatisfied, reckless, and godless" without female influence (102). Even before that, portrayals of the new Dominion throughout the 1870s were metaphorically female (and often childlike) in contradistinction to the masculine, mature, and aggressive "Uncle Sam" to the south. While these metaphorical portrayals were less explicit in their guidance of female behaviour, they worked to promulgate a sense of Canada's distinctive moral superiority expressed through characteristically feminine qualities.

Examples of the metaphorically feminine portrayal of Canada in the 1870s are numerous. Canada frequently figured as daughter to Mother Britannia[75] in Rudyard

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[74] See Jane H. Hunter's article "Inscribing the Self in the Heart of the Family" for a description of didactic literature influencing diary writing in late-Victorian America and Lynne Vallone's Disciplines of Virtue for an analysis of girls' conduct manuals.

[75] The study of the metaphorical figure of Mother Britannia has been commented on in many studies including Ann McClintock's Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest (35;61;218;354;355;356) where Britannia is often seen selling her wares; C. L. Innes's Woman and Nation

Kipling's "Our Lady of the Snows." Similarly, in line "d" of an acrostic poem on "Canada," Pauline Johnson names the new country "daughter of men and markets" (148). An anonymous story published as the first in the "Fiddle-Dum Dee Papers" in 1871 extended this theme by allegorizing "the children of Mrs. Dominion, how they quarreled and what came of it." Mrs. Dominion is portrayed as a "buxom widow" who eventually marries Mr. Kingdom on July first under the approving eye of Mrs. Britannia, her mother. Buxom, yes: the fertility of arable Canadian land seemed to have found an appropriate metaphorical vehicle in women's bodies. For example, a photo from a 1907 British parade celebrating emigration capitalizes on the connection between Canadian women and land. It shows a woman riding a bicycle meant "to advertise Canadian prosperity"; both woman and bicycle are laden with leaves and branches; foliage is draped across her bosom (Cavell 157). Natural, fecund woman in this instance represents the nature of Canada. The Canadian Illustrated News provides numerous cartoon images of Canada in 1870, one as a debutante at the Council of Nations; another as a tottering child between Mother Britannia and Uncle Sam.

Canada sought to develop a particular kind of citizen distinguishable from an American; however, the model of the ideal citizen was inflected by gender, and the expectations attending this model surfaced in, among other places, late-century debates about education. This is (at least one place) where participation in citizenship became contradictory for Canadian women.[76] Although Canada's process of nation-building at this moment incorporated an ethos of public education for the advancement of society and a popular belief about the civilizing role of women, it was not at all accepted that

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in Irish Literature and Society, 1880-1935; Madge Dresser's article in Raphael Samuel's Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British national Identity Vol. 3; and Marina Warner's Monuments and Maidens: the Allegory of the Female Form. Less studied is the representation of Britannia's colonial daughters: the empress of the east (India), the daughter of the sun (Australia), and the lady of the snows (Canada). I have been able to find no articles that deal with this issue in a strictly Canadian context.

[76] Women and democracy, and women and the law were obviously other arenas in the battle about participatory citizenship. I focus on women's relationship to education here because it most directly affects the writing activities of the young women involved with an educational institution.

higher education would be beneficial for women's civilizing powers. The debate about women and education in late-century Canada need only be touched on as it pertains to this argument because it is a complex issue which has already received substantial scholarly attention from historians and cultural commentators.[77] Among those entering into the debate were women like Elizabeth Smith Shortt [78] in the 1870s or Maude Abbott in the late 1880s and 1890s who worked to secure women's access to higher education. Added to their efforts were fictional letters from "Agnodice," published in 1879 in The Canada Educational Monthly, who lobbied for women's rights to higher education (Light CWOM 204). Women who clamoured for professional education in the 1880s met with this response from the Queen's College Journal: women should remain "Mistresses of Hearts not Arts" because the "delicate grace and beauty of women had to be protected from 'the rude influences, the bitterness and strife' of the muscular world outside" (Roberts 28). Higher education, meaning access to universities and professional (especially medical) schools, was a particularly embattled site for Canadian women. Essentially, the paradoxical argument levied against higher education for women was that it would only serve to taint women's purity and morality; they would, in effect, learn too much. This argument was maintained in spite of the fact that women were expected, as mothers, to teach the next generation of Canadian citizens.

The 1889-1891 diary of Bessie Mabel Scott (later Lewis) details her years at the University of Toronto shortly after it had become co-educational in 1884. At the time of

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[77] See in particular the work of Ruby Heap or Alison Prentice. A recent publication on the history of women teachers is Women who Taught: Perspectives on the History of Women and Teaching, edited by Alison Prentice and Marjorie R. Theobald. Wendy Mitchinson details some of the medical arguments used to prevent women from entering higher education in The Nature of their Bodies (83-87). Mitchinson cites an entry from the diary of Maude Abbott where she expresses her desire for education and her fear that she will never obtain it.

[78] The diaries of Elizabeth Smith Shortt detailing her efforts are available at the University of Waterloo Rare Book Room. Veronica Strong-Boag comments that "few repositories are as fortunate as the University of Waterloo where the Elizabeth Smith Shortt papers, never intended for public gaze, retain the intimate details of her life first as a teacher and a medical student, and as a wife, mother, and reformer" and she lauds the efforts of past Chief Librarian Doris Lewis for saving this document (RCC 75-76).

the changeover, the president, Daniel Wilson, expressed his fears that co-education would undermine the university's symbolic role as the "bulwarks of civilization" (Roberts 28). He further called women who wanted a participatory role in society "mischievous radical innovators" (28). Bessie's diary shows how she carefully navigated her way through this contentious period; for example, she tries with humour to refer civilly to professors who really did not want her there. "Professor Chapman, very funny, dear old man, denies that he objects to ladies" she writes early in her first year (30 October 1889). One month later, she writes with more invective that he is "an old fraud" because when Bessie and her female friends are late for class, Professor Chapman announces that "he was glad we girls were not there, when we walked in of course there was a row" (29 November 1889).

In 1880, the University of Toronto Varsity had warned of the disastrous sexual intrigues that might arise should men and women be allowed to commingle in the corridors and lecture halls (Mitchinson 116). As a result, Bessie Scott found it necessary to carefully negotiate her way amongst male students who feared "the proximity and competition of the 'softer sex'" (Mitchinson 116). The negotiations were intellectual and physical: "[I] found myself there the first of our girls, of course the 'Meds' were there first, had to go around boys [sic] way to get into the cloak room" (9 December 1889). She also ruefully records being denied the chance to hear a woman lecturer: "Expect to have a lecture from Mrs. Kate Tannaut [?] Woods of Boston but Sir Daniel puts a stop to that" (22 October 1890). Sir Daniel is, of course, the university president. In these and many other instances, Bessie uses her diary to record the frustrations she experiences; she also chronicles the way in which her group of female friends works to support each other through these trials, and she debates her future imagining only the possibilities of teaching or marriage (e.g. 19 November 1890). Historians Beth Light and Joy Parr, writing about this period, note that:

> in more prosperous homes, the shift from home production offered daughters time to cultivate religious and cultural interests or to seek further formal education. The sight of young women outside the home, [in] the streets, the factories, and the

> lecture halls was profoundly unsettling for many Victorians--and the more the range of young women's activities broadened, the more censure was leveled at a life outside the discipline of family. (CWOM 49)

Bessie Scott met this censure in its most insidious form: indirect confrontations with hypocritical professors, obdurate male students, and obstructive authorities like the university president. With no invitation and certainly no encouragement to publicly articulate these daily skirmishes, Bessie records the frustrations in her diary. Women such as Bessie were not expected to voice discontent, so instead, she takes up writing in a genre already approved for women's writing--the "private" space of the diary--and uses that space to voice her frustrations. In this way, her diary is not only a record of a private life but part of a larger public debate.

Although post-secondary education for women was hotly debated, basic education in Canada was considered useful for all and was thought to instill a sense of moral guardianship. Barbara Powell explains that young women diarists of the nineteenth century encountered in standard school texts "the sense of a religious moral and, implicitly, a linguistic standard" ("Nineteenth-century young women's diaries" 70). Consequently, Powell remarks, "whatever education these young people received linked the word and the good, and tied literacy to a moral and social standard" (70). Thus, the complex relationship of education to diaries begins to emerge. Education in post-Confederation Canada not only created a larger pool of literate women who would be able to write diaries,[79] but it prescribed preferred diary content in terms of a moral tone. This final point is the most important: diary writing was connected to morality and self-improvement by the link of literacy itself, by linking "the word and the good."

