The Super Unknown:
Canadian Women's Science Fiction, Fantasy, and the Circulation of White Feminist Politics, 1896–1941

by

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Abstract

This thesis examines the early tradition of Canadian women's genre fiction, with a specific focus on six fantastical and science fictional texts published between 1896 and 1941. Heretofore, this tradition of early Canadian women's genre fiction has been unrecognized as a field in and of itself, and with this thesis I aim to open the field to further study. Tracing these genres from what I call Canadian women's "proto-sf" to weird fiction to what readers today would easily recognize as science fiction, this dissertation provides a partial genealogy of Canadian women's imaginative literature as well as a material history of the *absence* of women's sf (encompassing science fiction, weird fiction, and fantasy) from the English Canadian literary canon.

Throughout this dissertation I use a methodology that I call "paranoid archive." I conduct symptomatic readings of all six of my primary texts and a wide variety of documents and ephemera, including historical newspapers, dozens of Canadian and American pulp magazines, and government documents like House of Commons Debates, Bills, and Acts, to piece together the scattered publishing conditions and sociopolitical contexts in which these texts were produced. I use an historical materialist approach to

show that the erasure of pulp magazines from both the cultural landscape and cultural memory was a desired outcome—not merely an incidental side effect—of the manufacturing of middle-class anglophone Canadian culture. Moreover, I show how the collapse of Canada's fleeting pulp magazine industry was the logical progression of the very social purity rhetoric that shaped Canadian women's fantastical genre writing from its outset.

Unlike the anti-racist, intersectional feminism inspiring much contemporary women's sf, the early texts that make up the core of my study and analysis all share an ideological commitment to racial and social purity. I demonstrate how this white supremacist ideology underwrites the texts' feminist and nationalist politics and argue that these writers deployed fantastical and scientific imagery to advocate for white women's racial and sexual management of the state. This same ideology is found in the racialized rhetoric used by Canada's mid-century members of parliament to condemn and criminalize pulp magazine production, circulation, and consumption. I therefore maintain that English Canadian literature's dearth of women's sf is the consequence of the very ideological commitments circulated by the genre's earliest Canadian women writers.

Preface

This thesis is an original work by Marcelle Kosman. Some portions of Chapter Three were published in the peer-reviewed chapter "Canadian Pulp Fictions: Unarchiving Genre Fiction as CanLit" in *CanLit Across Media: Unarchiving the Literary Event* (McGill-Queen's UP, 2019) edited by Jason Camlot and Katherine McLeod, 2019. I am the sole author of the chapter, and I thank Dr. Camlot and Dr. McLeod for their editorial work with my chapter and the collection. Preliminary portions of Chapter Three were also delivered as part my keynote address to the 2018 meeting of l'Association des bibliothécaires du Québec – Quebec Library Association (ABQLA), titled "Learning to Read like Hermione: Gaps, Symptoms, and Power."

I have presented nascent versions of much of this work at various Canadian academic conferences. I wish to thank organizers, panel members, moderators, and members of the Association of Canadian College and University Teachers of English and the Association for Canadian and Québec Literatures for their comments and feedback.

Dedication

For Trevor and Eliot, forever and ever.

Acknowledgements

As a settler scholar researching and writing about white women's historical participation in the ongoing project of Canadian nationalism, I want to first recognize the territories that supported and nourished me through this dissertation. I grew up on a small family farm in Prince Edward County, Ontario, a region largely settled by United Empire Loyalists after the American War of Independence, acquired from the Mississauga as part of Crawford's Purchases in 1783, although no treaty document exists (Shanahan). I was born, however, in Treaty 6 territory where I returned nearly three decades later to pursue a PhD at the University of Alberta. My time at the U of A has, in fact, alerted me to the ongoingness of treaty and the importance of recognizing where I live and work and play. In this spirit, I respectfully acknowledge that my primary archives are located at the University of Calgary in Treaty 7 territory, at the Toronto Public Library in the Dish with One Spoon territory, and at Library and Archives Canada, which is located in unceded Algonquin territory. I am grateful to the Indigenous peoples of these territories, and across Turtle Island, who serve as caretakers and knowledge keepers of these lands and have done for thousands of years.

Over these years, Treaty 6 territory and the extraordinary community I have found here have nourished me though more than words can say. I have been blessed with family, friends, colleagues, and comrades whose love and kindness made this possible. The support of my supervisor, Dr. Cecily Devereux, and my committee, Dr. Marie Carrière and Dr. Sheena Wilson, ensured that this dissertation became a project that I took pride in accomplishing. Cecily's guidance and encouragement have not only helped me to find my voice, but to understand myself as a researcher and a scholar. I also want to extend my endless gratitude to Dr. Julie Rak and Dr. Paul Hjartarson who served on the early formation of this committee. Julie has been a tremendous champion of my work and I am fortunate to have her in my corner. I also want to thank the superheroes who run the Department of English and Film Studies, Kim Brown, Annett Gaudig-Rueger, Dianne Johnson, Bob Longworth, and Mary Marshall.

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I am grateful for my mother, Christine Kosman, my grandmother, Joan Marisett, my late grandfather, Kenneth Marisett, my mother-in-law, Dr. Patricia Chow-Fraser, and my father-in-law, Noel Fraser, who believed in me every step of the way, who understood that the sacrifices were worth it, and who never asked me how much longer it would take. Thank you to my Aunt Patrice, who has single-handedly kept me connected to my paternal family. Thank you to Eliot Kosman, my favourite person in the world, for all your hugs and kisses. I have also been blessed with roommates who helped me think through the problems of my project and who provided countless hours of childcare: Sylvie Vigneux, Esther Rosario, Rob Jackson, Jason Moccasin, and my outstanding sister-in-law Gillian Chow-Fraser. Thank you to my Aunt Patrice for her being my paternal family, to my brother- and sister-in-law Emmett Fraser and Justine Féron, my beloveds in Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, and Calgary, Brodie Conley and Erin Kean, Arwen Fleming, Scott Herder, Emily Lewsen, Nyssa MacLeod, Christine Sinclair, Michelle Thompson, and Kay Turner who housed and fed me during my research trips and conference travel. Christine and Michelle also performed the added service of never letting me get too big for my britches. The friendships I made and cultivated during my PhD have been a gift. I want to thank my officemates, Richard Moran, Anna Sajecki, and Zeina Tarraf, as well as my friends and partners in crime Samantha Balzer, Neale Barnholden, Adam Carlson, Thomas Dessein, Megan Farnel, Helen Frost, Andrea Hasenbank, Katie Lew, Hannah McGregor, Katherine Meloche, Todd Merkley, Clare Mulcahy, Sean O'Brien, Stephen Tchir, Jason Treit, Kaitlin Trimble, Camille van der Marel, and Liam Young. You scoundrels have been my team and my cheerleaders—I'm so lucky to have met you. And I would be remiss to forget a loving shout out to the feline companions who have warmed

my lap and my heart over these years: Beowulf, Cozettie, Faye, Gandalf, Sally, and even my curmudgeonly cat-in-law, Suki.

In closing, there aren't enough words in the universe to express my gratitude to my partner, Trevor Chow-Fraser. Luckily, the best way to show him how much I appreciate all his love, support, patience, and care is to finish my dissertation. Here it is, Trevvy! I couldn't have done it without you.

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Prologue

Dissertations inevitably change direction over the years, as do fields and objects of study. When I started my PhD in the fall of 2012, I anticipated writing a dissertation that examined contemporary Canadian women's science fiction in relation to the history of women's science fiction writing in Canada. I wanted to know: do women writers in twenty-first century Canada share the same concerns as their predecessors in, say, the 1940s? What does this literary genealogy say about the concurrent developments of sf and feminism for Canadian women writers? In other words, how far have we come?

I quickly learned that too little was written on pre-1980s Canadian women's sf (science fiction, fantasy, and other imaginative genres) for me to undertake the project I had envisioned. I was both incredulous and frustrated that at the end of 2012 there was not yet any substantial analysis of Canadian women's sf writing, let alone an historical survey. I decided to write it myself.

I approached my new project with equal parts naiveté and optimism. At the same time as I was beginning my research in earnest, projects seeking to recover similarly lost

texts of Canadian popular culture were gaining celebratory coverage in the media. In June 2013, the CBC published a story called "Canadian superhero Captain Canuck rises again"; in October of the same year the *Toronto Star* ran a similar headline, "Nelvana of the Northern Lights will rise again"; the following summer the CBC applauded Rachel Richey's Kickstarter campaign to "revive WWII-era comics hero Johnny Canuck" ("Canadian superhero Johnny Canuck is back"); and Hope Nicholson's 2014 Kickstarter campaign to reprint the comic books of "Canadian Golden Age Hero" Brok Windsor in a bound omnibus nearly doubled its $17,000 goal. Although these newly recovered texts were all written by men, the successful resurrections of Nelvana of the Northern Lights, Johnny Canuck, Brok Windsor, and Captain Canuck assured me that Canadians have a desire to both recover and consume historical Canadian ephemera as part of a contemporary culture of nostalgia. I was motivated to contribute to this growing field and to use the forgotten texts in my study to nuance the English Canadian literary canon.

Although I did not actually know of any Canadian women's sf published prior to Phyllis Gotlieb's novel *Sunburst* (1964), I felt certain these texts must exist; the aforementioned comic book heroes of the 1940s could not have existed in a pop culture vacuum. I would simply have to "go to the archive," whatever that meant, and find the missing texts. I won't go into detail about my botched first efforts to locate my objects of study; suffice it to say that what I imagined to be "the archive" was nothing short of romantic.

Fast forward to the fall of 2016. I had found enough texts to move forward with my project (I knew they were there!), but now I faced the problem of reckoning with the demons of the texts themselves. They were not the early iterations of twenty-first century

intersectional feminism that I had expected to find; they were wildly, unabashedly racist and I was unwilling to write a celebratory, recuperative study of texts that offended my own intersectional feminist commitments. How, then, to critique the exclusion of these texts from English Canadian literary history while also acknowledging that these were not historic artefacts worth celebrating? What would be the point?

In November of the same year, I was one of millions of women around the world who were shocked to witness lifelong politician Hillary Clinton lose the US Presidential Election to an unqualified and shameless white male demagogue. Clinton had planned to celebrate her certain win at the Javits Convention Center in New York City, standing beneath a glass ceiling that would (symbolically) shatter and rain confetti to mark the first woman president of the United States. Years later, I still grieve for the glass ceiling that stayed both literally and symbolically intact that election night. Of course, as we know, Clinton did not become the first woman president of the United States. Her loss, which devastated liberals globally, sent many white women soul-searching, irrespective of citizenship. For me, this dissertation became a way to come to terms with that election; not so much to make sense of the results, but rather to understand what caused my own wildly misplaced certainty that Clinton would win. This certainty, like my assumption that Canada's early feminist sf writers would *not* be racist, came from the same ideologies of white supremacy cultivating the nostalgia for lost Canadian popular culture I had intended to exploit. Clinton's presidential loss was thus a stark lesson for me that my disavowal of white feminism had not prevented me from internalizing white feminism. To put it bluntly, I was embarrassed to be learning what I already claimed to know: that white

women's access to power is only probationary; that white feminism's accordance with neoliberalism and capitalism will never make women equal players in the game.

White women have long endeavoured to align ourselves with the very power structures that oppress us, so it is not surprising that the feminist movements accorded the most public recognition are those that have sought to bolster—rather than to topple—dominant systems of power. As Roxane Gay observes in her 2014 essay collection *Bad Feminist*, "feminism has, historically, been far more invested in improving the lives of heterosexual white women to the detriment of all others" (xiii). This sentiment is certainly as true of Canada's Famous Five as it is of American suffrage leaders Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton; and it is a sentiment currently embodied by Canada's most infamous white feminist and literary icon, Margaret Atwood.[1] As I note above, my failure to fully grasp the longstanding relationship between white supremacy and what Gay calls "Capital-F Feminism" (xiii) explains my surprise over the racism saturating the works of Canadian women's sf that I located for this project. The lessons of the 2016 election have thus refocused my research questions, yet again, away from investments in canonicity and generic inclusion, and towards questions of literary state-building, white women's counterpublics, and the construction of what Daniel Coleman calls Canada's "fictive ethnicity" (7). Though I remain interested in English Canadian literature as an institution, I find I am just intrigued by how these texts circulate a mutually constitutive racism and

[1] In January 2018, Atwood pondered the label "Bad Feminist" in a Special to *The Globe and Mail*; offering no acknowledgement to Gay, who popularized the term in the above-mentioned *New York Times* bestseller of the same name, Atwood added the moniker to a litany of other accusations she has borne "since 1972" ("Am I a bad feminist?").

feminism through imaginative fiction as I am compelled by their exclusion from the canon.

What continues to excite me about these texts is not that they were written by women, but that they clearly make use of literary devices historically dissociated from English Canadian literature's early women writers. Science fiction is broadly understood to be a genre that permits progressive thought experiments thanks to its many techniques of cognitive displacement. For this reason, many feminist authors of sf credit the genre with inspiring their politics. Québécoise science fiction author Élisabeth Vonarburg, for example, states, "what has informed my feminism above all is science fiction in general, via its fundamental goal of questioning what is by imagining it as different" (115). The thought experiments in the texts I discuss throughout this dissertation, however, all reinforce varying degrees of conservative, white supremacist ideologies. The rights and freedoms for which these texts advocate are explicitly limited to bourgeois white women; racialized women, if present in the texts at all, are of narrative value only in their function as foils to the ideal Canadian femininity. If science fiction as a genre has the capacity to inform one's feminist politics, as Vonarburg claims it has done for her, then surely the under-theorized literary history of Canadian women's sf can offer valuable insights into the history of feminism in Canada. That the sf in question is racist makes its study all the more necessary.

With this dissertation I have aimed to be thorough, but not exhaustive. Much, much more can be said of the texts I have included as well as of those I chose to omit. A study of the prolific Lily Adams Beck and her numerous literary personae, for example, is long overdue. Unlike some of the feminist critics that inform my scholarship, I am not

invested in questions of female or feminine "difference," but I am deeply interested in shared material conditions and what this specific collection of sf reveals about the valences of white feminism in pre-centennial Canada. The layers of marginalization (gender, genre, medium of publication) that have precluded for these texts any serious critical engagement provide for me a convenient organizing principle and an irresistible opportunity to establish a new field of study. It is my hope that further studies of these and similar texts will expand our understanding of English Canadian literary history, of Canadian women's writing, and of the literary history of "Capital-F Feminism" (Gay xiii) in Canada more broadly.

Introduction

> "I am not trying so much to raise pulp fiction to canonical heights as much as to broaden our scope of study, or, more exact, to show the limitations innate to our historical scope of study; … to step outside of canonicity and examine its dynamics for innate prejudice."
>
> (David M. Earle, *Re-Covering Modernism: Pulps, Paperbacks, and the Prejudice of Form*.)

In 1979 two groundbreaking catalogues of Canadian sf were published: an anthology of Canadian science fiction and fantasy titled *Other Canadas*, edited by John Robert Colombo, and an annotated bibliography titled *CDN SF&F* that was compiled by Colombo, Michael Richardson, John Bell, and Alexandre L. Amprimoz. According to the latter's preface, the compilers initially intended the bibliography to be "a short checklist of one hundred or so titles to help in the compilation of Colombo's *Other Canadas*… where [the compilers] expected it would appear as an appendix" (vii). The scope of their survey, however, produced a catalogue of approximately six hundred published books, warranting its publication as a stand-alone volume. Although both the anthology and the bibliography include works by "non-Canadians (when their work

is set in Canada)" (Colombo 1), both attempt nonetheless to articulate a generic definition to Canadian sf. Neither work claims to be fully comprehensive; both list the many genres and forms that had to be omitted for various reasons, and the editors express their hope that further work would be done in the field. "Perhaps there will be a successor to the present anthology," Colombo muses (5).

Indeed, since 1979 there have followed numerous anthologies, bibliographies and indexes, and works of criticism on Canadian sf. In 1985 American émigré Judith Merril inaugurated the first *Tesseracts*, an annual anthology of Canadian sf that continues today. In 1992 David Ketterer published *Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy*, a cross between an annotated bibliography and a monograph. In 1995, the National Library of Canada (now Library and Archives Canada) held an exhibition of Canadian sf that produced three publications: a collection of Canadian sf criticism edited by Andrea Paradis and published in both English and French, titled *Out of this World: Canadian Science Fiction & Fantasy Literature*, and in French *Vision d'autres mondes: La science-fiction et le fantastique au Canada*; an accompanying bilingual bibliography titled *Out of this World: Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy: annotated reading list / Vision d'autres mondes: La science-fiction et le fantastique au Canada: bibliographie annotée*; and a brief overview of the history of Canadian sf, researched and compiled by Hugh Spencer and Allan Weiss, titled *Destination: Out of this World* in English, and *Destination: Vers d'autres mondes* in French. The year 1998 saw the publication of Edo van Belkom's *Northern Dreamers: Interviews with Famous Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror Writers*, and a volume of children's sf titled *What If…?: Amazing Stories*, curated by Monica Hughes. This is also the year that John Bell

published his invaluable bibliography, *The Far North and Beyond: An Index to Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy in English Language Genre Magazines and Other Periodicals*.

Canadian sf publishing remained active throughout the aughts and teens, with regional anthologies such as *Land/Space: An Anthology of Prairie Speculative Fiction* and *Island dreams: Montreal Writers of the Fantastic*, both published in 2003. Collections of sf by BIPOC writers in Canada have also proliferated. Nalo Hopkinson and Uppinder Mehan published their sf anthology *So Long Been Dreaming: Postcolonial Science Fiction & Fantasy* in 2004—although not a volume of exclusively Canadian sf, the anthology includes a number of writers who are important to Canadian literature, such as Wayde Compton, Larissa Lai, Suzette Mayr, and Eden Robinson, in addition to its editors. Two anthologies of note specializing in Indigenous sf are *Mitêwâcimowina: Indigenous Science Fiction and Speculative Storytelling*, and *Love Beyond Body, Space, and Time: An Indigenous LGBT Sci-fi Anthology*, both published in 2016. Works of Canadian sf criticism have continued as well, with such publications as *Worlds of Wonder: Readings in Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Literature* (2004), edited by Jean-François Leroux and Camille R. La Bossière; Allan Weiss's *The Canadian Fantastic in Focus: New Perspectives* (2014); Dominick Grace's extensive study of Phyllis Gotlieb's body of work, *The Science Fiction of Phyllis Gotlieb* (2015); Amy J. Ransom and Dominick Grace's substantial *Canadian Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror: Bridging the Solitudes* (2019), which I discuss below; and Jason Haslam's *Gender, Race, and American Science Fiction: Reflections on Fantastic Identities* (2015), which, although not about Canadian sf, was nurtured by Haslam's "various SF classes" at Dalhousie University (Haslam xi). In addition, Canadian writers have also continued to publish stand-alone works of sf, including but by no means limited to Candas Jane

Dorsey, William Gibson, Hiromi Goto, Nalo Hopkinson, Larissa Lai, and Drew Hayden Taylor.

This brief overview, while certainly not exhaustive, illustrates the direction that Canadian sf criticism and collection has taken since Colombo's early anthology. With the exception of Bell's *The Far North and Beyond*, Ketterer's *Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy*, Haslam's *Gender, Race, and American Science Fiction*, and Ransom and Grace's *Canadian Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror*, the above-mentioned anthologies and collections have identified and focused on contemporary Canadian sf, its various subgenres, its regional inflections, and, importantly, on BIPOC sf writers throughout Canada. What these works are not able to do, however, is engage in specialized historical analysis—and rightly so. Their focus has necessarily been to demonstrate that sf is currently alive and well in Canada.

The genre known today mainly as sf, which typically includes both science fiction and fantasy and their respective subgenres, is vast and complex with a great deal of contradictions shaping its boundaries. In his introduction to *Colonialism and the Emergence of Science Fiction*, John Rieder declares his "theoretically informed" decision to *not* "define science fiction" (16). Rieder is here following Paul Kincaid, who theorizes the problem of defining science fiction in his essay "On the Origin of Genre." Arguing that "[a] genre does not emerge, entire and fully armed, from the body of literature" (46), Kincaid instead posits that "the genre … [is] in a state of constant flux" (47). He maintains that "what we conceive science fiction to be inevitably dictates how we identify its origin" (45), and proposes that we might more productively think of science fiction as a web of "family resemblances" (48). This suggestion seems to me to be

especially useful given that the term *science fiction* has largely given way to the term *sf* precisely in acknowledgement of the family resemblances between science fiction and its kin, including fantasy, weird fiction, and speculative literatures. For most of the writers in this study there was no definition of sf or set of guidelines instructing their imaginative allegories, but in hindsight we can see that these writers all made use of various modes of the fantastic as a means of defamiliarization. Throughout this dissertation I discuss imaginative elements that are varyingly science fictional, fantastical, supernatural, and downright weird, and these elements set my objects of study apart from realistic literary traditions. At times I refer to these and similar texts collectively as "genre," particularly when I discuss issues of scholarly and cultural marginalization; at other times I refer to the texts collectively as "sf," drawing attention to their use of what Darko Suvin terms "cognitive estrangement" (1979). I argue that the texts in Chapter Three are unambiguously science fictional, but in Chapter One I explain and employ the term "proto-sf," and in Chapter Two I move from "proto-sf" to consider the applicability of the term "weird fiction." It is not my intention to impose a set of definitional boundaries, or to suggest that these various categories are mutually inclusive. For this reason, the deliberately malleable term "sf," with its numerous possible meanings (science fiction, speculative fiction, science fiction *and* fantasy, science *and* supernatural fiction, to name a few,) is, I find, the most useful in referring generally to these texts as part of an imaginative collection but with discrete and, at times, contradictory differences.

The historical branch of Canadian women's sf writing with which I am concerned is no less complex and conflicted than is Canadian sf or sf in general, and

despite the proliferation of Canadian sf criticism and anthologies since 1979, much of the early field remains under-theorized and unread. In their 2019 critical anthology *Canadian Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror: Bridging the Solitudes*, Ransom and Grace elegantly historicize the development of Canadian sf, taking into account both French and English language genealogies, as well as documenting the history of academic writing on the subject. Their introductory literature review is invaluable to the study of Canadian sf and is a resource that would have vastly facilitated and supported my early research. The nearly 400-page edited collection examines Canadian sf in the contexts of transnationalism, postcolonialism, nationalist myths, gender, and more. Nevertheless, Ransom and Grace recognize that "much work remains to be done" (14). Since Colombo's 1979 anthology *Other Canadas*, anthologies, bibliographies, and volumes of criticism have acknowledged the impossibility of an exhaustive study; Ransom and Grace's collection is no exception.[2] My dissertation likewise focuses on only part of the history of Canadian sf: the heretofore unstudied tradition of early Canadian women's sf writing in English and its exclusion from English Canadian literary history. Unsurprisingly, my study also concludes with the acknowledgement that *still* more work remains to be done.

An early motivating query driving this project was why English Canadian literature seems to have no tradition of genre writing. Genre, it would seem, and sf in particular, provides a great many opportunities to question what is "real" and to make our commonplaces strange and new. English Canadian literature as an institution,

[2] Ransom and Grace use "the bridge" (14) as the collection's defining metaphor, responding to "the limitations of the solitudes concept so often applied uncritically to the Canadian experience" (2).

however, has long been bound up in nationalist politics and thereby preoccupied with the business of writing Canada into existence (Boire 228; Howells 23; Ketterer *Canadian* 2; Kroetsch 63; Lecker *Making*, 6; Miki "Sliding," 306), and not with making it strange and new. Early post-confederation literary periodicals, for example, make reference to the need to build a literature in order to unify the country. In 1893 an editorial on the subject of Canadian literature titled "Canadian Books and Authors" ran in the periodical *Books and Notions*. The editor assigns blame for the absence of a national literature to the shared shoulders of Canadian booksellers and readers, calling both "unpatriotic" (7). A few years later, an 1897 editorial in *The Canadian Magazine* responds to criticism levied at the magazine for being too critical of Canadian books:

> If cultivating a national literature is taken to mean unduly encouraging young and inexperienced writers, lauding everything that is printed regardless of inherent merit, buying Canadian books simply because they are Canadian, and petting Canadian writers simply because they live in the land of 'The Maple Leaf,' then we are faddists indeed. (277)

While the two editorials may appear to be at odds—the former accusing those who do not support Canadian authors of being unpatriotic and the latter condemning the notion that Canadian writing is *ipso facto* good writing—both editorials hold the assumption that Canadian literature is a national good and as such must be composed of "good" literature. The *Books and Notions* editorial insists that authors need financial support in order to produce quality work, whereas *The Canadian Magazine* insists that "wholesome criticism" is needed to encourage better writing.

The notion of "good" literature is ideologically loaded. English Canadian literature has historically celebrated realist fiction, and it is striking to note the ways that the mode aligns with and reinforces settler-colonialism. It is telling, for example, that the above-mentioned *Books and Notions* editorial, which hails a patriotic public to buy Canadian books, also makes an appeal for naturalism in Canadian writing:

> A Canadian literature can only be produced by the combined efforts of all classes of people in this broad dominion. Nature has given us materials, such as great lakes, majestic rivers, broad plains, and lofty mountains; and *civilization* has added thereto by bringing together the Frenchman, Englishman, Scotchman, Irishman, and other nationalities, which should make the study of character easy in the attainment of materials. (7, emphasis added)

The editorial makes clear that because the country's natural wonders belong to white settlers ("civilization"), Canadian literature has a duty to reflect Canada's "greatness" and "majesty" back to the reader. Moreover, Canadian literature should depict a Canada that is not only unified, but predominantly white, given the editorial's reference to the French, English, Scottish, Irish, and *other* nationalities who have settled here. This white settler-colonial outlook produced, as Coral Ann Howells argues, a "legacy… whose assumptions were Eurocentric, territorial, and masculinist" (23). These unchanging attitudes continued to motivate the institutionalization and professionalization of Canadian culture beyond the first half of the twentieth century, and further engrained into critical discourse the notion that a Canadian literature and a Canadian state were mutually inclusive. Roy Miki, for example, argues that "[t]he academic labour that went into the three-volume *Literary History of Canada* (1965), with

its famous 'Conclusion' by Northrop Frye, was less a descriptive task and more the making of teleological history that narrated CanLit into existence" ("Sliding" 306). Howells likewise contends that "Klinck's *History* represents the beginnings of the institutionalization of Canadian literature," using as an eye-opening example the way that Klinck's "chronological divisions set up the periodization of Canadian literary history in English, which has remained substantially unchanged ever since, with breaks around 1870, 1920, and 1960" (22).

We can likewise see the impact that the *Literary History of Canada* has had on recognized genres of Canadian literature in English. The only non-realist modes categorized as genres unto themselves are Folktales and Folk Songs, and Nature Writers and the Animal Story. By contrast, all other fiction is addressed as either "romantic" or "realistic," where only the realist is "serious in intention," "having a moral dignity that the former lacks" (Frye 837). Desmond Pacey's review of the fiction published between 1920 and 1940 is an appropriate example. Here, Pacey writes with palpable contempt of Lily Adams Beck, a prolific and popular author of orientalist fantasies whose work I ultimately omitted from this study because, in my opinion, it warrants robust analysis as an oeuvre. Pacey devotes nearly one and a half pages to his scathing critique of Beck, whom he calls a "forgotten author of amorous pot-boilers" (171), whose "career… might legitimately be claimed to be part of the literary history of Canada as an example of how readily the Canadian literary public of the twenties could mistake grandiosity for greatness" (171). Referring to the pseudonym Beck used for her historical romances, Pacey adds that "the astonishing fact is that 'E. Barrington' was taken seriously by her contemporaries" (171). To illustrate his astonishment, Pacey

goes to some lengths to emphasize the credentials of Beck's receptive peers. Duncan Campbell Scott, Pacey fumes, was "President of the Royal Society of Canada" when he reviewed Beck's collection of short fiction *The Ninth Vibration*, calling it "a real addition to our literature" (Scott *qtd*. in Pacey 171); and Frederick Philip Grove, who is one of only *three* novelists whom Pacey claims to be worth reading from the period, had the audacity to state that Beck's novel *Glorious Apollo* "has great merits" (Grove *qtd*. in Pacey 171). Only the magazine *The Canadian Forum*, according to Pacey, had the sense "to prick this bubble of over-estimation and reduce Mrs. L. Adams Beck, alias E. Barrington, alias Louise Moresby, to her proper size" (171). Several pages later, Pacey returns to Beck again as he concludes a section on Canadian historical fiction, writing that "[t]he astonishing thing about these books, as about those by Lily Adams Beck, is that reputable Canadian critics once took them seriously" (176). With the literary accomplishments of an author as celebrated and prolific in her time as was Beck recorded in this way, it is little wonder that the early Canadian fiction we would now consider genre—popular and non-realist modes like science fiction, fantasy, supernatural and weird tales, and *especially* works of this kind by women—have disappeared from master narratives of English Canadian literature.

If we accept that Klinck's *Literary History of Canada* and Frye's Conclusion had a meaningful impact on both Canadian writing and criticism, it follows that the English Canadian literary canon reflects the same ideological principles, which Howells succinctly identifies as "Eurocentric, territorial, and masculinist" (23), at least historically. David Ketterer, for example, argues that the lack of genre fiction in the canon results from Canada's "conservative political tradition" (3). He argues that "the

preponderance of works that constitute the 'canon' of Canadian fiction are realistic or naturalistic" because Canada's emergence as a sovereign nation "coincides with the dominance of realism and naturalism in Western literature" (2). Carole Gerson links the dearth of canonical women writers with the elision of women writers from anthologies of Canadian literature. She provides a detailed example using *Canadian Writers / Écrivains Canadiens: A Biographical Dictionary*, an anthology whose "sole announced criterion for their selection of early and current authors is… 'generally acknowledged merit'" ("Anthologies" 148). This "generally acknowledged merit," Gerson explains, which is "the overt qualification for canonization, thus involves an unacknowledged component based on education, occupation, academic connections, and therefore by extension, gender" ("Anthologies" 148). With so many odds against them, it is unsurprising that "women account for fewer than 19 per cent of the entries" in *Canadian Writers* ("Anthologies" 148), and have been largely neglected in the canon by the overrepresentation of one or two literary stars ("Anthologies" 146).

The critical and at times overlapping fields of Canadian women's writing and Canadian women's archives have been important guides for this project, particularly with respect to understanding the limitations of my own archival research. In 2001, Gerson noted that "[m]ore often than not, researching women writers in Canadian archives and institutions is a hit-and-miss affair, especially with regard to authors active before 1940" ("Locating" 10). Helen Buss, writing of Gerson's essay, states that Gerson "reminds us that whatever our motivations or goals are when we enter the archives, our methods will be dictated in the first instance by the problems of locating the subjects for continuing study—the detective work that uncovers the often hidden, poorly

documented and incomplete record of female persons" (Introduction 1). I can attest that the thirteen years between these two statements and the beginning of my own archival research on early Canadian women writers has yielded little improvement. Although each of the archives I visited had finding guides, none of these guides organized authorship by gender, nor did they account for the nationalities of authors featured in periodicals, nor did any of the collections hold complete runs of the periodicals I needed, meaning I could not rely on any one site as my home base. Marlene Kadar reflects that "the archive … is a complex site of influences and representations. But it is also an incomplete site, created by this donor or that; by this survivor or by that librarian; … it is a fragmentary piece of knowledge, or an unfixed and changing piece of knowledge" (115). This description is true of all three of my primary archives. Two of them, the Merril Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation and Fantasy at the Toronto Public Library and the Bob Gibson Collection of Speculative Fiction at the University of Calgary,[3] were donated from the respective personal collections of prolific sf writer Judith Merril, and dedicated sf fan Bob Gibson. The third archive, the pulp magazine collection housed at Library and Archives Canada (LAC), was purchased from collector George Flie. Flie himself had purchased the collection from the magazines' publisher, Alec Valentine, who "had been storing his pulps in a backyard shed that faced onto an alley" (Smith "Offal" 108). Michelle Smith, who interviewed Flie in 2003, describes Valentine's archival process:

[3] Only the Gibson collection, which was donated to the University of Calgary by Gibson's son, Andrew, after his father's death in 2001, was unavailable for Bell to consult in preparing his Index.

> Valentine used to send every single copy of each magazine title he published to the newsstands. If some of the magazines did not sell, the news dealers would send them back to him. He maintained one copy of each title that was returned, but he discarded the rest of the copies. Not surprisingly, some issues would occasionally sell out, while other titles would consistently sell out each month. As a result, some of the magazines are missing issues from their print runs, while other magazines that we know of, such as *Romantic Love Stories*, are not represented in the collection at all. That said, Valentine estimated that he saved seventy-five percent of everything he published. Given the campaigns for their destruction and their inherently ephemeral nature, this relatively comprehensive collection is remarkable. ("Offal" 107)

The personal and idiosyncratic nature of all three collections underscores what Kadar calls the archive's "fragmentary" nature. While Merril kept her books and magazines in reasonably clean condition, Gibson annotated his magazines and, in some cases, cut items out. Valentine's magazines were relatively well-preserved, but the publisher did not seem to keep any record of his various subsidiaries. This complicated the process of confirming Valentine's ownership of *Uncanny Tales*. The magazine's copyright page states that *Uncanny* was published by the Adam Publishing Company, located at Suite 403, 455 Spadina Avenue, Toronto, but Valentine's Alval Publishers of Canada Ltd. was housed three kilometres away at Suite 304, 95 King Street East, Toronto—not an impossible distance, but by all appearances Adam and Alval seemed to be separate publishing companies. That all three archives are incomplete is to be expected, and

although collectively they provide a remarkable material history of Canadian pulp sf, it is clear that much of this history remains untold.

With the exception of one novel, my objects of study were all listed in Bell's index of Canadian magazine sf, *The Far North and Beyond*. This meant that my project relied heavily on locating and accessing archived copies of early fiction periodicals and pulp magazines—no easy task. Bell himself acknowledges the challenges of researching Canadian sf in periodicals, writing that "it was apparent that the primary materials, the pulps themselves, were generally not available for examination" and thus "in order to compile a full picture of Canadian SF and fantasy in the pulps it was necessary to compare and synthesize the findings in more than fifteen different indexes and checklists," which Bell further supplemented with his personal collection (*Far North* 5). My own archival research, supported by digitized library collections across North America, has shown only one omission from *The Far North and Beyond*: S. Carleton's "Mystery Mine" (1918), which is a re-publication of her 1907 story "Lastluck Lake," which *is* listed in the Index. While this singular addition underscores the extensive and thorough research that produced the now twenty-two-year-old *Far North and Beyond*, it also suggests the possibility of more Canadian women's sf texts waiting to be found.

I will digress briefly to describe my research process in greater detail. This documenting is important because the project itself has been slowed by the countless details, dilemmas, and processes that are unique to archival research. A close friend of mine, whose dissertation was hermeneutic in nature, once described to me her process of choosing her objects of study: she went to her local bookstore and handpicked several titles by women from the Canadian authors section; then she read the books; then she

wrote about the books. This is neither what my selection nor my research processes looked like. During my first trip to the Merril Collection in Toronto, one of the librarians, seeing that I was at a loss for where or *how* to find authors relevant to my project, provided me with several indexes and bibliographies of sf (including John Bell's *The Far North*, which became at that moment instrumental to my research). I scanned each catalogue, copying out names of Canadian authors and Canadian published periodicals, as well as names that seemed "feminine"; I then searched the names through various online databases to determine which of the writers were probably women and which of the women were Canadian; I then searched the databases and revisited the indexes and bibliographies for these writers in an effort to compile a full list of their published works.

I was surprised to learn that the holdings at the Merril Collection were not searchable by gender. This may well have been anticipated by more experienced scholars, and indeed I had no such expectations when I later visited Library and Archives Canada and the Gibson Collection, but in this moment I was unprepared. For every *Canadian* author I encountered, I had to turn to a variety of online databases to determine gender, and for every *female* author I encountered I had to do the same to ascertain nationality. The databases I found most useful were the connected Canada's Early Women Writers (CEWW) project, Canadian Writing Research Collaboratory (CWRC), and Database of Canada's Early Women Writers, as well as the fan-sourced Internet Speculative Fiction Database, and Wikipedia. This reliance on so many pre-existing catalogues necessitated a risk of incorporating errors in an author's listed gender and nationality into my project as well.

The problem of determining an author's gender is by no means unique to my study. Eric Leif Davin, for example, addresses this problem in *Partners in Wonder: Women and the Birth of Science Fiction, 1926–1965* by organizing his bibliographies by "Known Women Writers" and "Writers of Unknown Gender." Yet even when a writer's gender is "known" there remains a risk of ascribing gender inaccurately. There is no guarantee that because an author published with a feminine name and has been gendered feminine by historical records and databases, that they in fact identified as a woman. I am reminded of these remarks by Veronica Hollinger:

> [I]n spite of science fiction's function as a literature of cognitive estrangement, and in spite of the work of both feminist writers and critics in their on-going efforts to re-think the problematics of gender—especially gender's impact on the lives of women—heterosexuality as an institutionalized nexus of human activity remains stubbornly resistant to defamiliarization. … Both science fiction as a narrative field and feminism as a political and theoretical field work themselves out, for the most part, within the terms of an almost completely naturalized heterosexual binary. (24)

Hollinger is here remarking on the theoretical praxis she brings to her analysis of science fiction texts written by women, but for me the problem she identifies extends to the ease with which I—and many of the feminist scholars of women's sf before me—take ascribed gender for granted. These assumptions are particularly ironic given the axiom that women writers often published under masculine or ambiguously gendered pseudonyms. In other words, even though I know better, I do it anyway. This is, regrettably, a problem that I have not resolved in this dissertation.

Once I had a list of ten authors, I sought out the texts themselves. Most of these texts were stories or novellas published in pulp magazines between 1907 and the 1960s, and accessing the periodicals became my new challenge. I began my search with the holdings at the Merril Collection, which contained work by five of my authors, and when I returned home I continued searching through the University of Alberta Library and interlibrary loans system. This proved less fruitful, however, and soon I had to expand my searches to AbeBooks, eBay, Google Books, the Internet Archive, numerous used bookstores, and the many pulp vendors at the Edmonton and Calgary Comics and Entertainment Expos between 2014 and 2018. I was able to locate some of my objects electronically (the novel *Tisab Ting*, for example), but in most cases I had to either travel to archives outside of Edmonton to see the texts I needed, or to buy copies or facsimiles of pulp periodicals because no archive I could access held the issues I needed. I bought facsimiles of two issues of the pulp magazine *The Thrill Book* and, although I ultimately chose to omit it from this project, on eBay I was able to buy a story by Lily Adams Beck that had been cut out of a 1920s issue of *The Popular Magazine*. I succeeded in acquiring a scanned copy of S. Carleton's 1907 story "Lastluck Lake" through interlibrary loan, but the holding library was unwilling to break the fragile spine of the magazine when scanning it for me, and this meant that many of the story's seventy pages were only partly legible. I made at least five more trips to my three main archives, located in Calgary, Toronto, and Ottawa, where I requested materials by the cartload. On more than one occasion, Library and Archives Canada misplaced the boxes of materials I ordered, cutting my time with the magazines by days. As each research trip was both brief and costly, I spent my days in the archives photographing everything I imagined could possibly be useful for my project. Having not yet read the

texts and having no time to read them in person, I could only guess what I would find "useful" later. Using my phone, I took thousands of pictures of magazine covers, tables of contents, entire stories, ads, illustrations, letters to the editor, and editorials. At the end of each day, the table where I had worked was dusted with debris from my handling of the magazines. In the evenings I would upload hundreds of photos to my computer, organizing them in folders by archive, magazine title, author, story title, and page order. I then made additional folders for the stories that I was sure were written by Canadian women. Also, my reading method is heavily tactile and I knew I would need to make notes on, highlight, and flag the pages of my texts. I appreciate having digitized copies for searchability and quick reference, but for sustained close reading I need to hold it in my hands and write in its margins. Thus, after making copies of the high-resolution photos I'd taken, I proceeded to recolour, sharpen, and crop the crumbling beige pages of the relevant stories, turning them black and white so that I could more easily print, annotate, and read them. Then, I turned the hundreds of single image files into a few dozen PDFs, printed them, and, in some cases *years* later, I started to read.

In addition to the work of acquiring copies of my texts, I have also been relentless in researching each author, publication, and publisher. In some cases, I have continued to find piecemeal traces of the authors in surprising places, even as I draft this Introduction. In the case of Nadine Booth Brumell, for example, I recently stumbled across a comment by Tony Brumell, her grandson, on a Bancroft, Ontario tourism blog promoting the Princess Sodalite Mine Rock Shop. In other cases, I obsessively compiled records of and references to authors, mainly from periodicals and digitized newspapers and pamphlets, intending to contextualize their sf writing with

their social and political activities. After flagging Lily Adams Beck's name across thirteen volumes of *The Atlantic* (1920–1928) but feeling unsure how much the contents could contribute to my thesis, I realized that I could not be exhaustive in both the scope of the study and in my research of the authors and texts themselves. Of the texts that feature prominently in my dissertation—Dyjan Fergus's (Ida May Ferguson) *Tisab Ting*, S. Carleton's (Susan Carleton Jones) "Lastluck Lake" and "The Clasp of Rank," Lillian Beynon Thomas's "When Wires Are Down," A.E. (Alice Elizabeth) Burton's "The Discovery of Nil," Nadine Booth Brumell's "The Swamps Come Back," and the periodical *Uncanny Tales*—and of some that were ultimately written out, I have been meticulous in my research. I have sought out historical records of the authors, their publishers, and their circulation. I have similarly tried to find any and all instances of republication, and to identify any meaningful material or textual differences between versions. Moreover, these texts work together elegantly to tell the story of early Canadian women's genre fiction and its erasure. Although I wrote the chapters of this dissertation out of order, I researched my texts in near chronological order because I wanted to understand the arc of Canadian women's sf as a genre alongside the texts' consistent investment in white women's liberation. Some texts were ultimately omitted from the final version of this dissertation. These texts included Edna Mayne Hull's short stories "The Flight that Failed" (1942) and seven-part Artur Blord series (1943–1946), Katherine Marcuse's short stories "21st Century Mother" (1954) and "The Holiday" (1955), and Phyllis Gotlieb's novel *Sunburst* (1964). A cluster of texts more recognizable as fantasy, such as Beck's novella "The Splendor of Asia" (1922) and short story "The Ninth Vibration" (1922), Susan Alice Kerby's (Alice Elizabeth Burton) novel *Miss Carter and the Ifrit* (1945), and Gwendolyn MacEwen's novel *Julian the Magician*

(1963), I excluded because they indicate a Canadian genealogy of Orientalist literature that I strongly feel warrants its own investigation as a field and to which I could not do justice with a single chapter. As I was completing this project I learned about three more relevant novels by Canadian women: Frances Fenwick Williams' *A Soul on Fire* (1915), Hilda Glynn-Ward's (Hilda Howard) *The Writing on the Wall* (1921) and Madge Macbeth's *Wings in the West* (c.1937). Identifying these three additional texts suggests that the study of early Canadian women's sf merits continued attention, and that there may well be more writing by women in this category that remains obscured by gendered, canonical, and cultural impediments. In cataloguing the texts both included in and excluded from this project (see Appendix B), at least, I have compiled substantive evidence of Canadian women's sf as genre.

Given the absence of an established critical apparatus for reading early Canadian women's sf, I have developed a methodology that I call, somewhat tongue-in-cheek, "paranoid archive." The numerous methods that I use in researching and interpreting my objects of study are motivated by an obsessive and, indeed, impossible desire to "find everything." I conduct symptomatic readings of all six of my primary texts and a wide variety of documents and ephemera, including historical newspapers, dozens of Canadian and American pulp magazines, and government documents like House of Commons Debates, Bills, and Acts, to piece together the scattered publishing conditions and sociopolitical contexts in which these texts were produced. I conduct close readings of my primary texts through the lenses of science fiction criticism, genre criticism, Canadian literary criticism, book history, and critical race theory to illustrate what the texts' respective representations of gender, race, and, at times, class suggest

about their shared white feminist objectives. I use an historical materialist approach to support my claim that the erasure of pulp magazines from both the cultural landscape and cultural memory was a desired outcome—not merely an incidental side effect—of the manufacturing of middle-class anglophone Canadian culture. Moreover, I show how the collapse of Canada's fleeting pulp magazine industry was the logical progression of the very social purity rhetoric that shaped Canadian women's fantastical genre writing from its outset. Unlike the anti-racist, intersectional feminism inspiring much contemporary women's sf, the early texts that make up the core of my study and analysis all share an ideological commitment to racial and social purity. I demonstrate how this white supremacist ideology underwrites the texts' feminist and nationalist politics and argue that these writers deployed fantastical and scientific tropes to advocate for white women's racial and sexual management of the state. This same ideology is found in the racialized rhetoric used by Canada's mid-century members of parliament to condemn and criminalize pulp magazine production, circulation, and consumption. English Canadian literature's dearth of women's sf, then, can be understood as the consequence of the very ideological commitments espoused by the state's earliest women writers of sf. Finally, and most crucially, I rely on extensive archival research that I have conducted and supplemented with relevant work by literary historians John Bell, Carole Gerson, David Ketterer, Michelle Smith, and others, to ensure that my selected texts are generically representative.