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[79] Victorian literary critic Margaret Shaw notices how the rise in literacy after 1860 (195) served to associate "the threat of mass literacy" with "what supposedly constituted it--the lower to middle classes, women and children" (199). This in turn, " led to the association of such groups with reading and writing that was instinctive, provincial, without form, and amateurish" (199). Diary writing would certainly be considered one of these amateur, formless modes of writing for women and children.

Diary critic Jane Hunter argues that late-Victorian girls' diaries were "the ideas of parents, who promoted diary writing for their daughters as a means to good character and refinement" (54). According to Hunter, "parents promoted diaries as a valuable 'discipline' useful in structuring time and character" (54). The editors of an anthology of diaries from Victorian Ontario also argue that the main purpose of diary writing in the nineteenth century was self-improvement (Hoffman and Taylor 2). By way of proof, they refer to an editorial in the Millbrook Reporter from 12 January 1893 which advocates four plausible uses for a diary:

> 1. a temporary expedient for training one's memory
> 2. to record a special purpose
> 3. to remember a special event such as a trip
> 4. jotting down in its proper place any remarkable occurrence whose exact date & description may be a matter of interest at a subsequent time. (1)

The editor of the Millbrook Reporter advocates the self-improving functions of the diary as an expedient to memory and envisions for diarists a highly regular life punctuated by external events rather than internal dilemmas. In the two examples cited from the children's magazine St. Nicholas and from the Millbrook Reporter , the diary is not condoned as a route to introspection, but rather as training in discipline. In conclusion, diary writing became associated with young people who enjoyed or were burdened with a lot of leisure time because of their class standing, and subsequently, by the late-nineteenth century, keeping a diary was considered a mark of genteel life, a sign of refinement. More importantly, the preferred content involved keeping a regularized account of life rather than engaging in introspection.

Because diary writing was considered a chronicle of moral development, parents sometimes assumed that they should oversee diaries and retain jurisdiction over the content. In the United States, Bronson Alcott watched over the diary writing of his daughter Louisa May during the late 1840s; the future writer and her sisters were "required to keep regular journals ... open to the inspection of their parents" (Moffatt and

Painter 28). In British Columbia, Martha Douglas wrote her 1866-1869 diary under the watchful eye of her father who sometimes wrote in the diary himself; and in Hamilton, Upper Canada, Sophia MacNab began a journal at the urging of her mother in 1846. Sophia's dying mother left explicit instructions to avoid waltzes, refrain from quarrels, and tend to her diary (Carter and Bailey 24). That Sophia's diary was a duty is suggested by the fact that she quit writing a short time after her mother's death. She tried to tend to the diary and had plans to run it to thirteen volumes, but the plan failed (Carter and Bailey 67).

Teachers at educational institutions could also act as surrogate parents when it came to overseeing a diary. While at the Prospect Hill Seminary in Port Dover, Ontario, Louisa Bowlby was expected to keep a diary. During what may be a formal period set aside for writing, she comments that "Bell is just writing a letter, Dora is writing in her journal" (9 January 1862). In an analysis of these diaries, diary critic Powell postulates that the diary may have been "marked or read by an instructor" at the seminary because Louisa worries over the "nature of the writing" (71). The fact that Louisa's diary keeping was condoned in an educational setting suggests the diary was clearly understood as an "exercise in improvement" (71), a form that invited vigilance from its readers--whether parents or guardians--and demanded attentiveness from its young authors.

Because diary keeping was associated with moral development, and because authority figures were the primary audience, diaries became the site of confession.[80] Transgressions or regressions of all kinds were dutifully reported. These often included perceived failings in the content or penmanship of the journal. Louisa Bowlby frets that "I have written the rest of this book so badly. I am going to finish it much better if I do not get in too big a hurry" (15 January 1862). Likewise, her sister Hattie, who wrote her diary while attending the seminary some years later, confesses, "I have not written any

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[80] My remarks focus specifically on the diary as a site of secular confession, but Jane Hunter points out religious moralism played a role in these late-Victorian diaries for those who believed that "good deeds and regular habits" could provide a route to salvation (53).

thing worth mentioning for I don't know how long and I guess I never will either" (8 May 1875). These apologies allude to a perceived ideal that governs the keeping of a diary. In tone, the confessions are very like those written in an earlier, explicitly religious diary by Catherine Bell van Norman with its apologies for writerly sins, "I commenced writing this journal thinking that I would make some improvement in writing, but I think it will prove a failure. Well it may make some improvement in my spiritual welfare" (5 January 1850). Diary keeping seems to solicit expressions of penitence from writers whenever the writing is neglected; this is the case with Sophia MacNab who is scrupulous in keeping track of her errors. After two weeks of missing entries, during which time her mother dies, Sophia writes, "I have not written my journal for a fortnight and I hope dear Papa will not be displeased with me but allow me to leave out a fortnight and just merely say that poor dear Mama was buried on Tuesday May 18th at two o'clock" (23 May 1846). Similarly, Louisa Bowlby feels it necessary to apologize when she neglects the journal: "I did not have time to write last night so I will have to finish my yesterday's work today" (16 May 1862). Because the diary is so closely associated with moral development for these young women, failing to write is akin to a spiritual failing and demands penitence.

The diarists' acknowledgment of the discipline and, sometimes, the tedium of the diary's daily demands leads Hunter to speculate that "like the Catholic confessionals described by Foucault, diary writing [for nineteenth-century young women] was an internalized discipline of the self" (52). The confessional mode in diary writing ensures a certain obedience, and because it was a kind of writing that stayed within the margins of privacy by not seeking publication, it was not confrontational and therefore socially acceptable. It is true, as Hunter argues, that Victorian girls used their "diaries both as technique and discipline in their formalization of one kind of self"; but if diary writing seemed to promote a self that was socially timorous and obedient within parental or educational guidelines, Hunter argues it also contained the seeds of the New Woman

(51). Hunter focuses specifically on those diaries written within a family setting and concludes that there are moments of resistance and moments of compliance in texts which were used "not as an escape from the Victorian family, but as a way of discovering--or constructing--the self within it" (53). On the other hand, Barbara Powell, concludes that "writing was a duty" for those instructed by parents or teachers to keep a diary, "so [diarists] practiced a stilted version of the public discourse of the day" (79). I agree with Powell that the diaries are often duty-bound, but there is something rather more subtle being performed in the pages. Young women used their diary writing to learn how to express independence within the confines of a family system, how to juggle the dual obligations of family and self, and, in turn, how to establish independence in the wider world.

To test this argument, I examine the diaries of young women in educational situations where the primary audience is no longer a parent but a more complicated and dynamic combination of authorial teachers and a usually homosocial peer group. Although the format and self-improving goals of the students' diaries might be roughly the same as those written in the parental home, the discipline of self elicited when the diarists are living away from home with female roommates in boarding school or residence has slightly different permutations.

The nineteenth-century students' diaries in this chapter are written by diarists separated from their families. The diarists are learning to establish their roles and identities within a larger social setting. Critic Katherine Dulsimer persuasively argues that a diary written under these circumstances can be used as a "transitional object" of adolescence in the same way that a teddy bear or a beloved blanket might be used in infancy (75). She proposes that the diary represents a confidante, a site of confession, and the illusion of parental power which slips away in adolescence. Because the diarist is frightened by her own lack of control and her growing suspicion of external control, she tries to re-invoke the illusion of a protective, comforting parental power by recreating it

in the pages of her diary. Thus, the act of confessing all to a diary imbues it with power at the same time as it makes vulnerable the diarist by exposing her weaknesses. Dulsimer states that the diary demands confessions even when the parents are no longer an audience; indeed, "the diary ... embodie[s] values and prohibitions that originally resided in the parents"(76). Thus, even without the physical proximity of their parents, student diarists can potentially recreate the same ambivalent arrangement of parental control that they knew at home.

In all of the texts to which I now turn, the diarist is away from home for the first time living with a group of women who are not her relatives in an educational setting. There are a number of such texts written between 1870 and 1910 including those by Sadie Harper, Bessie Mabel Scott, Queenie Crerar, Kathleen Cowan, Sophie Puckette, and Marjorie Saunders.[81] The first three write before the turn of the century; the next three after. Two remarkable features permeate all of these texts: one is the important role of female peers as imagined or actual audience. The second is that they all contain moments of rebellion and resistance and thereby support Hunter's claim that such diaries contain evidence of a new model of feminine behaviour, one that would be able to challenge society's mores. The sense of solidarity and purpose that emerges from these diaries is noteworthy, even if couched in terms of apology and ambivalence. Once I sketch out these two features, I will focus on the 1908 diary of Marjorie Saunders in an attempt to bring together in one close reading some of the issues that have been discussed in this chapter.