Few, if any, of the writers I discuss in this dissertation would have identified their work as fantasy, science fiction, or weird fiction, yet they all made use of tropes now conventional to sf. It is therefore surprising to me that early women's sf, or what I

call "proto-sf" in Chapters One and Two, is not the subject of greater investigation with respect to white feminism's racist and eugenic legacies. After all, the *fantasy* of racial purity—the conditions of whiteness and its supremacy—is central to these imaginative texts. Throughout this dissertation, I aim to show the value of reading early Canadian women's sf as representative of the desires of white, bourgeois women to shape and be recognized as contributing to a socially and, by extension, racially "pure" nation. In Chapter One I offer an analysis of the novel *Tisab Ting* by Dyjan Fergus, alias for Ida May Fergus, in the context of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century intersections of white supremacy, feminism, and nationalism. My close reading and critical analysis are largely influenced by Daniel Coleman and Mariana Valverde who have outlined the allegorical functions of whiteness in early Canadian popular culture and social reform movements. Building from this context, in Chapter Two I elaborate on the material conditions out of which S. Carleton, alias for Susan Carleton Jones, and Lillian Beynon Thomas published their social reform allegories in fiction periodicals. In so doing I draw on historians of sf periodicals and consider the First World War's demonstrable impact on the material and generic developments of sf. In both Chapters One and Two, I assert that the racist ideologies inherent in my objects of study are symptomatic of the xenophobic commonplaces of the time and their contemporaneous white feminist movements. In Chapter Three I aim to show how the ideological progression of the previous decades' social purity rhetoric carries forward to the mid-century nationalist imperative to both criminalize pulp magazines and nationalize literary production in Canada. This chapter explores the short-lived Canadian pulp magazine industry in relation to the moves toward high cultural production and, eventually, canon formation. In juxtaposing the collapse of the

Canadian pulp magazine industry and the developments of Canadian women's sf with the political discourse over young people's reading, I show how the same xenophobia and white supremacy informing early Canadian women's sf progressed to influence popular perceptions and political discourse over literary genres and materialities of text.

With this analytical genealogy, I aim to demonstrate unequivocally that the early decades of Canadian women's sf, of which these early texts are representative, deserve greater investigation. Further research and analysis will contribute to a greater understanding of early twentieth century cultural signs and allegories, and their continued circulation today.

Chapter One

Canadian Women's Proto-sf Writing, 1896–1919

> "If we are not to reproduce these power structures, if we are not to allow whiteness to exist unquestioned, unproblematized, among those who benefit from being white, then we must (loudly and perhaps gracelessly) examine race and its role within literature and literary studies."
>
> (Elisabeth Anne Leonard, *Into Darkness Peering: Race and Color in the Fantastic*.)

INTRODUCTION

In her essay "Right Out of 'Herstory': Racism in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Herland* and Feminist Literary Theory," Arun P. Mukherjee illustrates the intimate and ongoing relationship between feminism and racism in feminist literary criticism. Mukherjee begins with a review of the importance accorded to both *Herland* and its author Gilman in feminist scholarly circles; she then unpacks "the racist and imperialist designs of *Herland* that seem to have eluded the feminist literary critics thus far" (132). For Mukherjee, "a woman of colour" (141), it is not the whiteness of Gilman's

Herlanders, but the "absence of the colours other than white in this utopia of feminist revolution" that signals the novel's racism and imperialism (135). Specifically, it is the fact that Gilman's feminist utopia requires "providential genocide" (137) to remove the "offending racially Other so that when we enter the utopia in the textual present, only the Aryan stock is left" (136). Drawing on bell hooks's influential *Ain't I A Woman: Black Women and Feminism*, Mukherjee reiterates "how white feminists have consistently used the unmarked word 'women' when they were really speaking about white women. In this usage, contemporary white feminists are following the example of turn of the century feminists like Gilman who use 'women' to stand for 'Anglo-Saxon women'" (140). As Mukherjee points out, the continued celebration of "white supremacists like Gilman in the feminist canon" universalizes middle class white women's experience (141) and, I would add, enables a pernicious ignorance of the numerous historical and contemporary intersections of racism and institutionalized feminism.

In addition to the general feminist literary canon, Gilman's *Herland* is central to a subset of imaginative literatures described variously as women's "speculative fantasy" (Evans "Nineteenth," 13), women's "speculative fiction" (Rosinsky 115 *n.*2), "feminist fabulation" (Barr xii), women's "literature of estrangement" (Cranny-Francis 26); or simply the "literary tradition of women's writing about a better place" (Donawerth and Kolmerten 1). However one names it, this literary tradition comprises what I understand to be a variety of fantastical, science fictional and speculative genres written by women, and, much like the feminist literary canon described above by Mukherjee, it is accompanied by a feminist scholarly tradition that inadequately accounts for the racist ideological underpinnings of its texts. Feminist critics of historical science fiction,

for example, tend to consider race only in direct reference to a few well-known women writers of colour (like Octavia Butler), or in the form of apologetic discussions of explicit textual racism in canonical works by white women, such as Gilman's *Herland*,[4] as described above.

Throughout this chapter (and, indeed, this dissertation), I aim to articulate the ways that white feminists in early twentieth-century Canada deployed fantastical genres in their contributions to what Daniel Coleman calls Canada's "fictive ethnicity" (7). These women sought, as Robert Kroetsch would say of the mid-century Canadian Modernists, to *write* the country into existence (63), and in so doing they circulated prescriptive norms of Anglo-Saxon middle-class femininity through their imaginative, fictional texts. As Coleman contends,

> what has come to be known as English Canada is and has been … a project of literary, among other forms of cultural, endeavour and … the central organizing problematic of this endeavour has been the formulation and elaboration of a specific form of whiteness based on a British model of civility. By means of this conflation of whiteness with civility, whiteness has been naturalized as the norm for English Canadian cultural identity. (5)

Unlike Kroetsch, who is largely interested in canon formation and canonical texts, Coleman investigates Canada as a nation literally written into existence through popular ("low culture") literature produced and circulated between 1850 and 1950.

[4] Another excellent example is Jean Pfaelzer's critical introduction to her 2000 edition of Mary E. Bradley Lane's *Mizora: A Prophecy*, "Utopians Prefer Blondes—Mary Lane's *Mizora* and the Nineteenth-Century Utopian Imagination."

This body of writing, Coleman argues, allows us to "observe the unstable dynamics between the official symbolic history of the nation and its fantasmatic, repressed histories" (35). Certainly, Coleman's claim is particularly salient for feminist literary history because, as he puts it, "popular writing is usually produced not only by those who securely hold the reins of power but *also by those who are lobbying for power*" (35, emphasis added). Missing from Coleman's study, however, as from most studies of Canadian literary history, is an investigation of this period's fantastical and science fictional texts written by women. As scholars of Canadian feminist and literary history have demonstrated, it was commonplace for Canadian feminists to make use of print media, including fiction, to reproduce the eugenic, Anglo-Saxon supremacist visions for Canada that were popular among the period's social reformers. Writing of Nellie McClung's fiction in the context of "ethnic nationalism, race-based social reform, and Anglo-imperialism" (15), Cecily Devereux describes the "emergence of what should be understood as a maternalist, eugenist genre in English Canada" (62). Mariana Valverde highlights the "international dimension" of eugenic thought that so influenced and contextualized the feminism of key figures such as McClung, Emily Murphy, and organizations such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union ("Mother.") Coleman notes the commonplaceness of eugenicist discourse in fictional allegories for "the Canadian national character" (148), a claim that is further illustrated by Jennifer Henderson's analysis of Emily Murphy's figure Janey Canuck (159–207). Just as significant women in Canada's so-called first wave of feminism deployed eugenic tropes to promote their ideal Canadian nation, so too did the obscure writers I discuss throughout this dissertation. Notably, the four texts published between 1896 and 1919, which are the subjects of this and the next chapter, all depict science and the

supernatural allegorically in order to centralize—whether implicitly or explicitly—the importance and value of middle-class white women to the young country. As a result, and in spite of their departure from the realist and naturalist narrative forms assumed by mid-century canon-makers to define early Canadian literature, these texts actively contributed to the circulation of norms that helped shape English Canadian identity into the fiction taken for granted today.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

There are numerous ways to categorize the subset of Canadian women's writing here under study. To reiterate the monikers listed above, terms such as women's "speculative fantasy" (Evans "Nineteenth" 13); women's "speculative fiction" (Rosinsky 115 *n.*2); "feminist fabulation" (Barr xii); women's "literature of estrangement" (Cranny-Francis 26); and the descriptive "literary tradition of women's writing about a better place" (Donawerth and Kolmerten 1), are already in circulation. While each of these terms is useful for its respective study, and the accompanying definitions should not be taken as interchangeable or mutually in- or exclusive, none has been formulated for the specific historical and geopolitical context that was early twentieth-century English Canada. For this chapter and the analyses that follow in Chapter Two, therefore, I have developed the specific if unimaginative term "Canadian women's proto-sf" to describe four texts that were written by Canadian women and published between 1896 and 1919. I use "proto" because, as mentioned above, despite their mobilization of generic conventions that could today be described

as science fictional or fantastical, these texts were written and published well before science fiction and fantasy were acknowledged literary genres with agreed-upon sets of conventions. I use "sf" because the shorthand (also written SF) has become "[t]he preferred and most common modern abbreviation for science fiction … [and u]nless usage clearly shows a different intent, SF includes all branches of the fantastic, including fantasy" ("SF").[5] Readers who encountered these four texts at the times of their respective publication may have associated the stories with a Gothic tradition[6] or with the "weird tale," or thought of them simply as "yarns"; readers of the two 1919 publications discussed in Chapter Two may even have described them as "scientifiction," the awkward portmanteau coined by Hugo Gernsback in 1915,[7] but it is also possible that readers of these texts did not think in terms of genre at all, since the proliferation of "genres"—insofar as we think of them today—was quite new, even in 1919. Thus, the productively vague term "proto-sf" highlights these texts' historical and generic positions as works of imaginative fiction written before sf and its affiliated genres were coined, while clearly making use of fantastical, pseudo-scientific imagery and tropes.

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[5] I use a fan-sourced definition here because, like many genres, sf's conventions were developed and refined by its fans.

[6] In limited ways, the four texts in my first two chapters align productively with what Patricia Murphy has termed "New Woman Gothic" (2016). A study of these and other Canadian texts of the period through a New Woman Gothic lens would be of great value to Canadian women's literary history.

[7] Gernsback's term is said to have been "first printed in the January, 1916, issue of *Electrical Experimenter* to describe what is now called 'science fiction,' 'speculative fiction' – or, for some relatively new fans, 'sci fi' or 'skiffy' – and which was in its earlier forms called 'scientific romances'" ("Scientifiction"). Though some sf scholars insist the ungainly term "never caught on," (Rabkin 17), scientifiction and its abbreviation "stf" ("pronounced stef") were commonly used in the 1930s and 40s ("Scientifiction").

It is worth considering the usefulness of reading the texts in these first two chapters as feminist. As Anne Cranny-Francis states, "[n]ot all women writers are feminist writers. Many writers work conscientiously within the dominant ideologies of gender, race and class; after all, that is the best way to make a living" (1). For Cranny-Francis, feminist writing works "against, not with, conservative ideological discourses" (1), but for many white women in late nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Canada, feminism was an improvement upon, and not necessarily oppositional to, conservative ideology. Devereux explains that what we would now consider "reductive and biologically determinist notions of gender" in fact motivated first wave Canadian feminists to claim "maternal instinct" as grounds for women's rights (20); Valverde similarly points to maternal feminists' use of "housecleaning metaphors" to "legitimize women's entry into the public sphere" and establish "a parallel between what was known as 'political purity' and personal hygiene" (*Age* 28); and Henderson draws on white settler women's narrative self-representations to demonstrate the "contradiction internal to liberal feminist discourse … that allowed nineteenth-century feminist protest to be transformed into advocacy on behalf of the norm" (13). In the Canadian settler colonial context, Henderson argues, "[t]he authority of the woman who could pronounce on problems of government was predicated on her embodiment of certain norms of conduct. She was subjected to a moral and racial valorization that tied her expertise in the government of others to the requirement that she relate to herself as valuable racial material, an investment in future Canadian 'stock'" (13). Thus, in order to ascertain the white feminist objectives of the texts in these first two chapters, it is necessary to read them as self-consciously feminist—that is, promoting a feminist politics in line with late-nineteenth and early twentieth century ideas about women's

emancipation—despite the texts' investments in the dominant, conservative ideologies of gender, race, and class contemporaneous with their publication.

Though I argue throughout this and the following chapter that these four texts are invested in a white feminist agenda, I stop short of categorizing them as "feminist," myself. Generic definitions depend a great deal on the reader's politics, and political definitions—like feminism—are likewise slippery. As Natalie Rosinsky succinctly puts it, "feminism is not one cohesive viewpoint but rather an ideological framework which contains a range of views" (ix). Understandably, one's own feminist views necessarily impact one's reading and interpretation of women's writing. Cranny-Francis, for example, defines feminist genre fiction "including science fiction, fantasy, utopian fiction, detective fiction and romance" as "[genre] fiction written from a self-consciously feminist perspective, consciously encoding an ideology which is in direct opposition to … patriarchal ideology" (1). Of course, this definition's lack of attention to race leaves it both vulnerable to and complicit with the universalizing tendency of white feminism described by Mukherjee above. For me, insisting on the modifier "white" clarifies and foregrounds the racist implications of these texts, particularly as they relate to white women's emancipation and political agitation. Thus, even if the white feminist politics advanced by the texts are in keeping with historically contemporary feminist activism, the modifier "white" reminds us that the texts' racist ideologies are historically germane.

METHODOLOGY

I have employed a methodologically promiscuous approach to engage with and respond to the proto-sf texts under study in these first two chapters: the novel *Tisab Ting; or, The Electrical Kiss* by Dyjan Fergus, published in 1896 by Toronto's Hunter, Rose Co., which is this chapter's primary object of study, and the stories "Lastluck Lake," "The Clasp of Rank," and "When Wires are Down," published in fiction magazines between 1907 and 1919, which I discuss at length in Chapter Two.[8] I read these texts symptomatically for signs and tropes of turn-of-the-century white settler feminism and imperial ideology, as well as to gauge political allegiances with either of the two dominant outlets for first-wave feminism: the social purity and social gospel movements.

Considering the works in these first two chapters were written in formulaic, non-literary genres, I argue that their representations of men, women, and race reveal a repressed history of white women's access and appeals to power in a burgeoning society organized around the preservation and proliferation of whiteness. "Popular literature," Coleman explains, "allows us to see a contest between representations of the nation that had broad appeal and how these representations jockey for official state adoption" (35). These two complementary chapters thus aim to historicize white Canadian women's mobilization of science and the fantastic as part of their efforts to popularize white women's emancipation during the early twentieth century. In other

[8] All four texts exemplify the argument I put forward in this chapter; although I treat them as a set, I postpone my close readings of the latter three to Chapter Two to ensure that I devote adequate attention to each.

words, my reading of the first four imaginative texts in this dissertation insists that they are not *incidentally* racist but, rather, deliberate in their white supremacist fantasies about the young nation-state and white women's value to it.

CANADIAN WOMEN'S PROTO-SF, 1896–1919

The expansion of the popular press was a boon to late-nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century Canadian feminists. They took advantage of all manner of "periodicals, pamphlets, and books" to champion suffrage and women's rights in general (Strong-Boag 349). During this period literature was widely used to circulate and promote codes of conduct for competing "social projects" (Coleman 20), so it is unsurprising that Canadian white feminism, like its American and British counterparts, has a strong history in fiction, among other kinds of print.[9] Although the terms "science fiction" and "fantasy" would not be formalized as genres until the proliferation and specialization of pulp magazines in the nineteen twenties, thirties, and forties, numerous tropes now conventional to sf were widely employed by early feminist fiction writers, as described above. In her ground-breaking book *Into Darkness Peering*, recognized as "the first text of consequence to undertake a discussion of race in the fantastic" (Lavender *Race* 11), Elisabeth Anne Leonard contends that "[b]ecause the fantastic is not 'high' culture but 'popular,' what it has to say about race is especially

[9] Studies of early Canadian feminist literatures are numerous. For analysis of feminist drama see Kym Bird's *Redressing the Past*; for Nellie McClung's fiction see Cecily Devereux's *Growing A Race*; for settler women's first-person narratives see Jennifer Henderson's *Settler Feminism and Race Making in Canada*; for women's archives see Carole Gerson's *Canadian Women in Print, 1750–1918* and Linda Morra and Jessica Schagerl's *Basements and Attics, Closets and Cyberspace*.

significant; it can represent or speak to the racial fears of a large group" (3). In this way, Leonard's analysis is akin to Coleman's in that both are expressly invested in the ways white supremacy and racism are encoded in and circulated via popular literature.

My research indicates that Leonard's analysis, like Coleman's, is well-suited to a study of early Canadian women's fantastic writing. Firstly, each text in this and the following chapter deploys literary devices that would become popular tropes of sf decades later: *Tisab Ting*, for example, is recounted through a now-pervasive science fictional storytelling device called "future history," and this futuristic setting makes possible an imaginative harnessing of the power of electricity to do good or evil; "Lastluck Lake" incorporates both a "wolf-man" figure and supernatural geology; "The Clasp of Rank" relies on a combination of fabricated Indigenous ceremony and the influence of a meteorite to explain the supernatural events of the short story; and, lastly, "When Wires Are Down," knits together ghost story conventions, the supernatural, and technological fallibility. And secondly, as Leonard posits, these conventions consistently serve to allegorize intersecting concerns over race and gender, creating opportunities for the explicit prescribing of gendered norms of whiteness in relation to the stories' racialized characters.

The fledgling tradition of Canadian women's genre writing vividly documents through metaphor and allegory the desire of first wave Canadian feminists[10] to build a racially and socially "pure" Anglo-Saxon Canada. For this reason, the sf trope

[10] The notion of feminist "waves" is not without its limitations, but I use it deliberately in reference to the numerous white women's movements understood to comprise feminism's "first wave": the suffragettes, the New Woman, maternal feminism, and eugenic feminism.

"Contact with the Other" (James 211), which would seem most relevant to my research, is in fact the single most problematic sf trope for my analysis. Science fiction scholar Edward James proposes that because Contact with the Other is "one of the most ubiquitous themes in science fiction," there follows the "problem of deciding whether the Other—an alien, a robot, an android—is actually intended as a racial Other" (211).[11] In the case of Canadian women's proto-sf, the answer is unequivocally yes, but this is unremarkable because these alien Others (Tisab Ting, and the two ghosts) happen also to be racialized Others in the texts themselves.[12] The subject of this chapter, *Tisab Ting*, provides a useful touchstone for analyzing the juxtaposition of "Contact with the Other" with more fantastical literary devices. The novel's plot revolves entirely around contact with Tisab Ting, "the Chinaman," but it is his manipulation of science (made possible by the futuristic setting) that allegorizes the impossibility of his—the Other's—integration into white, bourgeois Canadian society. "Lastluck Lake," "The Clasp of Rank," and "When Wires Are Down," too, all dictate "appropriate" contact between and expectations of whites and racialized Others. Thus, rather than using "Contact with the Other" as a critical tool to interpret these texts' representations of race, I find instead that the less overtly political sf tropes (future history and supernatural geology and weather) function to amplify the undesirability of contact.

[11] Isaiah Lavender explores this point in greater detail in *Race in American Science Fiction*.

[12] S. Carleton's "Lastluck Lake" and "The Clasp of Rank" depict "contact" with greater complexity than either Fergus or Beynon Thomas in their respective works. Carleton's stories both demonstrate an investment in the possibility of redemption through cleanliness and hard work, even for the texts' racialized characters; and, by contrast, the antagonists of both stories are corrupt, greedy white men.

In conjunction with their prescriptions on appropriate relationships with racialized Others, both *Tisab Ting* and the texts in Chapter Two advocate white women's necessity to the nation-building project. This is most visible in their meticulous allegorizing of "good" and "bad" masculinities vis à vis idealized white femininity. Coleman describes popular literature in Canada as having a "pedagogical function" prior to the institutionalization and canonization of English Canadian Literature. Demonstrating the ways that "popular, formulaic writing tended to anthropomorphize the nation in single allegorical human figures" (38), Coleman argues that "[s]uch anthropomorphic tropes for the nation function strategically under the civil ethos of liberal modernity to fuse the codes of personal morality, usually figured as the development of admirable character, with the codes for public citizenship" (39). One recurring example, which Coleman calls "ubiquitous in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries," is the "allegorical [figuration] of the colonial nation as a youth on the verge of independent manhood" (39). Certainly, all four texts in this and the following chapter depict at least one white male character who could be interpreted thus, but their respective interests in the involvement of white women in the nation-building project compel me instead to consider their depictions of white *women* as symbolic of the young nation.

The strategic deployment of race and gender in these four allegorical fictions suggests not only the aspirations and ideologies of their middle-class white women authors, but the popular interests, too, of the masses to whom they might appeal. Leonard argues that "[t]he ways in which race is represented in the fantastic produce a measure of the concern culture has for matters relating to race. … Examining the

systems of racial meaning and stereotypes within a work (or, in this case, within a genre) provides a better understanding of culture, cultural production, and racial ideology" (4). In other words, it is not the measurable influence of these texts on their readers that is significant—some may not have ever had an audience! Rather, it is the texts' shared vocabulary about matters of gender, race, and civil behaviour that reflect significantly on early-Canada's white feminist aspirations.

My analyses of the texts here and in Chapter Two investigate the origins of women's sf writing in Canada not in spite of the texts' racist deployment of imaginative and speculative tropes, but to carefully articulate the relationship between feminism and white supremacy in early-twentieth-century Canada. All four texts, for example, centralize women's vulnerability to men; *Tisab Ting*, "Lastluck Lake," and "When Wires Are Down" rely on racist stereotypes of non-white men's predatory, bestial instincts and the supposed threat they pose to white women's bodily safety. "When Wires are Down" reiterates a racist and eugenic attitude toward immigration and miscegenation through heavily coded imagery like the sheepskin coat, which I discuss in Chapter Two. By contrast, "The Clasp of Rank" focuses on the absolute power of the corrupt Indian Agent over the Indigenous community under his rule, and the threat this corruption poses to "civilizing" reform projects like the social gospel movement. In fact, through its characterization of the Indigenous mother figure, "The Clasp of Rank" encourages the assimilation of Indigenous peoples, suggesting that racist ideology can support the nation-building project.

Further, as mentioned above all four texts contain at least one white male character who didactically performs good, civilized, masculinity. *Tisab Ting*'s Jerry

Arnald and the protagonist of "Lastluck Lake," Paul Hazard, embody characteristics that align with Coleman's assessment of both "muscular Christian" and "enterprising Scottish orphan" tropes:[13] both men are hardworking, Anglo-Saxon, of modest beginnings, and capable of raising the morale and civility of those in proximity by setting an example; they prioritize the virtue of the women they love above all else, successfully endeavouring to earn that love's return. The narrators of both "The Clasp of Rank" and "When Wires Are Down" are entangled in plots surrounding mysterious deaths of women, the former as a good neighbour and the latter probably as a brother, though the exact nature of his relationship to the victim is part of the mystery. In both instances the narrators desire to see the women's murderers punished, not because the murdered women deserve justice *per se*, but rather to illustrate the illegitimacy of men's unchecked power over women.

The fact that none of these texts is utopian, generically speaking, is interesting considering the volume of American women's utopian fiction published during the same period. Noting that "notions of utopia, science fiction, and fantasy overlap to some degree" (2), Jane Donawerth and Carol A. Kolmerten refer to Darko Suvin's definition of utopia, which is "the verbal construction of a particular [more perfect] quasi-human community … based on estrangement arising out of an alternative historical hypothesis" (qtd. in Donawerth and Kolmerten 2–3). Likewise building from Suvin, Peter Stockwell describes utopias as "configuring an entire rich universe in

[13] In *White Civility: The Literary Project of English Canada*, Coleman organizes a variety of recurring white, Anglo-Saxon character types of early Canadian popular literature into four major tropes: the Loyalist brother (pp 46–80), the enterprising Scottish orphan (pp. 81–127), the muscular Christian (pp. 128–167), and the maturing colonial son (pp. 168–210).

which the details of the social, political and natural environment are the main concern" (204). Stockwell adds that "the lyrical description of the environment … is stylistically expressed either in tiny incidental details or in encyclopedic detours that account directly for the utopian society" (204). Kolmerten notes that over thirty American women wrote utopian novels between 1890 and 1919 (107). Utopian fiction is arguably the best-known sf/feminist cross-over literary genre thanks to serials like Mary E. Bradley Lane's *Mizora: A Prophecy* (1881) and Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Herland* (1915),[14] discussed above. Incomplete archives make it impossible to say for sure, but I have attempted to identify all of the proto-sf works written by Canadian women and published prior to 1960 (see Appendix B). Based on bibliographies by John Bell, Mike Ashley, John Robert Colombo, and David Ketterer, the four texts that I discuss here and in Chapter Two were among a total of only six texts written by Canadian women, employing identifiable sf conventions, and published between 1896 and 1919.[15] Although Allan Weiss identifies a handful of Canadian utopian fictions "published between Confederation and the First World War" (305, *n*1), it does not appear that Canadian women publishing in English made use of the genre.[16] As it is set in the future and indeed entails numerous "encyclopedic detours" (Stockwell 204), *Tisab Ting* comes

[14] Both were reissued as novels after their initial publications as serials.

[15] In addition to the four texts I discuss in Chapters One and Two, there is the novel *A Soul on Fire* by Frances Fenwick Williams, published in 1915 by S.B. Gundy, and S. Carleton's novel length story "Mystery Mine," published in the pulp magazine *Top-Notch* in 1918. On reading Carleton's 1918 publication, however, I found it to be nearly identical to "Lastluck Lake," published eleven years earlier. With the exception of a name change for the main male character (Hazard becomes Wayne) I could find no substantive differences between the two stories.

[16] Though incomplete archives make such a claim precarious, it is worth noting that Allan Weiss's brief survey of Canadian utopian literature lists only four texts: *The Dominion in 1983* (1883) by Ralph Centennius, John Galbraith's *In the New Capital* (1897), Frederick Nelson's *Toronto in 1928 A.D.* (1908), and Hugh Pedley's *Looking Forward* (1913), all of which are presumed to have been written by men.

closest to mimicking the utopian conventions common to its American contemporaries, namely presenting a new and improved society introduced to the reader via the visiting spectator who moves between the author's contemporary society and the utopian one. But even though Fergus's "futuristic" Montreal depicts white women's emancipation as rote, the setting is far from the idealized world necessary to fit the genre. Robert Elliott argues of utopian fiction that "to have faith in the possibility of utopia, one must believe in progress" (87); if Elliott is correct, it would appear that, unlike the male Canadian writers identified by Weiss and the white feminists writing in the US, white feminists in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Canada were not yet convinced of the country's "unending progress" (Weiss 293). They do, however, share a common conviction in the possibility of "purity." Like their American comparators, these texts are overtly invested in the nation-building project underway during the period. To borrow from Coleman, they rely heavily on allegories to educate their readers about proper norms of "white civility," including hard work, philanthropy, sobriety, and racial purity to build and fortify Canada as an Anglo-Saxon nation. In fact, given their respective investments in the *possibility* of a "pure" and thereby more "perfect" Canadian nation, the ideological underpinnings of these four texts might well be described as utopian even if, structurally speaking, the content cannot.

Hereafter, I will discuss *Tisab Ting* exclusively, and return to "Lastluck Lake," "The Clasp of Rank," and "When Wires Are Down" in Chapter Two to provide as much material and historical context as possible with respect to each text's publication and circulation.

TISAB TING; OR, THE ELECTRICAL KISS

As noted above, the novel *Tisab Ting; or, The Electrical Kiss* was written by Ida May Ferguson and published under the pseudonym Dyjan Fergus in 1896 by Toronto publisher The Hunter, Rose Company, Ltd. Set one century in the future (1995), and taking place primarily in Montreal, Quebec,[17] the novel tells the interconnected stories of Petra Bertram and Jerry Arnald, two young, white, hardworking orphans of venerable character, each one a carefully gendered allegory for an idealized Canadian nation. Although born in China,[18] Petra has been the ward of her maternal aunt since the occasion of Mrs. Bertram's death when Petra was only six years old (Fergus 15). Then, when she was seventeen, Petra's father, Antony Bertram, died suddenly and mysteriously in China, "where he had lived since his wife's death" (15). The narrator describes Petra as "the sweetest flower in that Canadian garden" (9) and, over the course of the novel, she is consistently portrayed as an archetype for Canadian femininity: hard working, philanthropic, modest, chaste, sober, and dutiful to the appropriate authority figures. By contrast, Petra's aunt, Mrs. Harrington, and her cousins, the Misses Maud and Nan Harrington, are depicted as remnants of landed English gentry settled in Montreal. Although the three foils are more concerned with looking good (hosting the who's who of society; marrying within their class) than doing

[17] Curiously, the Harrington's estate, where the bulk of the novel is set, is located along the Lachine Canal (figure 1.1). Though this geographical position is undoubtedly deliberate, it is unclear how this should be interpreted in light of the novel's anti-Chinese tenor.

[18] The novel gives no rationale for why the Bertrams would have been in China, but the context suggests they were missionaries.

good, Nan's character arc demonstrates that even the vestiges of the British aristocracy can be redeemed. This latter point is significant in that it connects to the novel's social reform ideology: that redemption is always possible for Anglo-Saxons but never for racialized Others.

Jerry Arnald is the Harrington's under-gardener who strives to improve his lowly station in life through hard work. At the outset of the novel we learn that Jerry came to work for the Harringtons when he was "an urchin of twelve, destitute of home, kith or kin" (35). After years of hard work and study, Jerry is accepted to medical school at McGill University where, unsurprisingly, he excels gracefully and outshines all of his peers who, nevertheless, adore him. Jerry's dedication to self-improvement is explained as partly owing to his desire to be "worthy" enough to marry his beloved Nan Harrington[19] (26). Significantly, however, his hard work, ambition, and abstinence from vice—in other words, his "character"—are depicted as worthwhile ends in and of themselves. "Character," explains Valverde, was central to claims of Anglo-Saxon supremacy in turn-of-the-century Canada (*Age* 104). "The Anglo-Saxon 'race' was regarded as much more capable of controlling their instincts than other races[.] … In the Canadian context, internalized control was seen as the best foundation for a social order envisioned as built primarily through consensus and genuine, internalized respect for authority, and only exceptionally through coercion and force" (Valverde *Age* 104–5). Importantly, Jerry's character is consistent throughout the entire novel. Though he

[19] Nan's character development is sloppy and inconsistent but, allegorically, its trajectory suggests that she is unable to reciprocate Jerry's affections until she overcomes the class-based prejudices she inherited from her mother.

continually strives toward self- improvement, his character is already the Anglo-Saxon—in other words, the Canadian—ideal. Jerry's dedication to self-improvement,

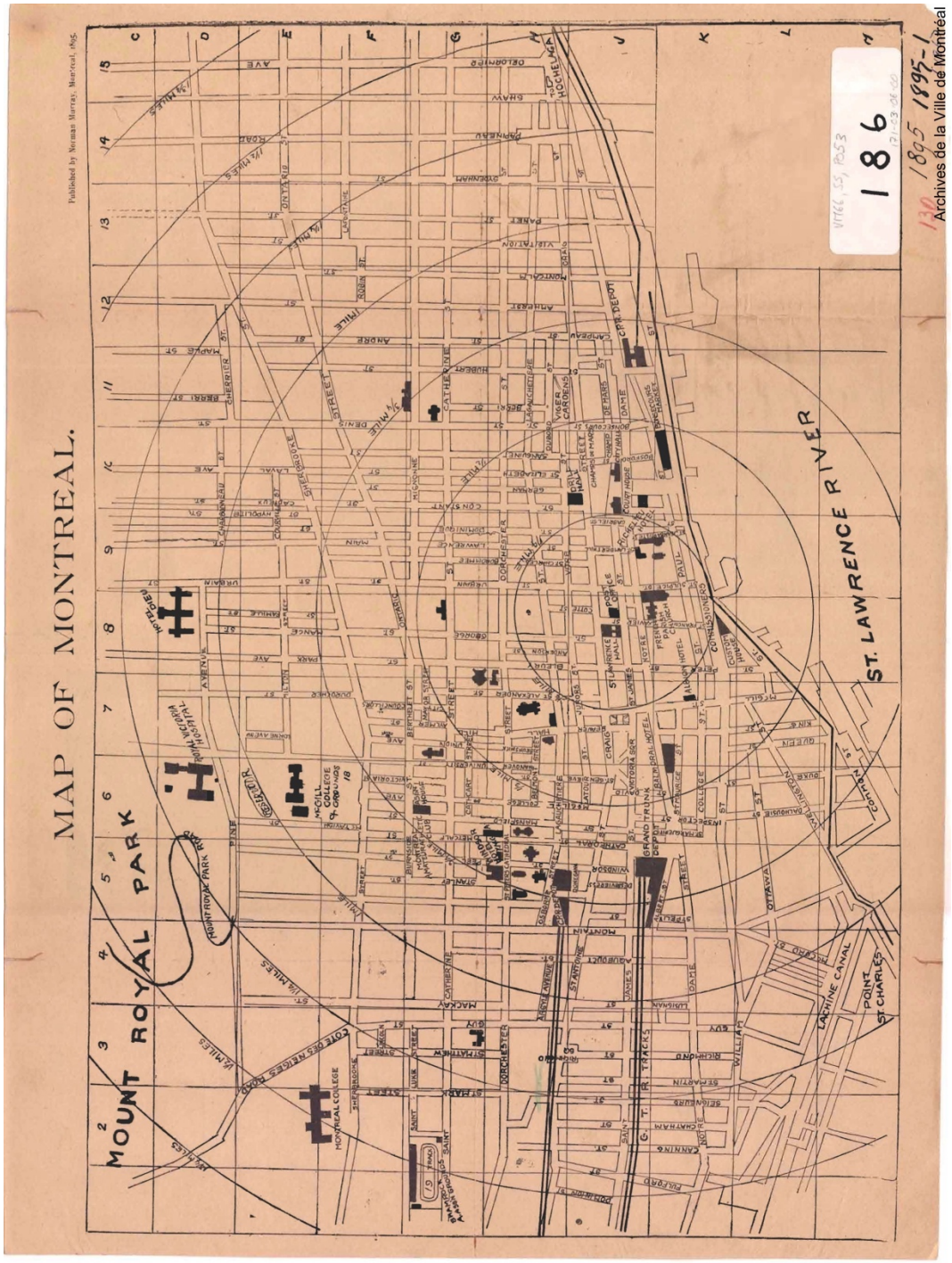

Figure 1.1: Map of the City of Montreal in 1895. Source: Archives de la Ville de Montréal, 2020.

then, serves both as a (masculine) exemplar for the reader and, necessarily, as a foil to the novel's antagonist, Tisab Ting. Though both Petra and Jerry are equally important to the novel's pedagogical function, hereafter my close readings focus primarily on Petra because she is the locus of the three allegories with which this chapter is concerned: idealized white femininity, contact with racialized Others, and "good" and "bad" masculinities vis à vis white femininity.

The novel's plot is best described as beleaguered, suggesting the story is secondary to *Tisab Ting*'s pedagogical function. For example, moments after the reader meets the novel's heroine, Petra, Mrs. Harrington explains to her daughters and niece that a "Chinaman," one Tisab Ting, is coming to Canada to acquire a wife (Fergus 11). From here, the novel sets up Petra's opposition to and hatred of Tisab Ting in an *almost* Austenian fashion: the former determined to hate the latter based on surface knowledge alone, and the latter stoic and chivalrous in his efforts to secure his recalcitrant love.[20] Complicating this classic enemies-cum-lovers trope, however, is the seething current of anti-Chinese racism that forms the foundation of the novel, which I discuss below. Though Petra vows never to befriend—let alone love or marry—him, Tisab Ting manipulates "science" by kissing Petra on "a vein of electricity" in her neck, a technique called "the electrical kiss" discussed in detail below, which thus forces her to fall in love with him (184). Although eventually they marry, Petra never feels entirely

[20] Jane Austen's *Pride & Prejudice* provides a popular example of this romantic chemistry. The novel's central heroine, Elizabeth Bennett, is determined to hate the wealthy and imperious Mr. Darcy based on the pair's first encounter. The couple's subsequent interactions are thus coloured with misunderstanding and narrative misdirection. Darcy, however, is determined to marry the stubborn Miss Bennett and by the novel's denouement proves himself to be worthy of her affection. The dynamic between Petra and Tisab Ting is similar, except that Fergus's novel refuses the possibility that Tisab Ting could ever be worthy of Petra's love.

comfortable with this love. During their honeymoon she experiences a moment of lucidity and, with the help of a stewardess who hates all men (215), Petra escapes Tisab Ting to start a new life in Boston, Massachusetts.

Throughout the novel, Petra alone distrusts Tisab Ting, heightening the Austenian nature of the romance. Tisab Ting succeeds in winning the favour and trust of everyone, including his foil, Jerry, who ultimately helps Tisab Ting reunite with the estranged Petra. In the final pages of the novel, when the spouses meet again, Petra—dying—tells her husband, "You thought that I did not love you; you grieved for the science you believed insufficient; but you need not grieve. I love you as passionately as in the moment of the electrical kiss; the sweeping unhuman power of that love has sapped my life; I come from the vale of death to tell you of my love" (299–300). For readers lacking the historical context in which *Tisab Ting* was written, the novel's message is thus profoundly unclear. Is Petra's initial hatred for Tisab Ting justified or unwarranted? Is Tisab Ting an upstart hero, an anti-hero, or a villain? Petra's hostility to Tisab Ting is unarguably—even exaggeratedly—prejudicial. On first learning of his forthcoming visit, she exclaims, "I hate the whole Chinese race" (14) and laments that she does not "live in 1895," which the reader will recognize as the year before the novel's publication, when "the civilized masses knew next to nothing of China, its customs, laws, and institutions" (17).[21] In the context of late nineteenth-century xenophobia, particularly as it related to the Chinese, Petra's anxiety over Tisab Ting's imminent arrival, her horror at his quest to take a Canadian wife, and her disgust at

[21] Petra's historically inaccurate beliefs about Chinese-Canadian contact are, of course, undermined by the novel's very existence. Clearly white "civilized" Canadians knew *enough* of China and the Chinese in 1895 that the author could produce the novel.

her aunt's desire for the wealthy, educated Chinaman to marry either Maud or Nan, are all reflective of "yellow peril."

Anti-Asian racism was a significant facet of Canadian life for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. John Kuo Wei Tchen and Dylan Yeats describe "Yellow perilism" as "neither misinformation nor the figment of overactive imaginations. It is a structured tradition of concepts and practices hardwired into the political culture of Western Enlightenment modernity itself" (357); their book *Yellow Peril! An Archive of Anti-Asian Fear* documents visual representations of yellow peril and its relationship to Orientalism, colonialism, and capitalism in Western culture. "Yellow peril" has likewise been a central concern for Canadian nation-building both literally, because of the Chinese labour used in railway construction, and figuratively in terms of white supremacist anti-Chinese immigration law. The concept is especially evident in nineteenth- and early twentieth century eugenic feminist texts, such as Emily Murphy's *The Black Candle*.[22]

It cannot be overstated that the portrayals of Chinese characters and customs in *Tisab Ting* are entirely drawn from racist stereotypes circulating at the time of the novel's writing[23] and serve only the purpose of emphasizing the natural superiority of white Anglo-Saxon Protestant culture. Likewise, the novel's representations of its

[22] For further historical context, see Sheena Wilson's work on Japanese Canadian literature and cinema, and work by Asian Canadian writers, critics, and scholars reclaiming their histories in the Canadian literary landscape. Roy Miki's *In Flux* (2011) and Larissa Lai's *Slanting I, Imagining We* (2014), are two such examples.

[23] Jiwu Wang writes that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries "many Anglo-Canadians saw the Chinese immigrants in Canada as the 'Yellow Peril' that would destroy the nation's Anglo-Saxon Protestant character. In order to protect the nation from such a threat, politicians, church leaders, university professors, newspaper editors, and union leaders soon formed an anti-Chinese coalition to eliminate Chinese immigrants from Canada" (143).

protagonists, Petra and Jerry, are saturated with a social purity rhetoric whose primary goal was to ensure that Anglo-Saxons were not "overrun by more fertile 'races'" (Valverde *Age* 32). Petra's extreme prejudice toward Tisab Ting, then, despite her eventual condescension to marry him, must be interpreted as a xenophobic call to arms against the "yellow peril."

The character Tisab Ting is both constructed and identified as an "exceptional" Chinaman; his education, style of dress, and command of the English language and customs are presented in contrast to the "typical" Chinaman portrayed by his servant Chipee-nee. Not only is Chipee-nee described as a clownish figure "still wearing the cue, long, narrow goatee, and queer costume of his country [China]" and who "cannot speak a word of English" (Fergus 76), he ceases to be of any narrative importance once he performs the grotesque task of slaughtering the Harrington girls' Chinese dog, Ginkee, and serving it to them for lunch (101–102). Where Chipee-nee represents a barbarous stereotype of the Chinese as an unassimilable *other*, Tisab Ting represents the danger that Chinese integration and assimilation pose to Canadian society.

Tisab Ting at times appears to be a kind of heroic underdog desperate to win the love of the protagonist, but these inconsistent depictions as sometimes sympathetic, sometimes predatory are the effect of an inexperienced author rather than any effort to make the character complex. When Tisab Ting is unable to convince Petra that he is worthy of her love, he uses his secret, scientific knowledge of the aforementioned "electrical kiss" to force Petra's favour. He explains the kiss to Petra thus:

"My father … found that in some, not all, of the human race was a vein of electricity. This vein, when present, runs counter to the pneuogastric [*sic*] nerve,[24] which supplies the heart with nervous energy from the brain. Those in possession of this vein have great mesmeric and magnetic power."

"Where did you say this vein was to be found, and what is its use?" inquired Petra, who was somewhat carried away by the soothing sweetness of Tisab Ting's peculiarly accented voice, and the unusual unheard-of theory he was advancing.

"It is found," replied Tisab Ting, "on the left side of the neck, and if one desiring the love, the affection of another which he cannot otherwise win, can touch with the lips this electric vein on the occasion of the first kiss may win the love, the affection of the person kissed." (184)

On hearing Tisab Ting's theory, Petra, her guard unusually down,[25] bends back her head "thoughtfully rubbing that portion of her neck where the electrical vein should be" (184). Seizing the opportunity, Tisab Ting swoops down and kisses Petra on her neck, "then standing erect he watches the effect of his act" (184). Thus after months of rejecting Tisab Ting's advances, Petra is henceforth and entirely against her will

[24] Probably pneu*mo*gastric nerve, the vagus nerve, "a paired nerve that supplies branches to many major internal organs. It carries motor nerve fibres to the heart, lungs, and viscera and sensory fibres from the viscera" ("Vagus nerve").

[25] The reason Petra's guard is so uncharacteristically lowered during this encounter is the result of a convoluted subplot in which Tisab Ting confesses his love for Petra to Nan. Nan comforts and sympathizes with him because she suddenly begins to love Jerry who, she believes, has fallen in love with a co-worker named Nurse Athol. Petra, noticing Nan's heartache, believes Nan to be in love with Tisab Ting and Tisab Ting to be likewise in love with Nan even though Tisab Ting had recently proposed to Petra. Because she does not take Tisab Ting's "protestations of affection" seriously, Petra does not believe she is at risk being alone with him (184).

compelled to love him. In this instance the novel demonstrates that donning western civility merely enables Tisab Ting to charm his North American hosts and finally delude Petra that young, white women are safe in his presence. But for all of his acts of civility, Tisab Ting is unable to respect Petra's autonomy and, performing the stereotype of the cunning Chinaman, he slips out of his civilized disguise to force her to his will. Thus, Petra's ultimate declaration of love for this exceptional "Chinaman" can only be interpreted as a tragic ending to a cautionary, allegorical tale.

Because Petra symbolizes Canada, Tisab Ting's control over her "love" can be understood more broadly as commentary on the vulnerability of white women's sexual purity. Anxieties about racial and sexual purity and the potential contamination of a pure, white Anglo-Saxon dominion by Asian and Black immigrants was a common focus for white feminists in turn of the century Canada. Valverde, like Coleman, is interested in popular literatures and allegories with respect to their connections to social purity activism. As noted above, the social purity movement "had a clear racial and ethnic organization" (Valverde *Age* 32). Valverde explains that "[t]he 'whiteness' favoured by the movement was not merely spiritual but also designated (consciously or unconsciously) a skin colour. The racist fears about 'the yellow peril' and about Anglo-Saxons being overrun by more fertile 'races' … pervaded Canadian politics and society through the period" (*Age* 32). Both Valverde and Coleman refer to the hierarchy of immigrants described in J.S. Woodsworth's book *Strangers within Our Gates: Or, Coming Canadians*. While Woodsworth's racial taxonomy was published over a decade after Fergus published *Tisab Ting*, it very clearly maintains the anti-miscegenation politics contemporary with the novel and consistent with the social purity movement. Unlike

the desirable, white immigrants at the top of Woodsworth's hierarchy (in order: British, American, Scandinavian, German, and French), the Chinese were considered unassimilable by Woodsworth and his contemporaries and therefore constituted a threat (a "yellow peril") to the Canadian nation.

There were, of course, efforts by Protestant churches to "Canadianize" the existing Chinese immigrants as a means of reducing the "threat" of the yellow peril. Jiwu Wang explains, however, that these missions to evangelize and Canadianize Chinese immigrants were undermined by the inherent contradiction in the goal of Canadian Protestantism, which was to produce a white Anglo-Saxon Canada:

> Indeed, there was always a basic contradiction in the motives of the Protestant clergy: the tension between the motive of Christian evangelism and the motive of Anglo-Saxon nationalism, between the desire to include the Chinese within a Christian community and the desire to remove the "Yellow Peril." Most of the Protestant clergy proved unable to transcend the prevailing prejudices against Chinese immigrants. (145)

In this context, it becomes apparent that Fergus's novel is indeed a cautionary tale against Chinese immigration to and integration in Canada. Tisab Ting, the Chinaman who journeys to Canada in search of a wife, stands as an unabashed metaphor for Chinese immigration in general, whereas Petra, Tisab Ting's eventual and unwilling wife, represents the fair Canadian nation under threat of Chinese encroachment.

Considering the social purity movement's allegories, Valverde argues that what readers *today* may perceive as "overblown is the historically specific way in which

[allegories] were connected to social practices and to each other" (34). Read in this context, the seemingly over-the-top depictions of Tisab Ting's menace, Chipee-nee's barbarity, and Petra's reified goodness, to name only a few examples from the novel, are simply constructed to resonate with turn of the century cosmologies (*Age* 34). Valverde emphasizes that "excessive metaphors … were neither rhetorical flourishes nor stumbling blocks in rational arguments, but were rather, to the audience, the inconspicuous vehicles in which truths about moral and social reform were conveyed to the public" (*Age* 34–5). The novel makes numerous blatant motions to allegorize the characters; in one scene, Petra, Tisab Ting, and an American friend named Eva, pose together for an artist as representatives of their "nationalities." The women are to be drawn dressed in their countries' respective flags, and Tisab Ting, in between them, would be drawn "dressed as an old-time celestial"[26] (Fergus 135). Yet in comparison to overt allegorical moments such as this one, there are moments when the allegorizing is sloppily covert. For example, when Petra believes Tisab Ting to be pursuing the affections of her cousin Nan while also pledging his love to Petra, Petra thinks, "What a miserable two-faced wretch Tisab Ting is to win Nan's childish affections and at the same time try to amuse himself with me—the sooner he goes the better for the peace of all" (150). Petra's desire for Tisab Ting to leave Canada is set up as her desire for the Chinese visitor to leave her family in peace, but the phrasing "for the peace of *all*" can easily be read as an allegory in which Petra and Nan represent good, if naïve, Canadians and Tisab Ting represents all Asian immigrants. The instance is not

[26] China was known as the Celestial Empire in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the Chinese were accordingly referred to "humorously" as celestials ("celestial"). The term should here be understood as derogatory.

executed to signify Anglo-Saxon Canadian sentiment regarding Chinese immigration, but rather *becomes* representative when put in context with the historical hostility and xenophobia white Canadians showed to the Chinese in Canada.

Though the novel's inelegant allegories can be understood strategically, as discussed above, it would be a mistake to describe *Tisab Ting* as anything other than poorly written. This was a commonplace in Canadian fiction of the period, perhaps owing to the familiarity of "excessive grammar" and "monstrous syntax" that Valverde identifies as "inconspicuous vehicles in which truths about moral and social reform were conveyed to the public" (*Age* 34–5). Gordon Roper writes in *Literary History of Canada* of the fiction published in Canada between 1880 and 1920,

> About 200 of the some 400 [Canadians] who published wrote only one or two volumes. Some of these were men or women in small communities who published one volume at their own expense, and then no more. Many of these solo flights were more earnest or ambitious than skilful, [*sic*] but among them are a few of the more interesting Canadian fictions of the period. (276)[27]

Tisab Ting is much longer than necessary owing to its incoherent, episodic style of narration. It relies heavily on melodramatic digressions[28] in place of engaging or at

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[27] Roper does not include Ferguson in his discussion of "interesting Canadian fictions" but she is listed under religious and popular "psychic fiction" later in the bibliography (322).

[28] The following passage is an excellent example of the novel's style:

> "Nan, Nan, will you ever know what joy this letter has brought? Will I ever whisper into your listening ear all the agony I suffered in my first college year," thought Jerry, gazing at the epistle in his hand as though it were a living thing; then bending forward in a perfect abandon of joy, he kissed the letter passionately until all the tears were dry and only stains remained, like scars, to mark a man's agony—an agony of joy over a resurrected love mourned as dead. (160)

least coherent plot developments. The story is fragmented with overlapping sub-plots—Mrs. Harrington thwarting Petra's attempts to find employment; Jerry the under-gardener attempting to woo Nan Harrington (his employer's daughter) by going to medical school; Jerry's adventures in medical school; Tisab Ting's secret knowledge of how Petra's father died in China; Petra's missions as a social purity worker in Boston; Chipee-nee killing and serving the Harrington family dog for lunch; a war being waged by Russia and France "to wrest Egypt from the British" (Fergus 225)—most of which only undermine the story's narrative continuity. One scathing review of the novel appears in *The Canadian Magazine* in 1897, stating, "The novelty of [*Tisab Ting*'s] central idea and of the plot does not make up, however, for the author's weakness of style and artistic skill. The execution is very weak, and this can be but partly excused on the ground that it is the author's first attempt" (284). The anonymous reviewer then goes on to chastise would-be authors and the Canadian publishing industry for producing "immature" literature (285). *Tisab Ting*'s weaknesses, however, do not prevent the novel from being useful in an historical context. Demonstrably, its "immature" style makes the novel's politics easier to recognize, for *Tisab Ting* is rich with allegorical didacticism, overtly reflecting late nineteenth-century white Anglo-Saxon Protestant moralism in Canada.

In terms of social purity's relationship to white feminism, Valverde argues that white feminists were able to use social purity discourses, conflating personal hygiene with nationalism, for example, in order to legitimize white women's participation in the nation state (*Age* 28). Further, the movement's attempts at reforming gender "meant that some women were given the possibility of acquiring a relatively powerful identity

as rescuers, reformers, and even experts, while other women were reduced to being objects of philanthropic concern" (*Age* 29). With this historical context in mind, it is clear that *Tisab Ting* is unambiguously a social purity tract. Throughout the novel, Petra runs the gamut from innocent girl, to woman under threat, to woman in need of salvation and, eventually, to rescuer and reformer. After falling prey to Tisab Ting's manipulation, Petra does everything in her power to resist the Chinaman's control. Once free of Tisab Ting's corruption, Petra is able to take on meaningful work as a missionary for the "Temple of Song" in Boston (Fergus 239), visiting the poor and sick to bring them salvation. The salvation Petra delivers, however, comes secretly in the shape of a gold ring, a gift from her abandoned Chinese husband, which contains a magical Yu-stone (jade) with the power to heal. The ring, we learn, is powered by electricity and literally brings the dying back to health with a mere touch. It was invented by Tisab Ting's father, an ambitious Chinese scientist, who tested it on Petra's father when the latter was dying of fever. Unfortunately, the stone brought about Antony Bertram's (slightly) premature death but, afterward, Tisab Ting's father was able to perfect its power. The fact that Petra uses this ring in secret indicates that its origins are morally compromised. By using the magical ring to save lives, however, Petra proves that in the right (white, feminine) hands, even the awful power of science can be used for good instead of evil.

For a novel cited as often as is *Tisab Ting*, very little is written about it, its author Ida May Ferguson, or Ferguson's alias Dyjan Fergus. References to the novel appear occasionally in contemporary works about the history of Canadian science fiction, but typically only as a gesture to demonstrate how long Canadians have been producing sf.

It is tempting to suggest that hardly anyone has actually read the novel[29] given that it was never reprinted by its publisher, The Hunter, Rose Company, nor picked up by another publisher, and only one digitized version appears online[30] despite the novel having been out of copyright for years. It seems most likely that the novel was author-financed, a common enough practice during the period,[31] and something that is suggested by the absence of any advertising support from the publisher.

My research has found only a few records of Ferguson (and none for her alias Dyjan Fergus) in newspaper archives and late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century pamphlets and periodicals. I have already cited the scathing review of *Tisab Ting* that appeared in *The Canadian Magazine* (1897), locating the author as a resident of New Brunswick; a book announcement released prior to *Tisab Ting*'s publication appeared in *The Globe and Mail* (1896) situating Ferguson specifically in Moncton, NB, stating, "Miss Ferguson is analyst for Moncton Sugar Refinery, and in the intervals of handwriting reports and figures has written her book" (7 Nov 1896). The announcement adds, vaguely, "Possibly constant association with the properties of things has been the source of this [novel's] suggestion" (7 Nov 1896).

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[29] David Ketterer, for example, describes the novel briefly as featuring "an electrical genius" (17), which is inaccurate.

[30] Digitized from the University of Alberta's microfilm collection.

[31] Other examples of author-financed books include William Kingsford's "massive ten volume history of Canada" (Hulse, Lamonde, and O'Leary 164), and books published by Montreal's John Lovell in the nineteenth century (Parker 151).

Cited as one of and occasionally as *the* first Canadian sf novel,[32] *Tisab Ting* incorporates several tropes that eventually become characteristic of sf as the genre develops in later years. Most prominently, the temporal setting of the novel takes place in an imagined future one century later than its date of publication. Published in 1896, the novel is set in a "futuristic" Montreal in the years 1995 through 1997. Some indicators of its futurity include reference to the rapid transit between China and Canada—a mere fifteen days! (Fergus 14)—as well as women's access to education and social advancement equal to men (66).[33] The novel's depiction of women's eventual emancipation and the threat of Chinese immigration aligns with its contemporaries. According to Arthur B. Evans, "[m]uch of the futuristic fiction of the nineteenth century sought to portray – either positively or negatively – humanity's social 'progress' in the years to come" (14). Further, *Tisab Ting*'s futuristic setting fits Istvan Csicsery-Ronay's description of "Future History": "Unlike real prophecies, [science fictional futures] are narrated in the past tense. They don't pretend to predict a future, but to explain a *future past*" (76, emphasis original). Csisery-Ronay argues that this narrative style is among science fiction's main narrative strategies in that it depicts "convincing images of life in the future … recounted in the familiar voices of bourgeois subjects" (76). Consistent with the "future history" trope, *Tisab Ting*'s setting permits Fergus to undertake a number of political thought experiments: she defamiliarizes late nineteenth century commonplaces, such the social hierarchy dividing aristocratic and bourgeois

[32] Depending on one's definition of sf, *Tisab Ting* is predated by James De Mille's *A Strange Manuscript Found in a Copper Cylinder*, published in 1888.

[33] The novel here (p. 66) also gestures to the role of the New Woman in moving forward Canadian women's rights. The complex figure of the New Woman is beyond the scope of this project, but the allusion to her function here indicates a further lens through which to interpret the white feminist politics motivating and circulated by *Tisab Ting*.

émigrés in Canada; expounds on the improved social graces of educated women; and, most emphatically, speculates the consequences of Chinese immigration to Canada, as detailed above.

"Future history" is a popular science fictional trope because it facilitates the defamiliarization of commonplace ideology which then makes that ideology susceptible to criticism in a safe and low-stakes kind of way. In the case of *Tisab Ting*, Fergus is able to imagine a future in which Canadian women have access to the same educational opportunities as men. By displacing that thought experiment in the future, she is able to present the positive effects of women's education in an otherwise entirely recognizable society. Where later feminist science fiction writers like Octavia Butler, Phyllis Gotlieb, Judith Merril, and James Tiptree used future history to radically reimagine and interrogate their societies' racial, class, and gender strata, Fergus's mild reimagining speaks largely to an investment in maintaining nineteenth-century codes of civility. For example, when the character Mrs. Bunder discusses with Tisab Ting the educational rights women achieved in Canada over the (imagined) past century, her observations are limited to the impact this education has had on the bourgeoisie:

> the hostess does not hurry her guests into a crush of chairs and start them like so many automatic machines playing with cards, amongst, per-chance, a number of uncongenial people, as was the custom when my mother was a reigning belle. No; social evenings are now conducted on very different lines from those, and I believe that the new order of society came about through the educated woman, who in the latter part of the nineteenth century was labeled the 'new' woman. Yes, undoubtedly with the higher education of woman, a

> new era came, and society was the first to feel the beneficial wave. Equal intellectual rights have produced, to a greater extent than has ever before been known, equal morality of sex. (66)

Education for women, the novel argues, is a moral good. We learn that Mrs. Bunder, the above quoted champion of "equal intellectual rights," "previous to her marriage had been one of the best known lawyers of the United States, and was able to converse with a fluency and ease which made it pleasant to listen to her conversation" (66). That is, Mrs. Bunder's education and subsequent career as a nationally renowned lawyer did not prevent her from marrying and raising a family of morally-rich Anglo-Saxons; rather, it made her more valuable in society for her excellent conversational skills. Tisab Ting's reply to Mrs. Bunder, that educated women have likewise "been a great factor in [China's] advancement" (66), seems to imply that the reforms benefiting "uncivilized" nations like China are long overdue in a "civilized" nation like Canada.

The novel likewise rejects class-based social hierarchies, insisting that with hard work and education, any white person can be a boon to society. Jerry's ability to work hard in medical school and ignore the lure of "society," which is "nothing to merit … congratulations and admiration" (161), allows him to fast-track through his training and become a practicing physician in a mere two years. In a jarring digression,[34] the reader learns that Jerry has done so well in his first year of medical school that he is

[34] In addition to reminding the reader that the duration of Jerry's studies constitutes his (emotional but not geographical) distance from his beloved Nan, the novel *also* provides a lengthy explanation of the McGill University "Matriculation Statute" imagined to have been passed in 1965 by the Board of Governors allowing for exceptional circumstances like Jerry's. The explanation is over a page long and reads rather as though it were copied word for word from a McGill course calendar—which, incidentally, it cites (162).

permitted to skip the second year entirely. This digression provides the narrator an opportunity to overtly prescribe traits appropriate to white masculinity. Even before learning how rare Jerry's rapid academic progress is, the reader learns that he has simply "worked hard and steadily" having no "society" distractions like his peers (161). Moreover, Jerry is respectably modest regarding his success, stating matter-of-factly, "I have done nothing to merit the congratulations and admiration that have been showered upon me" except, he explains, working hard (161).

The novel similarly provides for the reader examples of the good moral work done by *un*educated white women. After escaping from her now-husband, Tisab Ting, Petra lives under the alias Madam Norris in Boston where she is able to conduct volunteer work akin to home missions described by Valverde.[35] Neither Petra's training nor knowledge in how to conduct this work is explained; instead, the novel insists that any "decent-looking woman" (Fergus 247) has the moral character required to nurse the sick and poor back to health and prosperity. Pointedly, Jerry's patients in the East End hospital in Montreal and the sick under Petra's care in Boston are described in overlapping terms. Jerry treats "the poor pain-stricken creatures from Poverty Row, in the eastern part of the city, brought low by want, ill-usage, or sin" (165), whereas Petra attends to "the degraded humanity of North quarter [Boston] … and their heirs in sin, want and poverty" (240), "Men and women in every stage of human decay, debauched, sodden creatures, standing in the passage-ways, squabbling, drinking, smoking, spitting" (246). The novel thus positions Petra's philanthropy as equivalent to Jerry's work as a physician in terms of social impact, moral imperative, and self-sacrifice.

[35] See her chapter "Racial Purity, Sexual Purity, and Immigration Policy," especially pp. 114–128.

Whether educated or not, the novel insists, emancipated white women are as vital to improving society's health and morality as are its hardworking, educated white men. *Tisab Ting*'s pedagogical function makes it a stunning example of turn-of-the-century white feminism in Canada. It typifies what Coleman describes as "'low culture' literature" by one "lobbying for power" (35), which is to say that it demonstrates a clear attempt at reaching a wide audience in its mobilization of popular anti-Chinese racism while simultaneously making appeals for white women's importance to the cultural refinement and maturation of the Canadian nation state.

The next proto-sf text to be published by a Canadian woman would not appear for over a decade: "Lastluck Lake," a novel-length story, was published in the general fiction periodical *The Popular Magazine* in 1907. Like *Tisab Ting*, it was published pseudonymously, its author Susan Carleton Jones writing under the name S. Carleton. Despite the lengthy stretch of time between *Tisab Ting* and "Lastluck Lake," the two novels share a strikingly similar white feminist agenda, though the latter would have had a much broader circulation. My discussion of "Lastluck Lake," its feminist politics and circulation, continues in Chapter Two.

CONCLUSION

I began this chapter with Arun P. Mukherjee's discussion of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Herland*, a novel of substantial canonical importance to both feminist literary history and the tradition of women's sf writing. Mukherjee's interrogation of both the novel and its feminist critical reception highlights issues of racism and white supremacy

cardinal to mainstream and academic feminisms. By comparison, neither *Tisab Ting* nor any of the three texts that I discuss in Chapter Two can claim a sliver of demonstrable influence over Canadian feminist history, Canadian women's sf writing, or Canadian literature in general. The three authors of these texts, Dyjan Fergus (Ida May Ferguson), S. Carleton (Susan Carleton Jones), and Lillian Beynon Thomas, if remembered at all, are certainly not remembered for the content of their stories as discussed in this dissertation. It is worth asking, then, what purpose un-archiving these texts serves; if they have already been forgotten by Canada's feminist and literary traditions, why bring their xenophobic, white supremacist pages back into circulation?

However limited their respective circulation and lasting cultural relevance has been, I have endeavored to show here (and will continue to elaborate in the next chapter) how the racist ideologies propagated by these texts are culturally inflected to reveal both the white feminist aspirations and xenophobic commonplaces of the period. Moreover, the attitudes central to the social reform movements that influenced these texts carry forward into mid-century Canadian politics. Not only do xenophobia and white supremacy shape social and political discourse over immigration and assimilation, they influence popular perceptions and political discourse over literary genres and materialities of text, as Chapter Three details. For these reasons alone, these early texts deserve greater investigation to appreciate the scope of their cultural signs and allegories. I have provided an analysis here of only one cluster of significance: the intersections of proto-sf and white feminism in an early Canadian nation-building context; undoubtedly there are myriad other ways that these texts can mean. If English Canadian Literature, as a discipline, is to account for its contributions to English

Canada's "fictive ethnicity," as Daniel Coleman contends it should (7), then we must consider our literary history holistically, not just canonically, and that includes the four seemingly fringe publications making up the focus of this chapter and the next.

Chapter Two

Supernatural Canadian White Feminism in Early Twentieth-Century Fiction Periodicals

> "A mode is a way of doing something, in this case, of telling stories. But storytelling is a complicated business. In order to depict the essentials of character, dialogue, action, and physical setting, a writer must find ways, not only to present but also to interpret appearance, behavior, thought, and speech. She must base her descriptions on some conception of identity, causality, intentionality, and the benignity, malignity, or indifference of the universe. A mode is thus a stance, a position on the world as well as a means of portraying it"
>
> (Brian Attebery, "Fantasy as Mode, Genre, Formula")

INTRODUCTION

In Chapter One I outlined the historical socio-political contexts in which Canadian women published what I term "proto-sf" between 1896 and 1919. Although the focal point of that chapter is the novel *Tisab Ting* by Dyjan Fergus (alias for Ida May Ferguson), I examine the novel in relation to three additional texts: S. Carleton's two

stories "Lastluck Lake" and "The Clasp of Rank," and Lillian Beynon Thomas's "When Wires Are Down," all three of which promote white feminist politics in line with Fergus's social purity novel. Like *Tisab Ting*, Carleton's and Thomas's texts make use of supernatural tropes and pseudo-scientific discourses, either real or fantastical, to champion Anglo-Saxon femininity and render it symbolic of the Canadian state. I closed that chapter with an acknowledgement of the importance of recuperating and reading these texts not in spite of their racism but in full view of it. To do so acknowledges, as David Sandner remarks, that "[f]antasy is, of course, bound by the ideologies of its author, by its means of production, by its politics and prejudices" (5). Understanding these stories as white feminist texts, then, allows us to recognize both white feminism *and* genre within Canadian literary history in English. Of particular interest in this chapter are the ways these writers framed their legitimate concerns about women's rights not in *opposition* but as a critical *addition* to the white supremacist patriarchal social structures that would go on to foster Canada's mid-century highbrow cultural nationalism.

Like *Tisab Ting*, Carleton's and Thomas's texts were published prior to the establishment of popular literary genres like science fiction and fantasy. As a result they too draw from and participate in multiple imaginative traditions, such as Gothic fiction, the ghost story, and the "weird tale," which I discuss below, in such a manner that their deployment of fantastical tropes accords with what would later become the unifying thread of feminist sf: deploying imaginative literary devices to defamiliarize oppressive gendered commonplaces. The generic and material commonalities across Carleton's and Thomas's texts, however, are sufficiently distinct from *Tisab Ting* as to generate a

separate set of questions. Having already established the historical context for their white feminist politics in the previous chapter, my analysis here will prioritize the texts' material histories and the evolution of the proto-sf generic conventions in relation to trends in contemporaneous English Canadian Literature. In recognizing their operative racial politics, I argue that the manner in which all three texts depict the supernatural foregrounds white women's lack of personhood—manifest not in terms of suffrage but in women's vulnerability to men—as the texts' central concern. That these politically charged stories circulated in fiction periodicals aimed at a general readership rather than in, for example, women's periodicals or the overtly political suffrage magazines that were likewise in circulation suggests that imaginative fiction provided for these writers not only a broad audience but also the tools necessary to express their concerns sympathetically and persuasively.

I begin this chapter by articulating the relevance of reading these texts as part of English Canadian literary history. I then provide overviews of all three texts, demonstrating how the proto-sf and other narrative conventions function to promote their social reform agendas. I argue for the significance of the fiction periodical (the medium of publication for all three texts) in circulating these nascent feminist complaints. And, finally, I explain the importance of reading these texts as "weird tales" given their urgent social reform agendas.

WHOSE GARRISON?

In 1965 Northrop Frye wrote what would become an infamous conclusion to Carl F. Klinck's *Literary History of Canada*. Frye's conclusion, an extensive meditation on early

Canadian literature and the Canadian literary imagination, contained two key phrases that went on to saturate English Canadian literary criticism for decades. The first, Frye's remark that "[i]t seems to me that Canadian sensibility… is less perplexed by the question 'Who am I?' than by some such riddle as 'Where is here?'" (826), and the second, a characterization of the Canadian imagination that he "provisionally" calls "a garrison mentality" (830), have both fundamentally shaped the field and study of English Canadian literature, taking on what Helen Buss calls "the power of biblical authority" ("Women" 123). It should not be surprising, then, to learn that Frye's garrison metaphor and "Where is here?" riddle have likewise affected the fringe corner of Canadian literary criticism dealing with science fiction, fantasy, and other imaginative genres. Jean-François Leroux, for example, opens the introduction to his edited collection *Worlds of Wonder: Readings in Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Literature* by reminding the reader "that the question nagging much of Canadian literature is not 'Who am I?' but 'Where is here?'" (1). Leroux uses this point of reference to legitimize science fiction and fantasy as natural sub-genres of Canadian literature, declaring that "all of the contributors to this volume … valiantly strive to describe just such an ethos—and so, by extension, to answer the question 'Where is here?'" (2). Similarly, the compendium to the National Library of Canada's 1995 exhibition of Canadian sf begins with a section called "Identity Variations," specifically "Canadian Fiction and the Search for Identity" (Spencer and Weiss 6). Comparable Frygian sentiments explicitly shape the volume *Out of This World: Canadian Science Fiction & Fantasy*, an essay collection celebrating the same 1995 exhibition and jointly published by the National Library and Quarry Press. John Clute's "Fables of Transcendence: The Challenge of Canadian Science Fiction," the essay collection's first chapter, echoes Frye's

comparison of Canadian writing to the literary intentions of "a mating loon" ("Conclusion" 822). Clute asserts that "[f]or more than half a century, SF has been a literature of culture heroes, conceptual breakthroughs, manifest destiny, and imperial reasonings. Over that period, Canadian SF has been a wainscot halfling, murmuring a more bleak tune" (27). The allusions and invocations go on.[36]

Frye was undeniably an influential literary theorist beyond the borders of Canada and Canadian literature, and as such influenced non-Canadian sf criticism, as well. Istvan Csicsery-Ronay, for example, summons Frye by considering whether indeed sf fits "with the archetype of romance" (83) as Frye claims it does in his *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957).[37] What is surprising, then, about the deployment of Frye as a legitimating touchstone by critics of English Canadian sf is not the turn to Frye *qua* Frye, but rather these critics' perpetuation of the singular theoretical paradigm drawn out of Frye's "provisional" thesis ("Conclusion" 830) that has so dominated the study of English Canada's less fantastical literary spheres.

We know, of course, that despite its common usage there are numerous shortcomings to the Frygian approach to Canadian literary criticism. One such shortcoming germane to my study is the Frygian model's limited relevance to the tradition of Canadian women's writing in English. Helen Buss explains that critics have

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[36] Crawford Killian, for example, describes Scott Mackay's novel *Outpost* as "a science-fiction answer to Northrop Frye's question 'Where is here?'" Lastly, although she dismisses the garrison mentality's relevance to *all* Canadian literature, J.M. Frey nevertheless grounds her discussion of Canadian sf in Frye's influential metaphors.

[37] Csiscery-Ronay ultimately disagrees with Frye, opining that "[l]iterary sf follows in the stylistic tradition of the realistic novel, despite its many quasi-marvelous elements. Northrop Frye identified sf with the archetype of romance, but its romance elements are overwhelmingly rationalized; its parable spaces, plausible and prosaic" (83). This willingness to disagree with Frye further demonstrates the comparative reverence held for the theorist by Canadian literary critics.

used Frye's garrison metaphor to exclude "any writer whose reaction to the Canadian landscape is anything less than traumatic" (125). This, she argues, has necessarily left a great many women out of the literary tradition. Drawing on Elizabeth Meese's "The Languages of Oral Testimony and Women's Literature" (1985), Carol Fairbanks' *Prairie Women: Images in American and Canadian Fiction* (1986), the essay collection *A Mazing Space: Writing Canadian Women Writing* (1986), and her own research in women's autobiography, Buss makes the case for "a radical difference in the way women encounter the land"; what she calls "a vision of women and the Canadian land" made visible "[b]y foregrounding autobiographical works rather than traditional fiction or poetry" (126). Further, Buss demonstrates the ramifications of the critical elaboration of Frye's metaphor by pointing to what she calls the "second generation of 'garrisoned' critical commentary" wherein "Frye's garrison mentality is assumed and internalized" and thus Canadian literary criticism unquestioningly presumes "the heavy 'realism' of earlier writers" (125). The problem with this elaboration, Buss explains, is that Canadian literary critics frame their analyses of later literary trends on a faulty premise. Using Wayne Tefs' appraisal of Robert Kroetsch's postmodernist oeuvre as her example, Buss states that "by not being able to see anything except the garrison mentality he has been taught to see, and never having had occasion to examine literature outside the garrison-defined canon" Tefs positions Kroetsch and his contemporaries as "puncturing … the heavy 'realism' of earlier writers" (125) and thus negating what Buss calls the "womanly side of our tradition" (125). In other words, early Canadian women's creative deviations from realism are sufficiently elided that postmodernist male writers are permitted to invent them anew.

The process by which women writers are critically marginalized in the field of English Canadian literature is explicitly described by Carole Gerson in "Anthologies and the Canon of Early Canadian Women Writers." Following from Leslie Fiedler, whose claim that "[l]iterature is effectively what we teach in departments of English" (73) frames Gerson's own observation that "[w]hat we teach in Canadian literature is largely determined by what appears in our anthologies, especially when we look at early writers who are otherwise out of print" ("Anthologies" 147), Gerson traces the inclusion of women writers across "some sixty literary anthologies which claim to be national in scope" ("Anthologies" 150) published between 1864 and 1986. She explains that "the process of [women's] decanonization has been absolute" ("Anthologies" 153) and rendered invisible by "conferring stardom on one or two representative women writers while neglecting the rest" ("Anthologies" 146). For example, Gerson refers to the relative overrepresentation of "six major [female] figures from central Canada," one of whom, Isabella Valancy Crawford, Gerson quips, "functions as our Emily Dickinson, turning up in every possible anthology" ("Anthologies" 153).

Though Gerson does not discuss deviation from Frye's garrison mentality in her study, it is clear that the critical prerogative documented above by Buss coincides with the excision of women writers from literary anthologies in Canada. The "transition" of the national survey anthology throughout the 1940s and 1950s is a key example: "The old preservative notion of defining a literature as the sum of its practitioners yielded to the evaluative principle of choosing only the 'best,' thus replacing an 'accessible canon' with a 'selective canon'" (Gerson "Anthologies" 151). Gerson challenges the implication that the increasing numbers of anthologized male

writers represent the "best" of Canadian writing in English by unpacking the social connections that constitute their "cultural weight." She argues, "[n]on-literary factors contribute substantially to the significance of the preserved male writer, whose cultural weight is enhanced by his historical public career as explorer, clergyman, educator, lawyer, newspaperman, or political figure, and by the personal connections fostered by his profession" ("Anthologies" 154). Women's writing, Gerson demonstrates, has been consistently shed from national survey anthologies to accommodate the inclusion of well-connected men. Moreover, the transformation of the national survey anthology to a "selective" one coincided with "the birth of the pedagogical survey anthology intended for introductory university courses in Canadian literature. Together, the effect of the two trends was to limit the general representation of women writers and particularly narrow the canon of early female authors" (Gerson "Anthologies" 151). Thus, in the decades immediately preceding Carl F. Klinck's massive bibliographic undertaking, women's writing disappears from literature anthologies, the primary tool for circulating Canadian literature. It is entirely logical, then, that budding critics of Canada's national literature in English would take up Frye's conclusion to the *Literary History of Canada* in relation to the only literature to which they had been sufficiently exposed: fiction and poetry by men.

As a corrective, Gerson echoes Buss's eschewing of traditionally emphasized genres like realist fiction and poetry, insisting that "[t]o re-inscribe women into the literary history represented by our anthologies, we can begin by considering journalists and diarists along with the [male] explorers, by including temperance and suffragist writers with the [male] political writers, and by accepting social and domestic topics

into the early poetic canon" ("Anthologies" 154). To Gerson's list I would add proto-sf writing by Canadian women, such as the three texts I consider in this chapter: S. Carleton's "Lastluck Lake" and "The Clasp of Rank," and Lillian Beynon Thomas's "When Wires Are Down." Not only are these texts neglected by English Canadian literary history because of the authors' gender and their original sites of publication in American periodicals, but we might likewise understand them as excluded on the grounds of proto-sf's incompatibility with the dominant critical paradigms that shape English Canadian literary criticism.

As Buss contends, early Canadian women writers demonstrate a significant difference from their male peers with respect to representations of the land. For example, Buss shows that "[a]ll the women autobiographers examined in [her] essay react to the strangeness of the Canadian landscape by merging their own identity, in some *imaginative* way, with the new land. They arrive at this point in two ways: through a relationship with significant others and through some creative activity that discovers each woman's unique relation to the land" (126, my emphasis). Both Carleton's and Thomas's texts operate as Buss describes. All three stories take place in isolated Northern Canadian regions either on the cusp of or during ruthless winter weather. While the male characters are indeed terrorized by the harsh Canadian winter, the female characters seem to draw strength and power from it, leading, I argue, to their victory and vengeance over their male abusers. In "Lastluck Lake" the female protagonist Sophy Ridgeway discovers the legendary goldmine that eludes the story's male prospectors, including her exploitative father and a former abuser named Atherton; in "The Clasp of Rank" the ghost of the murdered Anne Labrador enables

the male narrator to discover the identity of her murderer as well as the location of her hidden children, whom she has protected from a similar fate. Thomas's "When Wires Are Down" is more complicated because there are no female characters, but the story nevertheless fits the pattern: when the body of a farmer, Morrison, is discovered during a punishing prairie storm, the reader is led to understand his grisly demise as redress for his heretofore unpunished role in the death of his wife.

That these authors would turn to the supernatural to portray women's vulnerability can be understood in relation to the long political history of women legitimizing their anger by "attribut[ing] it to someone else" (Traister 82). Rebecca Traister identifies this deflective strategy as popularly used by women in the public sphere—historically as well as contemporarily—because it allows them to defer to "a more authoritative source. Like, for instance, God" (83). Though it is not explicitly God who metes out justice in Carleton's and Thomas's texts, there is undoubtedly a sense of providence, if not outright awe, in the texts' resolutions.[38] Moreover, all three stories are guided by male characters who double as narrators in the latter two texts and whose own disbelief and reluctant acceptance gives authority to the moralizing subtext. In each story the respectable male character acts as a surrogate for the skeptical reader: not only is he appropriately disgusted by the abusive behavior of other men but he is also incredulous of the supernatural happenings around him. In the latter two stories

[38] The genre of these texts, what I call "proto-sf" but which critics like David Sandner might categorize more broadly as "the fantastic," lends itself to claims of divine inspiration. In the introduction to his critical volume on the genre, *Fantastic Literature* (2004), Sandner quotes two infamous authors of fantasy, J.R.R. Tolkien and Lewis Carroll, who, Sandner explains, "claim to have been moved to invent their classic fantasies by the sudden inspiration of a single sentence" (2).

the male narrator tries and fails to find a rational explanation for the spectres haunting him; that he must always come to accept the seemingly implausible as possible has the effect of framing the texts' supernatural redress as, somehow, natural.

In the next section I will provide outlines of each of the three texts in question. I have divided my discussion and analyses of the texts into two historical stages: prewar ("Lastluck Lake") and postwar ("The Clasp of Rank" and "When Wires Are Down"). In so doing I will show that Canadian women's proto-sf undergoes the same politically charged shift in genre recognized by critics to have emerged following the First World War and the accompanying "crisis of traditional fantastic" (Miéville 513). This shift allows us to see that women's proto-sf did not exist separate from mainstream writing but as part of it, responding to the same traumas and zeitgeists as popular literature written by men.

PREWAR

"LASTLUCK LAKE"

The first of these three texts to appear in print was "Lastluck Lake," a novel-length allegory for social reform written by S. Carleton, alias for Susan Carleton Jones (née Morrow), and published by Street & Smith's general fiction periodical *The Popular Magazine* in December 1907. As a social reform text, "Lastluck Lake" has much in common with *Tisab Ting*, such as a male and a female protagonist who serve as exemplars for white Canadian masculinity and femininity; it likewise overtly champions hard work, sobriety, heteronormativity, and chastity; it perpetuates racial

stereotypes; and it makes use of fantastical imagery and circumstances to advance the plot. Where *Tisab Ting* deploys imaginary science and future history, "Lastluck Lake" revolves around a mysterious goldmine and makes use of a werewolf trope; unlike *Tisab Ting*, however, these fantastical elements are ultimately rationalized. Additionally, "Lastluck Lake" avoids many of the specificities that date *Tisab Ting*. Fergus's novel, for all its fantastical tropes, attempts to paint a realistic picture of the future by specifying geographical, regional, and material details drawn conspicuously from a late nineteenth-century imagination. This, as I demonstrated in Chapter One, has the unintended effect of rigidly situating the novel in the 1890s. By contrast, "Lastluck Lake" is sufficiently vague in temporal and geographical detail, owing to its setting in an unnamed, isolated region of the Canadian north sometime after the Klondike gold rush, that the story would be re-printed a decade later in another Street & Smith publication, the magazine *Top-Notch* aimed at adolescent boys, with only minor changes.[39]

"Lastluck Lake" also departs from *Tisab Ting* in its narrative coherence and complex characterization. Carleton had published several novels before "Lastluck Lake," giving her experience that Fergus lacked. Where *Tisab Ting* relies heavily on idealized character archetypes, the characters in "Lastluck Lake" are deliberately imperfect, including the heroine Sophy Ridgeway, as I discuss below. Carleton's writerly skill enables "Lastluck Lake" to advance the same social purity polemic as *Tisab*

[39] The few minor changes include altering the title to "Mystery Mine" and changing the name of the male protagonist from Hazard to Wayne. Some other adjustments appear to make the story more suitable for children (eliminating some references to blood, for example), but none of the changes impact the story's setting or time period.

Ting—the cleansing power of hard work and the value of whiteness, particularly white femininity, which I outline in Chapter One—in a manner that frames social reform as recognizable and achievable to an average, imperfect reader.

The hero of "Lastluck Lake," Paul Hazard, is a good, clean man of character and integrity who must lead a mining expedition through a harsh winter in a hostile environment with inadequate supplies. After five months of fruitless prospecting, Hazard's partner Arthur Ridgeway has abandoned the team and his daughter Sophy, and absconded with most of the camp's supplies to ensure his own survival. To make matters worse, the expedition is peopled with men of subpar character, hired by Ridgeway, who are on the brink of mutiny. Hazard calls the workers "riffraff" (11) and "hoboes" (7, 12) and describes them as "undersized men with sharp faces, scum of cities that Ridgeway had got cheap" (2); they make Hazard long for "his own *clean*, trained men" (2, emphasis added). In keeping with social purity rhetoric, the novel uses the language of hygiene and sanitation to distinguish good masculinity from bad. For example, when Hazard investigates the workers' bunk-house, looking for a bag of gold stolen from Sophy Ridgeway, he finds the men "dirty" (18) and in "hysterics" (17): "To Hazard's horror … Bernstein put up his arms and clung to him. He was not clean, and he was just out of some sort of hysterical fit, but [Hazard's] hands that took down the dirty arms were kind and slow" (18). We learn that the men's mutinous and hysterical behaviour is brought on by some kind of terrorizing spectre: part-man, part-wolf. Hazard attributes the apparitions of the wolf-man to the workers' idleness: "What Hazard saw was that hysteria from the loneliness without work had given Bernstein the jigs" (18). Hazard, in sharp contrast to the men, maintains a cool head and attends to

his physical appearance even though their isolated northern mining camp is "five hundred miles of anywhere" (1). For example, one morning when he oversleeps and is rushed, Hazard still takes the time to shave, if "recklessly" (13). Importantly, Hazard's attention to his appearance is never framed as an effort to attract or impress the sole woman in their camp, Sophy Ridgeway. Rather, his personal hygiene is an understated example of his character, alongside his sobriety and his work ethic.

Although we eventually learn that the wolf-man is real, Hazard's assessment of the men as hysterical from boredom is supported by the fact that the men cope with their fear of the spectre by drinking. As Olsen, one of the "honest" workers (17), explains to Hazard, "We fear to go out of the bunk-house as we fear to come in; we lock our doors and drink, and make these [snow-shoes to escape the camp]" (18). The men's idleness, drinking, and lack of character combine to pose significant risk to Sophy Ridgeway. Much of the reader's introduction to the plot and crisis of the story occurs while Hazard agonizes over Sophy's risk of sexual assault by the workers. Multiple inferences are made to the threats the men pose to Sophy: "The men were only worrying yet, but they were men; and Rider, the foreman, only to be trusted when he was sober" (4); "There were plenty of things the men would spy on Miss Ridgeway's loneliness for, leaving out gold; and he [Hazard] had a helpless fury at their knowledge. But he could govern their actions, if he could not govern their brute thoughts" (12); "it was not so much the plain theft that had roused him [Hazard], but the entering Sophy Ridgeway's house through a locked door; if that could be done in the daylight it could be better done in the dark" (16). Hazard, in fierce contradistinction, is depicted as the only man on the expedition with the moral character to respect Sophy's bodily integrity

and chastity.[40] Although Hazard certainly desires her, his desire is chastely articulated as love and adoration. Moreover, because he must protect her, Hazard demonstrates his own chastity by restraining himself from disclosing his amorous feelings to Sophy, who is otherwise helpless in the isolated camp.

Like Hazard, Sophy Ridgeway is an admirable figure of hard work and chastity. The omniscient narrator informs us that Sophy is as "brave as women go; which means being braver than a man at the last pinch" (24). She is also a model of white femininity; the narrator describes the "deep shining of her blue eyes" and how "she could be deadly pale. Her knitted sweater was no whiter than her cheeks" (3); "a sight to make a man's heart ache, her face pale as ashes and her eyes blazing dully" (8). Further, she is a deferential and dutiful daughter. Despite having been repeatedly mistreated by her father, Arthur Ridgeway, she nevertheless strives to protect him and his reputation (3). Sophy's essential goodness is most importantly manifest in her accidental discovery of the gold mine that had for five months eluded the seasoned prospectors Hazard, Rider, and her father. As noted above, the novel conflates the language of hygiene and sanitation with goodness, so when Hazard and Rider confirm that Sophy's discovery is a viable gold mine, she thinks of the profits not as a chance to get rich, but simply as "good, clean money" (15) with which she and her father can start a new life.

From a feminist perspective, Sophy is a remarkable literary figure. Once the reader has been assured of her overall goodness (as exemplified by her work ethic, her chastity, her deference to her father, her bravery, and, not insignificantly, Hazard's

[40] Rider, we learn, is also trustworthy with the caveat that he must be sober.

love for her), we learn of her complicated past. The story reveals that, prior to the expedition to Lastluck Lake, Arthur Ridgeway had prostituted his daughter to a rival prospector named Atherton. Ridgeway, who was "wanted for forgery," had planned to pay Atherton off with the money from the Lastluck gold deposit, but Atherton stole the Lastluck maps from Sophy:

> "I could have paid him off," Ridgeway ended furiously, "if it hadn't been for you! If you hadn't let him see those maps I'd have been safe out in Lastluck country in another month. All he wants is money—do you suppose he'll sit here quiet and let me take my chance of paying for his silence out of Lastluck gold when he can go there and get it for himself, and have me pay him, too? My last chance to get square is round Lastluck Lake; and you've spoiled it. Unless"—he stopped, staring at a totally unexpected look on his daughter's face, and finished his sentence with five words that struck the girl like so many blows—"unless you can manage him!"
>
> And Sophy had managed him. (22)

The subsequent details of Sophy's involvement with Atherton are vague, but it is easy to interpret the exploitative affair as sexual. For example, Sophy recalls that "Atherton had given her back the maps just to keep her quiet, as men do give women things; had wanted to marry her only because she was about the most beautiful thing he had ever laid eyes on" (22); yet she also considers that Atherton leaves "soon after on business of his own, and [had] never seen her since" (22); and that he "had pretended to love her and then lied to her" (29). Atherton's promise of marriage thus reads as entirely insincere, suggesting he used a proposal to seduce Sophy, unaware perhaps that she

had been ordered by Ridgeway to "manage him." Moreover, Sophy does not *want* to marry Atherton. Relieved, she thinks to herself that the profits from the Lastluck gold mine will ensure she "need never marry Atherton, now" (15). The text in no way suggests that the money means she can marry someone else; it simply specifies that her financial independence frees her from all ties to Atherton, a man who "always bent her to his will" (23).

By contrast, Sophy's affection for Hazard is articulated in terms that emphasize her self-determination. She describes Hazard three times as "reliable" (8, 26, 67), a quality she finds "odd… in a man as good-looking as Hazard" (8). Far from drawing attention to her physical attraction to or infatuation with her fellow protagonist, Sophy's repeated use of term "reliable" insinuates that she loves Hazard because she can trust him to respect her as a sovereign individual. Indeed, the narrator explains that *if* Sophy "knew he [Hazard] loved her she was proud of him for holding his tongue about it, just as she always felt safe with him as she had never known safety in her life" (29). When Sophy worries that Hazard will learn about her past ("it would kill her to have Hazard know Atherton had ever kissed, ever had the right to lay a finger on her" [23]), it is implied not merely that Hazard would think her unchaste but that her lack of chastity makes her unworthy of respect and autonomy.

The novel, however, refuses to justify Sophy's self-doubt by consistently characterizing her as *good*, irrespective of her relationship with Atherton. This characterization is primarily achieved through Sophy's ability to resolve the early crises in the text. For example, as noted above, the experienced prospectors Hazard, Ridgeway, and Rider had "never seen a sign of gold" from June through November

(7), yet Sophy quite literally stumbles upon a gold deposit that Rider likens to "Klondike in '98" (14). The mine provides the heretofore unruly and mutinous men with hard work, leading to the reform of even the "worst specimen" of the lot, Kelly (19). Sophy's bravery and conviction lead her to face the wolf-man spectre head on, an encounter that had driven at least one of the men in camp, Bernstein, mad with fear (18). Sophy's encounter reveals that the spectre is nothing more than a man wearing a fur suit. Sophy's nature makes possible a friendship between them, and this relationship encourages the wolf-man to reform, as well. We eventually learn that the man's name is Bill Devenish and that he fled his own sordid past—coincidentally, he was also tormented by Atherton, whom Devenish knew by the name of Donkin—to live out his days in isolation.[41] Thus, Sophy single-handedly removes the three initial crises of the story by locating the gold, giving the men work, and unmasking the supernatural terror that haunted the camp.