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[81] Other diaries by students include an anonymously written one from 1876 at the Public Archives of Nova Scotia; the well-known convent school diaries of Debbie, Helen, and Anna Barlow written between 1838 and 1860 and published as The Young Convents; Fannie Churchill's from 1879; Amelia Archange Harris's from 1882; Mary Elizabeth Stinson's from 1906; Annie Laycock's from 1901; Irene A. Carter's from 1920; Fiorenza Johnson's (Drew) from 1924-1931; and the Scrapbook of Smith College combining four women's diaries from 1910-1920. Notice that almost all are written after the mid-century. One notable exception is the diary of upper-class Maritimer Annie Winslow who was sent to finishing school in Boston for 1771-1772. Excerpts from her diary are found in No Place Like Home (Conrad et. al.).

The peer audience or homosocial sphere addressed in women's diaries after mid-century is named and described by several critics inspired by Caroll Smith-Rosenberg's ground-breaking 1975 article "The Female World of Love and Ritual."[82] A sense of female camaraderie evident in the late century built on the notion of a separate sphere and was abetted by "didactic works on sex roles and marriage " (Cott 165) that, along with the clergy, actively encouraged women to think of themselves as having "a more exquisite sensibility than men" (Cott 160). It gave women access to language that historian Nancy Cott terms a "rhetoric of sisterhood." Cott argues that by 1835 new language was minted to coincide with a "newly self-conscious" and idealized sense of female friendship (191), and my research suggests that the appeal to other women readers or the appeal to a "dear domestic circle" was common by the middle decades. For example, in the opening pages of Isobel Finlayson's letter journal, she hails "the dear domestic circle, for whose amusement [this notebook] has been written" (185). In other diaries written around mid-century, the homosocial sphere were the primary readers; sometimes, they were co-writers. Circulating diaries among the homosocial network was not only an "insincere effort to conform to social standards of female modesty and avoid infringing on male turf," as Mary Poovey might argue, but a way to secure and honour the separate sphere. The diaries provide examples of the rhetoric of sisterhood and were used themselves as cultural currency: exchanging and sharing diaries became a way for women to signify the intensity of female friendship. For example, Mary Louise (Queenie) Crerar, from Hamilton Ontario, kept a diary during her private school training in Britain between 1887 and 1891 and had various female friends write notes in the back.

By the final decades of the century, when women entered educational institutions in increasing numbers, "shared educations add[ed] a dimension" to women's friendships

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[82] After Smith-Rosenberg's work came Amy K. Levin's The Suppressed Sister, and Frances B. Cogan, who challenged the universality of Barbara Welter's Cult of True Womanhood, and Lillian Faderman's Surpassing the Love of Men.

because "women were exhorted to consider themselves a little band of sisters" (Todd 176). Diaries from this era record close relationships flourishing in boarding schools and in other situations where female students lived together. Bessie Scott's diary documents her growing attachment to five women with whom she lived while attending university; she names them a "charmed circle" (22 November 1889). Throughout the diary, she records the individual strengths and weaknesses of each, and the waxing and waning of individual friendships. Most notable is her use of romantic language to record a special bond with a roommate named Tina. When they are separated during Christmas vacation, Bessie writes dramatically: "Ah Tina, how I miss you--wish we were together again but if that cannot be I will try and be content where I am" (7 January 1891). In this entry, Tina is an absent audience, but Bessie is not always writing her diary all alone. She alludes to a more widespread practice when she writes, "after tea we studied until 11:30, wrote in *our* diaries & I suppose will retire" (12 April 1890) [italics mine]. It is possible that Bessie and Tina exchanged journals; the practice was widespread. For example, Hattie Bowlby exchanged diaries with her friend Emma (Powell 72).

The circle of female friends described in Bessie's diary were essential supports when she went through a trying time, and she understood her romantic outbursts about Tina to be socially acceptable. However, the acceptability of such language was changing at the end of the century. Janet Todd argues that women's epistolary friendships always had uneasy erotic implications (322). Todd, along with Nancy Cott, traces the language of sisterhood to eighteenth-century novels where epistolary heroines wrote to other women to avoid being ensnared in seduction plots (writing to men might mean leaving oneself open to their wily charms). It is perhaps no surprise, then, that by the late nineteenth century, when the scientific work of Havelock Ellis and other sexologists pathologized intense female friendships as lesbian and deviant, that any textual representations of the female bond would also be called into question. The shift is evident in Queenie Crerar's diary where her romantic language shifts to heterosexual

attachments. Her female friends are important; however, she also "goes mad" for a tenor; she "think[s] by day and dream[s] by night of his enthralling, heavenly voice" (6). Researchers have speculated that the end of the century is precisely the moment when the language about female friendships undergoes a change.

In The Spinster and her Enemies, Sheila Jeffreys argues that the female network is increasingly associated in the late nineteenth century with lesbianism or pseudo-lesbianism. Consequently, then, a woman diarist would need to dissociate herself from the female network and withdraw from suspect romantic friendships to indicate her psychic and sexual well-being. Because romantic female friendships were construed as pathological, a woman's failure to direct romantic rhetoric to the men in her life might call for psychological intervention. By the 1910's, writes Christina Simmons, women "turned against the styles which emphasized women's distance and differentiation from men" (55) and this might include their diary writing practices. It is hard to judge when and how these cultural developments reached individual diarists. Kathleen Cowan's diary of 1907-1910, for example, shows her juggling both discourses. She lived in an all-female residence while attending Victoria College in Toronto, and the diary she wrote there was later published as a typescript entitled It's Late and all the Girls have Gone. The romantic language of female friendship is still apparent when she writes entries such as the following: "After I came home had a long talk with Carrie Dunnett. I think she likes me and I am so glad because I just love her" (91); "Slept with Ada and she told me all her love affairs" (101); "I quite fell in love with a girl in a red dress and black hat who sang." (114); "Dottie sat on my knee and my! it was good to be loved." (351). Elsewhere, Kathleen explains that she and her friend Edith spent the night together sleeping "in shirts and pants *hugging*." [her italics] (167). However, Kathleen's "crushes" as she calls them can be directed towards men too, and she seems aware of the necessity of choosing one particular man on whom to have a crush. She writes "I have quite a crush on Susie Findlay" (198) but also "... I skated with Mr. Rumball. He is a perfect dear and I could

soon develope [sic] a crush on him" (202) or "I love Dorothy Luke and Edith likes Mr. [illegible]" (336). Kathleen's assumption that she can have crushes on both men and women, or the implicit equation of her romantic feelings for Dorothy Luke and Edith's feelings for a man, does not seem to present a discursive problem in this diary.

Although Kathleen Cowan does not sense any conflict between her female and male attachments, denouncements of the intensity of female friendship were brought to her through the vehicle of the Ladies Home Journal, a magazine which she was known to read. An article decrying sororities in the September 1907 issue was reprinted in Victoria College's student newspaper, the Acta Victoriana, as a warning to the girls in Cowan's residence. It described a kind of close-knit female behaviour they should avoid :

> The members of the sorority are led to consider primarily the need of the little coterie to which they belong. It lessens their interest in communal life and their sense of responsibility which membership in an academic family imposes ... These are not mere fanciful or theoretical objections. One short year has been sufficient to show all these influences present in active operation. Some of the results we see in broken friendships, class division, and the apparent reluctance of the charmed circle to mingle with the vulgar crowd--such as might be expected of public school children, but hardly becoming college students.
>
> (Cowan n. 132-133)

Now, I do not want to defend the immature behaviour of sororities, but it interests me that the "charmed circle" which had been so necessary and helpful to Bessie Scott in 1890 is read as superfluous, spiteful, and regressive by 1910. This rhetoric might only serve to isolate women within "the academic family" from other women in a more concrete way than they were isolated within the parental family where they at least had the company of other female relatives.

Two early twentieth-century Canadian diarists demonstrate how these late-century changes manifested themselves in diary writing: Sophie Puckette (later Miles) and Marjorie Saunders (later Dingwall) work to identify themselves as "individuals" set apart from their sisters; they want their writing to be absolutely "private" and unconnected with their sister's lives. In 1903, Sophie Puckette does not start her diary of homesteading in

Alberta until her younger sister Maud has finished hers so they do not talk about the same things. Forty years earlier, they might have written the diary collaboratively. Within the diary, Sophie is continually comparing herself to Maud especially in terms of weight: "I weigh 137, Maud 115. I have gained 7 lb in the last month" (5 December 1903). The emphasis here is on differentiation and contrast.