Despite her vaguely disreputable past, Sophy not only performs similar civilizing and reform work as *Tisab Ting*'s hyper-idealized heroine, Petra, but she is even allowed a happy ending. Following the story's climax, in which Atherton appears with a team of men and a bloody battle ensues for ownership of the mine, Sophy and Hazard

[41] Much like Sophy and Hazard, the text is firm about Devenish's good character and describes the man in terms of character and hygiene. He is respectful and chivalrous with Sophy, refusing to frighten her as he had frightened the workers (27). When the two first meet, the wolf-man allows Sophy to decide whether to go with him to his house or return back to the camp. His home, we discover, is "warm with a big fire, with [animal] skins on the floor and walls; had a table and even a rough chair beside a scrupulously neat bed covered with a moosehide" (27). Thus even before Sophy and the reader learn of the wolf-man's motivations for living in isolation and terrorizing the prospectors at Lastluck Lake, we are assured of his decency because his home is tidy and clean. It is perhaps not a huge leap, then, that a man who "was a gentleman once" and who has "enough decency … to be one still" (27) would be reformed by his friendship with Sophy Ridgeway, but the text insists that Sophy's influence civilizes the wolf-man: "I'm sick of this life since I've talked to that girl" (35), he laments. Indeed, so reformed is he by his friendship with Sophy that he risks arrest and execution to travel to the nearest recording office in Macleod and record a claim to the gold mine in Sophy's name (70).

emerge victorious, Atherton is killed, and her father, Arthur Ridgeway, is shamed for his selfishness and cowardice. In an act of recompense, Ridgeway offers his share of the gold to Hazard: "I'll give you my share of it—Sophy's told me about you and her—if you'll start for home with her to-morrow" (72). Hazard, however, rejects Ridgeway's attempts to buy his love for Sophy: "'Great Scott, Ridgeway!' cried Hazard. 'Do you suppose I wouldn't give my own share [of the gold] to take her?'" (72). The reader is thus encouraged to assume Sophy and Hazard will truly live happily ever after. But Sophy's happy ending does not depend on promises from another man, no matter how "reliable" he may be. Rather, Sophy thinks of her future, of the "life and money and safety for her and her father" (72) that *she* made possible through hard work at Lastluck Lake. If she marries Hazard, it will not be a transaction secured by her father, nor will it be out of desperation. The text thus permits Sophy the same moral redemption through hard work permitted to male characters like Kelly, a man who is first described as having "never known good from evil" (19) and quickly learns to be "proud of responsibility" (29), concluding the story as a beloved, heroic character (71–72). In this way, the story relieves Sophy of some of the cruelest trappings of patriarchy. By attributing culpability for her sexual history to Ridgeway and Atherton for exploiting their power over her, "Lastluck Lake" insists that Sophy is still capable of good works and, more significantly, is herself *still good* despite her sexual history. That such an emancipatory ending is possible for a female character whom contemporaneous readers might have interpreted as "fallen" or "ruined" is nothing short of remarkable.

POSTWAR

Over a decade elapsed between the publications of "Lastluck Lake" and the next work of proto-sf under study here: S. Carleton's short story "The Clasp of Rank."[42] During this time, trends begin to emerge in fantastic literature, understood as a response to the horrors of the Great War. The generic label used by readers, publishers, and eventually critics to describe these trends is "weird fiction." The First World War's impact on literature is well-documented[43] and Canada is no exception. Desmond Pacey writes that "[t]he War shattered the core of common beliefs and attitudes [of 'high colonialism,]" leaving Canadians "angry, sceptical, and restless" ("The Writer" 3) and this translated into "a conscious, at times a self-conscious, determination to create a literature commensurate with Canada's new status as an independent nation" ("The Writer" 4). Of British fiction, Nick Milne argues that "those who experienced [World War I]" worked out "a host of questions" in literature, especially through non-realist creative writing (187–8). Questions like "[w]hat did it mean for so many to have sacrificed so much, and with consequences so complicated and (often) disappointing," argues Milne, "birthed a multi-faceted body of literature that was focused upon coming to grips with the war through writing creative fiction" (187–8). Like Milne, China

[42]A number of proto-sf texts written by Canadian men appeared in magazines during this time. In addition to *The Popular Magazine*, Canadian men sold stories to *The All-Story Magazine* (also published as *All-Story Cavalier Weekly* and *All-Story Weekly*), *The Argosy*, *The Cavalier* and *The Cavalier Weekly* (which became combined with *All-Story Weekly* in 1914), *The Monthly Story Magazine* (which was re-named *The Monthly Story Blue Book Magazine*, and later *The Blue Book Magazine*), and *The Scrap Book* (which was combined with *The Cavalier* in 1912). In 1915 the feminist writer Frances Fenwick Williams published the novel *A Soul on Fire*. Although this text is included in the bibliography *CND SF&F* under "Fantasy and Weird Tales," it is regrettably omitted from my study.

[43] Some recent examples include Randall Stevenson's *Literature and the Great War: 1914-1918*; Vincent Trott's *Publishers, Readers and the Great War: Literature and Memory Since 1918*; John Bremer's *C.S. Lewis, Poetry, and the Great War 1914-1918*; and Oliver Tearle's *The Great War,* The Waste Land *and the Modernist Long Poem*.

Miéville describes this new literary paradigm as "a postwar phenomenon," arguing that weird fiction writers of this period "are responding to capitalist modernity entering, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a period of crisis in which its cruder nostrums of progressive bourgeois rationality are shattered. The heart of the crisis is the First World War, where mass carnage perpetrated by the most modern states made claims of a 'rational' modern system a tasteless joke" (513). Above all, Miéville continues, this literary period breaks with the previous era of weird fiction writing in its understanding of "traditional monsters" as "now profoundly inadequate, suddenly nostalgic in the epoch of modern war" (513). Although Pacey and others point to a proliferation of realism and naturalism in English Canadian literature during this period, it is clear that Canadian writers also worked out their post-war anxieties in creative fiction. Of the two short stories that follow, only Lillian Beynon Thomas's "When Wires Are Down" explicitly takes place during World War I,[44] but both it and Carleton's "The Clasp of Rank" demonstrate the shift, identified by Milne, Miéville, and others, of a resistance to rational—or realistic—explanation. Unlike, for example, Carleton's 1907 werewolf—ultimately just a man in a fur suit—the spectres haunting "The Clasp of Rank" and "When Wires Are Down" force the narrators, and through them the readers, to grapple with the mundane human capacity for monstrosity.

[44] The narrator tells us that "[i]t is the third day, of the third month, of the third year of the war" (Thomas 59), presumably meaning 3 March 1917.

"THE CLASP OF RANK"

S. Carleton's "The Clasp of Rank" was first published in the April 1 1919 issue of Street & Smith's *The Thrill Book*. The story's author, Susan Carleton Jones, once again uses the pen name S. Carleton, as she did when she published "Lastluck Lake" in *Popular* in 1907. Unlike "Lastluck," I have found no indication that the "The Clasp of Rank" was reprinted prior to its inclusion in David Skene-Melvin's 1999 anthology *Crime Where the Nights are Long*.[45] Although Carleton does not appear at all in Ketterer's *Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy*, both "The Clasp of Rank" and "Lastluck Lake" are listed in Bell's bibliography *The Far North and Beyond* (16).

Carleton's short story "The Clasp of Rank" is narrated to the reader by its protagonist, a man named Devlin. Devlin is a similar character type to Carleton's "Lastluck Lake" wolf-man, Bill Devenish. Both are solitary white men who live civilly despite their distance from urban or town centres. Where Devenish lived "five hundred miles of anywhere" ("Lastluck" 1), Devlin's "metropolitan cabin" is located "three

[45] It should be noted that the copy of "The Clasp of Rank" in Skene-Melvin's anthology is riddled with typographic errors, some which alter the substantive meaning of the text. For example, the anthologized version states, "it is no use wondering where Indians are concerned, even though you know best" (40), but the original copy in *Thrill Book* reads, "there is no use wondering where Indians are concerned, even those you know best" (23). The former quotation frames Devlin as a condescending, patronizing acquaintance; but the latter emphasizes his closeness with Anne and her family while also acknowledging irreconcilable differences in worldview.

Additionally, Skene-Melvin adds the following epigraph from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* to the story's title page: "For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak / With most miraculous organ" (33). This addition is a curious editorial choice, for Hamlet speaks the quoted words as part of his "rogue and peasant slave" soliloquy, a speech in which he declares his intentions to use a play to reveal Claudius's guilt (2.2.537–94). Specifically, Hamlet refers to the power of theatre to strike the soul of the "guilty creatures" in the audience such that they are moved to "[proclaim] their malefactions" (2.2.577–83). Carleton's short story is not wholly comparable in this regard. The story's murderer, Lazier, is compelled to confess, "as if he were hypnotized" (48), by the haunting presence of his victim, Anne Labrador, and the reappearance of her identifying "clasp of rank." The only character haunted to madness in *Hamlet* is Prince Hamlet, himself.

miles from the dizzy centre of the 'settlement' comprised of the priest's house, the Indian agent's, one trader's, and a few shacks" ("Clasp" 21). The narrator's ironic use of the term "metropolitan," juxtaposed against the brief catalogue of buildings that make up the nearby settlement, strategically highlights isolation as a key player in the events of the story.

Having just returned from his "solitary job in the winter bush" (21), Devlin is surprised by a vision of a woman, whom he calls a "squaw," "crouched oddly motionless on her hands and knees in the ice-spattered snow" (21). Recognizing her instantly as Anne Labrador, the wife of the local band's chief, Devlin is struck by her solitary presence: "Labrador was the Indian chief in my district, but he and Anne and their two little children lived forty miles off, in a camp they never left except to look after their lines of traps and their fur caches. … '*Kwa*, Anne,' I shouted in Indian. 'What was that you threw at me just now? And where's Labrador and the children?'" (21, italics original). Devlin, we learn, has a friendly relationship with the Labradors and their children ("Anne and her husband were old friends of mine" (22)), and thus he is familiar with their usual comportment and some of their customs. Significantly, Devlin notices that Anne is missing an important object: "For a moment I could almost have doubted that it was Anne. She wore no silver clasp of rank as a chief's wife in the blue shawl over her breast" (22). Devlin has an anthropological knowledge of such objects and recognizes Anne's clasp instantly when it later appears to him outside his home. As he describes the clasp of rank in both general terms, as well as in detail specific to Anne's own clasp, Devlin remarks,

> a squaw's *niskaman*, or clasp of rank. They are slightly convex disks of native silver with a round hole in the middle, through which the two ends of a shawl are pushed and secured by a hinged pin the size of a two-inch nail, but flattened to the point of a dagger. Held in a woman's hand with the pin upright, the clasp would give a nasty wound, but I never heard of one being used as a weapon. … It was the clasp of a chief's wife, three inches in diameter, but cut in circles and half circles; dear to the owner as her honor, and as hard to steal. More than that, it was a clasp I knew, for I had often handled it. (23, italics original)

The reader learns that Devlin is able to read the inscription on Anne's clasp and is familiar with its power because of his close friendship with Labrador, who had himself taught Devlin to read the words. Devlin explains its power thus: "To cut the symbol of your own soul on your dearest belonging is to make it possible—if you so please, or happen to have earthly business a dead body cannot finish for you—that your spirit can enter into that belonging when you die and put life into it till it can go where it chooses and work out the desire of the dead" (23). Despite Devlin's reference to it as mere "superstition" (23), Anne's clasp of rank enables him to solve the ensuing mystery. Devlin reflects on the clasp hiding in his pocket when Anne's brother tells him that the chief, Labrador, has been murdered and that the district's Indian agent accuses Anne of committing the crime. Over the course of the story, the clasp both appears to Devlin and disappears strategically, leading the narrator on a path to locate Anne's hidden children and her frozen corpse. Eventually Devlin is even able to throw it and trust the clasp will reappear, guiding his way.

At no point does Devlin believe that Anne could have murdered her husband or so endangered her children; he describes her as a "passionately good mother" (24). Further, Devlin assures the reader that the Indian agent, a man named Lazier, cannot be trusted: "I knew in my soul furiously that Lazier was a liar" (24). In fact, even before learning the news of Labrador's murder, Devlin has explained to the reader that he *hates* Lazier for the ways the agent abuses his authority:

> He farmed his wretched Indians. They never saw half of their government allowance; he was always sniffing out their poor quarrels, and our district was getting a bad name. If a man took out a knife he was a murderer, if he borrowed an ax he was a thief, and Lazier confiscated his flour and blanket money for a fine. No one was clever enough to catch him out on it, even if there had been any one but the settlement priest and myself who cared. (22)

Learning that Lazier has accused Anne of the murder, then, makes Devlin suspect Lazier himself of framing Anne to cover up his own crime. The narrator explains that "Lazier had ways of his own in the district. He had used them to get Michail Paul hanged when we all knew he was crazy, and the sheriff was his led captain" (23–24). Unlike Anne, whom Devlin knew to be at the very least a "passionately good mother" (24), Lazier has a history of theft, murder, and deception.

Lazier does indeed turn out to be the culprit and, faced with Anne's body, he is compelled to confess his crimes (26). But the affirmation of his guilt is no great surprise to the reader, who has been made certain of the Indian agent's villainy from the outset of the story. The text's great mystery, rather, is how Anne managed to show herself to Devlin and to manipulate her clasp of rank after her death. Devlin reflects on the

possibility of the clasp functioning as the Labradors told him it could: "to make it possible … that your spirit can enter into that belonging when you die and … and work out the desire of the dead. Anne Labrador believed it, for she often told me so" (23). Ultimately, however, Devlin decides that such power is impossible, favouring instead a pseudo-scientific explanation: "I suppose even a poor squaw dying agonized for her helpless children, could think hard enough of the only man who could save them to bring her image before that man's mind. Anyway, Anne had brought hers before mine, and I knew it, though I suppose telepathic vision would have been the right term. … I took off my cap to the splendid soul of a dead mother" (26). Devlin decides that Anne has been able to perform posthumous telepathy because she is such a good mother. Because Devlin's good judgement and closeness with the Labradors are taken for granted, the story precludes the possibility of Indigenous ontologies with which Devlin is ignorant. The text thus refuses the viability of Indigenous ceremony (even if the representation of such ceremony is itself a white projection), and accounts for the mystery of Anne and her clasp, instead, with the pseudo-scientific concept of telepathy; a fundamentally unsatisfying conclusion that leaves the reader with no rational explanation for the supernatural events of the text.

Of course, Devlin, too, is left unsatisfied with his conclusion. Despite his assertion that "[t]here was nothing supernatural" in what had happened (26), the story concludes with Devlin puzzling over Anne's clasp: "the thought I could not fight down—in spite of all my plain knowledge that it was just Lazier and I who had carried the clasp from the green rock and back again—was that it had been Anne's ordinary, beaten-silver rank clasp that had really done the desire of a dead mother for her lost

and starving children" (27). As narrator and surrogate for the reader, Devlin's puzzlement leaves room for the reader to speculate on possible explanations for Anne's spectre—or her telepathy—and her magical clasp. Because Indigenous ontologies are not permitted to be a source of explanation, the short story leaves one convenient loose end dangling for the reader to cling to: the incorporation of a "huge green meteorite" (24) whose formidable presence causes supernatural effects:

> Ten miles south of the camp where Labrador had been killed lay a district where he had always run a line of traps and kept a fur cache or two. A huge green meteorite marked its boundary, and with that crazy obsession of my own head I snowshoed all day to get there, and at sunset saw my landmark of the green bowlder [*sic*] shining like an emerald under the rose-colored sky. (24)

Devlin can no longer escape the meteorite either physically or psychologically: "something inside me said passionately that I had to look for [the children], and that if there were any chance of finding them alive it was out here—by the green rock" (24). The meteorite, we learn, is indeed where Anne has hidden her children. The story's climax—wherein Devlin discovers Anne's body and finds the children alive, and when Devlin confronts Lazier and the corrupt Indian agent confesses his crimes—takes place in close proximity to the large green rock from space, the very spot where Lazier had murdered Anne (26). The meteorite's supernatural presence does not exactly explain Anne's ghost or her magical clasp, but it gives the reader sufficient information to leave Devlin's disavowal of Indigenous ontologies untroubled.

By disavowing Indigenous ontologies and attributing Anne's spectre and her clasp's magic powers to the meteorite, the text ultimately assures the reader that the

story is *fantastic*, not *realistic*. This generic distinction is necessary in order to frame the Indian agent's despicable actions as *extra*ordinary, so that the story may condemn his behaviour without condemning colonization. For the purposes of this discussion, much like my discussions of "yellow peril" in Chapter One, my focus is not on the inaccuracy of the story's representations of Indigeneity or colonization, but rather on the ways that Anne Labrador specifically is constructed as the product of successful white feminist intervention. To borrow from Terry Goldie, "[t]he problem is not the negative or positive aura associated with the image but rather the image itself" (195). Anne, as a character, is most productively understood as an allegory for the work that white women do in "civilizing" Indigenous peoples during colonization. It cannot be ignored that Anne Labrador is a model colonized subject; she has an Anglo-Saxon Christian name, Anne, as well as a surname that marks her as the property of her husband, the Indian chief Labrador. Further, we are told they were an exemplary nuclear family, husband and wife with two children living in semi-isolation. Though Anne's brother visits Devlin with news of the murder, there is no indication that he, or any other kin, live together with the Labradors. Enakshi Dua reminds us that "[i]n Canada, as well as elsewhere, the entrenchment of the nuclear family was located in a politics of bourgeois morality" (241). In Canada, she explains, "the nuclear family, as an institution, beings to emerge for the bourgeoisie during the late eighteenth century" (240) and, in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century, social reform workers following an "ideology of domesticity" would institutionalize "gender and familial relations in society" by imposing the nuclear family structure onto "the working class, as well as immigrants and First Nations people" (241). As I noted in Chapter One, such social reform work was primarily carried out by bourgeois Anglo-Saxon white women

working to shape the Canadian state. Dua describes how this "social reform movement play[ed] a major role in shaping state policies" (241), with particularly brutal consequences for Indigenous communities:

> A series of acts, culminating in the *Indian Act* of 1876, legislated the system of reservations and policies which regulated all aspects of social life in First Nations communities. State regulation focused on family forms. … Through residential schools and child welfare agencies, children were forcibly separated from biological parents and First Nations communities. Notably, child welfare officers were most likely to remove these children from parents who did not conform to the norms of a patriarchal nuclear family. (244)

The portrayal of the Labradors as a "patriarchal nuclear family" indicates that they abide by colonial state regulation; and, as a chief's family, they set an example not only for the other members of their band, but for all Indigenous peoples with whom they interact. Further, the fact that the Labradors continue to engage in *some* traditional practices, like trapping, creates the impression that colonization—at least, the social reform elements of colonization conducted by white women—is a net good for Indigenous people. Indeed, the narrative gives white readers the impression that, prior to the events of the story, the Labradors lived a downright pastoral existence.

By juxtaposing the civility of the Labrador family against the despicable actions of the Indian agent, Lazier, the story is able to both valorize white supremacist colonial hetero-patriarchy while also condemning men's abuses of power. Lazier's authority over even the local sheriff provides an example of a corrupt system in need of correction, and is emphatically not an anti-colonial call for Indigenous self-governance.

Anne's function, therefore, should by no means be understood to represent Indigenous women and the disproportionate violence they endure at the hands of white men, nor even the genocide of Indigenous peoples by settler-invaders. Such a reading is unsupportable because her character functions, in Goldie's terms, as "a signifier for which there is no signified except the image. The referent has little purpose in the equation" (191). Based on what little the reader can surmise about Anne's life—that she is a wife and a mother of two small children whom she loves enough to protect even in death—Anne's death represents men's violence against *white* women. This reading accords with tropes Jennifer Henderson identifies in both settler feminist literatures and settler feminist literary analysis, particularly "the analogous positions of woman and the colony, the uninscribed ground inhabited by the pioneer woman writer, the first-person narrative as a work of self-expression, the givenness of race, and white feminism's benefitting – rather than its impoverishment – from its implication in the elaboration of racist knowledges and practices" (12). Indeed, Anne does not represent Indigenous women at all; hers is "a white image" (Goldie 193) whose purpose is to reflect an image of white Canadians as indigenized. Through her gruesome death, white women's struggles are defamiliarized and represented in a safe and disposable character against a supernatural backdrop that explores the mundane via the extraordinary. Moreover, because the story's hero, Devlin, is a good white man, the text is able to partition male violence from settler-colonial patriarchy altogether, as though suggesting if all men behaved like Devlin, then no women would suffer as Anne did.

"WHEN WIRES ARE DOWN"

The third object of study in this chapter is the short story "When Wires are Down" by Manitoba suffrage activist Lillian Beynon Thomas. My research suggests that, like Carleton's "The Clasp of Rank," "When Wires are Down" was first published in Street & Smith's *The Thrill Book* (September 1 1919), after which it remained out of print until it was included in Skene-Melvin's aforementioned anthology, *Crime Where the Nights are Long*.[46] And, like "The Clasp of Rank," the short story is listed in Bell's bibliography *The Far North and Beyond*, but not in Ketterer's *Canadian Science Fiction & Fantasy*.

In this short story, an unnamed first-person narrator finds himself in an isolated prairie town on the Canadian Pacific Rail line called Oakhom seeking revenge against a farmer named Morrison for a "great injury" (62). Having arrived in the town to pay his "debt" to the farmer (62), the narrator learns that Morrison disappeared three weeks earlier. Unable to locate his quarry, the narrator decides to leave that same night and thus finds himself awaiting a much-delayed train during a vicious winter storm. The majority of the story takes place in the small train station, and the narrator relays his conversation with the other men awaiting the train: the station agent, a mail carrier, and a farmer sick with the flu. Over the course of the men's conversation, the reader learns that the missing farmer, Morrison, had moved to the area with his wife, "a young

[46] While the copy of "When Wires are Down" in the anthology has fewer transcription errors than "The Clasp of Rank," it is interesting to note that an error in *The Thrill Book* makes its way into the anthology. Although the table of contents identifies the author correctly as Lillian Beynon Thomas, the story's title page names her "Lillian Benyon Thomas" (53). Bewilderingly, Skene-Melvin repeats this error throughout the entire anthology; in the table of contents (5), on the title page of the story (155), and in her author bio, which states, "Regrettably, nothing is known of this authoress other than that she was Canadian, wrote short fiction for the pulps, and was a playwright writing a well-constructed comedy, *Jim Barber's Spite Fence*, in 1935" (14). One wonders whether Skene-Melvin might have found more information on the suffrage activist had "Beynon" been correctly spelled.

bit of a girl… much above him—educated and accomplished and all that—and he was ignorant and coarse" (56) and that the two did not "get along" (56). Further, we learn that during a winter storm much like the one presently raging outside the small station, Morrison's wife "started for a neighbor's in her night clothes. She was frozen to death of course. He [Morrison, her husband] said she walked in her sleep" (56). Whether or not the men in conversation believe the excuse that Morrison's wife "walked in her sleep," the subtext indicates that Morrison had abused the young woman and she either fled in fear or he forced her out into the storm.

It is unclear how the narrator is connected to Morrison's dead wife, but the text assures the reader of an important relationship between them. First, the narrator responds viscerally to the story of the young woman's death: "I felt my hands twitching—closing and unclosing spasmodically—it was such a terrible night for a young bit of a girl, all alone on the prairie" (56). Second, the story reveals that both the narrator and the young woman owned matching gold rings, each "with a heart-shaped crest, with two crossed keys in the center" (56, 62). According to the mail carrier, rumors circulated about Morrison and his wife: "some say she belonged to a titled family and ran away with him; and some say she wasn't his wife, that she was married to another man, but … it's all gossip; nobody knows" (56). The narrator does not solve the mystery for either the reader or the men in the station. Whatever his relationship to Morrison's dead wife, the narrator makes no indication to the other characters that he knew either the girl or the farmer.

While awaiting the arrival of the train, the men in the station are startled by the sudden appearance of a farmer, apparently sick with "[l]a grippe" (56), whom no one

noticed enter the tiny station. The farmer sits, slumped over and silent, unwilling or unable to respond to their questions. Not long after this mysterious appearance, the men are terrorized by several supernatural occurrences seeming to come from behind the locked door to the station's freight shed: "the soft distant tones of a pipe organ… at first low, then gaining in power and volume as it seemed to approach, until it seemed that we were beside it; and we recognized the grand but solemn music of the dead march" (57); the Massey-Harris farm calendar, hanging on the shed's locked door, slowly raises of its own accord until it is perpendicular with the door, defying "all laws of gravity" (58); the sound of "some one [*sic*] shoveling coal," then "dumping a whole load of coal on the other side of the door," and then "a great crash, as if a whole carload of coal… was all being dumped at once on the other side of the door.… On it came like thunder" (59). When the men try to unlock the door, they hear "a queer hollow chuckle—not human—not like anything we had ever heard" (60). Finally, they begin to hear "stealthy, stealing, menacing steps … coming toward the door behind which [they] stood" (60). Terrified, the men try to hold the door closed, but something on the other side slowly forces it open. Once fully open, the men notice on the other side "thick dust undisturbed on the floor—cobwebs hanging from rafters and walls; nothing human had crossed the threshold of that door for months, possibly years" (60). Suddenly, the men see the body of a farmer, dead from hanging: "Yes, it's Morrison! It looks like suicide" (61). Having discovered the hanged man, the narrator, mail carrier, and station agent turn to where the sick farmer had been sitting, only to see that he has vanished: "He was not there. … I do not know how long we stood there, … the telegraph wires shrieking and moaning and groaning in protest against something they did not understand" (61). At this point, a doctor arrives to find the men

in distress: "You all look as if you had seen a ghost" he tells them (61). The mail carrier insists that they have, that the sick and silent farmer in the corner must have been Morrison's ghost, but the doctor is dismissive. Soon after, the narrator's train arrives and he leaves the station and the town of Oakhom behind.

The author of this supernatural feminist polemic, Lillian Beynon Thomas, was a well-known suffragist and journalist in the first decades of the twentieth-century. The *Manitoba Historical Society* identifies her as having been an influential (white) women's rights columnist for the *Manitoba Free Press.* Thomas's column

> provided a forum for the discussion of the problems of rural women, and brought the debate about the rights of women to households across the prairies. The letters she published told the stories of women who had been abused and abandoned, and who had no legal right to their farms or custody of their children. She used these columns to lobby for new divorce and child-custody laws, for the protection of unwed mothers, for the property rights of farm women, and for legislation to prohibit the sale of liquor, which she saw as a cause of much of the misery and hardship. ("Lillian")

Given Thomas's political leanings, it is evident that the interventions of the supernatural in "When Wires are Down" respond directly to patriarchal violence. The narrator, for example, embodies a vague representation of the patriarchal family structure under which women are powerless. Again, we do not know *how* he is connected to Morrison's dead wife, but the simple fact of his being a man connected to her is sufficient to assure the reader of his responsibility for—or, more accurately,

his authority over—her. The nameless woman is unserved by this patriarchal authority not because Morrison committed suicide before the narrator could avenge her death, but because she was trapped by a violent man in the first place. Though we do not know the circumstances of the marriage or, indeed, if they were married at all, the mail carrier assures us that everyone recognized theirs as an unconventional—read, *unnatural*—match. For the narrator, murdering Morrison might resolve what he termed the "debt" he owed the farmer, but in no way would such an act resolve the problem of women's subjugation under men, even symbolically. By interpreting the text's supernatural events as the nameless woman's vengeance, however, we can interpret the story as empowering the dead woman, even if it is just a fantasy.

The allegorical function of "When Wires are Down," however, is not without xenophobic undertones. "Some people said Morrison wasn't his name, he was hidin,'" remarks the mail carrier (55); and the spectre of the sick farmer, who turns out to be Morrison's ghost, is described as wearing a sheepskin coat. To the contemporary reader, these may seem innocuous details, but a new name indicates that Morrison was an immigrant. Moreover, for Thomas and her contemporaries, the sheepskin coat functioned as a dog-whistle for the white Anglo-Saxon bourgeoisie anxious over Canadian immigration policy. Paul Hjartarson explains:

> Between 1840 and 1918, tension between Canada's need for settlers and its desire to shape a British nationality – in part, by limiting immigration to northern Europeans – increased steadily. While large-scale immigration by German and Scandinavian immigrants, for example, was largely welcomed, the

> arrival of 'men in sheepskin coats' from Galicia and Bukovina in eastern Europe and of immigrants from China was much debated. (43)

Because Morrison's sheepskin coat was a signifier of his barbarity, "When Wires are Down" must be recognized not as an allegory for *all* women's vulnerability to domestic violence, but as a warning against the brutality immigrant men will enact upon white women. This racist inflection of feminism aligns with the politics of *Tisab Ting* that I discuss in Chapter One: a feminist politics not in opposition to white supremacist hetero-patriarchy, but rather seeking to empower white women in the racial and sexual management of the state.

THE MATERIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FICTION PERIODICAL

The three texts here under study were produced during a dynamic period of literary production in English. Roger Luckhurst describes "an explosion of newspapers and cheap weekly and monthly journals… partly driven by a new mass audience from compulsory education, but also innovations in printing technologies that pushed costs down" (44). In terms of its impact on literary form and genre, the period has become known as the "Age of Storytellers," a term coined by Roger Lancelyn Green[47] (Ashley *Age* 1, 3) to mark the shift in British popular reading away from "ponderous and consciously annotated historical novels" and toward "well-digested, light and speedy historical romances" (Green 153). Bibliographer Mike Ashley attributes the period's

[47] David Skene-Melvin employs Green's term to describe the texts in his anthology, the full title of which reads *Crime Where the Nights Are Long: Canadian Stories of Crime, Adventure, and Terror from the Golden Age of Storytelling*.

surge in literary production to the proliferation of "the popular (as distinct from the 'literary') fiction magazine" in Britain between 1880 and the Second World War (*Age* 1). Luckhurst, too, argues that "[t]he demand for short and serial fiction in this new environment rapidly established a whole new literary world" (45). The situation was similar in Canada. Gordon Roper describes late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Canada as a "world of print":

> Daily and weekly newspapers, weekly story papers, religious publications, monthly magazines, and books, at all prices from 5 cents to $1.50 and up, provided the Canadian reader with short stories, fictional sketches, romances, and novels. The quality ranged from serious fiction (in hard covers, and paperback editions at 20 cents or less) … through high romance, historical romance, tales of everyday life, local colour stories, domestic sentimental fiction, boys' adventure books, girls' stories, pour moral tales, stories of detection, crime, Indians [*sic*], and the West and Northwest. What was not sentimental was apt to be sensational, and often fiction was both sentimental and sensational. (278)

Accompanying this plethora of reading materials and wide-reaching reading culture were opportunities for writers to circulate political ideas and politically inflected fiction. Amanda Hinnant and Berkley Hudson refer to the years 1880–1920 not as an "Age of Storytellers" but rather as the "Magazine Revolution," a heightened political period in which "magazines expanded and capitalized upon a burgeoning intersection of consumer and cultural life" (113). Hinnant and Hudson note the Progressive Era's (1890–1920) "impetus for reform" was "assisted by the burgeoning magazine industry"

(117), pointing to "[c]overage of temperance reformers such as Anthony Comstock and Carrie Nation … in general-interest magazines" (118) and "niche magazines serv[ing] as forums where progressive ideas could be explored" (117). Like Luckhurst and Ashley, they argue that "[p]eriodicals capitalized on obsessions for serial fiction and short stories and a desire for multi-genre publications" (121). And, most crucially, they note that "by reaching a national audience, magazines served to construct an American identity" (123). This claim about the significance of the American magazine industry aligns with Coleman's description of "the modern nation state" of Canada as a literary construction:

> The sale and distribution of popular texts such as the newspaper and the novel paved the way for the emergence of the modern nation state. For whereas feudal states cohered by means of dynastic and clan rites of belonging, the modern state required widely dispersed, unrelated people to imagine themselves as part of the same community. Print literacy enabled unrelated groups to read the same narratives and become acquainted with the same information, which provided the collective imagination necessary for national consciousness. (34)

White women's exclusion from official political channels in both the US and Canada led these women to lobby and agitate for their rights using the channels available to them—in this case, the burgeoning periodical industry.

Popular fiction's potential for circulating politics is evident in the sheer number of print media available resulting from the proliferation of literacy across the middle class. The notion put forward by Coleman—that popular writing tells unofficial,

repressed histories—is central to understanding the fantastical texts in this chapter as white feminist contributions to English Canadian literary history. Carleton and Thomas found in popular fiction a vehicle with which to lobby for white women's rights. Coleman argues that "the most influential writers of this period employed popular, formulaic modes of writing that appealed to large, non-elite audiences in order to shape popular views in advance of the pedagogies of the state" (36). The novel *Tisab Ting* is clearly written as both a didactic, cautionary tale against immigration and miscegenation as well as an overt call for women's education and suffrage—but it was a commercial failure. For Carleton and Thomas, however, the periodical market, particularly pulp magazines, facilitated the circulation of their comparable white feminist allegories.

As noted above, the novel-length story "Lastluck Lake" was first published in December 1907 in Street & Smith's *Popular Magazine*[48] and in 1918 was republished with minor changes as "Mystery Mine" in the publisher's periodical for boys, *Top Notch*. According to N.W. Ayer & Son's 1908 *Ayer & Son's American Newspaper Annual*, the 1907 incarnation of "Lastluck Lake" published in *Popular*[49] would have circulated among a

[48] Street & Smith's *Popular* also published Lily Adams Beck's "The Splendor of Asia" in 1922, another example of Canadian women's proto-sf.

[49] Unlike Street & Smith's publications *Top Notch* and the *Thrill Book*, also discussed in this chapter, the *Popular Magazine* was not a pulp magazine by today's standards; *Popular* preceded the expansion of the pulp magazine genre and was considered in early twentieth-century terms to be a general interest monthly magazine, albeit one printed on cheap pulpwood paper. Initially aimed at a juvenile audience, it grew to target a broad readership as demonstrated by this announcement in its sixth issue: "The mission of the *Popular Magazine* is to give pleasant relaxation from the sordid routine of existence. We particularly wish to see it in the hands of the tired man of business and in the hands of those who feel constrained to seek an hour's relief from the cares of their daily life" (qtd. in Reynolds 140). This announcement clearly seeks a bourgeois readership in its interpellation of the "tired man of business," but it is worth noting that the vague gesture to "those who feel constrained to seek an hour's relief from the cares of their daily life" may just as easily hail a proletarian reader irrespective of age, gender, or employment status. Indeed, the magazine's editor Charles Andrew MacLean argued in an editorial that "[t]he best writing is the most unpretentious, the most sincere, the most readily understandable.

general, mainly adult audience of approximately 300,000 (1064).[50] It is difficult to estimate the circulation of Carleton's "The Clasp of Rank" or Thomas's "When Wires are Down," since N.W. Ayer & Son's 1920 *American Newspaper Annual and Directory* lists no circulation data for *Thrill Book*, even though the directory contains details like the magazine's number of columns (two), and annual subscription cost ($3.60).[51] The *Directory* does, however, provide a combined circulation for Street & Smith's publications in 1919: 850,000 based on a publisher's report submitted to N.W. Ayer & Son (684). Bleiler notes that, despite *Thrill Book*'s minor status "when compared to the major pulp magazines of its day … it had an unmatched emotional impact" (*Annotated* 1), suggesting that irrespective of its individual distribution numbers, the magazine was influential. Bell lists eight submissions in the magazine by four Canadian writers: in addition to Carleton (who appears to be the first Canadian contributor) and Thomas, Bell identifies H. Bedford-Jones, whose novel *The Opium Ship* was published in four parts between 1 July 1919 and 15 August 1919, and whose novelette "Mr. Shen of Shensi" appeared in the publication's penultimate 1 October 1919 issue; and Frank L. Packard, whose short story "The Red Lure" was published in the 15 September 1919 issue (Bell 50). Half of *The Thrill Book*'s sixteen issues had one Canadian contributor, a curious

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The best writer is not the man who is trying to show how much he knows, but the man who is trying to convey his feeling to the reader in the straightest possible line" (qtd in Reynolds 144).

[50] It should be noted, however, that magazines rely heavily on circulation to entice advertising revenue and thus, prior to the 1914 establishment of the Audit Bureau of Circulations, "some publishers falsified readership numbers" to attract advertisers (Hinnant and Hudson 114).

[51] Since the *Directory* reflects the previous year's data for the information of advertisers, and since the *Thrill Book* had been terminated in October 1919, it is curious why the *Thrill Book* is listed at all. Its inclusion runs counter to the *Directory*'s statement that "it is not wise to insert every paper [periodical] when it is first issued, for while the exclusion may be unfortunate in a few instances, much dead matter is thereby kept out of the book ; as many of these ventures have very short lives" (7). The *Thrill Book* is precisely such a venture, published semi-monthly for only seven months.

ratio for magazine with no recorded Canadian circulation. Recognizing that Bedford-Jones expatriated to the US long before the inauguration of *The Thrill Book*, sometime around 1907, though the exact year is unknown (Ivison 26),[52] it is entirely possible that Bedford-Jones was familiar with the publication. For Carlton, Thompson, and Packard, however, it is more likely that they knew nothing of *The Thrill Book* and had in fact submitted their stories to one of Street & Smith's more prominent publications, like *Popular*, which had published Carleton in 1907, and from there the manuscripts were "shunted" to *The Thrill Book*. This was, according to pulp historian Will Murray, the case for the prolific Greye La Spina, whose first short story, "Wolf of the Steppes," had been passed to *Thrill Book* by *Popular*'s then-editor, Eugene A. Clancy (16).[53] Murray further opines that *The Thrill Book*'s limited budget prevented the new magazine from securing "even reprints by better known writers" (15), meaning that "*The Thrill Book*'s early stable of writers were a collection of obscurities" (16). This may explain why the cover of the magazine's third issue features Carleton's "The Clasp of Rank," but the thirteenth issue (vol. 2, no. 5), which includes better known writers Murray Leinster and Clyde Broadwell, does not include Thomas on its cover (figures 2.1 and 2.2).

Periodical publishing allowed many Canadian writers to have their work circulated widely and, although the Canadian fiction market was much smaller than its US counterpart, Canadian magazines were dedicated to championing Canadian writers. It is worth asking, then, why all three texts in this chapter debuted in popular

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[52] Some critics, like Ketterer, use the year 1908 to mark Bedford-Jones's move, but there does not appear to be any evidence for this specific date.

[53] Murray notes that Packard's "The Red Lure" was in fact "taken from [Street & Smith's] short-lived *New Magazine* (19).

fiction periodicals published by the American magazine giant Street & Smith. In his history of Canadian magazines, *The Monthly Epic*, Fraser Sutherland remarks that the Canadian population was not sufficiently urbanized to support mass-market magazines until after 1921 (113), and thus "from the earliest days [of magazine production] Canada sent a steady stream of writers, editors and publishing executives to Britain and the United States" (12). Although it was commonplace for Canadian writers to submit stories to American and British periodicals, the absence of proto-sf from English fiction periodicals even after 1921 appears to be a distinctly Canadian phenomenon. Ashley explains that prior to the short-lived *Thrill Book*, "most pulps had carried a general range of fiction and there had been limited specialization" (*Time Machines* 37). Justin Everett and Jeffrey H. Shanks make a similar claim, explaining that during this period "horror, fantasy, and science fiction … were still evolving" and "no such genre labels existed" (ix). Sam Moskowitz contends that such generically diverse material was commonplace among magazine fiction:

> with the advent of the ten-cent magazine aimed at the middle classes … coupled with the arrival of a literary genius specializing in science fiction, H.G. Wells, science fiction became a familiar part of the popular magazines. Such publications as Pearson's Magazine, Cosmopolitan, Munsey's, McClure's, Hampton's Magazine, and The Metropolitan Magazine were *family* publications with something for every member and age group. (*Under the Moons* x, emphasis original)

Figure 2.1: Front covers of the third [left] and thirteenth [right] issues of *The Thrill Book*; the third issue displays S. Carleton as a featured contributor. Stephensen-Payne, 2020.

While American general interest magazines would publish "a large amount of SF and fantasy" (Bell 2), this is simply not the case for Canadian periodicals in English. The four Canadian magazines described in the *Literary History of Canada* as "foundational" to English Canadian literature, "the *Canadian Bookman* (1919–39), the *Canadian Forum* (1920–), the *Canadian Historical Review* (1920–) and the *Dalhousie Review* (1921–)" (Pacey "The Writer" 5), collectively established a critical preference for realism and naturalism in Canadian Literature. Canadian magazines, it appears, would not publish proto-sf content until the 1940s when genre labels like "science fiction" were in circulation and specialization was commonplace, as I discuss in Chapter Three.

Irrespective of the traction Carleton's and Thomas's texts may or may not have had among Canadian readers, the texts clearly demonstrate *attempts* to write white

women into the national narrative at a time when the nation was being ideologically constructed. As my analyses above show, Carleton's and Thomas's texts are as invested in shaping the Canadian state as the overtly didactic social purity novel *Tisab Ting*. But unlike *Tisab Ting*, whose circulation cannot be taken for granted, these three stories circulated broadly in North America at the times of their publication and thus bespeak an expanding white feminist discourse made possible by the circulation of text. Even if we do not know the distribution numbers for *The Thrill Book*, the periodical's influence on fiction is sufficiently documented to acknowledge it *had* a readership. Bleiler writes elegiacally that the magazine "promised something that a sizable number of readers wanted, a repeated, unapologetic glimpse at weird and wonderful things in stories of a sort that appeared only occasionally elsewhere… In this it was a pioneer. It died prematurely, as pioneers sometimes do, and it was soon surpassed, but it was still a trailblazer" (*Annotated* 1). Michael Warner reminds us that publics are textual by nature, so it is unsurprising that varyingly progressive women during this period used the circulation of print to form what Nancy Fraser calls subaltern counterpublics, developing language to articulate their oppression and new ideas about society. According to Fraser, subaltern counterpublics are comprised of subordinated social groups ("women, workers, people of color, and gays and lesbians") coming together to "invent and circulate counterdiscourses, which in turn permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs" (67). Warner similarly explains that

> [a] counterpublic maintains at some level, conscious or not, an awareness of its subordinate status. The cultural horizon against which it marks itself off is not

> just a general or wider public but a dominant one. And the conflict extends not just to ideas or policy questions but to speech genres and modes of address that constitute the public or hierarchy among media. The discourse that constitutes it is not merely a different or alternative idiom but one that in other contexts would be regarded with hostility or with a sense of indecorousness. (119)

While white women *today* are slowly coming to terms with our contributions to the many oppressive systems that continue to organize twenty-first century Canada (and elsewhere), we can recognize Carleton's and Thomas's proto-sf as responding specifically to middle-class white women's relative lack of power under men in the early twentieth-century. Within their imaginative, fictional modes of address they are able to represent men's violence against women through sympathetic male characters who identify and condemn the suffering of women, a feature I will discuss further below. That all three texts employ this mode indicates that Carleton and Thomas understood white women to be part of a subaltern counterpublic, despite their commitments to the many other facets of white supremacist heteropatriarchy.

As noted above, the circulation of texts is an important means by which both publics and subaltern counterpublics expand. By 1919, numerous periodicals aimed at women were in circulation in both the US and Canada. The Canadian Women's Press Club was founded in 1904 "by thirteen feminists," eventually growing to include "leading suffragists, such as Nellie McClung and E. Cora Hind" (Strong-Boag 350). Of the many print venues in which white women lobbied for suffrage in Canada, Veronica Strong-Boag argues that "the popular press was most influential" (351). The situation was similar for American suffrage activists. Mary Chapman and Victoria Lamont argue

that "disenfranchised women [found] political self-expression through print culture that emerged in the nineteenth century, in the forms of petitions, women's rights periodicals, and pamphlets, and proliferated at the turn of the twentieth century to include suffrage magazines, popular literature, and even publishing companies" (253). Most striking is Chapman and Lamont's observation that "popular print culture worked even more effectively than the vote to contribute to debate and influence government policy" (254). They explain that the twentieth-century suffrage movement "popularize[d] suffrage periodicals by embracing the punchy design, witty tone, lavish illustrations, and colourful front covers of mass-appeal magazines" and regularly included "serialized middlebrow fiction on women's themes" among other innovations (261).

Of course, not all women's periodicals positioned themselves as political. Moskowitz explains that by 1912 advertising agencies had identified women as a lucrative demographic to target (*Under* x). Hinnant and Hudson remark that "[t]his advertising-centred approach [which] remains dominant even in the early twenty-first century" generally produced magazines that "instructed white middle-class women on how to live and how to keep the home a sanctuary away from work and public" (123). Hinnant and Hudson further observe that these magazines "conflated gender with consumption" and "exploited anxiety about the performance of femininity and maintenance of the perfect home" (124). This description aligns with Lauren Berlant's analysis of "women's culture." Berlant uses the term "intimate publics" to describe such groups elaborated "through a commodity culture," among other organizing principles (8), and argues that

> in mass society, what counts as collectivity has been a loosely organized, market-structured juxtapolitical sphere of people attached to each other by a *sense* that there is a common emotional world available to those individuals who have been marked by the historical burden of being harshly treated in a generic way and who have more than survived social negativity by making an aesthetic and spiritual scene that generates *relief from the political*. (10, emphasis original)

Such periodicals would have been explicitly at odds with both Carleton's and Thomas's polemical texts. Even though women's magazines published fiction about women's issues, it is difficult to imagine that either "The Clasp of Rank" or "When Wires are Down" would have found a home therein.