The apparent sibling rivalry between Maud and Sophie may have been due to the fact that although both had educational aspirations, the family could only afford to send one of them to school. Maud wanted to be an artist or a writer[83] and Sophie wanted to be a teacher. After a few glitches, Sophie's more practical dream held sway over Maud's desire for art lessons. On 23 December 1905, she writes with great delight, "Papa is going to let me have $100 and I'm going to school after all!" Unfortunately, by 6 January 1906, when she is "seated in [her] room at Mrs. Almy's on 1st St. in Edmonton" she is overcome with loneliness: "O dear but it is awful to be away from home. Homesickness is simply something terrible." To her credit, Sophie perseveres and achieves her dream of becoming a teacher only to face a new dilemma: career or marriage. Just when she gets the chance to teach at a school in Washington state, she finds herself growing attached to Jim Miles from her hometown. He asks her to marry him, and the diary becomes a place to debate the choices available to her.

The 1908 diary of Marjorie Saunders also records a desire for differentiation from her sister. On 3 October 1908, seventeen-year-old Edmontonian Marjorie opens a seven-inch-by-nine-inch scribbler emblazoned with the crest of her Toronto boarding school, Glen Mawr, and writes: "I am going to keep a diary. I have always intended to but never really got started on it till now." With that, Marjorie begins to chronicle life at boarding school in daily entries, an experience she shares with her fifteen-year-old sister Beatrice. The fact that Saunders sisters are sent east to attend this prestigious boarding school

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[83] Maud Puckette Nodwell's novella "The Shack" describing life during the 1918 flu epidemic through the eyes of a plucky young heroine is available in the Alberta Folklore Collection in Bruce Peel Special Collections, University of Alberta.

designates their social standing; it marks them as part of Edmonton's upper class. Glen Mawr--a private girls school for the upper class established in 1876--maintained dress codes and behavioral codes to instill a model of femininity in each of its charges. Glen Mawr provided an experience that affected Marjorie's developing sense of self. The diary written there shows Marjorie constructing an identity within the mesh of cultural and educational discourses using her biological sister, Beatrice, along with her figurative sisters, the "Glen Mawr girls" as significant others in this process of self-representation.

Marjorie Saunders Dingwall, as she later became, wrote three diaries before marriage. The Glen Mawr diary is first. The second diary records a trip around the world with her parents; it ends in Switzerland where the Saunders sisters take two years of course work at the University of Lausanne. Marjorie specializes in Arts and Music. The third and final diary details a vacation in Banff, Alberta, from 9 September to 29 October 1912 and focuses on social events, dances, and beaus. During her stay in Banff, Marjorie is a correspondent for the Edmonton Journal; upon her return to Edmonton, she becomes the first children's librarian at the Edmonton Public Library. This job continues until the outbreak of World War 1 when Marjorie and her family move to England. Once there, Marjorie begins a nursing career at St. Dunstan's Hospital for the Blind but is later transferred to Third London General where she meets her future husband, an engineer and wounded soldier named Robert Dingwall. Beatrice also falls in love with and marries a soldier. After the war, the expanded Saunders clan returns to Edmonton. Marjorie demonstrated a continued interest in writing: her verses appeared in local newspapers and The Alberta Golden Jubilee Anthology. She published a book of children's poetry entitled The Saucy Robin in 1949. Marjorie joins the Canadian Authors' Association and, as late as 1961, vows to spend more time writing about her experiences: "I must share them with others," she says in a newspaper interview. Her diary writing, however, ends at marriage. It is as if the diary provides a particular and necessary type of writing

outlet during her formative teenage years; indeed, I will argue that her diary writing enacts a useful, if paradoxical, role in the process of self-representation.

During her year at Glen Mawr, Marjorie feels so compelled to write in her diary that she steals time away to indulge in this activity: "This is Thursday," she writes, "and I am sitting in study writing this instead of studying scripture and mythology" (25 March 1909). That her diary is a risky yet necessary undertaking, and not just a diversion from her studies, is revealed when she confesses:

> Yesterday while I was writing this I had to keep putting it under the mattress every little while for fear someone should see me writing. Last night ... I lit a match [to look at my diary] and Fraulein came in. I blew the match out, I don't think she saw it. (19 May 1909)

The threats of immediate disciplinary action or poor future recommendations from her teachers loom large but Marjorie keeps writing. The act of writing outweighs the consequences because the diary offers the adolescent Marjorie a place of self-creation or self-authorization. Questions of self, identity, and individuality persist throughout the diary. In one entry, for example, Marjorie examines her name to see whether it will yield certain individuality:

> I wonder how many Marjories there are in the world. These are two cards I got from two Marjories for Xmas. There are three boarders Marjorie and goodness only knows how many day girls. (27 February 1909)

When her name fails to designate her uniqueness, Marjorie represents "self" by using others as narrative foils and as models for comparison. Her sister Beatrice assumes the role of the most significant "other" but the diary text itself becomes an important "other." In Marjorie's struggle to articulate "self," the diary functions as an unseen partner in a dialogue that elicits Marjorie's response to the boarding school culture in particular, and society in general.

Marjorie's self-representation uses comparisons of self to other. It is a more explicit act than the self/other narrative maneouvre evident in the journal letters of Elizabeth Simcoe and Isobel Finlayson when they used the expository other to narrate events and thereby present their own actions in the best possible light. Marjorie explicitly compares her own behaviour and her own accomplishments to others, and often portrays herself in a less than sympathetic way. A number of figures in her life act as other, including a young pianist featured in a concert at Toronto's Massey Hall: "... to think of being able to play the way he did and only seventeen ... I practice 90 hours a month and am eighteen and can't begin to play yet" (26 March 1909). Although Marjorie took first class honours in her examinations at the Toronto College of Music, the other fares better in this process of self-analysis; she uses the exemplary skill of the other to critique her own shortcomings. Likewise, on Christmas day, Marjorie self-reflexively scrutinizes one of her relatives: "Aunt Mary is just lovely. I don't know how she ever keeps her temper if she were me she would fly off the handle at every little thing and I am sure she has enough to bother her three big step children and one of her own to manage and she's so good to them all I don't know how she can be I know I couldn't" (25 December 1908). These are just brief examples of a rhetorical strategy Marjorie develops in an effort to identify herself: it is a strategy which climaxes in the relationship with her sister, Beatrice. When Marjorie discovers her sister 's potential as "other," the diary resounds with the consequences.

Beatrice already occupies a position of some importance in Marjorie's life. Their parents are three provinces away and, in this boarding school situation, her sister is the only other family member present. Siblings, along with parents, mediate for other siblings the culture's rules, responsibilities and expectations. Although any sibling can act as such a mediator, sisters merit special attention because the rules, responsibilities and expectations of culture they mediate for each other include definitions of gender.

This becomes apparent in Marjorie's diary where her definitions of Beatrice set the standard for a definition of ideal womanhood.

Because of the gender homology, sisters--perhaps even more than brothers and sisters--exert a particular influence over each other's sense of self. Christine Downing, writing a personal treatise about sisters, asserts that "same sex siblings are engaged in a uniquely reciprocal mutual process of self definition" (11). In fact, the sororal relationship is paradoxical: the sisters need each other in the process of mutual self-definition but also wish to establish their independence, their individuality and their mutual exclusivity. Consequently, sisters oscillate between the poles of "we" and "I" because their relationship "involves the discovery of an otherness more subtle than that between mother and daughter and yet as inescapable" (75). Marjorie Saunders may write diary entries in which she explores self by comparison to the pianist, her Aunt Mary, a cousin named Esther and a friend named Eleanor, but this operation of comparison weighs most heavily on her sister Beatrice--the most significant, most troublesome, and most closely-engaged other.

Although Aunt Mary and the pianist fare well in Marjorie's comparisons, Beatrice suffers. When Marjorie writes about Beatrice she unleashes invective that appears nowhere else. Beatrice's shortcomings are fully documented from her weakness for ice cream to her lack of respect for authority. The prevalence and tone of these descriptions implies reciprocity: Marjorie explains Beatrice in an attempt to explain herself. She evaluates their respective school marks, costumes, and boyfriends; she notes the subtle differences between their clothes, their meals, their Saturday trips and their luck at the races. The tone of these factual comparisons often hints at character indictments. In one instance, the undertones of condescension and jealousy are only dimly present: Marjorie flatly notes, "we had lemonade and cake, I got two pieces of cake, Beatrice got three" (26 March 1909). Yet, in another entry, Marjorie derides Beatrice who "had enough ice cream for once" (16 June 1909). Certainly a teasing tone is possible here, but even in

teasing there is the unstated goal of keeping the "other" firmly in place; teasing, too, can be a subtle form of control. I would argue that Marjorie manipulates Beatrice's failures to reflect her own position as an unsullied heroine. Beatrice is Marjorie's foil.

Marjorie sets herself up as the protagonist of her own narrative, a protagonist reliably and generously reflected by a flawed and static character named Beatrice. In this narrative scheme, Beatrice persistently "fails" in most factual comparisons; then, through a strategy of opposition, Marjorie steps forth as heroine. If Beatrice is clearly successful at something, Marjorie has to adapt her strategy. In such instances, Marjorie gently reprimands herself without heaping any undue praise on her sister: "Beatrice got 78% in History of Art. I only got 65%. Well I studied hard for the exam anyway " (21 May 1909). More frequently, Marjorie constructs herself as the responsible protagonist anguished by a rebellious, morally lax younger sister.

The relentless analysis of Beatrice's activities continues in the pages of Marjorie's diary and reveals the unspoken agenda at work: Marjorie wishes Beatrice were a steady mirror reflecting her own identity. Marjorie can barely restrain herself from making value judgments based on the factual differences between herself and Beatrice, but when she compares their behaviour an even stronger dialectic emerges. Marjorie shifts the comparison: no longer is the comparison locked in the content of the diary; it is now found in the narrative structure. In this way, the process of self definition becomes silent but is still evident: scathing disapproval of Beatrice is silently conjoined with Marjorie's emphatic resolutions about proper behaviour, and the two operations are indissolubly linked. An example will serve to make this clear. In the following entry, note how Marjorie positions her resolution against a denunciation of Beatrice. First, Marjorie vows to change her behaviour: "I am going to church ... I hope I manage to control myself better after this, I got a dreadful raking over from Miss Gordon last night because I laughed in prayers, I worried over it all last night and this morning." And in the very next paragraph we read:

> Beatrice is the awfullest little brat I've seen in ages, she talks back to Miss Brough like fun. Beatrice did something or other at breakfast and came to our room while we were making our beds and marched to her room and told her if she ever did it again she would report her but Bea doesn't care a rap she says she isn't frightened of any of them and don't believe she is and they know it too. (30 January 1909)

The second paragraph betrays Marjorie's strong feelings; although she pledges control in the first paragraph, the confused pronouns and run-on sentence of the second indicates the opposite; she can't control her outrage or her syntax. It is also possible that Marjorie is not outraged by but envious of Bea's willingness to confront authority. In either case, Marjorie is projecting the unwanted aspects of herself onto Beatrice. Any ambivalence she feels about her own actions is easily bifurcated and the negative aspects are transferred into the written representation of Beatrice. This strategy allows Marjorie to maintain a clear position as the protagonist of her own narrative.

Marjorie also uses the written representation of her relationship with Beatrice as a way to describe new and improved versions of herself. In one episode, where Marjorie declares a new found control of her temper, she demonstrates that control by telling the diary that she is "making Beatrice a daisy chain for her birthday on the 29th that youngster will be 16 it hardly seems possible" (14 November 1908). Marjorie is all charm and pastoral sweetness as if the benevolent treatment of Beatrice verifies her self control. In another similar entry, Marjorie castigates Beatrice for stealing her trunk key, "I found my trunk key in Bea's drawer where she said it wasn't--Oh!" but offers instant forgiveness (a sign of Marjorie's control) by approving Bea's Hallowe'en costume: "Beatrice is going as a Japanese, I think she will look very pretty" (31 October 1908). These examples merely recast the operation cited in the previous paragraph: in the first instance, Marjorie says "I must control my temper because Beatrice is awful" (and she reflects me); and in the second set of examples: "Look how I can control my temper and be nice to Beatrice who is awful" (I am not like her). She is me; I am not her. This is

Marjorie's dialectic of self-representation, half-submerged in the content of the diary but evident in the narrative structure.

Throughout the diary, Marjorie uses her sister in her struggle to know herself as a unified and coherent subject. Vitriolic passages denouncing Beatrice's behaviour are placed beside Marjorie's emphatic resolutions about her own behaviour; this narrative structure implies an unwritten conjunction which brings the paragraphs together in a tacit process of definition. Marjorie disavows any connection with her sister in an effort to assert her own identity. Paul Smith explains how this process works to represent a coherent subject in Lacanian terms: when the "subject at one and the same time separates itself from or disavows its construction in the field of the Other [it] simultaneously erects itself in the garb of coherent subject" (75). She is me; I am not her: the dialectic of sisterhood intersects with the construction of coherent subjectivity.

Marjorie's resolutions about proper behaviour and her descriptions of Beatrice's failings help the reader compile an image of Marjorie's "ideal" woman. This woman would have none of Beatrice's disruptive habits and would control her temper at all times. Not surprisingly, this "ideal" woman corresponds to cultural ideals of womanhood in 1908 as promulgated by the boarding school. Glen Mawr's principles owed much to its founder, Miss Veals, who was still running the school in 1908. A student who attended the school in the 1890's recalls in her memoirs that Miss Veals was a figure of authority and discipline whose fondest desire for her pupils was "that [they] should have the language and habits of Christian gentlewomen" (5). A 1939 magazine article about Glen Mawr written by another former student describes Miss Veals as someone who "tried to instill in 'her girls' that indefinable something...expressed in terms of gracious living, in poise of manner and personality distinctive in present-day hostesses" (48). "I can still hear Miss Veals' voice," writes the author: "Girls, an English gentlewoman does not do that!" or "Girls, remember buckles in and brooches out!" (46). Buckles are waists and brooches are bosoms: the girls are admonished to watch their posture. Proper

feminine attire is emphasized again in the school's 1917/ 1918 prospectus which informs us "there is no school uniform, so that good taste and common sense in dress may be encouraged and developed. The use of superfluous jewellery is discouraged" (14).

The school maintained a vigilant gaze over every aspect of its pupils' feminine development in an institutionalization of the dominant cultural discourses of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century femininity. Because the girls are away from home, the teaching staff assumes the surrogate power of parental authority; they establish rules, enforce regulations and punish transgressors. This parental role falls under the boarding school's mandate and the students know its power: a former student remembers that the mere sound of Miss Veals' silk petticoat struck terror in the hearts of students as "it presaged punishment" (Maynard 50).

Marjorie Saunders shows a willingness to adopt the institutional ideals of Glen Mawr even though a scrapbook in Marjorie's archival collection compiled during the years 1911-1919 and containing articles on the "women's question" written by Charlotte Perkins Gilman suggests that she questioned cultural ideals of womanhood. The scrapbook also contains a newspaper clipping from the society column of the Edmonton newspaper--Marjorie made headlines when she refused to include the word "obey" in her World War 1 wedding vows. However, Marjorie's 1908 diary reveals not a suffragette's zeal but an adolescent's desire to understand and uphold cultural ideals--in short, the desire to be a "normal" girl. She reveals this desire in her resolutions about proper behaviour and in her written representation of Beatrice.

Beatrice helps Marjorie define gender--mostly by disobeying cultural expectations about how a good girl should behave. The angry way in which Marjorie responds to Beatrice's failures indicates Marjorie's respect for the culture's rules, responsibilities, and expectations for women. When Beatrice falls short of cultural and institutional ideals by talking back to Miss Brough "like fun," she is, according to Marjorie, the "awfullest little brat." Here, Marjorie inscribes her sister's gender with implicit expectations (i.e. a

good girl does not talk back to her teachers); consequently, Marjorie retextualizes a gendered script she will later question. By representing her sister's gender, Marjorie constructs her own. The dialectic is apparent in the following example where Marjorie becomes irate because her sister's shortcomings in the areas of proper feminine attire are mistaken for her own:

> Miss Veals kept me after dinner and told me she thought the lace around the neck of my dress looked "dragged." I was cross about it when Fraulein came up and said Oh! It was Beatrice's lace that was mussed. Oh! ... Apparently she got Beatrice and me mixed. (5 May)

This incident is triply vexing to Marjorie in her quest for identity: it suggests that she is indistinguishable from Beatrice--contradicting something she has constituted as necessary for her identity; it suggests that she has failed to attain the ideals of Glen Mawr; and it further suggests the possibility that the authority figures have been inattentive during Marjorie's strenuous efforts to control her temper, distinguish herself from Beatrice and attain the ideal.