While feminist, temperance, and possibly even women's magazines could have been venues for Carleton's and Thomas's social-reform fiction, none would have had as broad and varied readerships as *Popular* and *Thrill Book*. By publishing in fiction periodicals intended for wide, general circulation, Carleton and Thomas had the potential not only to reach sympathetic readers, but to invite a variety of reading communities into their ideological counterpublic. The imaginative, pseudo-scientific, and supernatural storytelling modes provided for Carleton and Thomas, as it did for Fergus, an opportunity to defamiliarize and challenge gendered commonplaces of their readers' societies. Further analysis of their material history and circulation, then, may well provide relevant insight into the circulation of social reform ideology in early Canadian feminist writing.

ARE THEY WEIRD, OR WHAT?

Because of the tremendous impact the First World War had on literature, the narrative tools and tropes that Carleton and Thomas use in 1919 are noticeably different from Carleton's 1907 "Lastluck Lake." Evident stylistic differences that distinguish the prewar text from the postwar "The Clasp of Rank" and "When Wires Are Down" reflect both generic and material developments in the fantastic during the early twentieth-century. The prewar text, to use a simple example, is significantly longer than both postwar stories. *The Popular Magazine* identifies Carleton's 72-page "Lastluck Lake" as not only "A Complete Novel" (n.p.) but also "the best work this author has ever done" (1), indicating that novel-length contents were neither unusual to nor unwelcome by the magazine. Moskowitz in fact describes *Popular* as "a rather thick pulp" in 1907 at over 200 pages (*Gaslight* 36).[54] In terms of content, too, Moskowitz credits the magazine with publishing "more fantasy and science fiction than most [general fiction pulps]" (36). By contrast, neither the April 1 nor the September 1 issues of *The Thrill Book* include any comparably lengthy content. Carleton's "The Clasp of Rank" is only six pages, and Thomas's "When Wires Are Down" only slightly longer at ten pages. Although *The Thrill Book*'s July 1 issue would grow to meet the pulp standard of 160 pages (Bleiler *Annotated* 13), the periodical only occasionally published stories longer than twenty pages.

An important difference between the prewar and postwar period is the generic makeup of fiction periodicals. Where "Lastluck Lake" appears in a general fiction pulp

[54] Lily Adams Beck's "The Splendor of Asia," published by *Popular* in 1922, is forty-five pages long.

magazine, the postwar texts are published in a newly attempted specialized genre magazine. Indeed, Mike Ashley refers to *The Thrill Book* as the first "magazine devoted to fantastic fiction" (*Time* 37). Despite *The Thrill Book*'s emphasis on "strange, bizarre, occult, mysterious tales" (*qtd.* in Moskowitz *Moons* 425), however, there is no reason to assume that either Carleton or Thomas envisioned themselves as writing in a new *genre*—indeed, as I discuss above, there is no reason to assume they were submitting their stories to this specific magazine. S.T. Joshi argues that for writers between 1880 and 1940 "the weird tale… did not (and perhaps does not now) exist as a genre but as *the consequence of a world view*" (1, emphasis original). Joshi specifies that with the exception of HP Lovecraft, writers of weird fiction "regarded themselves (and were regarded by contemporary reviewers) as not intrinsically different from their fellow novelists and short-story writers" (1). Joshi points to the weird tale's coexistence with other genres in the mainstream until "[t]he establishment of [the periodical] *Weird Tales* (1923–1954) … effectively marked a dubious watershed: from this point on, the weird disappears almost entirely from traditional 'slick' or general-interest magazine" (4). In fact, most weird stories published by Canadian women after 1923 appear to have been published in magazines specializing in weird fiction. Grace M. Campbell's "The Law of the Hills" (1930) and L.M. Montgomery's "The House Party on Smoky Island" (1935), for example, were both published in *Weird Tales*.

Given the postwar period's transformation of the fantastic into what would come to be called the "Haute Weird,"[55] Carleton's and Thomas's postwar texts may

[55] The most famous writer of the "Haute Weird" is HP Lovecraft, the figure widely held to have ushered in this "new paradigm" of Weird Fiction in 1919 with the publication of his story "Dagon" (Miéville 513).

seem discordant with what some critics call the "cosmic awe" expressed by other writers of the period (Miéville 510). Joshi, however, outlines numerous "types" of weird tale, what he calls "broad divisions," that "should be regarded as loose and nonexclusive" (6–7). Of the categories he proposes (fantasy, supernatural horror, nonsupernatural horror, and others), the type Joshi calls "quasi science fiction" aptly describes the weird qualities of "The Clasp of Rank" and "When Wires Are Down." Quasi science fiction, Joshi opines, "is a development of supernatural horror in that the real world is … presupposed as the norm, but the 'impossible' intrusions are rationalized in some way. …[I]t implies that the 'supernatural' is not *ontological* but *epistemological:* it is only our ignorance of certain 'natural laws' that creates the illusion of supernaturalism" (7, emphasis original). Further, that "we may some day be able to account for the 'supernormal' phenomena, but cannot do so now; and these tales are not actual science fiction because of their manifest intent to incite horror" (8). This description brings us back to the white male narrators of the postwar texts, whose roles as surrogates for the skeptical reader facilitate the texts' pedagogical function.

Both postwar texts centre around male characters; in addition to the narrators, both of whom are men of character and civility, there are several other men who mediate the texts' supernatural occurrences for the reader. "The Clasp of Rank" has its antagonist, Lazier, as well as the sheriff who does Lazier's bidding. "When Wires Are Down" has the mail carrier, the station agent, the doctor, and a soldier. The only female characters in both texts are dead women whose speech acts come exclusively in the form of supernatural apparitions. This mode of storytelling allows the male characters to tell the stories of the murdered women, to speak *of* them without speaking

for them. This relieves the female characters of the burden to convince the reader that patriarchal violence is real; the male narrators to come to that conclusion on their own. Finally, unlike Carleton's prewar "Lastluck Lake," a text whose supernatural elements are explained away early on through plot developments, the two postwar texts purposely leave the reader without satisfying rational explanations.

Pursuing Joshi's analysis of quasi science fiction, we might consider the possibility that the "natural law" of which our narrators, on behalf of the readers, are ignorant is women's autonomous personhood. By this I do not mean suffrage specifically, but rather the fundamental understanding of women as *people* rather than property exchanged by men.[56] Thomas's "When Wires Are Down," for example, slyly conflates the text's imminent supernatural terror with the dead Mrs. Morrison. Just as the scene in the train station is laid out for the reader, the narrator asks, "Any sign of her?" (54). The narrator is asking about his train, but as the station agent responds, "Not a sign… and it's a terrible night—like Hell let loose—I pity any one who is out tonight," the mail carrier introduces the narrator (and the reader) to the woman's story: "It was just such a night as this that a woman out in the country was frozen to death," he explains (54). The narrator, perhaps unaware that the mail carrier is describing his kin, or simply attempting to avoid the conversation, asks the station agent "Can you find out where she is?" (55). The mail carrier, however, continues to build associations between the storm and Mrs. Morrison:

[56] I am thinking here of Luce Irigary's theory of the incest taboo as "the foundation of the economic, social and cultural order" (170–171).

"It's a bad time of year to be traveling," the mail carrier continued. "Last week … a traveler like yourself, sir, and I waited here until four o'clock in the morning, and then the traveler gave up and went back to the hotel, and didn't she come through at four-thirty, and it was important for him to get to Winnipeg that night, too."

He waited for me to ask a question, but when I didn't, he continued: "He was a detective, working on the Morrison case—that was the one I mentioned—it was Mrs. Morrison who was frozen to death." (55)

We do not learn whether or not the detective made it to Winnipeg because at this point the narrator realizes his interest in the mail carrier's story, shifting his (and our) focus accordingly. The subtle references to "she" make use of the colloquial feminizing of vehicles,[57] but structurally these references bring the "she" of the *backstory* into the foreground of the text. It is no coincidence, then, that the narrator's train arrives only after the body of Morrison has been discovered. Considered in combination with the unnamed detective who missed his train, it appears that the supernatural "she" is able to manipulate the cosmos until her work is done. Further, because the supernatural relieves the narrator of his obligation to exact revenge, the story is able to emphasize the troubling story of the woman's death. The narrator, as surrogate for the reader, and the mail carrier, as the main storyteller, are able to centre both the tragedy and the mundanity of the woman's death. The mail carrier's repeated expressions of uncertainty, "I don't know" (55), "no one will ever know" and "it's all gossip; nobody

[57] The *OED* describes the common use of the word "she" to refer to "[t]he thing personified or conventionally treated as female" such as "an artefact, esp. a ship or boat" ("she").

knows" (56), underscore the lack of earthly justice available to the woman. Through the supernatural, however, "she" is able to avenge her death, to restrain the detective working on her case, and to alert the narrator that his "debt" has been cancelled (62).

I claimed earlier that the character Anne Labrador from Carleton's "The Clasp of Rank," is not representative of Indigenous women, but is rather what Goldie calls "a white image" (193), whose purpose is to reflect the suffering of white women through a symbolically indigenized body. As a model colonized subject, Anne's adherence to patriarchal and nuclear family conventions—having a husband's surname, for example—alludes to the civilizing work of white women carrying out the colonial project. Moreover, Anne's reductive status as a wife and mother of two ensures that her character can be imaginable for the bourgeois white audience who needs to identify with Anne for her murder to provoke outrage. Her murder thus represents men's violence against *white* women, offering no substantive critique of colonialism or its violence against Indigenous women. In fact, using the narrator's term, Anne as a "squaw" provides a useful vessel for the text's supernatural to take shape. She plays the role of the "magical Indian," a trope more commonly seen in westerns but with a steady presence in fantasy and science fiction. I maintain that, as "a white image," Anne is able to channel and wield the supernatural in ways that would be inaccessible to a white female character in her place. "The Clasp of Rank" needs to make its point about men's violence against women without undermining the *civility* of white women—their personhood that should be seen as equivalent to white men's personhood—so the Indigenous woman is a convenient archetype. She is able to draw on the white reader's presumptions about Indigenous peoples as uncivilized, or "inferior" (Goldie 199), and

thus her "semiotic embodiments of primal responses" (195), for example, her ability to posthumously "bring her image before [the narrator's] mind" in order to save "her helpless children" (Carleton 26), are expected and excusable. Goldie reminds us that representations of Indigenous peoples often trade in "mysticism" as a commodity (199). As he explains of such texts, "what the white needs is not to instill spirit in the Other but to gain it from the Other. Through the indigene [Anne] the white character [Devlin] gains soul and the potential of becoming rooted to the land" (Goldie 199). Devlin's ultimate assertion, that it was not the clasp but Anne herself who had the power "to bring her image before" his mind, allows the woman—necessarily severed from the possibility of Indigenous ceremony—to channel her connections to nature and do her duty as a mother. Devlin articulates the horror of Anne's murder and the pitiful fate of her children for the reader. He thus permits her to be a subject of identification for white women and a subject of pity for white men.

Finally, the narrators of "The Clasp of Rank" and "When Wires are Down" describe the respective events in such a way that the reader must interpret the fate of the two murderers as justice. Morrison is hanged in what appears to be a suicide and Lazier somehow shoots himself, but in neither case should we believe that the antagonists killed themselves. The narrator of "When Wires are Down" assures us that the dust on the floor below Morrison's corpse was so thick that "nothing human had crossed the threshold of that door for months, possibly years" (60), even though Morrison had been missing for only a few weeks. In "The Clasp of Rank" Devlin and the sheriff both witness Lazier shoot himself. The narrator tells us,

> I do say he did not mean to do the thing he did. He always carried his gun cocked, and in his side pocket of his coat. He slid his hand into his pocket now, and I guessed he was going to hand his gun over to the sheriff ostentatiously and make a play for injured innocence … The blinding dazzle of [Anne's clasp] flashed fair into Lazier's eyes. He jerked sharply away from the stabbing white light, the hand at his side flew up, and his gun snapped off like a whip, with the muzzle jammed upward under his chin, against the soft of his throat. (27)

The reader is compelled in both cases to see these deaths not as suicides or even murders, but as vengeance. Moreover, to the narrators and readers who take women's subjugation under patriarchy for granted, the vengeance is carried out with "the illusion of supernaturalism" (Joshi 7). For readers *not* ignorant of the "natural law" of women's autonomous personhood, perhaps the inexplicable and irrational deaths of the antagonists are legible, simply, as justice.

The social and political valences of weird fiction compel us to analyze these postwar texts as such rather than as the more critically acknowledged Canadian genre, the ghost story.[58] Although these two postwar texts revolve around the presence of

[58] Based on my analysis, Carleton's and Thomas's texts fail to meet the criteria of the Canadian iteration of the Gothic, as carefully described by Cynthia Sugars (2014). The postwar texts incorporate ghosts and as such *do* play with matters of the uncanny, but they do not operate to raise "questions of historicity, inheritance and political power" as Sugars illustrates of the Canadian Gothic (6). Most crucially, Sugars contends that "[t]he one constant in traditional Gothic literature, which is central to [her] interest in the ways that it circulates in Canada, is that there is always an *anxiety about history*" (6, emphasis original). While an argument might be made for *Tisab Ting* as Gothic, neither Carelton's nor Thomas's texts suggest anxiety about history. Moreover, Diana Wallace makes the compelling point that the feminist literary discourse around the Gothic has "obscured the ghost story as a separate genre and elided important differences between the two modes of writing" (428). Joshi is likewise perplexed by the frequency with which Gothic fiction is conflated with the ghost story and other iterations of the "weird tale" (2–3). Considering the careful attention Sugars has paid to articulating the specifics of a Canadian Gothic, it would be historically irresponsible to classify these texts as Gothic.

ghosts, the ghost story and the weird tale are not mutually inclusive. Diana Wallace explains that "many female writers have written ghost stories … to symbolize their sense that women are a marginal and repressed presence within patriarchal society and literature" (427). In fact, Wallace describes "the sheer number and variety of ghost stories by women" as "striking" (427). It is therefore unsurprising that Carleton and Thomas would employ ghosts in their stories about women's victimization, but while both may be political in aim and execution, the ghost story does not demand the same political analysis as the weird tale. Miéville contends that the weird tale manifests "the burgeoning sense that there is no stable status quo but a horror underlying *the everyday*" (513, emphasis added). With their provincial Canadian settings, "The Clasp of Rank" and "When Wires Are Down" draw attention to the unromanticized horror of Canadian women's everyday. Joshi insists of the weird tale that it "offers unique opportunities for philosophical speculation—it could be said that the weird tale is an inherently philosophical mode in that it frequently compels us to address directly such fundamental issues as the nature of the universe and our place in it" (11). Therefore, to read these texts as quasi science fiction weird tales opens them up to a possible futurity in which the "ignorance of certain 'natural laws'" (Joshi 7), like women's autonomous personhood, is overcome; that one day the supernatural will no longer be necessary to mete out punishment on behalf of murdered women because women are no longer objects under patriarchy.

CONCLUSION

Each of the texts under study in this chapter employs fantastical storytelling devices for the purpose of conveying lessons about white women's lack of personhood under patriarchy in the coalescing Canadian state. In concert with this pedagogical function, each text can, like the novel *Tisab Ting*, be read as an allegory for the value of white women to the Canadian nation state. For the contemporary reader, the pedagogical function can be distinguished from the allegorical—that is, lessons in moral reform and the protestant work ethic do not obviously entail women's emancipation. For Carleton, Thomas, and their contemporaries, however, the two were deeply intertwined. Borrowing from Bhabha, Coleman explains of popular national allegories: "[t]he allegorical referent is the pedagogical ideal … by which national discourse attempts to shape or discipline people's daily and repeated performances of citizenship; that is, national allegories teach people what 'Canadian' looks like so they can repetitively act it out themselves" (40). Proper—or for Coleman *civil*—behaviour is modelled in all three texts, as in *Tisab Ting*, by white masculine heroes. The codes for proper feminine behaviour are less consistent. Unlike characters Petra Bertram and Sophy Ridgeway, representations of white femininity are heavily veiled in the two post-war texts. However, even in the latter two short stories, the fantastical tropes *in toto* draw attention to white femininity as a national good in the racial and sexual (re)production of the Canadian state.

That these works are written in fantastical modes is significant for, historically, English Canadian literature as an institution has favoured realism and naturalism in its

canonical works. Similar to Buss's arguments at the outset of the chapter, Ketterer states,

> The history of Canada as an independent country and the production of Canadian literature coincides with the dominance of realism and naturalism in Western literature. It is not surprising, then, that the preponderance of works that constitute the "canon" of Canadian fiction are realistic or naturalistic. … That is to say, realism and naturalism were tools of nationalism. To describe the Canadian reality was, supposedly, to create the Canadian reality (2).

Ketterer's use of the term "dominance" is telling, for it refers to the genres' authority, not their incidence or popularity. I return to this generic conflict in greater detail in Chapter Three, but its significance here lies largely in the overlap between Coleman's remarks about popular literature as pedagogically nationalist, especially among those "lobbying for power" (35), and Buss's contention that Frygian criticism has been used to exclude from the literary tradition "any writer whose reaction to the Canadian landscape is anything less than traumatic" (125). The three texts in this chapter all make use of popular supernatural storytelling conventions in such a way that destabilizes Frye's garrison mentality paradigm. Although one *could* read these three texts through the lens of the garrison, or to use Atwood's term, "survival," their possible meanings and interpretations are increased if we instead consider, as Buss urges us to do, the ways the women in these texts experience the wilderness *differently*—not as the dominion or property of men, but as a window to their personhood.

These texts have been neglected for nearly a century, but it would be a mistake to attribute that neglect to their shared white supremacist ideology. Such racist tropes

as those found in these texts were in furious circulation throughout early twentieth-century Canadian print culture. Further, as I will discuss in the next chapter, such racist tropes have remained integral to Canadian literary production. Rebecca Traister reminds us that "women are not lauded for their fury, and too often have had their righteous passions simply erased from the record" (xxv). To dismiss these examples of Canadian women's proto-sf because of their white feminist undercurrents not only allows Canadian literary scholarship and feminist scholarship to continue to ignore the legacy of white supremacy in these institutions, but it also dismisses the urgent appeals these women writers made to the reader at large.

It is taken for granted that sf, with its endless possibilities for defamiliarization and social critique, can threaten the national narrative, but the proto-sf written by the two women authors in this chapter is far from inspiring a toppling of the state. For the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century proto-sf examined here and in Chapter One, it is clear that these white Canadian women writers did not wish to subvert the dominance of the white Anglo-Saxon bourgeoisie in the adolescent Canadian nation state, but simply to make room for themselves in the dominant public sphere. Imaginative, fantastical fiction published in periodicals provided for these writers a broad audience to share and circulate their white feminist polemic, and the tools, or "mode" to use Attebery's term ("Fantasy" 295), to represent and interpret not only the world in which they lived but the Canada they sought to build.

Chapter Three

Canadian Pulps and Cultural Panic

"Could it be true that Canadians have a predisposition for fantasy? Indeed, is Canada a fantasy?"

(David Ketterer, "Canadian Science Fiction," *Other Canadas*.)

INTRODUCTION

This third and final chapter diverges in focus and methodology from the previous two. Chapters One and Two emphasized close reading to identify and contextualize Canadian women's proto-sf writing as a vehicle for white feminist political discourse. By contrast, this chapter prioritizes bibliography to document both the development of Canadian women's sf writing and the erasure of genre from the institution of English Canadian literature commonly referred to as CanLit. Although this chapter is not about the generic transformation from proto-sf to science fiction *per se*, I aim to denaturalize the absence of a genealogy of women's sf in CanLit by bridging the period

of white feminist proto-sf writing discussed thus far with the appearance of unambiguously science fictional texts written by Canadian women at the outset of the Second World War. Nor is this chapter about the emergence of Canadian women's *feminist* sf. The texts that I examine herein lack the attention to (white) women's subordination that united the texts in Chapters One and Two, although they maintain the same ideological commitment to white supremacy in the face of another global war. As I will show, the cultural elite's anathema to genre fiction compelled Canadian writers of sf to publish in American (and sometimes British) venues, thus creating the illusion that Canadians—Canadian *women* in particular—did not write sf prior to Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, published in 1982. Indeed, the hostility toward genre within CanLit would preclude a vibrant tradition of feminist sf until well into the 1990s with the emergence of writers Hiromi Goto, Nalo Hopkinson, and Larissa Lai,[59] among others.

In order to adequately address the genealogy of Canadian women's sf and its subsequent erasure from cultural memory, this chapter looks in depth at Canada's pulp magazine industry and the moral panic that transformed pulp magazines into an American mass culture straw man. With an eye to the intersecting racial, gender, and class anxieties of the cultural elite[60] in 1940s Canada, the moral panic over Canadian

[59] Goto, Hopkinson, and Lai are among the leading writers of intersectional feminist sf in Canada and have largely set the standard for sf in English CanLit.

[60] The term "cultural elite" is commonly used in analyses of Canada's mid-twentieth century mobilization of cultural nationalism. Paul Litt offers the following explanation of precisely who made up this powerful demographic: "Members of this cultural elite were generally well-educated, white, middle-class, and male, and their interaction led to friendships which reinforced their shared interests" (*Muses* 21). He cites Ron Faris who further clarifies, "Canada in the first half of the twentieth century appears to have operated in the fashion of a country club. Members of this elite national assemblage were often leaders of such voluntary associations as the Association of Canadian Clubs, the Canadian Institute for International Affairs or the National Council of Education. […] What intrigues the

pulp magazines can be understood as the logical progression of the previous decades' nationalist social purity rhetoric. By this time the overt analogies to cleanliness and purity have fallen out of political discourse, but the racialized rhetoric of hygiene remains; records of parliamentary debates, for example, show members of parliament referring to pulp magazines and other working class leisure reading[61] in no uncertain terms as "trash" and "offal."[62] Further, these debates manipulated pulp magazine reading into a national imperative to save young readers of so-called trash periodicals from unrefined reading tastes that prevent good, moral citizenship.

The anti-pulp sentiment expressed specifically by late-1940s Canadian politicians must be considered in relation to post-war anxieties over proletarian political agitation. Much has been written on Marxist and socialist CanLit (Doyle 2002; Rifkind 2009; Vautour 2011; Mason 2013), and it is not the objective of this chapter to thoughtlessly collapse Canada's small for-profit pulp magazine industry into that history. However, during this period of rapid social change, the relationship between national loyalty and reading was of growing concern and the Canadian pulp magazine industry exposed the instability of Canada's socio-economic class stratification. Throughout 1949, at the same time the Federal government acknowledged a need for

observer is not, however, isolated individual behaviour but rather how relatively small, intimate, and manageable the Canada of that of that period was" (Faris xiv).

[61] Pulp magazines, comic books, and mass-market paperback novels have overlapping histories with respect to their readerships and their low status on the hierarchy of reading materials. While this chapter deals mainly with the reception and publication history of pulp magazines, at times comics and paperbacks are important part of that discussion. It is not my intention to give the impression that these three distinct forms are interchangeable, but at times they were treated thus by the Canadian government and cultural lobbyists.

[62] See for example the 6 October 1949 House of Commons Debates on Davie Fulton's proposed amendment to the Criminal Code, during which the term "trash" is deployed six times and the term "offal" deployed once in reference to pulp magazines.

a Royal Commission on the state of culture in Canada,[63] Members of Parliament were also in debates over an amendment to the criminal code that would outlaw, by defining as "obscene," the portrayal of crimes in pulp periodicals. While these latter debates were introduced to address crime comics, parliamentary records of the debates show the discussion of dangerous reading habits extending to pulp magazines and cheap paperback novels in general. The government perceived the reading practices of its citizens—especially among youth and the working class—as a matter of national concern; nearly two years before the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences would issue its report and recommendations for nationalized cultural production, the Canadian government effectively excised genre fiction from the Canadian literary landscape by criminalizing the production and distribution of pulp magazines, including but certainly not limited to crime comics. The consequences of pulp fiction's criminalization were so far-reaching as to characterize genre fiction as distinctly "un-Canadian" and its production almost treasonous (Ketterer *Canadian* 2).

The absence of genre fiction from studies of Canadian literary history is the legacy of a similarly elitist scholarly tradition that, like the aforementioned political elitism, disavows young, working-class, immigrant, and even middlebrow readers. In the American context, David M. Earle laments that "there has been no capturing in

[63] The Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, launched 8 April 1949, would come to be known most commonly as the Massey Commission after its chair, Vincent Massey. Slightly less common are references to the Massey-Lévesque Commission in an effort to acknowledge the commission's "vision of a national culture based on bicultural (English and French) toleration and cross-pollination" (*Muses* Litt 6) and in particular the important role that commissioner Georges-Henri Lévesque played in "ensuring that the Report give more than lip service to French-speaking Canada" (Sirman 2014).

amber of what has always been considered and remains the literary trash of the twentieth century" adding that "academia, especially as concerning literature and the avant-garde, establishes its reputation in opposition to material, economic, or physical dynamics" (6–7). Further, Earle problematizes the fact that cheap reading materials, like pulps, digests, magazines, and paperbacks, "are uncollected and unexamined despite the fact that they had circulations in the tens or even hundreds of thousands" (6). This is likewise the case in Canada. Although there has been some movement in academia to fill this gap (examples include Strange and Loo 2002, 2004; M. Smith 2004, 2005, 2006; Bell 2009; Coleman 2006; Rak 2013; Hammill and Smith 2015), most of Canada's popular reading materials remain unstudied. Not only does this gap contribute to popular ignorance of non-realist literary traditions in Canada, but it also reinforces the powerful social amnesia about Canadian racism and white supremacy. The focus on women's proto-sf in Chapters One and Two, for example, demonstrates the ways white supremacist rhetoric was intertwined with supernatural and scientific fiction to champion white women's political issues and their value to the state. Daniel Coleman argues that "[b]efore the rise of literary modernism in Canada in the twentieth century, literary texts were overwhelmingly characterized by allegorical or formulaic representation" with wide-ranging impact (37). In particular, Coleman explains that "popular literature mediated fundamental concepts of Canadianness that have since become reified assumptions of Canadian culture" (37). Thus, despite the "modernist dismissal of early Canadian writing as hopelessly romanticized and unrealistic" (37), an analysis of Canada's pulp magazine industry can provide insight into the evolution of the politics and prejudices espoused in the popular fiction of the turn-of-the-century. Moreover, mapping the tradition of Canadian genre fiction

writing up to and including its erasure provides a necessary nuance to the Massey Commission's ideal of a unified national literature. The Commission and its report were symptomatic of a cultural and political elite anxious to define Canadian literature (among numerous other areas of cultural production) in terms that would—and indeed *did*—fortify the existing racial and class hierarchies in Canada.

Given that Canada's pulp magazine industry was virtually unheard of until 2002, this period of literary production has become a burgeoning new field. In 2002, the National Library of Canada (now Library and Archives Canada (LAC)) launched a public exhibition of its pulp collection "designed to showcase the pulps as artefacts that provide 'absolutely priceless' insight into a nearly-forgotten era of Canadian publishing" (M. Smith, "Offal" 101). The subsequent academic uptake of pulp magazine studies in Canada has been largely limited to scholars of periodicals, such as Michelle Smith; criminologists such as Carolyn Strange and Tina Loo; and academics who are also collectors, such as Will Straw. Additionally, the majority of published work on Canadian pulp magazines centres on the crime genre holdings of LAC: detective fiction and true crime—the two most popular genres among Canadian pulp readers in the 1940s (M. Smith, "Soup Cans" 267), and thus the genres best represented in the archive. The ground-breaking research conducted thus far facilitates further study of the less represented pulp genres held at LAC, and also points to a number of significant gaps in Canada's publishing, cultural, and literary histories. The elegiac language of a "nearly-forgotten era" (M. Smith, "Offal" 101), for example, naturalizes the disappearance of the pulp industry and the absence of genre fiction from

English-Canadian literature, when in fact the eradication of both were essential to the "invention" of English-Canadian literature as a coherent category.

Building from research on Canadian pulp magazines conducted by Michelle Smith, Carolyn Strange, and Tina Loo, this chapter argues that, in addition to actively eliminating the pulp magazine industry from Canada's cultural landscape, the Canadian cultural elite fostered a climate entirely inhospitable to genre fiction. To support this claim, I examine in detail the fate of the small sf wing of Canada's aborted pulp magazine industry. Canadian sf pulps are uniquely instructive for two reasons: first, because of the ways these magazines hailed and engaged a female readership, thus documenting a tradition of Canadian women's interest in reading and writing sf, and second, because none of the Canadian government's moves to control the circulation or production of pulp magazines identifies sf genres (science fiction, scientifiction, supernatural, or weird fiction) within the morally conspicuous periodicals circulating among Canadian readers. The fact that sf pulps were still swept up in the moral panic over lowbrow periodicals suggests that pulp eradication was a power move, made in the guise of cultural sovereignty, to fortify the country's class stratification.

Throughout this chapter I use an historical materialist approach to analyze the rise and collapse of Canada's pulp magazine industry throughout the 1940s and early 1950s. I conduct a symptomatic reading of a wide variety of documents and ephemera, including newspaper archives, dozens of Canadian and American pulp magazines, and government documents like House of Commons Debates, Bills, and Acts, in order to demonstrate that the Canadian Government allocated resources to support the cultivation of highbrow cultural production to the deliberate exclusion of mass culture.

Moreover, I show that the erasure of pulp magazines from both the cultural landscape and cultural memory was a desired outcome—not merely an incidental side effect—of the post-war manufacturing of middle-class anglophone Canadian culture.

PROTO-SF TO SF

Although Canada's pulp magazine industry would not emerge until the early 1940s, Canadian women continued to write and publish imaginative fiction in magazines and novels throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Hilda Howard published the future history novel *The Writing on the Wall* in 1922;[64] L. Adams Beck published numerous orientalist fantasies, such as "The Splendor of Asia" and "The Amethyst Scarab" in 1922 and 1923, respectively;[65] in 1926 Beck published a novelization of "The Splendor of Asia," retitled *The Glory of Egypt*, which she attributed to her masculine pen name Louis Moresby;[66] Grace M. Campbell published a werewolf story called "The Law of the Hills" in 1930; in 1935 L.M. Montgomery published her ghost story "The House Party on Smokey Island"; Madge Macbeth published the science fictional novel *Wings in the West* in 1937;[67] and A. E. Burton published her inter-planetary science fiction story "The Discovery of Nil," which I will discuss below, in 1939. This timeline indicates that Burton's short story, published in the British science fiction magazine *Fantasy*, is the first work of fiction by a Canadian woman to be published in an expressly science

[64] Listed in Colombo, Richardson, Bell, and Amprimoz, p. 15.
[65] Listed Bell, *The Far North*, p. 11.
[66] Curiously, this same year Beck published a work of historical non-fiction on the teachings of the Buddha. This book was titled *The Splendour of Asia* and, like the short story from which she drew its title, attributed to L. Adams Beck.
[67] Listed in Colombo, Richardson, Bell, and Amprimoz, p. 7.

fiction (or "scientifiction") pulp magazine. This is significant because magazines specializing in genres likes science fiction, fantasy, and the supernatural were far more influential in developing those genres than were novels. In fact, magazine historian Mike Ashley argues that "even the shortest-lived magazines [could] feature work of lasting value" to developing genres (*Time* 18). Though Canadian women appear in general interest and supernatural pulps in surprising numbers, their inclusion in science fiction pulps is comparably rare. I have found no evidence, for example, to suggest that any Canadian women writers were published in Hugo Gernsback's *Amazing Stories*; nor do they appear in Street & Smith's *Astounding Science Fiction* until December 1942 when the magazine published E. Mayne Hull's "The Flight that Failed." The above listed fantasies by Beck were first published in the American general interest periodical *The Popular Magazine*, and those by Campbell and Montgomery were published in the supernatural-focused pulp magazine *Weird Tales*, which I discuss below.

This relative dearth of science fiction in early Canadian women's sf is consistent with trends identified by Canada's major sf bibliographers. John Robert Colombo's *Other Canadas*; Colombo, Michael Richardson, John Bell, and Alexandre L. Amprimoz's *CND SF&F*; David Ketterer's *Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy*; and Hugh Spencer and Allan Weiss's *Destination Out of This World* all identify a predilection for fantasy over science fiction in Canadian sf. As I discuss at length in Chapter Two, these bibliographers attribute this tendency to the same themes that have historically dominated canonical CanLit criticism, namely Frye's garrison mentality and the search for self/national identity prompted by his riddle "where is here." Consequently, these bibliographers infer that Canadian preoccupations lend themselves to fantasy more

than to science fiction. But it is also the case that in the 1920s and 1930s the leading science fiction magazines prioritized "scientific plausibility" (Bould "Pulp SF" 127) in their publications, thereby excluding authors lacking the requisite education in science.[68] Ashley, for example, describes Gernsback as maintaining a "strict [editorial] requirement for scientific accuracy" in the stories he published in *Amazing* (*Time* 35). This emphasis on scientific accuracy was mirrored by John W. Campbell when he became *Astounding*'s editor in 1937, and the model "rapidly became normalised during the war years" (Bould "Pulp" 127). This compelling material explanation for the relative lack of *science* in early Canadian sf does not negate the analysis of Canada's main sf bibliographers, but it does indicate a more complex history than their canon-influenced rationalizations allow.

A number of sf critics problematize mainstream histories of science fiction for neglecting sf's many influences beyond the attention to scientific plausibility popularized by Gernsback and Campbell. Roger Luckhurst, for example, notes that such histories "try to isolate the passage from the 'scientific romance' of the 1880s … to the 'science fiction' of the 1920s," ignoring the fact that "this was an era that produced—and across the world—a whole host of different, overlapping forms of fantastical fictions, all of which fed into what was always a quintessentially hybrid literature with blurred boundaries" (48). Likewise, Mark Bould critiques the tendency in these histories to examine only "isolated [American] works which can, retrospectively, be seen to lay the groundwork for Campbell's editorial revolution and

[68] It must be noted, however, that Gernsback's *Amazing*, which launched in 1926, was the first of its kind. It would therefore have been impossible for Beck to publish her work in such a venue, irrespective of the plausibility of her scientific content.

the so-called Golden Age he inaugurated" ("Pulp SF" 105–6). Critics such as Bould and Susan Gubar further remark that this standardizing of scientific plausibility across science fiction as a genre has excluded many non-white, non-male authors from the field of sf. Bould notes that "hegemonic definitional structures and practices within sf, sf studies, and literary-academic canon formation have concealed black sf" ("Come Alive" 220); Gubar similarly argues that the "virtual exclusion (until relatively recently) of women from a university scientific or mathematical education" restricted "the number of women who would attempt such [mainstream SF] writing" (17). Further, Isaiah Lavender reminds us that science as a discipline has historically been informed by racist logic and as such it follows that this limited view of science fiction leaves us with a generic tradition that "has reproduced rather than resisted racial stereotypes" ("Critical" 188). Therefore, it may well be the case the Canadians are predisposed to fantasy (Ketterer "Canadian" 333), but it cannot be ignored that the carefully constructed generic contours of "science fiction" produced longstanding gendered and racial consequences. I am therefore reluctant to interpret the disproportionately fantastical nature of Canadian women's sf and proto-sf, let alone Canadian sf in general, as demonstrative of anything other than the material conditions under which these women wrote and published fiction.

This brings me to the central material condition impeding the publication of Canadian women's sf: the absence of Canadian pulp magazines prior to the 1940s. As noted above, it is widely agreed that through sheer numbers American pulp magazines dominated the early field of science fiction. This was not only the case in Canada; by the late 1930s the UK "was overrun with American sf 'pulp' magazines," which British

editor T. Stanhope Sprigg describes as being "dumped over here in vast quantities" (qtd. in Ashley *Age* 79). This saturation led many British writers to sell their sf "transatlantically" (Pringle and Ashley 13), and it would not be until 1938 that the first British pulp dedicated to science fiction appeared on newsstands (Ashley *Age* 79). Titled *Fantasy*, this science fiction magazine was a short-lived pulp that had, to my knowledge, no official distribution in Canada. Yet, in its brief run of three issues, it contains one Canadian-authored short story. Expatriate A.E. (Alice Elizabeth) Burton, who had been living in England since 1936,[69] contributed the short story "The Discovery of Nil" to *Fantasy*'s second issue. Given that *Fantasy* was launched just prior to the outbreak of World War II, it is unsurprising that the fleeting periodical was preoccupied with what Ashley calls the "gathering clouds of war" (*Time* 132); Burton's short story is no exception.

Unlike the magazine fiction I discuss in detail in Chapter Two, "The Discovery of Nil" is framed as a work of scholarship rather than as a work of fiction. Of course, it *is* a work of fiction and, like Carleton's "The Clasp of Rank" and Thomas's "When Wires are Down," Burton's story is narrated in the first person by a civil and respectable man. This narration, however, is styled as a lecture; the narrator delivers his research findings to an audience of lay people and academics from his home city of Mat, on the planet Ut. Despite the text's intergalactic setting, the storytelling mode successfully hails the magazine reader as a member of the narrator's community. By using statements like "As you all know" (93) and "those of you who are interested" (94), as well as

[69] This biographical detail comes from a *Google Books* snippet view of Burton's book *The Georgians at Home* (1973). I have not yet been able to access a copy of this book to confirm the date.

frequent use of first-person plurals, such as "our" and "we," the narrator compels the reader to feel invested in the research data he delivers. This hailing, in turn, encourages the reader to note the many similarities between Earth and the planet Ut. For example, the narrator reminds the reader of "the common carpenter, who saved us by teaching a new set of values, and was himself tortured to death for his belief" (94), alluding to Jesus of Nazareth and the founding of Christianity. Similarly, the narrator reflects on the "prismatic … cut stones the children play with … found in abundance in the hills near Mat" (96). These stones, the narrator reflects, "though worthless, are, when cut, very pretty and formed in the earth by centuries of pressure" (96). Here the reader is encouraged to think of gemstones, diamonds in particular. These recognizable allusions encourage the reader to presume that Ut is the future Earth. Evidently, the planet Ut is an enlightened, utopian civilization that has abandoned materialism. Moreover, the people of Ut have achieved tremendous scientific advancements. For example:

> We, of course, know the full destructive force of the Cosmic Ray and so have learned to control it—to sift it from the atmosphere. As a result, we can now live for centuries—forever if we so desire. Before we knew of the destructive force of this now controlled Ray we used to die of strange and horrible diseases of the tissues, diseases that affected all parts of our body, internally and externally. (94)

Thus encouraged to believe that humanity's future is bright, the reader is confronted with the shocking core of the narrator's report: the exploration of a "cold and dead" planet called Nil (94).

The narrator explains that, having learned to pass the powerful "Cosmic Ray through a series of delicately-adjusted transformers," he and a team of researchers from the University of Scientific Research created a "magnetic force" called the Inverted Ray (93). Under the supervision of Professor Varga, our narrator and his colleagues began a series of experiments culminating in the ability to magnetically pull the dead planet Nil "several billion miltres closer to Ut and [hold] Nil in the outer rim of our own solar system" (95). This feat allows our narrator his colleagues to travel to Nil and explore the lifeless planet.

Nil, our narrator explains, is a planet that has much in common with Ut and for this reason is of great interest to the scientific community. "The College of Planetary Investigation, which is a branch of the University of Cosmic Science, years ago published an amazing thesis" explaining that Nil was once part of another solar system, "which they called Chaos," and "revolved about a great sun" (93). Nil was of particular interest because "its approximate distance from its own sun and the manner in which it had revolved was very similar to the revolutions of our own planet—and this led us to believe that life on that far planet must have been similar to ours" (93–94). Indeed, the researchers discover deep beneath "its great icy surface" (96), "absolute proof that there had once been life on Nil" (97). The excavation first uncovers "the habitation of the last form of life on Nil" (97); what follows is a markedly racialized depiction of the specimen they discover, representing the "primitive tribe which had obviously retrogressed" (*n*. 97):

> We came across the body of a man clothed in furs and set in a curious ring of ice which had been at one time a sort of ice hut. The man was much as we are,

> though much shorter in stature, and more heavily built. His body was covered with coarse natural dark hair. The features were brutish, with the nose set flat between the eyes and the teeth protruding. (97)

The narrator follows this assessment with a description of the body's sudden deterioration: "Of course, when released from the icy bed, the flesh, which had been well preserved, disintegrated rapidly leaving only the bones. These we tabulated and turned over to the anthropologist of the party" (97). This objective, unaffected tone describing the loss of their initial discovery underlines the racialized depiction of the body. The narrator's evaluation is soon put in sharp contrast as the team subsequently discovers "the second perfect specimen of these strange people" (98). Professor Varga, we are told, describes this second discovery as exemplifying "the 'best' period of Nil's civilization" (98). The narrator explains that this second body "was a much more advanced specimen, with a well-developed forehead and nose, slightly receding chin, fair skin and only the head covered in fine fair hair" (98). He then describes Varga as "joyously [sending] the man back to Ut where he is still in ice under observation" (98). Moreover, the narrator tells us that there are plans "to revive this specimen" (98). Finally, the narrator reveals how the researchers believe the "[advanced] civilisation had been destroyed" (99). Having conducted tests on the ice and air, the researchers conclude that the mass-killing agent must have been "gas—some terrible poisonous chemical production, obviously man-made, else life could not have existed at all on Nil" (99). Finally, lest there is any doubt in the reader's mind that Nil, not Ut, is the future Earth, the narrator tells us of the discovery of "a stone with the hieroglyphics" that archaeologists determine must have once read "LONDON" (99), although he

admits they do not know what the word means. The narrator then concludes his report by explaining, without a shred of subtlety, that "these sad people of Nil did wilfully and with intent destroy themselves in some great battle" (99).

Published in March 1939, "The Discovery of Nil" clearly expresses the anxieties of a society on the verge of another war. While the story takes pains to rationalize its fictitious scientific content,[70] its allegorical function is to advocate against a second Great War rather than to imagine the future possibilities of science. By introducing the war-ravaged Nil through the eyes of the narrator, the text denaturalizes the magazine reader's present-day geopolitics and underscores the possible extremes of a Second World War. Ashley notes that prior to the 1930s, "most science fiction had tended to glorify war, marvelling at the wonders of science rather than the impact upon the human race" (*Time* 165). The years immediately preceding the outbreak of World War II, however, led writers "to consider the inevitable consequences of fascism" and to treat war as "something that might yet be avoided" (Ashley, *Time* 165). Burton's description of poisonous gas saturating the air on Nil is particularly gripping, as it reminds the reader of the devastation caused by the mass-scale deployment of chemical weapons during the World War I. Further, in identifying the Anglo-Saxon civilization ("an example of the 'best' period of Nil's civilisation" (Burton 98)) as the first to be annihilated by "some great battle" (99), the text refuses a futurity in which *either* Britain or Germany recovers from a second war.

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[70] For example, the narrator gives a formula for augmented lightspeed, "x^4 (z^{10}) $100b$" (97), and the people of Ut use "miltres" to measure units of distance. These idioms mimic scientific unit systems already foreign to readers lacking in science education but, because the story is a work of imaginative fiction, the terms work to incorporate the reader into the world of the text, rather than alienate the reader from it.

This final point draws on what I have previously argued is white Canadian women's commitment to racial purity and clearly aligns Burton with the white feminist politics articulated by her generic predecessors. The researchers' discovery of the "retrogressed" specimen (*n.* 97) is clearly positioned as a consequence of another European war. The narrator notes that "centuries before" the planet was devastated by its own "natural elements," "[m]ost of the people of Nil, with the exception of a primitive tribe which had obviously retrogressed, were destroyed" (*n.* 97). This analysis implies that without the influence of the metropole, in this case Great Britain, colonized subjects will not only "retrogress" but, judging by "specimen's" proximity to what was once London, they will become the dominant "race" on Earth. In this way, "The Discovery of Nil" does not merely consider the fate of its UK readers but prophesies the annihilation of the entire British Empire.

As I have shown in the first two chapters, pulp magazines were a site for political ideology and remained so even as they distinguished themselves by genre. Moreover, pulp sf, and here science fiction in particular, continues to be used by white Canadian women for the circulation of eugenic, nationalist discourse. Where Carleton's and Thomas's weird fiction examines small, isolated Canadian communities as microcosmic of civility, Burton associates the fate of the Commonwealth with the whole of Western civilization at the outset of yet another global war.

CANADIAN PULP *FRICTION*

Pulp fiction is widely understood to be "the fiction of the working class" (Hoppenstand 2013, xiii; E. Smith 2000; M. Smith 2005; Earle 2009) and as such inherently separate from high culture, but evidence suggests that periodical readerships are not neatly segregated by class. In the American context, Andrew Thacker comments on "the interplay between high and low circulations, between mass and minority publications, or between 'pulp' and 'slick' and 'quality' magazines" as evidence that a binary between high and low publications is "too crude to capture the diverse field of American periodicals" (12). Faye Hammill and Michelle Smith's work on magazine publishing in Canada likewise indicates that the boundaries between the main tiers of periodicals (pulps, slicks, and avant-garde publications called "little magazines") are so porous that "it is perhaps more useful to think in terms of a continuum rather than a fixed hierarchy" (25). Perhaps most challenging to the association of pulps with a so-called lowbrow readership is David Ketterer's research on Canadian fan magazines (called "fanzines"). Among the creators and editors of fanzines produced in Canada during the 1940s Ketterer names a group of peers who attended "a private boys' school, St Andrew's College in Aurora, Ontario," at least one of whom (Fred Hurter Jr.) would go on to graduate from McGill University (41). Thus even though pulp magazines were targeted to young and working-class readers, there is ample evidence to suggest pulp magazine circulation exceeded the boundaries of class divides.