And Marjorie did continually strive toward an ideal set by the teachers of the boarding school. At the end of the year, she laments:

> If only I could live up to Miss Veals' ideals how much better it would be for all concerned. I have been making great resolutions about how I am going to behave when I get home but I daresay I will be as bad as ever. (16 June 1909)

Her great resolutions concern her temper, which seems to demand continuous monitoring ("I am learning to keep my temper better everyday, I hope I succeed sometime" [14 November 1908]), and lesser crimes like playing cards: "[Miss Veals] said we should never play bridge in the afternoon ... I won't go to any afternoon card parties when I go home ... I wonder if I will" (5 April 1909). These examples are coloured by the constant fear of failure which aids and abets the operation of self-regulation: it keeps Marjorie

striving toward the ideal within the institutional discourse. Because she is certain she will fail, her self-castigation continues even when the authorities seem to be pleased:

> [One of the teachers] told me the other day that I had done everything that was quite correct since I came to Glen Mawr and she told Mother that Beatrice and I were two of the nicest girls she ever had in her school. Isn't that a compliment. I don't believe she knows what a beastly temper I have and how we sometimes bring eatables into the school.
>
> (27 January 1909)

In the pages of her diary, Marjorie rehearses the role of the unworthy penitent striving toward a necessarily unattainable ideal. (The ideal is only worthwhile so long as it is unattainable.) Only the diary hears her emphatic resolutions. Only the diary knows that Marjorie is "really going to try and learn 'some good resolutions need carrying out'" and how she smiles as she writes it, knowing it to be "an almost impossible thing" (6 March 1909). She and her diary conduct a conversation about rules and ideals and the certainty of failure. In this way, the diary emerges as a silent interlocutor in a discussion about society and gender.

The diary assumes a greater importance for its participation in this discussion when Marjorie looks to it as a site of confession and absolution. One night, after sneaking out to go to a corner store, she becomes terrified that the teachers will find out and punish her. She writes the incident in the diary but fear overwhelms her writing ability. She scribbles "my gracious I'm scrade" (9 March 1909) creating an accidental anagram for "scared." Nowhere else does she make such a jumbled spelling mistake. The diary becomes the site of confession and Marjorie's fear of its power is manifested, materially and textually, in the scrambled word. Sidonie Smith uses Foucauldian theory to explain the power relation implicit in this written transaction: "the one who remains silent exerts power over the one who speaks" (Poetics 49). The diary--the silent site of confession--assumes a powerful parental presence akin to that of the teachers and Glen Mawr; it elicits Marjorie's resolutions for success and her fears of failure. Critic Katherine Dulsimer would support this reading, seeing the otherness of the diary "like the

mother of infancy ... continuous with self" (75); moreover, the diary is invoked to bolster the superego with an "imagined presence ... external to herself, someone upholding standards to which she expects ... to adhere" (76). Like Beatrice, the Glen Mawr girls, or the teachers, the diary itself can be engaged as an important "other" in the process of self-representation.

The diary form makes tacit demands on diary writers. The diary's imperatives are evident not only when it becomes a site of confession but even in the opening lines where Marjorie writes: "I am going to keep a diary, I have always intended to but never really got started on it till now." Here, she acknowledges the purported usefulness of such a project (that others have done so and she has always meant to) and silently anticipates its rewards and demands. She implicitly enters into a contract with the diary genre which makes seemingly contradictory demands. Diaries straddle two genres: autobiography--which valorizes the unitary self--and the dialogic form of epistolary writing. Cynthia Huff cites the reasons for the first imperative: "Autobiography [has been] the story of the male self constructed by himself and recreating the metaphors of his life. The more the male self dominate[s] the genre, the better" (108). Marjorie responds to the autobiographical demand for a unitary self by creating a protagonist and, dialogically, uses her sister to augment and clarify this position.

Although Marjorie seeks to distance herself from Beatrice, there are moments of sadness and trouble when she seeks intimacy and identification. In times of boredom or homesickness, Marjorie does not distinguish herself from Beatrice; instead they become a unit, a communal "we": "Beatrice and I are going to the rink this afternoon it will be the first bit of excitement we've had since we came" (25 December 1908), "Beatrice and I will be so anxious to get home that we will not want to stay anywhere before we go home" (4 May 1909) or "Beatrice and I were feeling pretty blue all alone in our room" (22 April 1909). Excitement, anxiety, homesickness and sadness grip them both; according to Marjorie, the two sisters do not divide these emotional states. In times of

trouble, Marjorie wishes to retain the reassuring context of sisterhood. Because of this, Marjorie oscillates between the "I" demanded by autobiography and the shared "we" of dialogue, of relations. Women's diaries embody the contradictions of two genres--autobiography and epistles--the writing self is pulled between "I" and "we" but then so is sisterhood: it is typified by a simultaneous longing for and fear of fusion. As a "we," Marjorie loses the "I" that seems necessary for autobiographical undertakings; as an "I," Marjorie loses the "we" necessary for dialogue. She is caught in a paradox inescapable for women diarists but understandable to them through their experience of sisterhood with its internal contradictions about the desirability of a unitary self.

Marjorie identifies with her sister Beatrice and her other figurative sisters, the Glen Mawr girls, in times of rebellion. The Glen Mawr girls are an equally contradictory and tension-filled sisterhood which force Marjorie to contend with another paradox in the pages of her diary: the "simultaneous sense of [herself] as part of a group but one which is nevertheless judged as lesser by the dominant male culture" (Huff 113-114). Her delighted participation in this group of rebellious Glen Mawr girls is first signaled by her approval of one of Beatrice's pranks: "cousin Mae sent us a box of cookies I thought I would be very clever and carry them to my room but Miss Gordon met me and asked what they were and I had to tell and she made me put them on the cabinet but Beatrice went down and hooked them next morning so that put matters all right" (6 March 1909). Here Marjorie celebrates her sister as rebel; she seems smugly thrilled at Beatrice's risk-taking. This passage draws on Marjorie's knowledge that she and Beatrice are complicit in "crime" and accountable to the same authority.

In this and other examples, Marjorie's descriptions evoke an exciting sense of camaraderie, something which was probably encouraged by the institution of Glen Mawr. Remember that girls in late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century boarding schools were often exhorted to consider themselves a "little band of sisters" (Todd 176). Moments of female camaraderie also appear in the diary of Sadie Harper (later Allen) writing from her

all-female residence while attending Mount Allison University in 1894. After being caught by a teacher with some of her roommates doing something that they are not supposed to be doing, Sadie writes:

> So weren't we astonished to see Miss Johnson amongst us, and asked us if we were excused. Of course we had sneaked there, and didn't she go and march us all off to our rooms. O dear, *sich* is life among us poor school girls. (Peck 97)

Later, Sadie delights in acts of rebellion carried out by braver friends: "Mrs. Archibald made every girl that she got hold of show her how her neck was fixed, and if she didn't think it all right, she made that girl either change her dress or sit down and fix the neck of it in some way. And it was more than fun to see some sneak down and get over to the college without Mrs. Archibald seeing them" (Peck 107). The sense of sisterhood so enjoyed by Sadie and Marjorie was likely encouraged as long as it did not involve acts of rebellion (although it often did), such as bringing eatables into the rooms, or sneaking "brown bread and sugar upstairs" (Peck 106) which was at odds with stated institutional rules. Marjorie shows in her diary how she must quell her excitement at being part of the Glen Mawr sisterhood because it fits poorly with her desire to please authority as represented by Miss Veals and the other teachers. Marjorie is quite explicit about how she manages this double bind. In the following entry, written after Marjorie has been confronted by Miss Veals to report on the bad behaviour of other girls, Marjorie shows how she manages to offer just enough reassurance to please Miss Veals but not enough information to get any of her friends (or herself) in serious trouble:

> Miss Veals took me into the drawing room and told me how she had heard that some girl ... boasted about keeping eatables in her room and also asked me about the boys that passed us on the way home from church on Sunday .... Of course, I couldn't tell her anything about the boys but that she needn't worry then I told the girls they would have to be more careful. (25 March)

In its negotiation between two discourses, that of rebellious sisterhood and that of the institutional ideal, this passage speaks in what Sidonie Smith calls a "double-voicedness":

the writer, "acutely sensitive to her reader's expectations and to her own often conflicting desires ... negotiates a sometimes elegant, sometimes cramped balance of anticipating reader expectations and responsive authorial maneuvers" (Poetics 50). Marjorie must maintain a tenuous balance to secure the approval of authorities without violating the loyalties of sisterhood, so she lectures the girls about being more careful but tells Miss Veals nothing except that she "needn't worry"; she thus preserves the camaraderie of sisterhood. Although Marjorie bonds with her female friends in times of trauma and times of rebellion, she nevertheless submits to the demands of the authorities. Consequently, an ambivalent definition of sisterhood emerges from the pages of the diary: just as Marjorie oscillates between the poles of "we" and "I" in a dialectic with her biological sister Beatrice, she both longs for and fears fusion with her Glen Mawr sisters because the institutional ideal, as presented by Miss Veals, expects Marjorie to stand apart from them and report on their misbehaviour. She feels pulled in two directions. The tensions and ambivalences of sisterhood demand that Marjorie speak with a doubled voice and enact the role of an unworthy penitent unable to attain the ideal.

We have seen that the paradoxical positions Marjorie must maintain in order to understand herself as a coherent subject are reified in the text's narrative structure, accidental anagrams, and double-voicedness. For Marjorie, the written representation of her sister and the rhetorical strategies of her diary provide a space where she can conduct a dialogue between herself and ideological structures, where she can chart the operations of her double-voicedness as she responds to the camaraderie of sisterhood and the demands of authority. For her, the diary is an interlocutory space mediating between these competing claims; it is a space where she can claim her status as subject because, as Lacan argues, the dialectic between the subject and ideological structures constitutes selfhood (Smith 71). Marjorie wavers between the desire to portray herself as an individual using Beatrice as comparison and wanting to portray herself as one of Beatrice's comrades. Conflicts erupt between the "we" of sisterhood and the dialogic

writing of diaries as opposed to the "I" mandated by the institutions of boarding school and autobiography; ironically, these conflicts are constitutive of the "self" Marjorie wishes to articulate.

On 16 June 1909, eighteen-year-old Marjorie Saunders lays down her pen and sets aside her diary. In the preceding eight months she has filled up one scribbler and half of another. The Glen Mawr girls, departing for the summer, write "quotable quotes" in the back of the half-empty scribbler. "I will cause a commotion in every place" is the quote attributed to bratty Beatrice Saunders. In fact, Marjorie and Beatrice go on to lead "normal" middle-class lives; they command respect from their community and manage to cause very little commotion. Both marry and become mothers. Both follow in the footsteps of their mother and join the I.O.D.E. Beatrice joins the "Willing Workers" of the Anglican church and Marjorie allies herself with the Edmonton Chapter of the Local Council of Women. Marjorie Saunders Dingwall lives out a life with little discordance or overt rebellion. In her adolescent diary, with its double-voicedness and its ambivalence, Marjorie anticipates and learns strategies for dealing with potential discord; in the Glen Mawr diary, Marjorie practises the maneuvers that will help her negotiate the conflicts and contradictions of a woman's life.

In Canada, some of these contradictions emerged from the educational system itself. Canada's process of nation-building at this moment incorporated an ethos of public education for the advancement of society and a popular belief about the civilizing role of women; this led to confusion about the nature and purpose of women's education. At the turn of the century, women understood that they bore responsibility for the nation's culture and morality, for civilization itself. Marjorie Saunders, Sophie Puckette, Kathleen Cowan, and Bessie Mabel Scott, all cited in this chapter, show their desire to attain this cultural imperative by educating or being educated. All three experience the contradictions of trying to live out this double bind. Sophie wants to teach but quits, partly because of pressure to marry and homestead. Marjorie both maintains and rebels

against the image of an upper-class daughter; she curries favour with the teachers even while she brings eatables into her room and sneaks out at night. Women who engaged with an educational system became entangled in the contradiction of national and cultural imperatives; they used their diaries to articulate and attempt to resist these contradictions and in so doing vicariously interact with the public debate about their education and their place in society.

In conclusion, the literacy and abundance of young women's late-century diaries point, on one hand, to the changing roles for women and the democratization of education at the end of the century. On the other hand, the diary provided a space where the young diarists could work out some of the conflicting messages they received about womanhood. These women were expected to take up their prescribed but contradictory positions without voicing discontent; instead, they take up writing in a genre already approved for women's writing--the allegedly "private" space of the diary--and use that space to voice their discontent. In this way, the diaries are not only records of private lives but part of larger public debates. The disciplines of self and the subtle acts of resistance enacted in diary writing gave these late-century women training to take up their roles in a changed Canadian society.

Reading Grandmother's Diaries, an afterword.

This dissertation questions some of the prevailing assumptions about the privacy of women's writing in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by focusing on the network of readers who surround a diary text. These readers can include the diarist's immediate family, the larger community, or the archival researcher who eventually rediscovers her words. The immediate contexts for diary reading are anticipated to some degree by the diarist herself who takes into account the needs, values, and assumptions of her community of readers. The context of reading is more troubled when the reader is one trained by the academy to make meaning and separated by a gulf of time; in this case, the relationship needs careful theoretical articulation. Reading women's diaries is therefore one of the primary concerns of this study.

The contexts of writing receive attention both in this study and within the diary itself. Diarists comment metatextually on the act of writing and any impediments to their ability to write. This cannot be the case, of course, if illiteracy is the impediment to writing, and scholars remark on the dearth of first-hand documents from lower-class women who had little or no education. Class plays a significant role in the writing contexts, but as Andrew Hassam notes: "the gender bias of the archives is probably more acute than the class bias [and] ... harder to explain" (S to A 14). Hassam argues that women had roughly the same literacy rates as men by the mid-nineteenth century, so he is confused by the relative scarcity of women's documents. A number of possible explanations for this difference draw attention to the contingency of diary writing: perhaps men were appointed the record keepers of the house while women took on other jobs that gave them no time to write; perhaps descendants and archives were not as eager to save writing by women in days gone by; perhaps women more fiercely guarded their privacy after mid-century and destroyed their own records. Whatever the answer or combination of answers, the survival of a woman's diary is clearly contingent, a "thing

dependent on an uncertain event; thing incident to another" (OED); it is based almost entirely on chance.

After I had finished the first draft of this dissertation, after I had been researching women's diaries for six years, I made a startling discovery. Two crates of diaries written by my paternal grandmother, who taught in a rural one-room schoolhouse, along with one small diary written by my grandfather in 1936, were sitting in my aunt's basement.[84] I had no idea these diaries existed. At many points during the course of this project, I have been asked if someone in my family kept diaries and if this was why I became interested in diary writing. No, I would reply, no one in my family kept any records of self. My aunt knew what I was researching, but she had not bothered to mention these diaries to me because she felt sure I would not be interested. She had failed to mention them before, she said, because they were "merely personal," and she thought I was surely working on diaries that were more important than those written by an ordinary teacher and farm wife. Within my own family, one woman's archive was obscured and, apparently, very nearly obliterated: my aunt was thinking of throwing out a good number of these musty books.

My mother rescued two in particular and made photocopies which were then sent to me. I have photocopies for the first six months of 1961 and selected entries from 1965 and 1966 when my mother became pregnant and gave birth to me. At first I could not bring myself to read these diaries. What if they contradicted everything I thought about diary writing and diary reading? Here was the perfect opportunity to practise an intersubjective reading; not only was I metaphorically a daughter to the text, as Helen Buss might say (MOS 26), but I was biologically the granddaughter to the diarist. Would that change my reading? Would it make reading impossible? I made myself read the diaries, and I am happy to say that they did not contradict everything I thought I knew

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[84] My grandmother's diaries do not appear in my bibliography of women's diaries written in Canada because they are not deposited at an archive, and I left out all diaries held in private collections. Moreover, I did not know they existed when I compiled my catalogue of women's diaries.

about diaries. The act of reading them did modify my position on reading diaries to some extent. By way of conclusion, I want to revisit some of my ideas about reading women's diaries in light of reading my grandmother's diaries and argue that a little distance is not a bad thing.

Throughout this dissertation, I have been arguing for the usefulness of empathy and the necessity of immersing yourself, as reader, in the historical context in order to make sense of women's diaries (with certain precautions as described by Joan Scott among others). I think this approach works well when you do not know the diarist, but it is highly disorienting to study your grandmother's diary this way. In this situation, immersion feels a little like suffocation. Reading Grandmother's diaries, I was confronted by too much knowledge about her circumstances; I know too well the brown and pink linoleum on the kitchen floor in the farm house that she describes, and I know all (or most) of the characters in her diary without having to make connections and speculations about who they might be. When Grandmother writes "dreamed of 3 eggs--Eleanor didn't think it too much of a joke--Just what they needed" (3 May 1961), it could not make much sense to an outside reader, but I know exactly what she meant. My grandmother fancied herself to be somewhat psychic and the "egg dream" meant that a baby was on the way. My recently-married mother, Eleanor, would not think this too funny because she and my father were in no position yet to think about having babies. They didn't. Grandma learns on 8 May that the dream referred to a baby born to friends on 4 May: "my egg dream to the day," she writes. The first entry was written on 3 May, so clearly grandmother was not above a little poetic license. My point is that this idiosyncratic short-hand would be difficult for an outside researcher to decipher.