However deceptive and inaccurate we now understand a class-based stratification of reading material to be, a hierarchy was certainly taken for granted during the pulp magazine boom period. Elite hostility toward working-class reading

material, at least insofar as such sentiments have been expressed by highbrow figures in cultural production, is elucidated by the fact that "cheap fiction helped to improve literacy among a previously excluded readership" (Hoppenstand xv). Gary Hoppenstand locates pulp's origins "back to the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution in western Europe and America" (xiii) and in particular to "the advent of the movable-type printing press" (xiv), which made reading material accessible to the peasant, working, and middle classes: "The combination of new technology, a newly educated working class, and growing urban populations thus led to the birth of mass-produced fiction in the early nineteenth century" (xiv). Drawing on the work of media historians, including Tim DeForest, who links pulp magazines back to the nineteenth century story papers, and Quentin Reynolds, who documents the history of magazine publisher Street & Smith, Hoppenstand likewise traces elite condemnation of affordable literatures to the origins of peasant and working-class literacy, including the nineteenth-century story papers and penny dreadfuls to twentieth-century dime novels and pulp magazines.

Public libraries provide a fascinating example of how this elite condemnation trickled down into the lower and middle classes. "In the decade before the First World War," Gail Edwards argues, "public anxiety about the assimilation of immigrants and the social change caused by industrialization and urbanization led children's library innovators … to argue that children's reading tastes and habits, formed by a combination of 'temperament and racial tendencies', could be reshaped through the guidance of a sympathetic librarian" (136). Race and class were thus well-established as significant determinants for not only what but *whose* reading constituted "good"

reading. That is, reading materials were understood to reflect the moral character of the reader. Erin A. Smith's research into the economic stratification of American pulp readers suggests a primary readership that was "white, male, often immigrant, and working class" (16). By contrast, the "sympathetic" librarians that Edwards describes were able to draw authority from "their own status as [white] middle-class women" (136). These women's social status enabled them to employ what Edwards describes as "first-wave maternal feminist arguments" to support their work in fostering "children's moral and intellectual development" (136). In particular, these librarians believed the library "played a vital role in encouraging children to become 'intelligent, self-helpful readers', in making 'the poor into more happy and useful citizens', and in acculturating non-anglophone children through exposure to good literature, thereby ameliorating the menace to society resulting from the 'filth and ignorance' of immigrants" (136).

Julie Rak identifies a comparable contempt for genre within the humanities, noting that "scholars have had to contend with lingering opinions about genre fiction that are based on its history as a lowbrow form for ordinary people, not for elites or the avant-garde" (19). Highlighting the derision of poor people's reading habits expressed by Q.D. Leavis in *Fiction and the Reading Public* (1932), Rak explains that for the elite, "'bad' books and 'bad' reading are to be associated with cheapness and the values of the market, that the urban poor do not understand literature, and—most importantly—that the wrong people reading the wrong things in the wrong way are to be regarded with suspicion and even as a kind of social threat" (20). This is precisely the suspicion that characterizes the Canadian elite's condemnation for pulp magazines throughout the 1940s.

The notion of a literate working class is in and of itself threatening to the cultural and economic systems that are dependent on proletarian complacency and subservience. As Andrea Hasenbank reminds us, a literate proletariat is able to write, consume, and circulate seditious reading material:

> Prime Minister R.B. Bennett's imposition of Section 98 of the Criminal Code of Canada … outlawed the Communist Party as a terrorist organization for purporting to advocate revolution based on Marxist economic principles. Although Section 98 works on the principle of unlawful assembly, criminalizing any association with an outlawed group (Petryshyn, "Class Conflict" 48–49), ranging from formal membership to mere possession of the group's material, it operates most pointedly on the circulation of ideas within the public sphere: ideological, not physical, association is the true locus of criminality. Subsections (8) through (10) specifically address the production, distribution, sale, and circulation of printed material. (132–33)

Historically, governmental fear of and anathema to communism has been so intense in Canada and the US that Caren Irr defines the 1930s America/Communism binary as "one of the most powerful ideological oppositions of the twentieth century" (3), so much so that the terms have become "mutually constitutive" (4). The Canadian government's manoeuvres to control pulp magazine distribution in Canada map smoothly onto the anxiety over working-class revolution at a time (both during and following the Second World War) when the Canadian state sought to define itself as a strong, unified nation.

Of course, not all pulp fiction aligns with revolutionary politics, and in the case of American pulp magazines the industry actually propped up high culture. Michelle

Smith explains that it was commonplace for American magazine owners to subsidize the production of their middle-class and elite magazines with the profit margins from pulp magazine sales. In this way pulp magazines "could be exploited as a base commodity that funded high culture, much the same way that the mass labor of typical pulp readers supported the power and elitism of the upper classes" ("Soup Cans" 266). An excellent example is the American hard-boiled detective pulp *Black Mask*, whose sale after a mere eight published issues allowed co-owners H.L. Mencken and George Jean Nathan to "subsidise their elite magazine, *The Smart Set*" (Hammill and Smith 2015, 23–4*n*1). By significant contrast, Canada's pulp magazine industry emerged unexpectedly and independent of existing middle-class and elite periodical producers.

When the Canadian government passed the War Exchange Conservation Act on 6 December 1940, imposing a trade embargo on consumer goods produced outside of "the sterling area" (defined in the Act as "the territories under the sovereignty, protection, suzerainty or mandate of His Majesty" [Canada, Parliament *Journals* 85]), it effectively cut off the supply of leisure reading for the country's least powerful and least influential citizens: youth and the working class. Prior to the ban, Canada's pulp readership had been predominantly served by American imports. Strange and Loo explain that "Canada had its own popular presses … since the 1910s" but "popular fiction writers had been selling stories and serials to North American and British publishers for decades" ("Hewers" 12). To put the scope of US pulp imports into perspective, Michelle Smith's research estimates that American pulp magazine circulation in Canada was "1 million issues per week" in the 1920s and 30s, accounting for "one-tenth of American sales" ("Soup Cans" 286*n*18). Smith, Strange and Loo all

point to the classist nature of the embargo on pulps given the continued importing of glossy middle- and elite class magazines called "slicks." The phrasing of the Act gives the Minister of National Revenue discretion over which items are "desirable" and may therefore be afforded a permit to enter Canada (Canada, Parliament *Journals* 85). In banning pulps but not slicks, like *Colliers* or *The Saturday Evening Post* (M. Smith, "Offal" 103), the War Exchange Conservation Act capitalized on "the inferior class status of the pulps" combined "with the belief that the pulps promoted moral degeneration" (M. Smith, "Offal" 103–4). This allowed the rationale for the pulp embargo to be both moral and economic; covertly, however, the Act enabled "the Federal Government of Canada [to control] the reading matter of Canadian citizens who possessed the least degree of economic and social power" (104). Recalling Rak's remarks about the elitist concern for "the wrong people reading the wrong things in the wrong way" (20), it would appear that for the Canadian government, the wrong things were not merely American, but were both American *and* cheap.

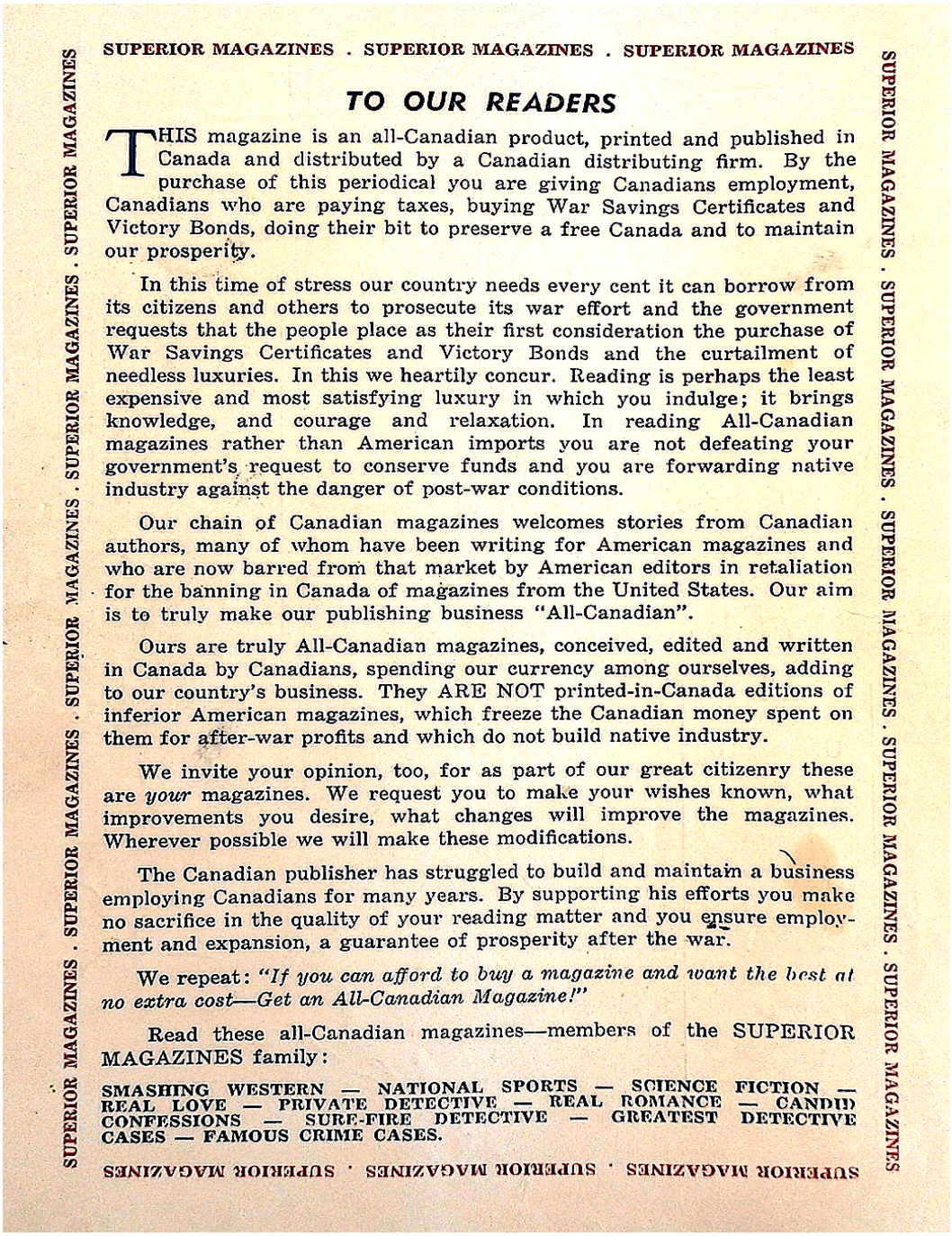
Nevertheless, the implementation of the War Exchange Conservation Act precipitated a surge of Canadian pulp magazine production as small-scale publishers emerged to capitalize on the void in the Canadian periodical market. As mentioned above, this new pulp industry operated quite differently from its American counterpart. Like other Canadian entreprenneurs, former Toronto Star reporter Alec Valentine took advantage of the massive demand for pulp magazines and began producing his own periodicals independent of the existing Canadian magazine trade. Home-grown publishing houses like Valentine's thus provided no financial benefit to middle-class or elite cultural producers; they were purely purveyors of lowbrow reading, primarily pulp

magazines and comics. And they were tremendously successful. Michelle Smith writes, "Between 1941 and 1945, Valentine's publishing house [Alval Publishing Company and its subsidiaries] sustained itself with the monthly production of fifteen top-selling true crime magazines and four crime fiction magazines" ("Offal" 105). Further, "at the publishing house's peak in 1943–45, Valentine was publishing up to forty-four different titles on a monthly basis" ("Soup Cans" 267). The success of this rogue commodity meant that, irrespective of the ideological content of the pulp magazines themselves, Canadian pulp publishing signified an alternative to Canada's existing class hierarchy.[71] At their core, Canadian pulp magazines were a *de facto* threat to the dominance of elite cultural production. Given that during the 1940s cultural sovereignty and national sovereignty were increasingly seen as the same thing, a threat to the one was necessarily seen as a threat to the other.

Canadian pulp magazines were saturated with nationalist rhetoric. Michelle Smith explains that even though these magazines strove to emulate the out-of-reach American periodicals in order to attract pulp-hungry readers, they did so while affecting a nationalist identity to set themselves apart from their American predecessors ("Offal" 104). Valentine's pulps, for example, used war-time rhetoric to make leisure reading a way of patriotically supporting the Canadian economy. Blurbs and ads stated

[71] It is worth noting that a number of major players in both the Canadian and American pulp industries were in fact socialists. Sam Moskowitz, an active member of the American science fiction fan association The Science Fiction League, writes of his personal and political grievances with Donald Wollheim whose rival association The Futurians, Moskowitz claims, "believed that revolutionary communism was the only answer to the problems of the world in general and the United States in particular" ("Canada's" 88). Moskowitz further describes being hoodwinked by Melvin R. Colby, editor of *Uncanny Tales* discussed at length below, who was a "strong leftist and didn't at all like the intimation he got from [Moskowitz] that [Moskowitz was] anti-communist" ("Canada's" 90). I elaborate on the socialist nature of the Canadian pulp magazine industry in "Canadian Pulp Fictions: Unarchiving Genre Fiction as CanLit."

that "'each issue [is] packed with the best stories that Canada's authors … can produce. Get your copy today!'" and "edited and printed in Canada by Trade Union Workmen



SUPERIOR MAGAZINES . SUPERIOR MAGAZINES . SUPERIOR MAGAZINES

TO OUR READERS

THIS magazine is an all-Canadian product, printed and published in Canada and distributed by a Canadian distributing firm. By the purchase of this periodical you are giving Canadians employment, Canadians who are paying taxes, buying War Savings Certificates and Victory Bonds, doing their bit to preserve a free Canada and to maintain our prosperity.

In this time of stress our country needs every cent it can borrow from its citizens and others to prosecute its war effort and the government requests that the people place as their first consideration the purchase of War Savings Certificates and Victory Bonds and the curtailment of needless luxuries. In this we heartily concur. Reading is perhaps the least expensive and most satisfying luxury in which you indulge; it brings knowledge, and courage and relaxation. In reading All-Canadian magazines rather than American imports you are not defeating your government's request to conserve funds and you are forwarding native industry against the danger of post-war conditions.

Our chain of Canadian magazines welcomes stories from Canadian authors, many of whom have been writing for American magazines and who are now barred from that market by American editors in retaliation for the banning in Canada of magazines from the United States. Our aim is to truly make our publishing business "All-Canadian".

Ours are truly All-Canadian magazines, conceived, edited and written in Canada by Canadians, spending our currency among ourselves, adding to our country's business. They ARE NOT printed-in-Canada editions of inferior American magazines, which freeze the Canadian money spent on them for after-war profits and which do not build native industry.

We invite your opinion, too, for as part of our great citizenry these are *your* magazines. We request you to make your wishes known, what improvements you desire, what changes will improve the magazines. Wherever possible we will make these modifications.

The Canadian publisher has struggled to build and maintain a business employing Canadians for many years. By supporting his efforts you make no sacrifice in the quality of your reading matter and you ensure employment and expansion, a guarantee of prosperity after the war.

We repeat: *"If you can afford to buy a magazine and want the best at no extra cost—Get an All-Canadian Magazine!"*

Read these all-Canadian magazines—members of the SUPERIOR MAGAZINES family:

SMASHING WESTERN — NATIONAL SPORTS — SCIENCE FICTION — REAL LOVE — PRIVATE DETECTIVE — REAL ROMANCE — CANDID CONFESSIONS — SURE-FIRE DETECTIVE — GREATEST DETECTIVE CASES — FAMOUS CRIME CASES.

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SUPERIOR MAGAZINES . SUPERIOR MAGAZINES . SUPERIOR MAGAZINES . SUPERIOR MAGAZINES . SUPERIOR MAGAZINES . SUPERIOR MAGAZINES . SUPERIOR MAGAZINES

Figure 3.1: Back cover to the second issue of *Science Fiction*, published by Superior Magazines. Photographer: Marcelle Kosman, 2015.

on Canadian paper" (quoted in M. Smith, "Soup Cans" 268). Toronto's Superior Publications, too, would emphasize nationalist pride and promise original, Canadian content. For example, the back cover of the second issue of *Science Fiction*, a short-lived publication devoted entirely to reprints of American sf, states: "This magazine is an all-Canadian product, printed and published in Canada and distributed by a Canadian distributing firm. By the purchase of this periodical you are giving Canadians employment, Canadians who are paying taxes, buying War Savings Certificates and Victory Bonds, doing their bit to preserve a free Canada and to maintain our prosperity" (Figure 3.1). Further down the page the statement continues, "Ours are truly all-Canadian magazines, conceived, edited and written in Canada by Canadians, adding to our country's business" (ibid.). Given that the pulps were predominantly marketed to working-class readers, ads like these performed the dual function of identifying with the working class and hailing them as producers and consumers of Canadian culture.

WEIRD AND *UNCANNY TALES* IN CANADA

Prior to the 1940 War Exchange Conservation Act, the American pulp magazine *Weird Tales* had significant circulation in Canada and was at the time the most successful purveyor of supernatural fiction available. Emerging in 1923, it was the spiritual successor to "the short-lived, poorly-distributed *Thrill Book*" (Everett and Shanks x) discussed in Chapter Two, and would undoubtedly inspire the creators of Canada's *Uncanny Tales*. Collector and digital archivist Phil Stephensen-Payne explains that

during *Weird Tales*'s lifetime the magazine produced two series of Canadian reprints, which indicates a specifically Canadian audience. The first series ran from June 1935 to July 1936;[72] Stephensen-Payne describes this series as "simply abridged versions of the equivalent US editions" (n.p.). Interestingly, the third issue in this reprint series (volume 26, number 2) features a story by L.M. Montgomery titled "The House Party at Smoky Island." The story is described in the table of contents as "A quaint and appealing weird story by the author of 'Anne of Green Gables'" (n.p.). A similar lead appears just below the title and illustration on the story's first page: "A quaint little ghost story by the author of 'Anne of Green Gables'" (figure 3.2). It was common practice for *Weird Tales* to include a brief blurb about each story, and the repeated gesture to Montgomery's immensely popular novel seems especially pointed in this third issue produced with a Canadian readership in mind.

Montgomery was not the first Canadian to publish in *Weird Tales*; she is preceded by Grace M. Campbell, whose werewolf tale "The Law of the Hills" was published in August 1930, five years earlier. In fact, Canadian writers had appeared regularly in *Weird Tales* since the magazine's inaugural issue in March 1923.[73] Given that a number of Canadian authors also published in the ill-fated *Thrill Book* in 1919 (including S. Carleton and Lillian Beynon Thomas, discussed in Chapter Two), it is clear that imaginative genres like sf and weird fiction were of interest to Canadian

[72] This brief first series is most likely the result of an import tax on American magazines introduced in 1931. According to Michael Dewing's policy paper "Federal Government Policy on Arts and Culture" (2013), "A number of American magazines reacted [to the tax] by printing in Canada, but this lasted only until the government of William Lyon Mackenzie King repealed the tax in 1936" (1).

[73] John Bell's sf index *The Far North and Beyond* lists RTM Scott's "Nimba, the Cave Girl" (March 1923) as the first Canadian contribution to *Weird Tales*, followed by many more.

readers and writers, even if their popularity was overshadowed by the more salacious crime genres.

Figure 3.2: Title page for L.M. Montgomery's "The House Party at Smoky Island," in *Weird Tales* vol. 26, no. 2, 1935. Photographer: Marcelle Kosman, 2015.

By the beginning of the 1940s there was sufficient desire for a Canadian publisher to create an outlet for the kind of science fiction, fantasy, supernatural, and weird writing being published in *Weird Tales* and, previously, *The Thrill Book*. The first issue of *Uncanny Tales*, published by the Adam Publishing Company and attributed to Alec Valentine (Moskowitz "Canada's" 86), is dated November 1940, a full month before the War Exchange Conservation Act (hereafter WECA) was debated and approved by Parliament. Conventional magazine cover-dating suggests that this November issue would likely have been published in October 1940.[74] The absence of printing records—indeed any records at all—makes the date of this inaugural issue a curious one. To what degree were *Uncanny*'s creators aware that an embargo on American pulps was imminent? As discussed above, WECA was passed on 6 December 1940, after only three days of debate (Farquharson 1). The embargo would come into effect for pulp magazines on 16 December, although goods ordered before 2 December would "be admitted until Feb. 28" ("Pulps, Comics, Cut Off Dec. 16" 7). Sam Moskowitz attributes the initiative for *Uncanny Tales* to *Weird Tales* contributor Thomas P. Kelley, claiming, "When Kelley heard that American pulp magazines were barred from Canada, he began calling on Sayer's Fireside Publications, Valentine, Koniac, and Chamberlain, and other downtown Toronto publishers suggesting they fill the void" ("Canada's" 87). Moskowitz's claim is likely apocryphal; both Valentine and Melvin R. Colby, *Uncanny*'s editor, had been journalists and would undoubtedly have

[74] The practice of dating magazine issues weeks later than the actual date of publication has long been the industry standard. *Magazines Canada* lists the time necessary for "printing, shipping to your distributor, re-shipping to stores and shelving" and the need to "keep your title [looking] fresh and on the stands for a maximum amount of time" as reasons for the discrepancy between the release date and the cover date.

heard about the embargo before it affected *Weird Tales*. It is most likely that the creators of *Uncanny* were merely lucky; that, much like the magazine *Weird Tales*, *Uncanny* is the result of *kairos*: "a unique moment when the time is right for the production of a particular utterance" (Everett and Shanks xi). Shortly following its inauguration as a small digest magazine of weird fiction, *Uncanny* grew to a size and quality that (at least according to some letters to the editor) brought it in league with *Weird Tales*, as well as its other American competitors: *Unknown*, *The Spider,* and *Amazing Stories*.

The design of *Uncanny* appears to emulate *Weird Tales* as much as possible. In its first issue, *Uncanny*'s table of contents provides a brief quotation from each story that might capture the reader's interest (figure 3.3), just as *Weird Tales* would do (figure 3.4). Likewise, the stories themselves are led with a short hook to sell the reader on their quality. For example, the story "Murder in the Graveyard," placed first in the magazine, is introduced with the statement "An Original Story by Thomas P. Kelley, America's Foremost Weird Story Writer" (1). Before *Uncanny* started, Kelley had been publishing stories and serials exclusively to *Weird Tales* since 1937; this gesture to his fan base thus strongly supports the notion that *Uncanny*'s target audience was existing readers of *Weird Tales*.

With an absence of data on *Uncanny*'s circulation, letters from readers provide a useful if imperfect record of *Uncanny*'s development and reception. Over its twenty-one issues *Uncanny* published fifteen issues with a letters to the editor column titled "Around the Cauldron." Numerous letters printed there express gratitude for *Uncanny*

". . . There was that sickening thud of human bone crashing against stone. Then the body slumped onto the grave mound, to roll slowly off, then down beside it in grotesque fashion . . ."

MURDER IN THE GRAVEYARD ..... *Page 1*

". . . There is going to be an unfortunate accident. In say five minutes the air pipe will spring a leak. There will be nobody to hear your protests except an occasional shark . . ."

SHARKS ..... *Page 16*

". . . At this moment I felt a cold rush of air from a hastily opened window, and, in the expiring gleam of the fire, I noticed something dark swaying to and fro from a great beam . . ."

THE LOVER AND THE BEAM ..... *Page 21*

". . . Suppose the fellow was dangerous—suppose he turned round on his mother, not knowing her? I tried to move to assist her, but my feet seemed rotted to the ground, as in a horrid nightmare . . ."

U DAY ZAUNG ..... *Page 27*

". . . A wild cry rang out to the night, a piercing yell of rage and fear. Muttering a curse, Harry sprang upon the man to club him into unconsciousnes before his shouts aroused the sleeping crew . . ."

THE TALKING HEADS ..... *Page 33*

Murder in the Graveyard

An Original Story by Thomas P. Kelley, America's Foremost Weird Story Writer

I PLANNED and perpetrated the perfect crime. A crime so unique, a crime so flawless, as to defy detection. Who would guess it was I, the heart-broken husband, who murdered Sarah Foster? Why the act I put on at her funeral would have done credit to a Barrymore!

As to those brains in the graveyard and the centuries of torture they say will be mine — don't make me laugh! Let them plot and plan their dismal vengeance. Let them hope and wait, six-feet below, within the skulls that are their homes. They wait in vain! And as for the present: You've got to get up pretty early to put anything over on Martin Blane. I'm safe. Sure, I killed Sarah Foster but I'm safe—Sarah told me so herself last night!

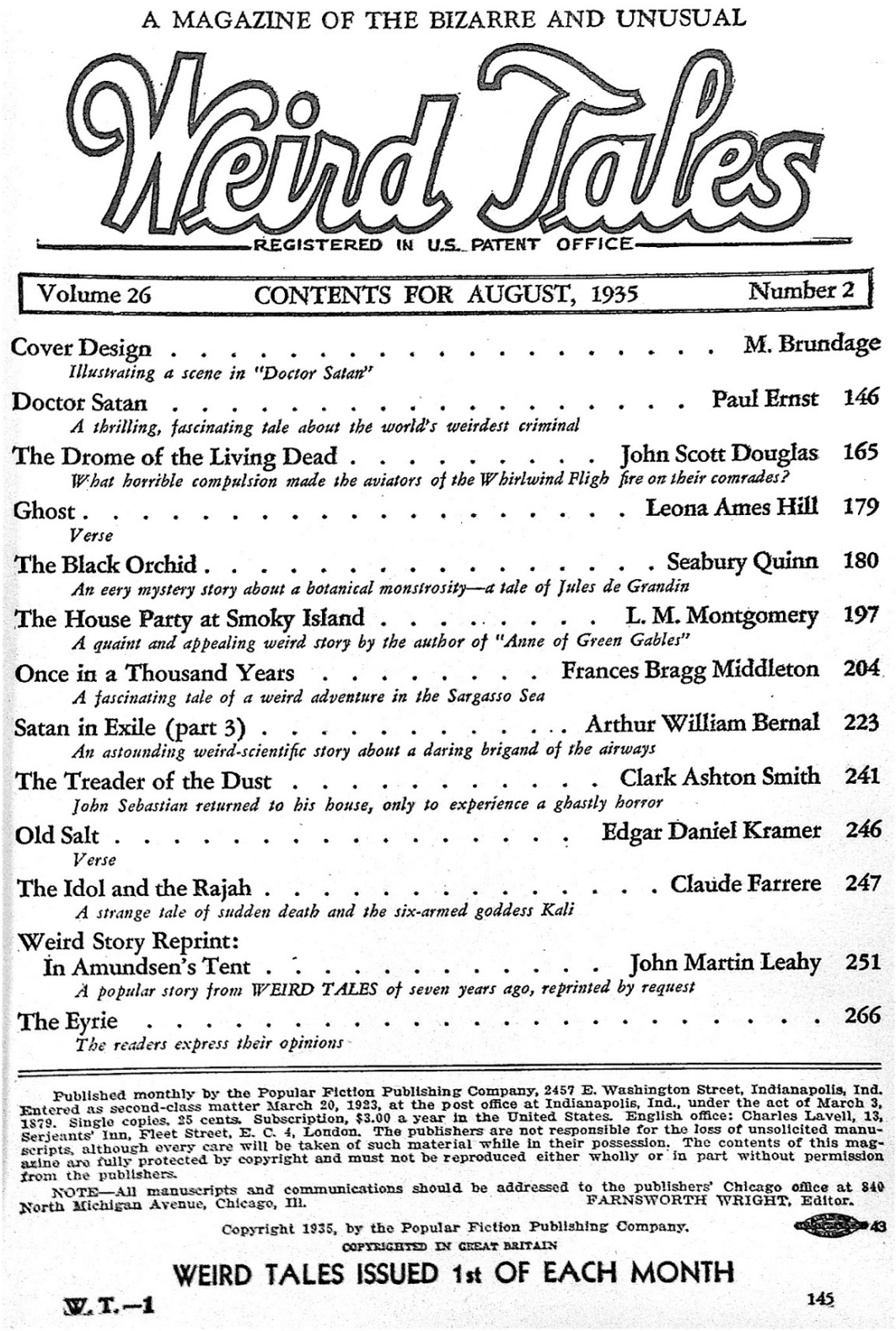
Surprises you, eh? Well, brace yourself for a lot of 'em before you read this story.

I first set eyes on the Foster farm some nine months ago. It was around sundown when, dusty and tired, a three days growth of whiskers on my face, I came up the front pathway and entered through the gate. The yard was fairly alive with cheeping chicks and fat, clucking hens. A newly erected silo stood beside the large, well-kept barn, behind and around which wide, surrounding fields reaching to the skyline, showed their waving crops of corn and buckwheat. From the distance came the fragrance of an orchard. In brief, the very air shouted that these were the acres of a more than the average well-to-do farmer.

I made my way to the rear of the red-bricked, two storey house. There I saw Sarah.

She appeared in the open doorway as I mounted the steps; a tall, thin, hard-faced woman in her

Figure 3.3: Table of contents next to the title page to "Murder in the Graveyard" by Thomas P. Kelley, published in the inaugural issue of *Uncanny Tales*. Photographer: Marcelle Kosman, 2015.



A MAGAZINE OF THE BIZARRE AND UNUSUAL

Weird Tales

REGISTERED IN U.S. PATENT OFFICE

Volume 26 CONTENTS FOR AUGUST, 1935 Number 2

Published monthly by the Popular Fiction Publishing Company, 2457 E. Washington Street, Indianapolis, Ind. Entered as second-class matter March 20, 1923, at the post office at Indianapolis, Ind., under the act of March 3, 1879. Single copies, 25 cents. Subscription, $3.00 a year in the United States. English office: Charles Lavell, 13, Serjeants' Inn, Fleet Street, E. C. 4, London. The publishers are not responsible for the loss of unsolicited manuscripts, although every care will be taken of such material while in their possession.

NOTE—All manuscripts and communications should be addressed to the publishers' Chicago office at 840 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

FARNSWORTH WRIGHT, Editor.

WEIRD TALES ISSUED 1st OF EACH MONTH

W. T.—1

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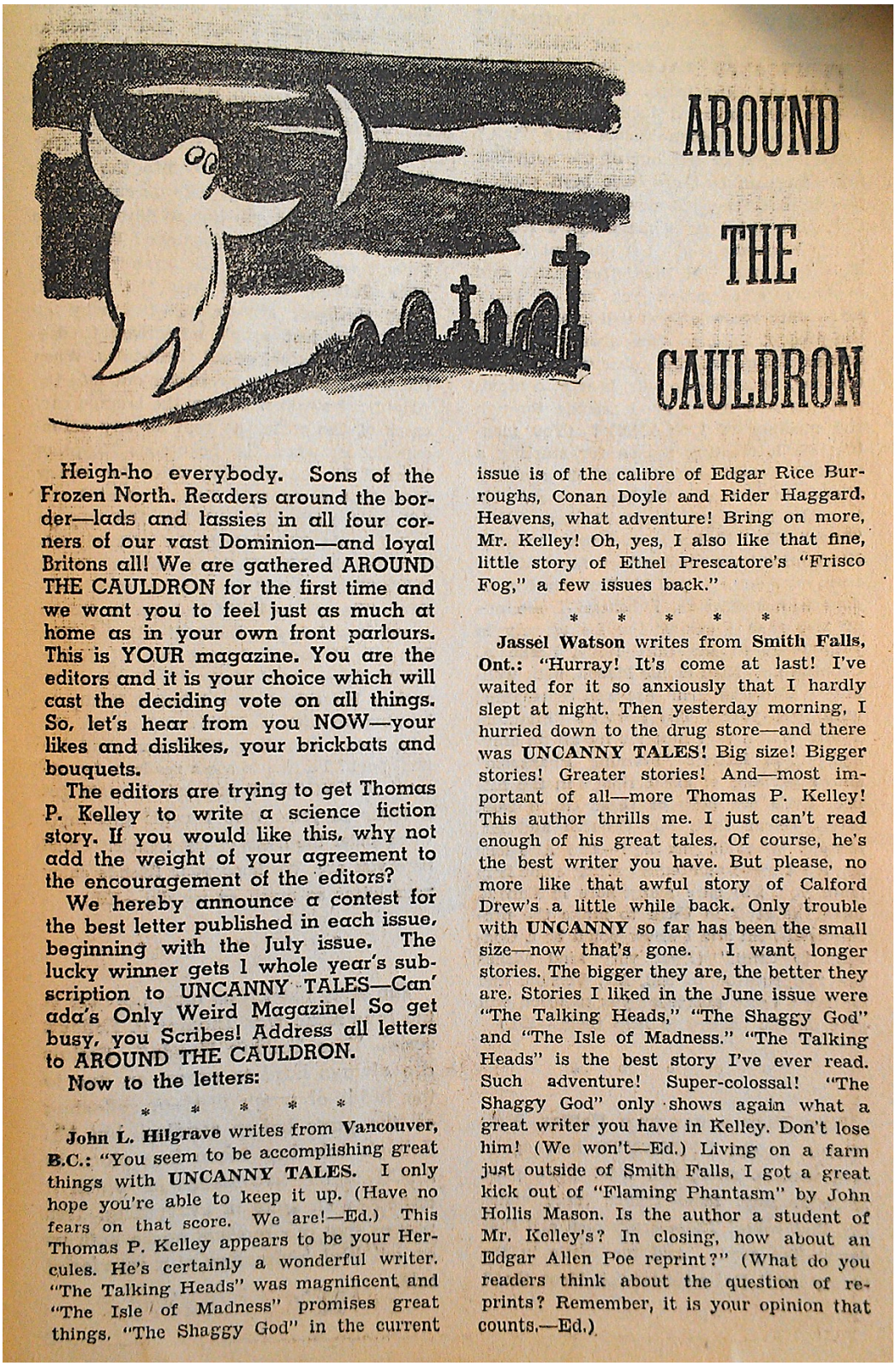
Figure 3.4: A typical table of contents for the magazine *Weird Tales*. Photographer: Marcelle Kosman, 2014.

since the embargo cut off supply of American sf pulps: "I hope you break the monopoly of the companies across the line [Canada/US border]. I hope that Canadian authors will get the recognition they merit" (J.A. McKay 95); "When the magazines from across the border stopped coming in I was disappointed, but now I am glad because it just goes to show: That necessity is the mother of invention. We Canadians are capable of as good and better fiction right here at home" (Viola Kenally 93); "It's [*Uncanny*] the best I've seen since the American mags have stopped coming in, and I might add, that Uncanny actually comes up to par to most of them, something I never expected to see in Canada!" (Albert Hayneo 91); "A few months ago I was strictly an American science-fiction fan and always thought Canadian mags were bunk. Then a friend of mine who is an ardent fan of yours introduced me to Uncanny Tales. … [I]t doesn't matter that I can no longer buy the American mags as I can now get UT" (Kenneth Freedy 96).

Reading "Around the Cauldron" alongside production shifts in the magazine also provides a sense of *Uncanny*'s arc from success to collapse. The letter column itself begins in June 1941 (figure 3.5), one issue after *Uncanny* increases from a digest to a standard pulp size.[75] The editors used the new column to hail readers as *Uncanny*'s stakeholders: "This is YOUR magazine. You are the editors and it is your choice which will cast the deciding vote on all things. So, let's hear from you NOW—your likes and dislikes, your brickbats and bouquets" ("Around the Cauldron" vol. 2, no. 6, 95). This strategy of reader engagement was in keeping with "the convention introduced by

[75] Pulp magazines varied somewhat in size, but the standard dimensions were 7 x 10 inches (Ashley *Time* 22).



AROUND THE CAULDRON

Heigh-ho everybody. Sons of the Frozen North. Readers around the border—lads and lassies in all four corners of our vast Dominion—and loyal Britons all! We are gathered AROUND THE CAULDRON for the first time and we want you to feel just as much at home as in your own front parlours. This is YOUR magazine. You are the editors and it is your choice which will cast the deciding vote on all things. So, let's hear from you NOW—your likes and dislikes, your brickbats and bouquets.

The editors are trying to get Thomas P. Kelley to write a science fiction story. If you would like this, why not add the weight of your agreement to the encouragement of the editors?

We hereby announce a contest for the best letter published in each issue, beginning with the July issue. The lucky winner gets 1 whole year's subscription to UNCANNY TALES—Can' ada's Only Weird Magazine! So get busy, you Scribes! Address all letters to AROUND THE CAULDRON.

Now to the letters:

* * * * *

John L. Hilgrave writes from **Vancouver, B.C.:** "You seem to be accomplishing great things with **UNCANNY TALES.** I only hope you're able to keep it up. (Have no fears on that score. We are!—Ed.) This Thomas P. Kelley appears to be your Hercules. He's certainly a wonderful writer. "The Talking Heads" was magnificent, and "The Isle of Madness" promises great things. "The Shaggy God" in the current issue is of the calibre of Edgar Rice Burroughs, Conan Doyle and Rider Haggard. Heavens, what adventure! Bring on more, Mr. Kelley! Oh, yes, I also like that fine, little story of Ethel Prescatore's "Frisco Fog," a few issues back."

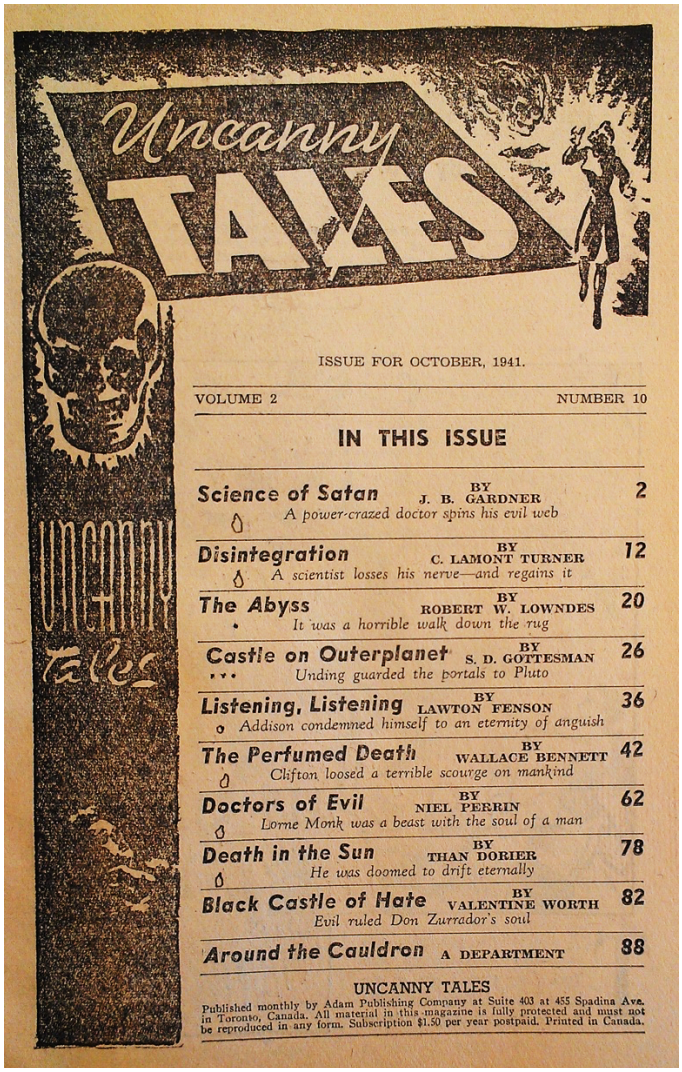
* * * * *

Jassel Watson writes from **Smith Falls, Ont.:** "Hurray! It's come at last! I've waited for it so anxiously that I hardly slept at night. Then yesterday morning, I hurried down to the drug store—and there was **UNCANNY TALES!** Big size! Bigger stories! Greater stories! And—most important of all—more Thomas P. Kelley! This author thrills me. I just can't read enough of his great tales. Of course, he's the best writer you have. But please, no more like that awful story of Calford Drew's a little while back. Only trouble with **UNCANNY** so far has been the small size—now that's gone. I want longer stories. The bigger they are, the better they are. Stories I liked in the June issue were "The Talking Heads," "The Shaggy God" and "The Isle of Madness." "The Talking Heads" is the best story I've ever read. Such adventure! Super-colossal! "The Shaggy God" only shows again what a great writer you have in Kelley. Don't lose him! (We won't—Ed.) Living on a farm just outside of Smith Falls, I got a great kick out of "Flaming Phantasm" by John Hollis Mason. Is the author a student of Mr. Kelley's? In closing, how about an Edgar Allen Poe reprint?" (What do you readers think about the question of reprints? Remember, it is your opinion that counts.—Ed.)

Figure 3.5: The inaugural letters to the editor column in *Uncanny Tales*. Photographer: Marcelle Kosman, 2015.

Hugo Gernsback in the first issue of *Amazing Stories* [April 1926] (and imitated by all other editors from this period) of building community with the promise that all editorial decisions would be guided by reader preference" (Yaszek and Sharp 292). In each issue *Uncanny*'s readers are encouraged to invest time and thought into the magazine and the editors respond directly and appreciatively to criticisms (the illustrations, for example, were universally abhorred). In only a few cases, however, did any substantial changes occur. The cut for the table of contents (figure 3.6), for example, is identified by frequent letter writer Gordon L. Peck as immature and ill-befitting the now-matured magazine (91). Precisely one issue later the table of contents is presented, as the editors phrase it, "naked" ("Around the Cauldron" vol. 2, no. 13, 90). While they promise the following issue would "appear with a new illustration to brighten the title page" ("Around the Cauldron" vol. 2, no. 11, 92), no such illustration ever appears. Similarly, "debates" over which (if any) classic sf stories should be reprinted in *Uncanny* were ongoing and without a clear editorial resolution; a "quarterly" is promised for months before it finally appears in December 1942, though it turns out to be the magazine's penultimate issue; and the illustrations never quite seem to earn reader approval. In every case the editorial strategy appears to be to placate the critical readers without alienating the satisfied ones.

According to *Globe and Mail* coverage of WECA, pulp magazine subscriptions were unaffected by the ban; apparently there were "so few readers who order pulp reading in advance [i.e. via subscription] that it is hardly worth going to the trouble of hutting off subscription copies" ("Pulps, Comics, Cut Off Dec. 16" 7). This sheds some



Uncanny TALES

ISSUE FOR OCTOBER, 1941.

VOLUME 2 NUMBER 10

IN THIS ISSUE

UNCANNY TALES

Published monthly by Adam Publishing Company at Suite 403 at 455 Spadina Ave. in Toronto, Canada. All material in this magazine is fully protected and must not be reproduced in any form. Subscription $1.50 per year postpaid. Printed in Canada.

Figure 3.6: Example of the much-loathed cut for *Uncanny Tales*' table of contents. Photographer: Marcelle Kosman, 2015.

light on *Uncanny*'s reader engagement strategies. If the magazine was unable to rely on subscriptions—not necessarily because of its newness or quality, but because most Canadian readers of pulps bought the magazines from newsstands—the letters column could be mobilized to create a feeling of obligation or commitment among readers. Each "Around the Cauldron" contained at least a few letters with criticism, but eventually the magazine opted to print letters that were outright hostile. Letter writers Jim Trotter and someone writing under the pen name "Man from Mars" criticize *Uncanny Tales* wholesale, mock other letter writers and deride the magazine's entire

readership, yet show no investment in the magazine's improvement. In response to the first letter from Trotter, the editors reply, "We don't mind you hating us just so's you buy the issue every month" (vol. 2, no. 17 92). That the editors continue to print letters from Trotter and the Man from Mars in each of *Uncanny*'s remaining three "Around the Cauldron" sections (the final issue did not contain a letters column) suggests the magazine needed every sale and would print even the most condescending letters in hopes the writers would buy the issues to see their names in print. Given the number of letters claiming their writers liked to read "Around the Cauldron" first, it is also possible that the editors thought the highly critical letters could rally *Uncanny*'s fans to its defense.