In interpreting Grandmother's diaries, I gain authority and credibility because of inside knowledge, but those qualities are also diminished because I become one reader among many in my family each of whom would bring different memories and information to bear on the re-reading of grandmother's text. I can well imagine someone

in my family reading the paragraph above disputing my claims about Grandmother's psychic ability and the meaning of the egg dream. While this is true in any reading situation, families have a special ability to exert control over the remembering and re-reading of past events; families have more invested in the interpretation of a diary and its depiction of family life than a group of scholars who will probably agree to disagree politely. More is at stake in a family. More is at stake in my position as interpreter. For example, within my family, I am noted for over-dramatizing the past, and this is automatically taken into account when I present a version of history; my interpretations are usually met with some skepticism. In academia, my interpretations are at least given the benefit of doubt. This is the first thing I learn from Grandmother's diary: if I am going to invoke a model of reading that "does not elide or denigrate the familial," or a model of reading based on an empathetic sisterly or motherly relation to the text, it does well to remember how families operate in all of their complexities.

A little distance from Grandmother's diary would help me step back from the prejudices I bring to bear on it. I think I bring more prejudices to this reading than I would when reading a diary by a woman I do not know because I assume that I know who my grandmother was, and I assume a great many things about her life before I even begin reading. Because I enjoyed an actual relationship with her instead of an imagined one, I know where we connect and where we disagree even before reading. In the diary, my grandmother seems eager to report jokes, pranks, and any occurrence that made her laugh. But then, that is how I knew her to be and perhaps another reader would not be struck by the repetition of these small events. My reading cannot help but be inflected by my actual relationship with her, and I think empathy can be inhibited by the relationship. This is the second thing I learn from reading Grandmother's diary: while new interpretive dialogues are made possible, other dialogues are made impossible because there may be prejudices or blind spots about my own grandmother's life that I cannot overcome. If my work is motivated "by the need 'to connect,' to recuperate, or to formulate ... the context,

the tradition, that would link women writers to one another, to women readers and critics and to the larger community of women" (Schweickart 32), I frankly feel a bit claustrophobic when the woman writer in question is my grandmother, who could be quite domineering. My research into other diaries has been underwritten by a silent notion that if I could just "actually talk" to these diarists, I would learn so much more to help me interpret their words; in fact, a real dialogue might only serve to complicate matters. The inevitable distance built into the exchange or dialogue of an intersubjective reading has been construed as an impediment, but it might also be a source of strength.

Both of the diary excerpts from my grandmother are written in books especially designed for diary keeping. Each page is divided into quarters with the date written as a heading. Her confident penmanship is evident on most days: sometimes she spills over the allotted area because too much happened in one day, and at other times she catches up on entries in retrospect because she was too busy to write every day. Some days pass without remark. She writes more in the winter when presumably she did not have as much to do on the farm. Her 1961 diary is written by her alone; the 1965-1966 diary is also used by my grandfather to record farm work. His brief notations about a Burford, Ontario farm in 1966 read much like the descriptions of farm work in Emma Stretch's 1859 P.E.I. diary: "drawing manure" (8 May 1966), "pd Shelley 20.00 on a/c" (12 July 1966), "pulling and planting" (1 June 1966). Because of my research, it did not surprise me that this second diary was used collaboratively nor that it recorded such quotidian details about farming. My grandfather never used the diary to record daily events nor did he ever express feelings in its pages. He came from five generations of farmers, and he kept a farm log.

Grandmother also records the weather, errands, and my grandfather's sales of tobacco, but she more expressively records her joy at social events and family gatherings especially in the 1961 diary. Her days are divided into two halves: teaching and home. Both entail a lot of work. Teaching receives attention when she has had a hard or tiring

day. In one particularly bad month, she straps "Danny Vance and Joe K twice for talking" (17 January 1961) and then straps "Geo Gibbons for talking" (19 January). On 26 January the "children are still playing paper darts." She gets involved with the Federation of Women Teachers Associations of Ontario, but only out of duty (8 February 1961). More of her diary writing is devoted to descriptions of the visitors who come by their busy farm, of card games played, and meals shared. Grandma's diary, like Emma Stretch's, participates in and records community values. Deaths are noted but receive little elaboration; the health of those around her is summarily described. She also uses her diary as an account book and lists, for example:

pd Stedman's 16.39
Hydro 39.39
Pontiac Insurance $17
Right House 9.95 bra and girdle
Sprowls 8.39 charge (7 January 1961)

However, her diary is unlike Emma's in its expressiveness. On 13 January she worries about their financial state: "what a jolt to be stony broke but been that way so many times" (13 January). She will relate whole stories in the diary especially if they have a funny ending. While there are some differences, it surprises me how much Grandmother's 1961 diary resembles Emma Stretch's 1859 diary.

At one time I would have argued that twentieth-century diaries are unlike their nineteenth-century predecessors. I would have argued that diary writing changed after it was inflected by a psychological model of understanding the self. For example, Freud first published A Young Girl's Diary in 1921 and, in a letter dated April 27 1915, he encourages its publication because "never before ... has anything been written enabling us to see so clearly into the soul of a young girl, belonging to our social and cultural stratum, during the years of puberal [sic] development" (5). Trading on romantic notions about the authenticity of diary writing, Freud helps to bestow upon the diary some of the cultural purchase it will have in the twentieth: that of diary writing as a psychological

window on the soul. My dissertation stopped at this moment in the development of diaries because here, I would have argued, the story diverges down two paths. On one hand, the diary is taken up by the new field of psychology. Newly renamed as "journals," diary writing is extolled as an aid to psychological introspection. On the other hand, the idea of a "diary" kept by a woman is outdated. In a Canadian work of diary fiction entitled As Others See Us set in 1915, the young debutante heroine of the story begins by writing "I'll be old-fashioned enough anyhow to keep a diary" (9).

Grandmother's diary shows that this kind of causal historical thinking is not always appropriate or useful. It imposes a literary history on diaries which presupposes readers and writers working in a shared tradition. This is not always the case with diaries. Diary writing could be actively encouraged by etiquette books and by teachers in educational settings, but other diary writing, such as Emma Stretch's or my grandmother's, is more like folklore whose practices are transmitted "by word of mouth or by observation and imitation, rather than from formal sources such as text-books and academic teachers" (Greenhill "So we can Remember" 2). Moreover, news about culture, trends, or fashions in diary writing, like anything else, would have arrived in different social strata and in different geographic locales at different times.

Writing a dissertation with a chronological framework has made me aware of how ill-suited this is for depicting the complexity of lived lives; in every chapter, in every temporally-bounded story, the women sneak away. Here is grandmother failing to invoke a psychological discourse available to her in the mid-twentieth century; in chapter five, Emma Stretch fails to employ religious discourse or romantic models of subjectivity; in chapter six, Kathleen Cowan ignores early twentieth-century injunctions against homosexual crushes. I'm still convinced that the best way to approach those subjects and their records of self-representation is to examine their embeddedness in an historical moment with the caveat that "some of that recalcitrant human matter inevitably seems,

instead, to leak out through the cracks of any grand theory and, thus uncontained, to pose a challenge to totalising claims" (Pierson 79).

Reading grandmother's diaries is difficult but for all the reasons that attracted me to diary writing in the first place. First, it is written by a real woman who is not a fictional character, and this demands a different ethical commitment from me than if I were studying fiction. The messiness of a human life complicates interpretive acts because the record of that life resists attempts at narrative closure; it resists mushy attempts at self identification[85]; it resists any desire to "speak with the dead." [86] Ultimately, the diarists remain "other"--separated from me by the gulf of the past. Buss remarks upon the recognition of this phenomenon as one of the acts necessary in what she calls the scholarly "mothering" of such texts. Buss argues that while we might be able to bring new texts to the world, give birth to them in our written words and thereby bring them to greater attention, we have to recognize that:

> the most radical demand of mothering is the necessity of knowing that although one's nurturing love seems to have given the text its very being , the text is finally and profoundly the other. It is not an extension of myself. If I am to fully read it, I must recognize its own separateness, its own life.
> (MOS 26)

And we must let them go. Letting go is an appropriate act for the conclusion of this study, but I want to make it clear that I am not symbolically returning the diaries to some imagined original obscurity. Rather they return to a field of Canadian history and women's writing newly enriched with the traces of their voices. I prefer to envision for these diarists a return to an obscurity thick with the traces of human life. It is the same fate described by Virginia Woolf in her essay on the "Lives of the Obscure" whose

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[85] My thoughts on this matter were also brought into sharper focus by Isobel Grundy's talk on "Missing Persons," Kaplin lecture, 13 March 1996.

[86] Helen Buss uses this quote from Stephen Greenblatt to preface her work on women's diaries in " A Feminist revision to New Historicism to Give Fuller Readings of Women's Private Writing."

subjects disappear from the page in a rhetorical gesture that I will borrow to end this study: "Gently, beautifully, like clouds on a balmy evening, obscurity once more traverses the sky, an obscurity which is not empty but thick with the star dust of innumerable lives" (122).

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