It is a common perception of the early and mid-twentieth-century that there were few "women-identified women" reading and writing science fiction (Lefanu 2). Although this perception has been refuted by a number of studies (Donawerth 1997; Davin 2006; Larbalestier 2006; Yaszek 2008; Yaszek and Sharp 2016), no similar study has yet been undertaken with respect to the Canadian market. *Uncanny Tales*'s interpellation of women readers offers a small but useful case study. The magazine certainly could not afford to alienate any reading demographics, but the manner in which *Uncanny* hailed women suggests that Canadian women were indeed assumed to read and write sf. Of the fifteen issues of *Uncanny Tales* featuring "Around the Cauldron," all but one included at least one woman-authored letter; eight issues had two or more; and three issues had at least four. In the early days of "Around the Cauldron" the editors call on women readers to write in, saying, "Thus far the male of the species has sadly outnumbered the 'weaker sex' in letters to the Cauldron. We hope

our lady readers will overcome this" (vol. 2, no. 8 93). In the following issue, women-authored letters made up four of seven published letters in "Around the Cauldron"—including one written entirely in verse—and the editors award the best letter of the month (with a prize of a free one-year subscription) to a "Miss Jacqueline Berke" whose letter describes everything she likes and dislikes about the magazine, as well as her and her husband's enjoyment of "science-fiction stories" (vol. 2, no. 9 92). One American reader, Barbara E. Bovard, writes in to tell the editors that she trades her American sf magazines to a Canadian for *Uncanny Tales* (vol. 2, no. 19 81–82), complementing the numerous letters by Canadian women readers of *Uncanny* who describe having read but no longer being able to acquire American pulps like *Weird Tales* or *The Spider*.

Another remarkable strategy of including its women readers was *Uncanny*'s brief use of "Around the Cauldron" to print "true stories," most of which (three out of four) were submitted by women. Unlike printing letters, which the editors describe in terms of giving readers editorial influence, printing "true stories" gave the women sending them a low-stakes opportunity to be contributors. Similarly, the publication of Nadine Booth Brumell's short story "The Swamps Come Back" is accompanied by a note of encouragement for the new writer in "Around the Cauldron": "This month UNCANNY introduces Nadine Booth Brumell to its readers. Miss Brumell is a new writer and lives in Toronto. This is her first atempt [*sic*] at the eerie fiction field. We thought her 'THE SWAMPS COME BACK' showed great promise of better things to come" (vol. 2, no. 8 91). Two issues later, the editors call on Brumell again in a brief editorial note:

> Are there any good writers of fantasy fiction in Canada? When this question is posed the fan who asks it usually means: Have we any writers of fantasy fiction in Canada who can compare with those in the United States? To a large extent we believe the answer is "Yes." Nadine Booth Brumell who wrote that splendid tale "THE SWAMPS CAME BACK," [*sic*] while only a beginner, shows definite promise. This writer, by the way, will be back with us again soon. (88)

The editors then go on to name Thomas P. Kelley, as well as describe "a number of manuscripts written by Canadians" waiting to be read "[o]n your editor's desk" (88). Singling out Brumell in this way suggests, on the one hand, that she and Kelley (writing under numerous pseudonyms) were the only Canadian authors printed in *Uncanny*.[76] At the same time, however, the juxtaposition of the new writer alongside the prolific Kelley—and with the promise of more writing of hers yet to come—frames her as a contributor worth anticipating.

Uncanny Tales also published stories attributed to women authors from its beginning as a digest: the inaugural issue contained a ghost story called "The Lover and the Beam" by Anne, Lady Selsden, and the second issue included the story "Frisco Fog" by Ethel Preszatore.[77] That both of these stories were in fact written by Thomas P. Kelley is unremarkable since Kelley wrote the majority of fiction in *Uncanny*'s early

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[76] Mike Ashley acknowledges *Uncanny*'s overreliance on Kelley, stating, "There were other notable Canadian writers [of pulp sf at the time] and it is perhaps surprising that [editor Melvin] Colby did not acquire material from Laurence Manning or A.E. Van Vogt" (*Time* 215–16).

[77] Some pulp bibliographers like Mike Ashley have claimed the failed Canadian magazine *Eerie Tales* was produced by the same team as *Uncanny*, owing in no small measure to the former's Thomas P. Kelley content. If this is correct, it is also worth noting that *Eerie*'s sole issue features a story penned by Kelley under the name Ethel G. Preszcator, a name so similar to the pseudonym Kelley used in *Uncanny*'s second issue, Ethel Preszatore, that one wonders whether Kelley had intended Ethel to be an ongoing writing personae.

issues, using no less than fifteen pseudonyms according to John Bell (*Far North*). What *is* remarkable is that the editors chose to include stories that *appeared* to have been authored by women. It indicates the very commonplaceness of "women-identified women" among pulp magazine readers and writers that the magazine's letters would quickly prove.

It is worth pausing here to look in detail at Nadine Booth Brumell's "The Swamps Come Back." Although the story is not wholly representative of *Uncanny Tales*' repertoire, the editors' championing of Brumell provides a useful point of reference for what *Uncanny* sought to become: a widely read sf periodical showcasing promising new authors. Such had been the legacy of *The Thrill Book*, which, in addition to being associated with names like Murray Leinster, had launched the prolific writing career of Greye La Spina. *Weird Tales* had similarly "become closely associated with" major writers, including La Spina, Seabury Quinn, Frank Owen, C.L. Moore, and H.P. Lovecraft (Ashley *Time* 42). Indeed, as Ashley puts it, "*Weird Tales* became not so much a magazine as an institution" (*Time* 41). The Canadian embargo against American pulp magazines presented an opportunity for *Uncanny Tales* to become just such an institution, and Brumell's "The Swamps Come Back" seems likewise to have provided for the editors an opportunity to promote new writers.

Published in the August 1941 issue of *Uncanny Tales*, Brumell's "The Swamps Come Back" is a heavy-handed "yellow peril" narrative. The timing of the story's publication suggests that we might interpret the text as an allusion to Japan's military gains in the Pacific theatre, but as Sheena Wilson reminds us, even before the Second World War "the white Canadian community … perceived Japanese Canadians as a

united group, and as a threat" (*Paradigms* 38). In fact, through the 1930s, Japanese Canadians had begun lobbying for voting rights, which many white Canadians were unwilling to accept. In *Redress: Inside the Japanese Canadian Call for Justice*, Roy Miki describes the Japanese-Canadian movement for the franchise, which, he explains, "gained visibility in the 1930s" and "was brought to a head in February 1936" (30). A delegation of "Canadianized" representatives of the Japanese Canadian community met in Ottawa with the Special Committee on Elections and Franchise Acts to petition for the vote (*Redress* 31). The racist arguments against this appeal drew on what Miki calls "a familiar refrain": claims that "the Japanese in particular wanted to infiltrate and miscegenate Canada"; that "[t]heir ultimate goal… was to take over the reins of power" (*Redress* 35). By 1937, Miki continues, "[s]oon after Japan invaded China, Japanese Canadians became the targets of an intensified hostility. Their stores were boycotted, and voices rose calling for them to be registered and placed under surveillance as potential saboteurs" (*Redress* 36). Japanese internment would not occur in Canada until 1942, but, as I will show, "The Swamps Come Back" betrays the violent, anti-Japanese racism that was seething in the months leading up to the "incarceration of some 23,000 men, women and children who had been categorized as 'enemy aliens'" (Miki *Redress* 2). Irrespective of the specific inspiration for the story, it builds on an extant convention of white Canadian women's use of sf to circulate narratives about the "yellow peril."

"The Swamps Come Back" takes place in what had been "a dried-up corner of Asia," newly flooded with "ominous rains" (Brumell 29). A group of scientists led by a man named Peter Lowry have come to study the relentless rains flooding this

unspecified country in Asia. The scientists realize that the rains have germinated an ecosystem of lush swamps that, to their horror, form the habitat of a species of yellow, armour-clad humanoid creatures. The yellow colour of the creatures is re-iterated throughout the story. They are first introduced to the reader by the character Tom Marshall, who observes the "gigantic, scaly hand" and "saffron, armored shoulder plate" of the creature whom he has shot (28); Marshall had "surprised" the creature while it was "lazily rubbing its saffron armor on the rock" (29). Another member of the team, Robert Smith, becomes delirious after encountering one of the species' children. The first thing Smith says is "[i]t was yellow, I tell you!" (32). He then proceeds to describe it as the size of "a small boy," with "spines on its head, and hands with great claws," concluding that "[i]t was horrible—horrible!" (32). The creatures are described as "saffron" yet another four times (30, 34, 35, 37), and "yellow" twice further (35). Although the creatures are clearly constructed as fantastical monsters, the references to their armour, the repetition of the colours yellow and saffron, and the abject horror expressed by the men who see them are all reflective of what Miki calls "the haunting spectre of the 'Yellow Peril,' a volatile term that projected the fear of miscegenation and takeover by the 'hordes' of 'Asiatics' and that resulted in protectionist reactions" (*Redress* 19).

Beyond the men's abject horror at the sight of the creatures, there is little textual evidence to show *how* the creatures pose any kind of threat. The characters Lowry and Bill Johanssen make a handful of vague references to a "Buddhist priest" (33) and some "parchment" (31, 33, 35) that Lowry had "brought out from Lhassa" (35). These references, presumably, indicate to the reader that the creatures threaten the future of

humanity. Lowry calls them "the Beast Gods of the Wall," "the intelligent product of some mad sport of evolution, planning to make this world a place for its kind again" (35). Lowry and his team watch as two yellow babies, "child[ren] of the swamp gods," one male and one female, crawl out of the mud (35). A full-grown creature lifts the babies into the air and "[a]s he did so, a roar went up to the blue and sunny sky, a roar of victory!" (36). The men estimate that "there must be hundreds, thousands of them!" (36), and thereby determine that the only way forward is to exterminate the species. Lowry thus leaves his team, intending to return "with enough poison gas to settle this thing for good" (36). Lowry reiterates the urgency of the plan to himself as he departs:

> "I've got to make it," Peter Lowry gasped, pulling himself up the steep and slippery incline, hanging to that thread of silken rope which was going to mean life for those other three [men] before long. "I'll get to the plane and fly out for help—should be back by tomorrow afternoon, with luck—bring a big bombing-plane with plenty of poison gas. We'll get them—we'll get them all, and the world will be safe again." (37)

The urgency felt by the characters is never satisfactorily explained to the reader. Much like Fergus's *Tisab Ting*, this may be attributed to Brumell's lack of experience as an author. Nevertheless, the story clearly relies on visual metaphors familiar to readers at the time of its publication to justify the extermination of an "intelligent" (Brumell 32) humanoid civilization in Asia.

Finally, the references to poison gas in Brumell's "The Swamps Come Back" are worth contrasting to Burton's "The Discovery of Nil." While we can interpret both texts as reactions to the Second World War, Burton's story anxiously anticipates the

annihilation of western civilization by chemical weapons, while Brumell's story advocates *for* the use of chemical weapons to eliminate the "yellow peril." The contrast underscores the geographical disparity between the two Canadian authors. For Burton, living in England at the outset of the War, mass extermination from chemical weapons was an immediate concern with historical precedent. For Brumell, who lived in Toronto, the War and its dangers were an ocean away on either side. Although there are no explicit references to either the War or Japan in Brumell's story, the numerous references to the creatures' yellow skin and armour, the metaphors of invasion, the urgent framing of genocide as a necessary security measure, and character Tom Marshall's fear that he will become "just one more name among the unnumbered ranks of those men who are listed as 'Missing in Central Aisia'" [*sic*] (29), collectively provide compelling evidence to read "The Swamps Come Back" as a call to arms against a Japanese military victory.

"The Swamps Come Back" was not the launchpad of Brumell's writing career. Given that *Uncanny*'s editors promised readers in the October 1941 issue that Brumell would "be back… again soon" (vol. 2, no. 10, 88), it is curious why no further work of Brumell's was published in the magazine. Born in 1907 (Cloyne), Brumell would have been thirty-three or -four when "The Swamps Come Back" was published. The Cloyne and District Historical Society notes that she married Ralph Brumell "in the early 1930s" and thereafter lived "mainly in Toronto"; the *Toronto Star* reports that she had been a supply teacher in North York (Brehl A2). Though Brumell appears to have achieved success as a writer in the 1970s—her co-edited publication, *The Oxen and the*

Axe (1974) earned her notoriety as a local historian[78]—her publications in the years between 1941 and 1974 are few in number, and do not appear to have been collected. Like all the authors discussed in this dissertation, full biographical data would be invaluable to further study.

Uncanny Tales folded in 1943. After transitioning to a bi-monthly periodical with its July 1942 issue (vol. 2, no. 18) it managed only two more issues (one of which was the long-promised quarterly, which appeared in December in place of a November bi-monthly issue) before taking a nine-month hiatus. *Uncanny* broke its hiatus to release a final issue comprised entirely of reprints and with no readers column, a soulless imitation of its former self. In December 1942 *Uncanny* issued its final editorial comment, replying to a critical but tender letter from Nils H. Frome. The exasperated tone of the reply intimates the end of the magazine has come. The editors write,

> The point is that there are very few Canadian authors of weird, science or fantasy who are able to market their material in the United States or Canada. We wish there wasn't a dearth, but the facts are there and they can't be ignored. Every manuscript, be it from an American or Canadian author, is read with care when it reaches this office. Rejections are returned with a genuine feeling of regret on the part of the editor. As far as the "praise Club" is concerned, we don't think any reader, unless he has a secret sorrow, can come to the conclusion that the fans who contribute to this department constitute a "praise

[78] In 1977, Brumell appeared on the CBC Television program *For the Record* alongside her co-editor of *The Ox and the Axe*, Gene Brown. Based on television schedules printed in *The Montreal Gazette*, the *Ottawa Citizen*, and other Canadian newspapers, *For the Record* re-broadcast Brumell and Brown's segment no fewer than three times that same year, and again in 1979, 1980, and 1987.

club." A quick glance at the contents easily disproves this assertion. (vol. 2, no. 20 128)

Thus ended "Around the Cauldron" and, save for one final issue, *Uncanny Tales* itself.

Figure 3.7: A near-complete collection of *Uncanny Tales*, held at Library and Archives Canada. Photographer: Marcelle Kosman, 2015.

Despite its disappointing end, Mike Ashley argues that the magazine "did have some impact within [Canada], encouraging new writers and acting as a regular focus for Canadian fandom which had hitherto lain hidden in the shadow of its American neighbour" (*Time* 216). That fandom included the aforementioned Nils H. Frome, publisher of the Canada's "earliest extant … fanzine, *Supramundane Stories*" (Ketterer 41). Ketterer, too, describes *Uncanny* as "the most important" of the Canadian sf magazines, having produced "six all-original issues" before the magazine began relying on reprints and stories plagiarized from American sources (*Canadian* 39).

Uncanny's demise correlates closely with the return of American sf pulps to Canada. Through what might well be called a loophole in WECA, the American publisher Popular Publications "began to issue special Canadian editions of its magazines through its Toronto offices" (Ashley *Time* 216), just as *Weird Tales* did with its first Canadian series in the 1930s. These magazines included *Astonishing Stories* and *Super Science Stories*. Most damning for *Uncanny*, however, would be the return of *Weird Tales*. In May 1942 *Weird Tales* launched what Stephensen-Payne describes as its second series of Canadian reprints. Unlike the first series described above, the second series employed local artwork and a copyright notice that deployed nationalist rhetoric to position the magazine as a Canadian publication: "This magazine was edited, illustrated, and produced in Canada, on Canadian paper, by Canadians" (figure 3.8).[79] Although issued only bi-monthly, the competition must have been a blow to *Uncanny*. Following the re-appearance of *Weird Tales* in May 1942, *Uncanny* managed only two more monthly issues (June and July 1942) before faltering and then folding soon after.

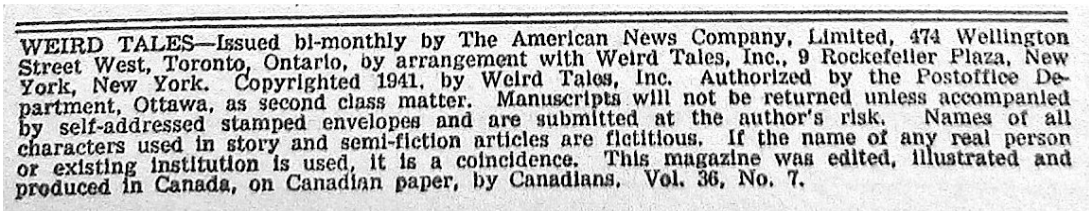
WEIRD TALES—Issued bi-monthly by The American News Company, Limited, 474 Wellington Street West, Toronto, Ontario, by arrangement with Weird Tales, Inc., 9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, New York. Copyrighted 1941, by Weird Tales, Inc. Authorized by the Postoffice Department, Ottawa, as second class matter. Manuscripts will not be returned unless accompanied by self-addressed stamped envelopes and are submitted at the author's risk. Names of all characters used in story and semi-fiction articles are fictitious. If the name of any real person or existing institution is used, it is a coincidence. This magazine was edited, illustrated and produced in Canada, on Canadian paper, by Canadians. Vol. 36, No. 7.

Figure 3.8: Copyright notice in a Canadian issue of *Weird Tales*. Photographer: Marcelle Kosman, 2014.

Although the story of *Uncanny Tales* is ultimately one of failure, there were some pulp publishers in Canada whose success lasted through the decade. Valentine's Alval Publishing Company continued to produce pulp magazines in a variety of genres, as

[79] Popular's *Super Science Stories* made a single attempt at unique artwork for its Canadian issues (figure 3.9). Only the cover for its first Canadian issue was redrawn and included some non-substantive changes; afterwards all subsequent covers matched the corresponding American issues.

well as publishing comics and eventually salacious pulp paperbacks in 1949 and 1950. Superior Publishing also outlasted the return of US pulps, which would multiply further when WECA ended.[80] Superior is perhaps the most successful Canadian producer of pulp periodicals, surviving until 1956 (Bell *Invaders* 70). In 1947, sometime after the wartime trade embargo ended, the Canadian government introduced the Emergency Exchange Conservation Act to once again even out trade deficits with the US. According to Bell, this new embargo was similar to the previous in that "American publishers were excluded from the Canadian market. However, unlike 1941, the new regulations permitted publishers in Canada to purchase the rights to reprint and repackage American comics" (*Invaders* 90). Given that Canadian lowbrow periodicals had been reprinting and plagiarizing American content even prior to WECA,[81] the additional provision for *legal* American reprints seems rather an effort to curb criminal activity in Canada's magazine industry than to represent Government sanctioning of American mass culture.

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[80] The exact date at which the War Exchange Conservation Act was repealed is hard to pin down. Phil Stephensen-Payne claims the repeal occurred "late in 1944" (n.p.); a 2016 *Toronto Star* retrospective on wartime comics states that it was 1945 (Kaplan n.p.); Michelle Smith points vaguely to "the end of the war" ("Offal" 2); and according to Will Straw the ban was lifted in 1946, but notes that "a new 'Emergency Conservation Act'" followed, lasting "from 1947 to 1951, once again [prohibiting] the importation into Canada of certain classes of print materials, including 'pulp' magazines and comics" (122–3). My own searches in historical newspaper records and in the library of parliament archives as of yet confirm no concrete date for the end of the embargo. The phrasing of the War Exchange Conservation Act is as follows: "any enactment founded on these resolutions shall be deemed […] to expire on the date of issue of a proclamation under the War Measures Act declaring that a state of war no longer exists or on such earlier date as may be fixed in a proclamation of the Governor in Council" (*Journals of the House of Commons of Canada* no. 21, 6 December 1940, Ottawa, p. 86). To repeal suggests that members of the House voted to nullify the Act; with no evidence of any such vote, it is perhaps more accurate to say that the end of War rendered the Act null.

[81] See for example Will Straw's "Constructing the Canadian Lowbrow Magazine: The Periodical as Media Object in the 1930s and 1940s."

Figure 3.9: An original issue of *Super Science Stories* next to a "repackaged" Canadian issue. Photographer: Marcelle Kosman, 2015.

Speaking to comics production, Bell explains that it was simpler and cheaper for Canadian publishers "to acquire reprint rights than it was to establish the infrastructure needed for a distinct national industry" (*Invaders* 90). The situation was similar for pulp magazines: the US title *Weird Tales* continued to dominate Canada's supernatural fiction market, producing unique Canadian editions out of its Toronto office until 1951; the sole surviving Canadian publisher of sf magazines, Superior Publications, seems to have survived the 1940s by devoting itself entirely to reprinting American content,[82] in spite of the publisher's original promise that "When it is a member of the family of Superior Magazines you may be sure that it is decidedly not a Canadian edition of an American publication" (*Science Fiction* vol. 1, no. 1, Oct 1941,

[82] Regarding Superior's comics titles, "by the end of 1948 it was the only company also releasing original comic books" but, Bell cautions, these original comics "were only nominally Canadian" (*Invaders* 92).

n.p.).[83] Clearly there remained a market for pulp magazines, comics, and increasingly demand for mass-market paperbacks, but most Canadian firms dedicated to publishing these materials did not have sufficient resources to build a Canadian industry.

Harlequin Books (now Harlequin Enterprises) is the exception that proves the rule of the Canadian pulp industry. Unlike the majority of Canada's pulp publishing houses, which emerged independent of the existing Canadian publishing industry and were generally run by upstarts or opportunistic newspaper expats, Harlequin was founded by three men with a winning combination of social prestige and publishing acumen: Doug Weld of Toronto's Bryant Press; Jack Palmer, sales manager for the Curtis Circulating Company, "the potent distribution arm of the company that published heavyweight periodicals such as the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Ladies' Home Journal*" (Grescoe 28); and Richard Bonnycastle, the "well-born, properly educated" (Grescoe 20) managing director of Advocate Printers who would eventually "become mayor of metropolitan Winnipeg and chancellor of the University of Winnipeg" (Rampure 186), and who, according to Paul Grescoe's account of Harlequin's origins, got into the business of publishing for *fun* (29). Grescoe quotes Bonnycastle's personal assistant, Ruth Palmour, who explains that "Harlequin was a filler for a nice, steady business" (29). These origins position the eventual paperback giant in league with the American pulp business model described above; that is, Harlequin was intended to be a low-stakes money-making business venture to bolster the incomes of several already successful businessmen. The company was not without its challenges, but it recovered

[83] To Superior's credit, this claim was technically true: although it reprinted American stories from a variety of sources in its magazines, Superior never produced a Canadian edition of an existing American periodical.

from net losses and mismanagement in its early years due to its association with Curtis Distributing: "the distributor had the reputation of playing hardball with local wholesalers and retailers, threatening to withdraw its popular *Saturday Evening Post* and *Ladies' Home Journal* if they failed to carry the books Curtis wanted them to sell" (Grescoe 33). Further, Bonnycastle was so well-positioned in the Winnipeg business scene that not even police confiscation of one of Harlequin's titles (*Twelve Chinks and a Woman*) was sufficient to taint either Harlequin's or Bonnycastle's reputation.

That Harlequin was successful in the provision of mass-market paperbacks (including crime fiction, westerns, science fiction, and others in addition to the infamous romances), where companies like Alval and Superior were not, is thus unsurprising. Although the company's lowbrow product and emphasis on reprinting well-known American or British authors in its early years (Grescoe 33) would make it ineligible for the kind of government support detailed below, Harlequin's business connections were such that the company flourished on its own.

Gradually the Canadian government's interest in controlling lowbrow reading material ceased to be framed in terms of cross-border economics and became an overt matter of cultural integrity. By the end of the 1940s, Canada's elite responded to the ongoing production of pulp magazines with much paranoia about "alien" American influence (Underhill 211) and the "insidious threat" these magazines posed "to the moral development of [Canadian] children" (Bell *Invaders* 92). Crime genres in particular raised the spectre of pulp magazines and comics as a kind of immoral American mass culture boogeyman, seducing readers into a depravity that was decidedly un-Canadian. This paranoia presumed that Canadian pulps had no unique

tropes or characteristics representing the imagined Canadian society, but this representation—at least of Canadian crime pulps—is inaccurate. Strange and Loo identify two genres that stand out as characteristically unique to Canadian writers: the true crime arm of the Canadian pulp magazine industry and its sub-genre of "identifiably Canadian stories" that had been produced since the early twentieth century called "'Northerns'—fictional accounts of the high north, typically involving heroic Mounties on the hunt for scoundrels" ("Hewers" 12). Both genres, Strange and Loo explain, served to promote values consistent with conservative Canadian nationalism. The Northerns, for example, "served imperialist ends: civilization always wore a scarlet [Mountie] uniform and spoke the Queen's English when delivering the benefits of empire to the hostile Indian, lawless American, or ignorant foreigner" ("Hewers" 12). Likewise, Strange and Loo document a similar "moralism" of Canadian true crime magazines:

> A detailed analysis of these crime narratives illustrates how Canadian pulps persistently conveyed the moral that sinfulness leads to earthly punishment: every crime sprang from pride, envy, anger, greed or lust. True crime stories were narrated with edgy dialogue and gumshoe argot, but they remained within and helped define the boundaries of heterosexuality, the racist tropes of moral hierarchies and the certitude of explicable crime. ("Hewers" 14)

Building from Strange and Loo's research into true crime magazines, Michelle Smith investigates the differences in American and Canadian pulp crime fiction, arguing that the Canadian stories "presented criminal activity as a problem that occurred in one of two places: either Canada's untamed spaces, or the cities south of the border. In using

American locations, Canadian crime stories projected modern social problems onto a culturally similar 'other' so that such problems might be viewed from a comfortable, and comforting, distance" ("Guns" 8). Providing a case study that compares a short story by Canadian Niel Perrin with American Raymond Chandler's novel *The Big Sleep* (originally published in the American pulp magazine *Black Mask*), Smith echoes Strange and Loo, stating, "The central message of the story is simple: order and justice are made possible by the co-operation of the law-abiding community with the official purveyors of law and order, while those who choose to break the law are punished for their actions. In this way, Canadian crime pulps worked in a manner directly opposite to the American pulps" ("Guns" 9).

Smith, Strange and Loo acknowledge that many of the Canadian crime genre pulps also reprinted and plagiarized stories by American writers. Nevertheless, their respective research agrees that the Canadian-authored works abided by conservative nationalist tropes consistent with the project of Canadian cultural nationalism itself:

> While most stories explored the underbelly of Canada's colonial legacies and its more recent immigration trends, cases involving Asian or black victims or perpetrators were rarities. Pulp writers pandered to English Canadians' anti-Native prejudices and fears of European 'foreigners,' but they simultaneously reassured readers that law and order Canadian-style was there, ready to right any and every wrong. (Strange and Loo *True Crime* 7)

Strange and Loo's assertion here somewhat complicates my analysis of women's pulp magazine proto-sf in Chapter Two. Although all three of the texts that I examined therein, "Lastluck Lake," "The Clasp of Rank," and "When Wires are Down," draw

on readers' anti-Indigenous prejudices and xenophobia towards European immigrants, none of them reassures the reader that "law and order Canadian-style" can be relied on to mete out justice. Rather, all three texts instead turn to the supernatural to ensure that justice is served. The two 1919 publications in particular depict agents of law and order as impotent with respect to violence against women. As I argued in Chapter Two, however, these texts draw on the supernatural to ensure that "those who choose to break the law *are* punished for their actions," as Michelle Smith puts it ("Guns" 9, emphasis added). In this way, the incorporation of the supernatural serves to underscore the *necessity* of Canadian law and order, emphasizing that Canadian justice *must* "right any and every wrong," as Strange and Loo contend (*True Crime* 7), and is therefore in keeping with the conservative nationalist tropes that differentiated Canadian pulp fiction from American.

Pulp magazines contributed to the material and textual production of Canadian literature and readership, especially among working-class readers whose options for affordable entertainment were most limited. This understanding of the pulps as Canadian cultural production was not, however, shared by Canada's cultural elite. Michelle Smith contends that because of its materiality, "Pulp production … generated a dynamic in which Canadian nationalism, embedded as content within a form of American-style mass culture, drew out fears about the Americanization of Canadian society" ("Soup Cans" 269). This meant that editorial strategies to replicate the American pulp magazine style in order to capture its existing Canadian market could be interpreted as "American culture … being replicated within the borders of the Canadian nation in a manner that eroded distinctions between American and

Canadian literary culture" ("Soup Cans" 269). Of course, American pulp magazines developed their distinctive style over decades. Canadian pulp magazines simply did not have a comparable history of development and, given the demands of the unanticipated market, they had no time to foster distinctiveness.

Although Strange, Loo, and Smith all problematize the claim that pulp magazines are *ipso facto* American culture, it is nevertheless axiomatic to say that American pulp magazines defined genre fiction. In his survey of British popular fiction magazines, Mike Ashley argues that "Britain failed to develop a distinct 'field' of pulp magazines in the way that America did. In the US 'pulp fiction'… has gained an almost mythological status; but not so in Britain, except by contagion from the US" (*Time* 12). Ashley goes on to explain that "[a]fter 1914, the big money, and the big magazines, were in the States, and British writers increasingly aimed their efforts at selling transatlantically" (*Time* 13). Likewise Hoppenstand asserts that "[I]t is safe to claim that [American] pulp magazines—through their influence on comics, paperbacks, and film adaptations—were one of the most significant venues for popular fiction and the development of genre formulas in the history of American mass-market entertainment" (xix). Pulp historian Ron Goulart muses that had Frank Munsey never created the first pulp magazine, *The Argosy*,[84] "there might never have been pulps and, consequently, no Tarzan, no Sam Spade, no Dr. Kildare, no Doc Savage, no Zorro, no Shadow and no Tros of Samothrace" (10). It would thus be unproductive to argue here that Canada developed an even slightly comparable pulp tradition; it did not. But nor was the

[84] There is some debate as to the official start date of pulp as a form, but Frank Munsey's periodical *Argosy* is universally considered to be the first pulp magazine.

industry given enough opportunity or any financial support to develop. American pulp magazines perfected their form over decades of experimentation, successes, and failures; moreover, they were predominantly run by experienced magazine publishers before genre fiction transitioned to paperback form. The Canadian pulp magazine industry had barely half a decade to experiment, during which time a substantial portion of the population was employed fighting a war. Thus while the eradication of pulp magazines from the Canadian cultural landscape would be made in the guise of cultural nationalism, this move ultimately precluded the development of a specifically Canadian mass culture, rendering mass or popular culture and Canadian culture mutually exclusive.[85] This would, of course, have the additional effect of making Canadian consumers *more* reliant on American imports when it came to enjoying mass or popular culture, and thus barring from the allegedly higher quality Canadian culture the class of citizens who were unable to afford it.

CRIMINAL CULTURE

The impact of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences on English-Canadian literature is reasonably well documented (Tippett 1990; Litt 1992, 2007; Finlay 2004; Lecker 2013). The significance of the Commission to the history of Canadian pulp magazines is the overlap between state-sponsored cultural production and the specifically highbrow cultural zeitgeist of the 1950s and 60s that followed the publication of the Commission's recommendations. That is, while

[85] Harlequin, for example, despite its global success has never been treated as Canadian literature.

the Canadian Government sought to stimulate Canadian cultural production, the *forms* of cultural production the government supported were predominantly highbrow, leaving mass culture industries to fend for themselves against American competitors. Pulp magazines comprised one such industry.

Perhaps it is unsurprising, given the history of pulp magazines elaborated thus far, that by the end of the 1940s there were no champions of pulp magazines entreating government subsidies to support the struggling industry. Pulp was widely denigrated by religious organizations, voluntary associations like Kiwanis clubs, as well as public institutions like schools, libraries, and parent-teacher associations, whose purview was promoting social hygiene and good citizenship among the youth, lower classes, and immigrants. These groups successfully lobbied Parliament to make reading—not literacy, but rather *what* people read—a matter of public concern.[86] Responding to these calls for action, Davie Fulton, Member for Kamloops, introduced a private member's bill[87] to the House of Commons to amend the criminal code, Section 207 (now Section 163), to include as "obscene" the pictorial depiction of crimes in pulp magazines and comics.[88] According to Fulton, "this bill is designed to amend the Criminal Code to cover magazines and periodicals commonly called crime comics, the

[86] Comic books were subject to comparable moral scrutiny in the US throughout the 1930s and 40s, with similar anxieties about the quality of the reading material. According to Amy Nyberg, "it was not until the postwar period that comics book reading became linked to the rising concerns about juvenile delinquency" (18). Unlike the Canadian approach to controlling comics and other pulp periodicals through legislation, the American comics industry opted to control itself through the implementation of the Comics Code, first introduced in 1948, then revised again in 1954, 1971, and 1989. The code and its managing body, the Comics Code Authority, are generally understood to have been defunct since 2009 (Rogers n.p.).

[87] Fulton's bill was introduced as Bill 9 under the 20th Parliament and was passed as Bill 10 in the 21st Parliament.

[88] This amendment would not be repealed until 2018.

publication of which is at present time legal, but which, it is widely felt, tend to the lowering of morals and to inducing the commission of crimes by juveniles" (Canada, Parliament *House of Commons Debates*, 20th Parl, 5th Sess, Vol 1, at 162). When reintroducing the amendment to the House six months later, Fulton clarifies that its target "is not the ordinary comic strip in the paper" but rather "what is commonly called the crime comic; in other words, the pulp paper magazine which retails for about 10 cents, vast numbers of which can be found on any of our newsstands" (Canada, Parliament *House of Commons Debates*, 21st Parl, 1st Sess, at 512). If Fulton's definition of "crime comic" seems to be more a definition of pulp magazines in general than of comic books specifically, this was entirely in keeping with the total lack of discernment the Members of the Parliament had for pulp periodicals.[89] This lack of discernment marks a point of contrast between the similar morality campaigns occurring in Canada and the US at this time. It is not to say that either the American cultural elite or anti-comics crusaders accepted or celebrated pulp magazines, but simply to point out that the anti-comics campaigns in the US were singularly focused on comics.

The House of Commons debates over Fulton's amendment, which would ultimately lead to the criminalization of both crime comics and pulp magazines in Canada, were initially framed around concern over young people's exposure to pictorial depictions of violence, very much like their American counterparts. The

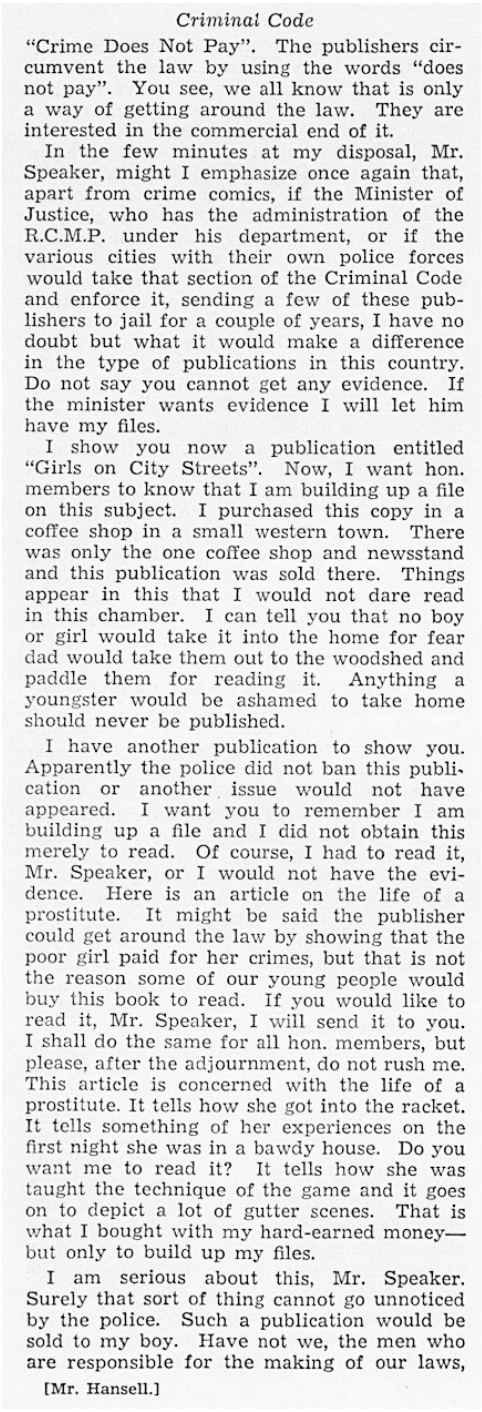
[89] It should be noted that comic books and pulp magazines are neither interchangeable nor mutually inclusive genres of literature. However, they share an overlapping history of censorship and availability in Canada given their material likeness. Both styles of periodical were printed on cheap pulp wood paper with flashy, attractive covers, were affordable, and thus widely read (or at least perceived to be read) by the same demographics. In Parliamentary debates over the Fulton's criminal code amendment, no distinction is made between comic books and pulp magazines suggesting that for members of parliament considering the value and quality of these periodicals, there was no meaningful difference between the two.

heading in the House of Commons Journals makes this focus clear: "Criminal Code: Portrayal of Crimes by Pictures in Magazines, Etc., Tending to Induce Violence." The Journal transcripts of these debates, however, show the discussion devolving quickly into hand-wringing over lowbrow reading culture in general, showing only a surface interest in the circulation of crime comics. In his introduction to the bill and its significance, for example, Fulton quotes from a resolution passed by Kiwanis clubs across Canada:

> be it resolved that the Minister of Justice be respectfully requested to fully investigate and to recommend prosecutions of the publishers, distributors and vendors of obscene books, *especially of the inexpensive paper bound type*, in order that the further corruption of the youth of Canada may be prevented and thus alleviate some of the ever increasing tendencies towards juvenile delinquency. (qtd. Canada, Parliament *HOC Debates*, 21st Parl, 1st Sess, at 514, emphasis added)

The category "inexpensive paper bound type" sounds very much to mean mass-market paperbacks and not magazines or comics, which were bound with staples; yet Fulton's invocation of the resolution goes unchallenged, and he offers it to the House as evidence "that crime comics have a direct bearing on the commission of crime by juveniles" (ibid. 514). Similarly, Ernest George Hansell, member for Macleod, who positions himself as something of an expert on "unwholesome literature," having compiled "quite a file of this material over the past few years" (Canada, Parliament *HOC Debates*, 21st Parl, 1st Sess, at 517), conflates crime comics and tabloids in his remarks about the need for the amendment. He begins by describing a crime comic called "Crime Does

Not Pay," but then moves on to "a publication entitled 'Girls on City Streets'" (ibid. 518). Reminding the House that he has been "building a file," Hansell describes read-



Criminal Code

"Crime Does Not Pay". The publishers circumvent the law by using the words "does not pay". You see, we all know that is only a way of getting around the law. They are interested in the commercial end of it.

In the few minutes at my disposal, Mr. Speaker, might I emphasize once again that, apart from crime comics, if the Minister of Justice, who has the administration of the R.C.M.P. under his department, or if the various cities with their own police forces would take that section of the Criminal Code and enforce it, sending a few of these publishers to jail for a couple of years, I have no doubt but what it would make a difference in the type of publications in this country. Do not say you cannot get any evidence. If the minister wants evidence I will let him have my files.

I show you now a publication entitled "Girls on City Streets". Now, I want hon. members to know that I am building up a file on this subject. I purchased this copy in a coffee shop in a small western town. There was only the one coffee shop and newsstand and this publication was sold there. Things appear in this that I would not dare read in this chamber. I can tell you that no boy or girl would take it into the home for fear dad would take them out to the woodshed and paddle them for reading it. Anything a youngster would be ashamed to take home should never be published.

I have another publication to show you. Apparently the police did not ban this publication or another issue would not have appeared. I want you to remember I am building up a file and I did not obtain this merely to read. Of course, I had to read it, Mr. Speaker, or I would not have the evidence. Here is an article on the life of a prostitute. It might be said the publisher could get around the law by showing that the poor girl paid for her crimes, but that is not the reason some of our young people would buy this book to read. If you would like to read it, Mr. Speaker, I will send it to you. I shall do the same for all hon. members, but please, after the adjournment, do not rush me. This article is concerned with the life of a prostitute. It tells how she got into the racket. It tells something of her experiences on the first night she was in a bawdy house. Do you want me to read it? It tells how she was taught the technique of the game and it goes on to depict a lot of gutter scenes. That is what I bought with my hard-earned money—but only to build up my files.

I am serious about this, Mr. Speaker. Surely that sort of thing cannot go unnoticed by the police. Such a publication would be sold to my boy. Have not we, the men who are responsible for the making of our laws,

[Mr. Hansell.]

Figure 2.10: Excerpt from "Criminal Code," *House of Commons Debates*, 21st Parliament, 1949. Library of Parliament.

ing "an article on the life of a prostitute" (ibid. 518), presumably printed in the publication "Girls on City Streets" though this is not quite clear from the transcript. Reminding the House of his file yet again, Hansell states, "I did not obtain this merely to read. Of course, I had to read it, Mr. Speaker, or I would not have the evidence" (ibid. 518). Neither "Girls on City Streets" nor the "article" Hansell claims to have read for research are characterized as comics or even having pictures. As such, Hansell's "evidence" of "unwholesome literature," like Fulton's reference to the Kiwanis resolution, further demonstrates that the purported concern for pictorial depictions of crimes is in fact a campaign against cheap reading material in general. In fact so loose is the definition of "crime comics" during these debates that one member, Angus MacInnis, eventually abandons pretext, stating, "I have received a number of letters and resolutions from organizations in my province urging that I support some measure, though not necessarily this one, to restrict the circulation of crime comics *or whatever we choose to call the sort of literature under discussion*" (ibid. 581, emphasis added).

The language used by Members of Parliament throughout these debates carries deep resonance with the early twentieth century moral panic over children's reading practices discussed above.[90] This resonates with Rak's analysis of elite disgust for cheap reading, also discussed above. Member for Lincoln Harry Cavers, for example, literally begs the question of the debates themselves by hypothesizing that crime comics are responsible for Toronto's gang violence:

[90] Robert Ross "Roy" Knight (Member for Saskatoon) explicitly associates cost with quality, declaring "anything that can claim the name of good literature" is "expensive" (Canada, Parliament *HOC Debates*, 21st Parl, 1st Sess, at 585).

> I think we can start with the premise that crime comics are detrimental to youth and have a bad influence on the moral standards of our young people. … In [Ontario] there has been a tendency for young hoodlums to band together and assault citizens. Probably that is an outgrowth of this very suggestion to young minds. The best known of these groups is called the beanery gang; and I suggest that perhaps the influence of poor literature of this kind indulged in earlier years, has had a good deal to do with this tendency. (Canada, Parliament *HOC Debates*, 21st Parl, 1st Sess, at 580)

Citing no actual evidence for his assumptions,[91] Cavers relies on his social status as an upper middle-class white man to assess the motivations and psychology of an infamous Toronto street gang. In so doing, Cavers echoes the social hygiene rhetoric of early twentieth century librarians discussed above by Edwards. Another Member, James Byrne, draws on his expertise as a father to claim that "[t]he minds of these children are generally wholesome" but that even if "that type of material" does not compel youth to commit crimes, "certainly it is good neither for their souls nor for their bodies to have this sort of stuff presented to them" (ibid. 588). Members of Parliament concur that it is not enough to merely censor bad reading materials, but that action must be taken to encourage the *right* kind of reading. Roy Knight, for example, makes this plea: "I suggest that instead of censorship or court action we institute a counter-attack by substituting things that are good for things that are evil. There should be a cultivation of taste for good literature while people are still young. Let us give our young people

[91] Evidence would have been difficult to come by as even early academic research on the impact of comics on young readers disproved any association between comics reading and juvenile delinquency (Nyberg 10).

better literature" (ibid. 585). Angus MacInnis, too, laments "the amount of trash offered for sale and the very small amount of literature that is worthwhile" (ibid. 582). In this way, Members of Parliament explicitly tied the conversation around objectionable periodicals to a dearth of good literature—in other words, *Canadian* literature—in Canada.

Keeping in mind that these debates occurred while the Massey Commission undertook to inventory cultural production in Canada, it is clear that this was a period of cleaning house, culturally speaking. Crime comics and the alleged threat they posed to children thus provided members of the Canadian government who were concerned with culture an opportunity to get rid of the entire tawdry pulp industry. For Knight, as well as many others, these cheap, salacious periodicals were American, decidedly *not* Canadian: "The comic book and comic strip business originated in the United States. … [T]his is an American institution. … The fact that we copy these things is an illustration of something I said the other day. In the matter of literature we seem to be copiers rather than originators. The sooner we change that attitude the better it will be not only for the adults but for our children" (ibid. 586). For these representatives of middle-class and elite Canadians, the quality of a literature was reflective of the quality of its readers, and thus Canada needed to cultivate good reading in its citizens to prove itself a mature nation and, no doubt, resist American cultural imperialism. It is thus no coincidence that during this debate on Fulton's proposed amendment to the criminal code, an amendment that records show is only superficially about the comics genre of pulp periodicals, Members of Parliament take the opportunity to expound on Canada's

need for a better literature and, indeed, a *Canadian* literature to define and unify the nation.

It is crucial to remember that between 1949 and 1951 the Massey Commission brought the matter of Canadian cultural production into public discourse, and following its Report in 1951 came a variety of government sponsored institutions and funding bodies to support high cultural production. According to Maria Tippett, it is not that high cultural production did not exist prior to the Massey Commission, but rather that it existed in private organizations that "did not feel obliged to open their doors to the public at large" (7). Moreover, Tippett explains, much of Canadian cultural production had become Americanized after the First World War, including music, theatre, and writing (127–29). That is, like Canada's pulp magazine industry, high culture was produced by small, disparate groups and greatly influenced by American cultural industries. With concentrated government support, however, most notably the Canada Council for the Arts established in 1957, these American-influenced arts could be Canadianized and eventually make Canada an internationally acclaimed producer of arts and culture. Tippett is emphatic that this government support is the direct result of lobbying throughout the 1940s, and that one of the great successes of the Canada Council is "in sidelining, and so turning attention away from, activities of the very sort out of which it [the Canada Council] grew" (187). While Tippett's interest is in recovering the history of Canadian high culture's amateur tradition, a similar argument can be made for the sidelining of Canada's tradition of mass culture. In contrast to pulp magazines' hailing of working class Canadians as producers of Canadian culture as described above, the outcome of Fulton's Bill was a

combination of marginalizing pulp magazines as "American" culture and blacklisting that particular iteration of American culture as immoral and, therefore, criminal.

Interestingly, Fulton would testify as to the inefficacy of Canada's anti-pulp legislation before the US Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency in the spring of 1954. According to Amy Nyberg's analysis of the hearings,

> the law to ban the sale of crime and horror comics had proven ineffective in Canada. After it passed, that type of comic was replaced by what Fulton termed 'salacious' material, and within the year, the crime and horror comics were back on the stands as well. Canadian law enforcement officials proved reluctant to prosecute retailers and distributors under the law, and the publishers were American and therefore not subject to Canadian law (Senate Hearings 160–1). (78–79)

Fulton's testimony acknowledges that although his bill eliminated the Canadian pulp magazine and comics industries, it did not eradicate crime comics or pulps from Canada. Rather, the bill created the conditions whereby Canadian pulp publishers could be prosecuted while American publishers remained out of reach. The elitist characterization of mass culture as "American" thus became a self-fulfilling prophecy, as the mass culture circulating in Canada remained dominated by American cultural producers.

The fear that Canadian pulp magazines signalled the contamination of Canadian literary and cultural production by American mass culture is ultimately unsupportable. Slicks and middle-class magazines like *Maclean's*, for yet another example, were never demonized as un-Canadian for sharing material similarities with

their American counterparts. Even the cheap paperback novel, introduced to "the English-Canadian market in the late 1930s and early 1940s" (Brouillette and Michon 405), would eventually be adopted by Canadian publishers to "raise the profile of numerous Canadian and Quebec writers among a new generation of readers" (Friskney and Gerson 137).[92] The paperback form has in fact been lauded by many Canadian writers for making Canadian literature accessible for classroom study (Steele 148), with some academics attributing to it Canadian literary studies as a field (Lecker *Making*, 154–55; Friskney 3). The elite conflation of American culture with mass culture relies, as noted above, on circular logic: Canadian readers consume pulp magazines (not to mention comics and other cheap forms of entertainment) but since there is no infrastructure for a Canadian pulp magazine industry, pulp magazine producers in Canada rely on emulating, reprinting, and plagiarizing American content and style in order to attract readers; the federal government provides financial support to certain Canadian cultural producers (in literature this would lead to the funding of realist and naturalist fiction), but provides none to lowbrow "copiers" of American culture, to use Roy Knight's terms; the mass culture circulating in Canada therefore remains dominated by American producers and is rightly characterized as American.

The eradication of pulp magazine production from the Canadian cultural landscape had the added effect of marginalizing genre fiction wholesale as part of this

[92] There were, however, tiers of paperback books, hierarchized similar to magazines in terms of price and quality. The "genre" of paperback adopted by McClelland and Stewart for its New Canadian Library, for example, is described by Friskney and Gerson as "the 'quality paperback'" akin to the New American Library paperback line Mentor books, which were "more expensively priced" and "[m]arketed through trade and college bookstores" (137). Nevertheless, the mass-market paperback is flexible enough to overcome "the spectre of the 'market'" (Rak 19) and work in the service of Canadian literature.

American and insurmountably un-Canadian tradition, which ultimately disqualified fans of mass culture (notably youth and the working class readers for whom the pulps were affordable sources of entertainment) from enjoying or participating in Canadian culture. Although this dispossession from cultural capital is in no way unique to Canada,[93] the long-term ramifications of sidelining genre fiction from Canadian culture are worth attention. By framing mass culture as un-Canadian, Canada's political and cultural elite tied specific forms of cultural production to national loyalty. To reiterate Ketterer's words, "realism and naturalism were tools of nationalism. To describe the Canadian reality was, supposedly, to create the Canadian reality" (2). This attitude produced a self-perpetuating literary tradition in which Canadian writers were obliged to publish their non-realist writing in American (and some British) venues. For example, Ketterer provocatively states that Canadian author Phyllis Gotlieb considered her science fiction career to be "somehow un-Canadian, maybe even treasonable" (1). Ketterer explains that Gotlieb, who successfully published poetry in Canada, found "the only outlets for her SF were American" (1). Frank Davey's material analysis of the Canadian canon corroborates Gotlieb's experience. Davey explains that "[t]exts published by British and American publishers tended to … foreground internationally popular generic conventions," whereas "[t]exts published by Canadian publishers tended to focus on internal Canadian events and issues" and, further, that "[p]rizes awarded by [Canadian] publishers rewarded consumable 'realist' texts" (676). Davey's analysis demonstrates a consistent preference for realist and naturalist literatures across Canada's various "canon-constructing actors" (676).

[93] See Pierre Bourdieu's *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, especially pp. 387–9.

Both critics and proponents of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences agree that its report's recommendations spearheaded a decade of both nationalizing and formalizing cultural production. In terms of literary development, the founding of the Canada Council for the Arts (which assumed responsibility for the Governor General's Literary Awards in 1959 ["About the Governor General's Literary Awards"]), the creation of university courses on the study of Canadian literature, the creation of a national library (now LAC), and the proliferation of small literary presses (Lecker, *Keepers* 217), all emerged in the wake of the Commission's recommendations. Collectively, these various players structured the landscape of literary production in English, ultimately creating a wide-reaching institution that would come to be known as CanLit.

Since the 2000s it has become commonplace for University courses on English-Canadian literature to introduce students to critical interrogation of the CanLit canon.[94] As a result, it is not unusual for scholars of CanLit to take for granted that English-Canadian fiction's relatively consistent tendency towards realist and naturalist formal qualities is the legacy of decades of canon-formation practices starting with the report of the Massey Commission, issued June 1951. Donna Bennett's essay "Conflicted Vision: A Consideration of Canon and Genre in English-Canadian Literature" compellingly demonstrates how the construction of a Canadian literary canon has been obstructed by preoccupations with genre. Bennett's analysis indicates that the works occupying the canon are not canonical because they exemplify the best

[94] Laura Moss addresses the role that anthologies of Canadian literature play in teaching, changing, and reflecting the canon in her editorial "Playing the Monster Blind? The Practical Limitations of Updating the Canadian Canon."

of Canadian writing (as is the idealized function of a national literary canon), but rather because they are so sufficiently similar in generic qualities as to form a cohesive list. This sentiment is reinforced by the always-appended nature of CanLit subcanons: Indigenous Canadian literature; Afro-/Caribbean Canadian literature; Ethnic Canadian literature; Jewish Canadian literature; Prairie realism. Rather than complicate a generically cohesive CanLit and its idealized "social, moral, and political values associated with … middle-class Britain" (Bennett 143), the canon includes *subordinately* all "other" Canadian literatures that deviate from the canon's white, bourgeois humanistic prose tradition. It is in this sense that we can think of CanLit as a literary genre with identifiable cultural and social implications and resonance that is inherently exclusive of other genres, like science fiction and fantasy.

What is often missing from the creation myths of CanLit, whether critical, celebratory, or ambivalent, is an account of the erasure of popular genre fiction from the Canadian literary landscape. For example, the history of Canadian sf is not mentioned—let alone featured—in any recent anthologies of Canadian Literature intended for classroom use.[95] The absence of major Canadian players in the field of sf, like founder of cyberpunk William Gibson, indicates that a Canadian author of sf is not the same thing as an author of Canadian literature. Moreover, works of sf by even the most consistently anthologized authors, such as Margaret Laurence's "A Queen in Thebes," find no homes in mainstream anthologies of CanLit. The comparatively recent intervention to situate the history of Canadian women's writing within a canonical context is likewise reluctant to include women's proto-/science fiction and

[95] See, for example, Bennett and Brown (2010), Moss and Sugars (2009), and Lecker (2008).

fantasy writing. Notable authors of Canadian sf, such as Laurence, Phyllis Gotlieb, and Margaret Atwood, have not been identified as such in these anthologies' author biographies until relatively recently.

While proponents of the Massey Commission sometimes position its critics as turning the commissioners into elitist gatekeepers of cultural capital,[96] a symptomatic reading of the post-war political landscape and its influence on the newly-energized arts movement that emerged in the 1950s does indeed reveal the dominance of English Canada's conservative nationalism.

CONCLUSION

The history of pulp magazines has been of growing interest for the last several decades (Hoppenstand vii), but remains comparatively under-researched by scholars of Canadian literature. In many ways, the academic interest in Canadian pulps versus American pulps mirrors the two states' pulp industries and the positions those industries held within their respective national cultural discourses. Where the American pulp industry "lived long past [its] fifty-odd years of existence" (Hoppenstand xiii) having produced genre-defining authors like HP Lovecraft (horror and the supernatural, also known as dark fantasy), Ray Bradbury and C.L. Moore (science fiction), Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammett (crime fiction), writers who were picked up by "big-name literary publishers like Knopf and have not been out of print since" (M. Smith,

[96] See for example Mavor Moore's foreword in Karen A. Finlay's *The Force of Culture: Vincent Massey and Canadian Sovereignty* (pp. ix–xv); or Paul Litt's repeated deployment of the term "culchah" in his *The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission.*

"Guns" 10), Canadian pulp history boasts no comparable figures[97] and was "nearly-forgotten" until "the discovery of a publisher's archive" in 1996 (M. Smith, "Soup Cans" 261). The deliberate excision of genre fiction from Canadian literary production is overshadowed by the active role the Canadian government took in fostering highbrow Canadian literature, which, I have argued, was precisely the intention. As Joseph W. Noseworthy, the member of parliament representing York South, stated with respect to Fulton's Criminal Code amendment, "legislation in itself is no substitute for education, for good libraries or good literature" (Canada, Parliament *HOC Debates*, 21st Parl, 1st Sess, Vol 1 at 588). By pouring resources into the cultivation of highbrow cultural production, the Canadian government and cultural elite were able to erase pulp periodicals from the cultural landscape and remove any traces of their existence (including the process of their erasure) from cultural memory altogether.

It is generally assumed that the demise of the pulps in Canada was brought about by a combination of the passing of Fulton's 1949 Criminal Code amendment and the introduction of the paperback novel. Michelle Smith argues, for example, that the emergence of the paperback novel was the greater foe in that its "format offered more fiction at a cheaper price than pulp magazines" (M. Smith, "Soup Cans" 285). Carolyn Strange and Tina Loo concur, stating that "True crime magazines watered the seeds of their own destruction when they advertised cheap paperbacks" and describe the demise of the pulp industry as "a continent-wide phenomenon, a product of changing products, changing tastes and changing markets" ("Hewers" 28). This

[97] Canadian authors who pursued careers in genre fiction (William Gibson, the founder of cyberpunk, is perhaps the best example) have done so distinctly outside the recognition of CanLit.

argument, however, fails to take into account English-Canadian literature's dearth of popular fiction. That is, pulp magazines were indeed replaced by the cheap paperback novel, but not as part of the nationalization of mass culture. Where American pulp magazines made the transition to pulp paperback novels, there was no comparable transition for Canadian companies like Alval or Superior, both of which collapsed in the 1950s, nor was Harlequin ever granted the honour of producing CanLit. The Canadian paperback novel, sponsored at arm's length by the Federal government through the Canada Council, was for decades largely a venue for realist and naturalist fiction. Moreover, the phrasing of Fulton's Bill to amend the Criminal Code states that what shall be considered obscene is "any magazine, periodical or book which exclusively or substantially comprises matter depicting *pictorially* the commission of crimes, real or fictitious" (Canada, Parliament *HOC Debates*, 21st Parl, 1st Sess, Vol 3 at 2690, emphasis added). Had the intent behind the amendment been simply to eliminate violent images from pulp periodicals, the inclusion of the word "pictorially" might have spared the fiction magazines from the fate of the comic books. As the discussions in the House of Commons indicate, however, no meaningful distinction was made between pulp genres by Canada's lawmakers. The elimination of Canadian mass culture was thus allowed to look like the incidental side effect of an unwholesome and disreputable industry.

Conclusion

This project began with a desire to understand the absence of women's genre fiction—sf in particular—from the early English Canadian literary canon. I sought not only to prove that Canadian women *were* among the early writers of sf, but also to understand what sf as a discourse enabled them to say, and to explain why there was no record of this genealogy in the master narratives of English Canadian literary history.

Canadian women have indeed been writing sf of various kinds since at least 1896. Among the texts that I read in the development of this project, all of which were published by 1964, I have found that Canadian women wrote about supernatural weather, supernatural geology, ghosts, werewolves, monsters, future history, telepathy, telekinesis, mastery over electricity, mastery over the atmosphere, mastery over death, interplanetary travel, artificial insemination, and abortion. The number of Canadian women's sf texts that I catalogued was likewise impressive. As the table in Appendix B shows, between 1896 and 1964, nine standalone sf novels were published by eight different Canadian women; between 1907 and 1956, twenty-one sf stories were published in English-language periodicals by nine different Canadian women; and

between 1940 and 1941, Thomas P. Kelley published three sf stories under the feminine pen names Ethel Preszatore, Ethel G. Preszcator, and Anne, Lady Selsden. Overall, my research indicates that at least fifteen Canadian women were writing and publishing sf before 1964. In strictly numerical terms, the appearance of fifteen writers between 1896 and 1964 may seem unimpressive, but considering the lack of publishing infrastructure to support non-realist writing, and the lack of criticism recognizing early Canadian women's sf as a field in and of itself, the number is striking. The six texts that I analyze in this study represent the work of only five of these fifteen women. These six texts provide a useful genealogy for my study but, like those texts I have omitted, they can be read and interpreted along numerous other lines of inquiry.

My area of focus emerged from the pattern I identified across many of the texts themselves. I found that, like their late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century peers writing in realist, naturalist, and sentimental traditions, these Canadian women used science fictional and fantastical tropes to advance the dominant racist ideology calling for a socially and racially "pure" Anglo-Saxon Canada. I selected for this study the texts that seemed most overt in the presumption of Anglo-Saxon superiority and in allegorizing the dangers of immigration and white women's vulnerability to uncivil men. The two texts published prior to white women's suffrage, *Tisab Ting* and "Lastluck Lake," emphasize in particular the civilizing power and importance of white bourgeois women in the racial and sexual management of the state. The two texts published in 1919, "The Clasp of Rank" and "When Wires are Down," do not reflect on matters of suffrage, but rather allegorize women's autonomous personhood as supernatural in order to draw attention to women's ongoing vulnerability as the property of men. The

final two texts, "The Discovery of Nil" and "The Swamps Come Back," published at the outset of what has been called Canada's "golden age" of pulp magazines (Strange and Loo *True*), direct their focus not at women's defenselessness but rather at the vulnerability of all of human civilization, understood implicitly to mean the British Commonwealth, in the face of a global threat. This is perhaps unsurprising given that the texts were published respectively in 1939, mere months before the outbreak of the Second World War, and in August 1941, when the War was well underway. Although these last two stories interpret the global threat differently—the former cautioning against chemical weapons, the latter villainizing the Japanese—both perceive the outcome of the threat in racialized terms—the end of white supremacy—and make use of sf to circulate this ideological position. For all of these women writers, sf in its various guises provided a set of discursive tools to articulate social and political grievances, to circulate their white feminist polemics, and the potential to reach a likeminded—or convince an undecided—audience.

It is certainly a remarkable irony of history that the same racialized social purity rhetoric that these early women writers deployed via genre fiction would be used by Canada's mid-century political elite to eradicate genre fiction, and thus the texts themselves, from the Canadian literary landscape. Where pulp magazines had been a political platform for Carleton, Thomas, and Burton, for Brumell and the writers who followed her the pulps had become a liability. Canadian politicians expressed their "moral" concerns over pulp magazines in racialized and classist terms, referring to them as "offal" and as "trash." As the debates over the obscenity of pulp magazines raged, the Federal government acknowledged the need for a Royal Commission on the

state of culture in Canada. The two conversations were invariably linked, with Members of Parliament simultaneously decrying the sale of "American" mass culture to Canadian children and the need for a Canadian "counter-attack" vis-à-vis the "cultivating of taste for good literature while people are still young" (Canada, Parliament *HOC Debates*, 21st Parl, 1st Sess, at 585). Nevertheless, nearly two years before the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences would issue its report and recommendations for nationalized cultural production, the Canadian government effectively removed genre fiction from the Canadian literary landscape by criminalizing the production and distribution of pulp magazines.

This eradication of Canadian pulp magazines without any substitution of "good literature," which multiple Members of Parliament claimed they wanted, is curious. The criminalization of production and distribution had consequences only for Canadian pulp publishers, since American publishers were "not subject to Canadian law" (Nyberg 79). American mass culture thus proceeded to flourish in Canada. I argued in Chapter Three that Canada's pulp magazine industry *symbolized* the instability of the country's economic class stratification. Further research suggests, rather, that the industry quite literally threatened Canada's class hierarchy. Alec Valentine, for example, one of the most successful pulp publishers in Canada, was publishing socialist editorials and revolutionary fiction in his magazines (Kosman 101). This undocumented intrigue of Canadian literary, cultural, and political history craves further investigation, but it is clearly plausible that the moral panic over cheap and salacious reading materials provided the Federal government with an opportunity to

quash Canada's nascent but self-sustaining pulp magazine industry without drawing attention to the political threat it had posed.

Over the course of this dissertation I have sought, more than anything, to put my research findings into coherent social, political, and material contexts. The analysis that I have provided here is by no means exhaustive and focuses on only one cluster of significance: the intersections of genre, specifically sf, and white feminism in a Canadian nation-building context. But much, much more can be learned and said of these texts, their authors, and the periodicals and publishers who brought them to light. At the conclusion to Chapter One I argue that scholars of CanLit must consider our literary history holistically, not just canonically, if the discipline of English Canadian Literature is to account for its contributions to English Canada's "fictive ethnicity" (Coleman 7). There are a remarkable number of Canadian women writers whose sf I have had to omit from my study, but whose work deserves critical analysis through the lens of genre. I have referred, for example, to the prolific Lily Adams Beck numerous times throughout this dissertation. Beck's popular orientalist fantasies invite a robust exploration of Orientalism in white Canadian women's literature, a genre of CanLit that has instead, at least in the case of Gwendolyn MacEwen's oeuvre, been called "mythopoesis." Such a study would be especially productive in light of the 2017 "appropriation prize" travesty, in which the problem of cultural appropriation seemed to many in Canadian cultural circles to be an intriguing new idea (McGregor, Rak, and Wunker 88). A serious examination of Canadian Orientalism, among other literary instances of exoticization and appropriation, is but one example. Fantasies about the so-called "Orient" can be found in both popular fiction, such as the historical romances

of Lily Adams Beck that Desmond Pacey so reviled, and canonical works like MacEwen's fiction and poetry. Such a study would demonstrate the ongoing imperative to reexamine our cultural myths and their legacies, while also refusing the highbrow/lowbrow divide that has been so central to the institution of CanLit.

To return again to my opening epigraph by David M. Earle, with this dissertation "I am not trying … to raise pulp fiction to canonical heights as much as to broaden our scope of study, or, more exact, to show the limitations innate to our historical scope of study; … to step outside of canonicity and examine its dynamics for innate prejudice" (8). Few scholars of CanLit would deny the existence of innate prejudices in the field, and the concerted study of Canadian women's genre fiction provides for us wholly new opportunities for both resistance and examination. In other words, there is still more work to be done.

Epilogue

Future Scholarships

I knew from the start
I don't belong in these parts
There's too much hate
There's too much hurt for this heart
Lord knows this planet feels like a hopeless place
Thank God I'm going back home to outer space
I'm waiting for my spaceship to come back to me
(Kesha, "Spaceship")

In my Introduction I acknowledge that I take the notion of gender for granted throughout this dissertation. This significant methodological limitation has led me to think about science in terms of what Louis Althusser calls an ideological state apparatus (ISA). The history of Canadian women's sf, Canadian pulp sf magazines, and American pulp sf magazines circulating in Canada, together provide a bracing snapshot of the increasing dominance of "science" as a discursive tool used to manage the social and sexual lives of—and indeed to determine who counts as—Canadian citizens. So much

of women's history hinges on our access to scientific discourses; emancipation, racial justice, domesticity, and reproduction are just a few examples. This dissertation largely focuses on the publishing history of Canadian women's sf, but the genealogy outlined herein invites countless further points of analysis. Roger Luckhurst argues, for example, that crucial to the analysis of science fiction is a consideration of "the significant shift of the cultural authority of science and the transformation of everyday life by electrical technologies after 1870" (46). He uses as an example Britain's "government commissions in the 1870s," which, through "research funding, scientific institutions, and the teaching of science for the first time in any systematic way… made the idea of a career in science, the professional 'scientist', rather than the gentleman amateur, possible" (Luckhurst 46).

Because of women's historical exclusion from professional fields of science, it is easy to forget the incredible impact that scientific developments have had on the lives of North American women during the late nineteenth- and early twentieth centuries. Kimberly Hamlin reminds us that "Adam and Eve provided the script, the images, and the template for Western ideas about gender until Darwinian evolutionary theory challenged their very existence and made it possible for women and men to imagine alternative origins and a whole new range of gendered possibilities" (1–2). Evolutionary theory, argues Hamlin, revolutionized what constituted common sense, particularly for the feminist movement: "at exactly the same time that Americans were grappling with evolutionary theory, the burgeoning women's rights movement brought questions of sex difference to the forefront of public debate, making feminism and evolutionary theory concurrent intellectual developments" (2). Evolutionary theory's intervention in the naturalized public/private dichotomy demonstrates the means by which scientific

discourses allowed late nineteenth- and twentieth-century feminists to imagine alternatives to their lived experiences.

As science came to be masculinized, women found alternative means to apply scientific discourse to the feminist movement (Hamlin 16-17). Eugenics was one such "scientific" project behind which bourgeois white feminists could muster, to the detriment of many other Canadian women. Sherene Razack's preface to *States of Race: Critical Race Feminism for the 21st Century* (2010) draws attention to the importance placed on the preservation of the Aryan race in early Canadian political discourse. She quotes Canada's first prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, speaking to the House of Commons in 1885: "It is not desired that they [the Africans or the Asiatics] come; that we should have a mongrel race; that the Aryan character of the future of British America should be destroyed" (ix). Razack discusses the impact of this racism and xenophobia in Canadian nation building, arguing that it was "a powerful ideological weapon in imperialist policies, including … the dispossession of Indigenous lands here in Canada" (xvi). This racist ideology is of particular relevance to discussions of early Canadian women's movements because they were deeply entrenched in nationalism—most notably, the suffrage movement. For example, Cecily Devereux identifies the discursive entanglement of eugenics and maternal feminism. Devereux explains that "Eugenic Feminism was a discourse within which white, middle-class, Anglo-Saxon women could constitute themselves as national – racialized – subjects in superior relation not only to the women (and men) of other nations but to other categories of womanhood such as indigenous, working class, and immigrant women" (37). Thus we can see that when Canadian women were struggling for equal access to citizenship, the

scientific discourse of eugenics allowed white women to demonstrate their value to the state.

Much as white feminists mobilized eugenics to justify their superiority over Indigenous, working class, and immigrant women, the medicalization of sexuality was likewise used to demonize and pathologize women's non-heterosexual desires. Cameron Duder's historical research on lesbian women in Canada suggests, however, that this medicalized sexual discourse introduced lesbian women to new, scientific terms to name and articulate their experiences. Duder writes that "written records reveal that in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s women in same-sex relationships were influenced by the language of sexology, even if they questioned the depiction of same-sex relationships as unnatural and unhealthy" (16). Importantly, by specifically identifying Canadian women's same-sex relationships as sexual, Duder's analysis justifies a queering of the trope of women's intimate friendships in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Canadian literatures. Duder's research demonstrates that the discursive shift from "romantic friendships" between women to relationships that were "explicitly sexual" if "deviant" affected the language lesbian women in Canada used to identify their experiences and desires.

Veronica Strong-Boag rightly notes that in comparison to the romanticized Canadian suffrage movement, "the aftermath of enfranchisement has frequently been taken for granted" (1). Her discussion of Canadian women's ongoing subordination is especially apt in terms of their relegation to the home. She argues that for most Canadians, "motherhood was taken for granted as marriage's logical outcome for the female sex. Women of every background were socialized from childhood on to discover personal fulfillment and purpose in childbirth and child rearing. … [M]otherhood was

to do much to compensate women for other shortcomings in their lives" (145). That women's proper place was accepted as within the home, or the private sphere, is of particular interest in terms of their historical relationship with science. Science historian Margaret W. Rossiter, for example, argues that the field of home economics was established as a separate realm in which women could pursue science without threatening their male peers.

When it comes to science's influence on Canadian women's lives, home economics and eugenics were merely two sides of the same nationalist coin. Mariana Valverde describes the coalescence of women, eugenics, and scientific domesticity in tandem with Canada's national formation in *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water*. Similarly, Ian Mosby's *Food Will Win the War* addresses "Canada's wartime mobilization of the home front" (5) through the lens of nutrition and "state intervention in food consumption and culinary practices" (8) during World War II. Franca Iacovetta and Valerie J. Korinek further identify the means by which food has historically been used to assimilate newcomers to Canada, typically by pitting "'scientific' [nutrition] regimes" against the "folk routines" of immigrant mothers (Epp et al. 190).

The idea that middleclass women have had ideas and opinions about science and technology seems, in some ways, novel to the study of sf. Bruce Sterling, for example, makes the incredible claim that "[t]he cyberpunks are perhaps the first SF generation to grow up not only within the literary tradition of science fiction but in a truly science-fictional world" (xi). He adds that for the cyberpunks, "the techniques of classical 'hard SF'—extrapolation, technological literacy—are not just literary tools but an aid to daily life. They are a means of understanding, and highly valued" (xi). What Sterling fails to recognize in this assessment is that bourgeois women have long been

living in a science fictional world and using science fiction as a means to understand it and themselves. It should not be taken for granted that new technologies were unremarkable to the woman who adopted them. In *Galactic Suburbia*, Lisa Yaszek discusses the impact of new domestic technologies on American women writers of sf, arguing that "both the industrialization of the home and the new technocultural situations engendered by the cold war fueled the development of women's SF in the 1940s, '50s, and '60s" (15). Canadian women experienced similar domestic industrialization during which, as Cheryl Krasnick Warsh and Dan Malleck point out, "[c]onsumerism became intertwined with national identity" (5). I explored the connection between consumerism and nationalism in relation to pulp magazines and post-war anxieties about Canadian cultural identity, but much more can be said of the expectations on Canadian women—especially mothers, wives, and homemakers—to sustain and protect the nation through consumption.

Each of these examples hints at the myriad ways that "science" kept average Canadian women politically engaged with the nation, as well as with race, sex, and gender. An examination of Canadian women's sf in conjunction with the developments of domestic science is but one exhilarating option worthy further exploration.

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Appendix A:

Select Archival Images

Pulp magazines are rare, and copies of Canadian pulps rarer still. The following images document pulp magazines relevant to my research that I photographed during my visits to various archival locations in 2014 and 2015. In the spring of 2014 I first visited the Merril Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation and Fantasy housed at the Toronto Public Library in Toronto, Ontario. In the summer of 2015, I visited Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa, Ontario. In the fall of 2015, I visited the Bob Gibson Collection of Speculative Fiction housed at the University of Calgary. The magazines I photographed were each published by corporate entities with dates of publication far exceeding Canada's fifty-year copyright term. As such, each of the following images is, to the best of my knowledge, in the public domain.

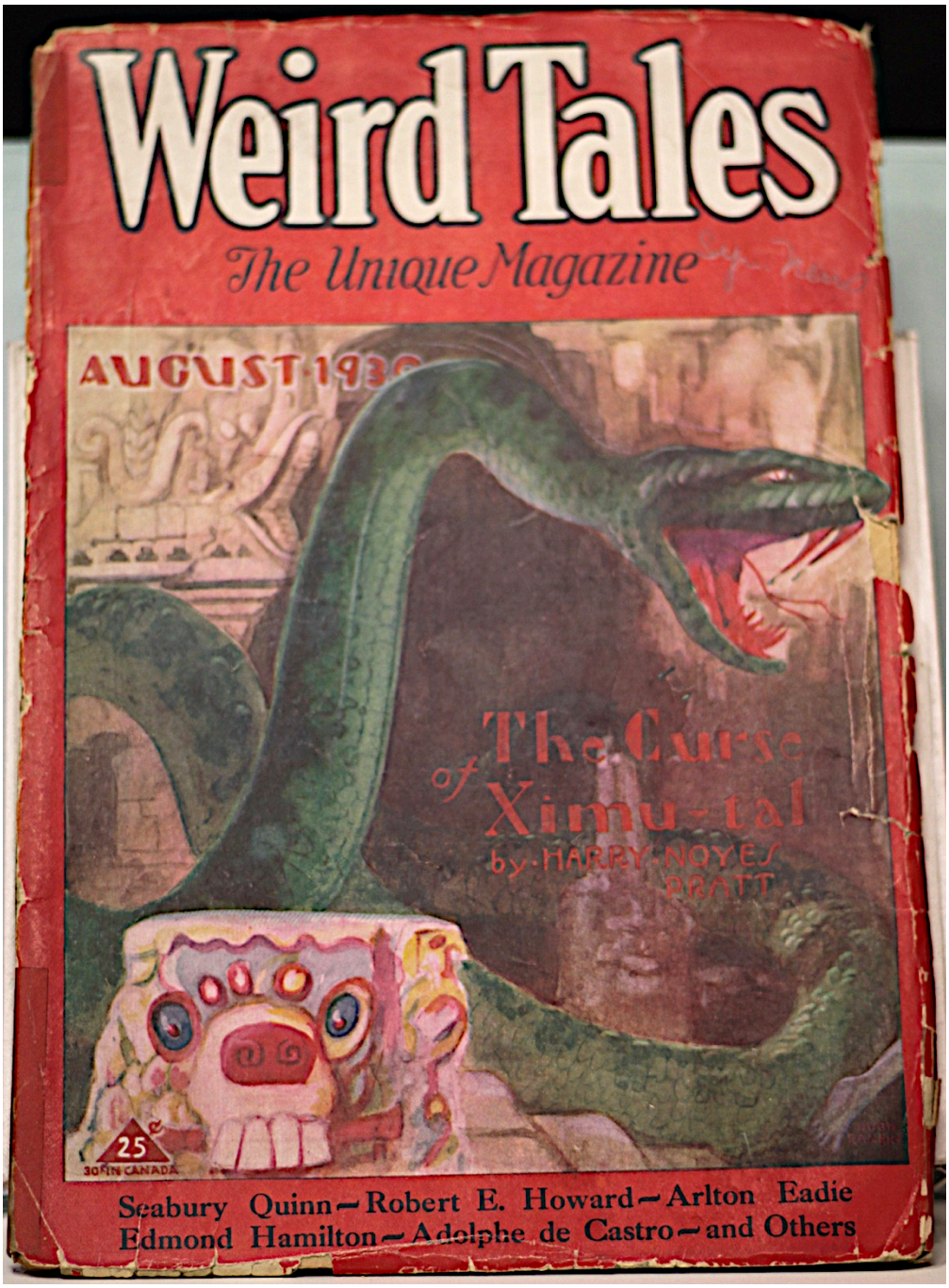

Figure 3.1: Front cover of the American magazine *Weird Tales* (1930), in which Grace M. Campbell published "The Law of the Hills," held at Toronto Public Library's Merril Collection. Photographer: Marcelle Kosman, 2014

Figure 4.2: Table of contents for the issue of *Weird Tales* featuring Campbell's "The Law of the Hills," held at Toronto Public Library's Merril Collection. Photographer: Marcelle Kosman, 2014.

Figure 4.3: Cover of the British magazine *Fantasy* (1939), in which A.E. Burton published "The Discovery of Nil," held at the Toronto Public Library's Merril Collection. Photographer: Marcelle Kosman, 2014.

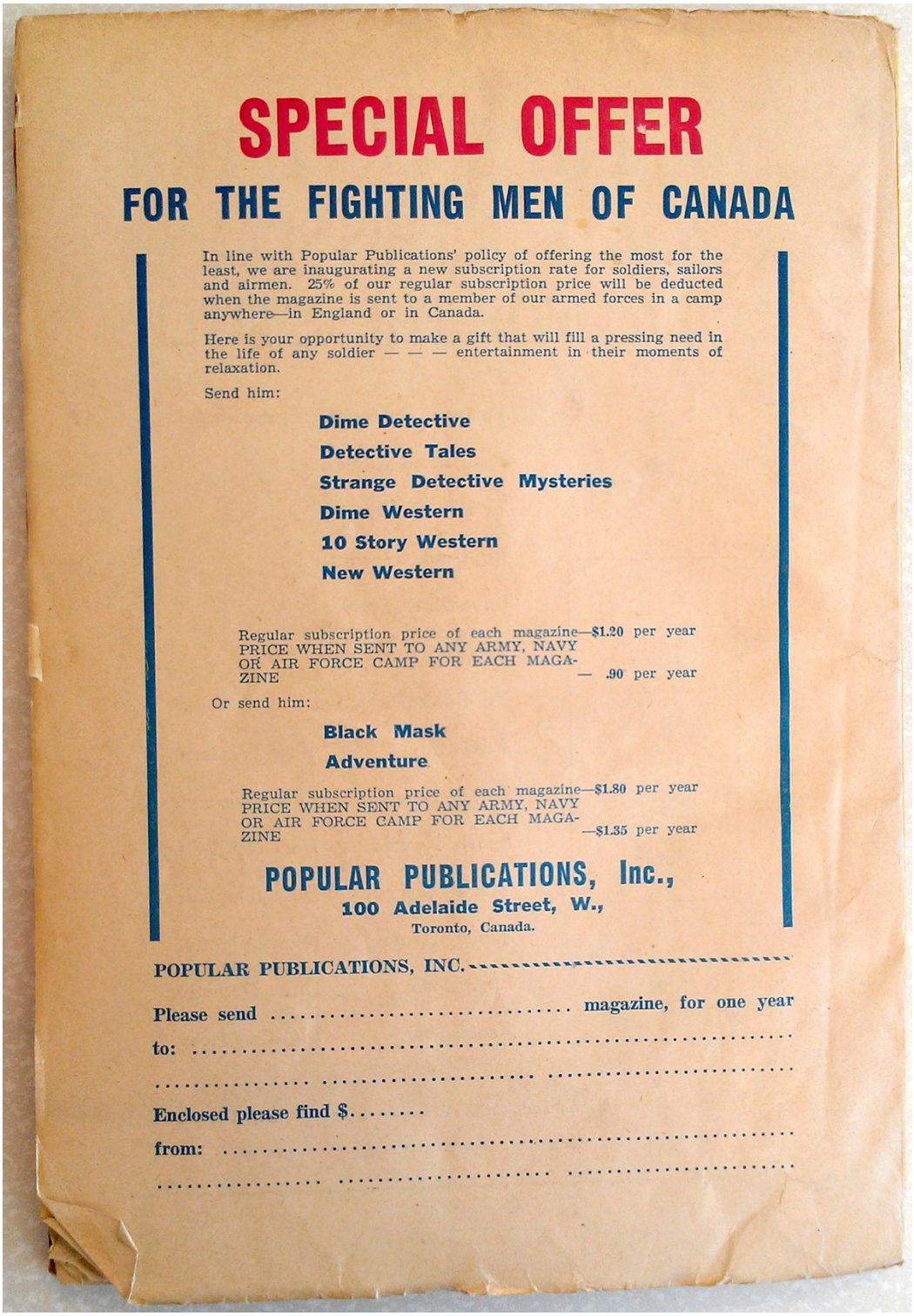

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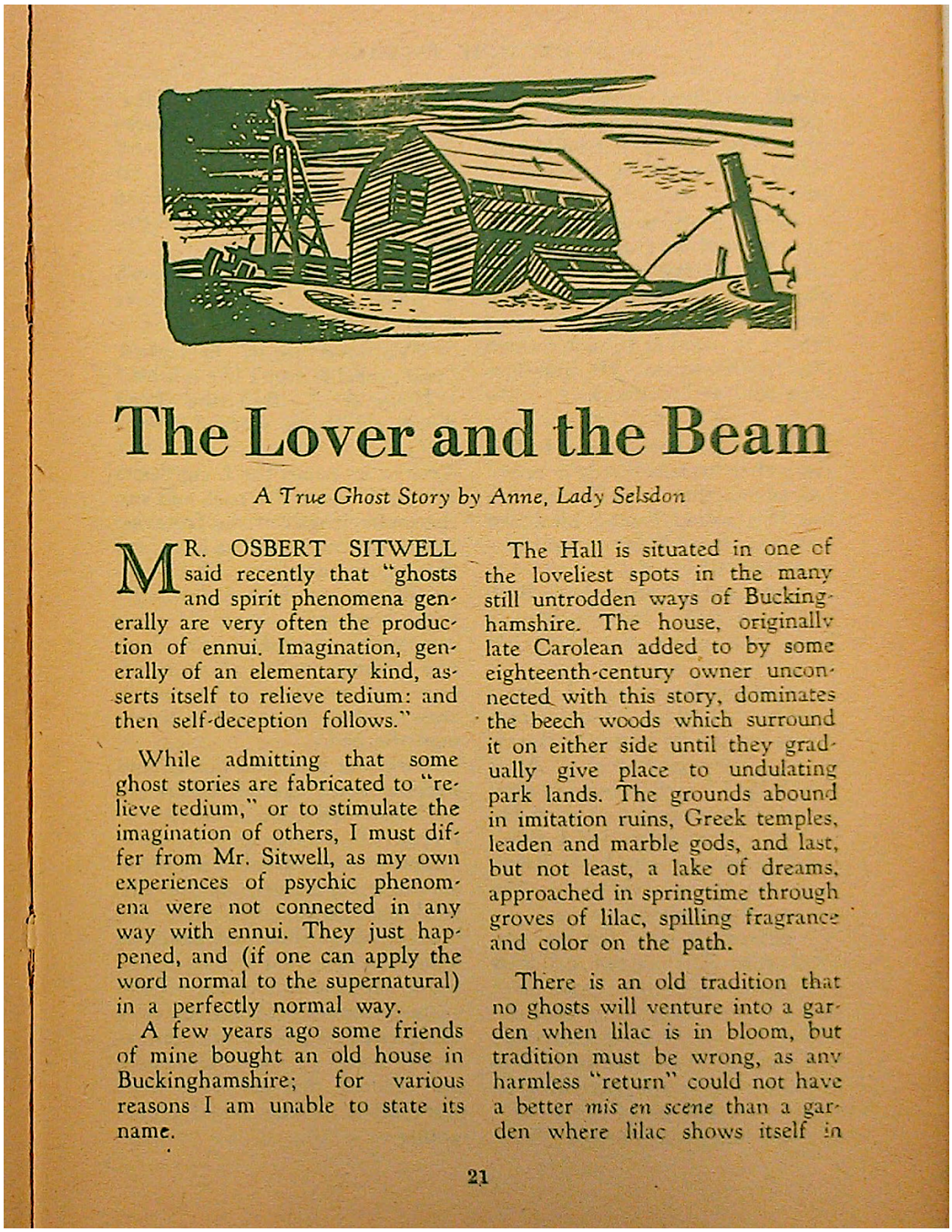
Figure 4.4: Back cover of a Canadian edition of *Super Science Stories*, held at University of Calgary's Bob Gibson Collection. Photographer: Marcelle Kosman, 2015.

Figure 4.5: Front cover of the issue of *Uncanny Tales* in which Nadine Booth Brumell published "The Swamps Come Back," held at University of Calgary's Bob Gibson Collection. Photographer: Marcelle Kosman, 2015.



The Lover and the Beam

A True Ghost Story by Anne, Lady Selsdon

MR. OSBERT SITWELL said recently that "ghosts and spirit phenomena generally are very often the production of ennui. Imagination, generally of an elementary kind, asserts itself to relieve tedium: and then self-deception follows."

While admitting that some ghost stories are fabricated to "relieve tedium," or to stimulate the imagination of others, I must differ from Mr. Sitwell, as my own experiences of psychic phenomena were not connected in any way with ennui. They just happened, and (if one can apply the word normal to the supernatural) in a perfectly normal way.

A few years ago some friends of mine bought an old house in Buckinghamshire; for various reasons I am unable to state its name.

The Hall is situated in one of the loveliest spots in the many still untrodden ways of Buckinghamshire. The house, originally late Carolean added to by some eighteenth-century owner unconnected with this story, dominates the beech woods which surround it on either side until they gradually give place to undulating park lands. The grounds abound in imitation ruins, Greek temples, leaden and marble gods, and last, but not least, a lake of dreams, approached in springtime through groves of lilac, spilling fragrance and color on the path.

There is an old tradition that no ghosts will venture into a garden when lilac is in bloom, but tradition must be wrong, as any harmless "return" could not have a better *mis en scene* than a garden where lilac shows itself in

21

Figure 4.6: Title page to Thomas P. Kelley's "The Lover and the Beam" (the only known text attributed to Kelley's pen name Anne, Lady Selsden), found in the inaugural issue of *Uncanny Tales*, held at Library and Archives Canada. Photographer: Marcelle Kosman, 2015.

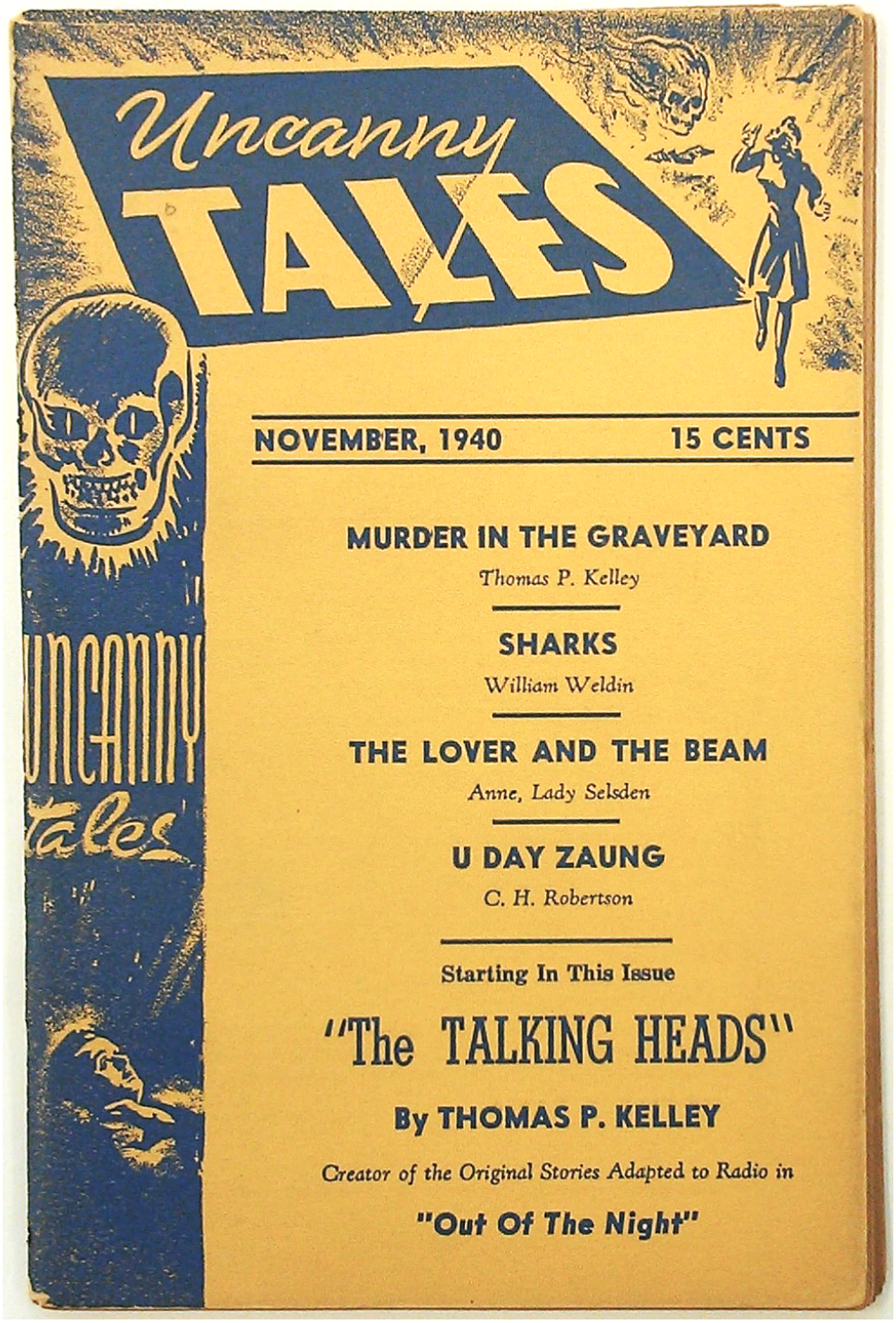


Figure 4.7: Front cover to the inaugural issue of *Uncanny Tales*, held at Library and Archives Canada. Photographer: Marcelle Kosman, 2015.

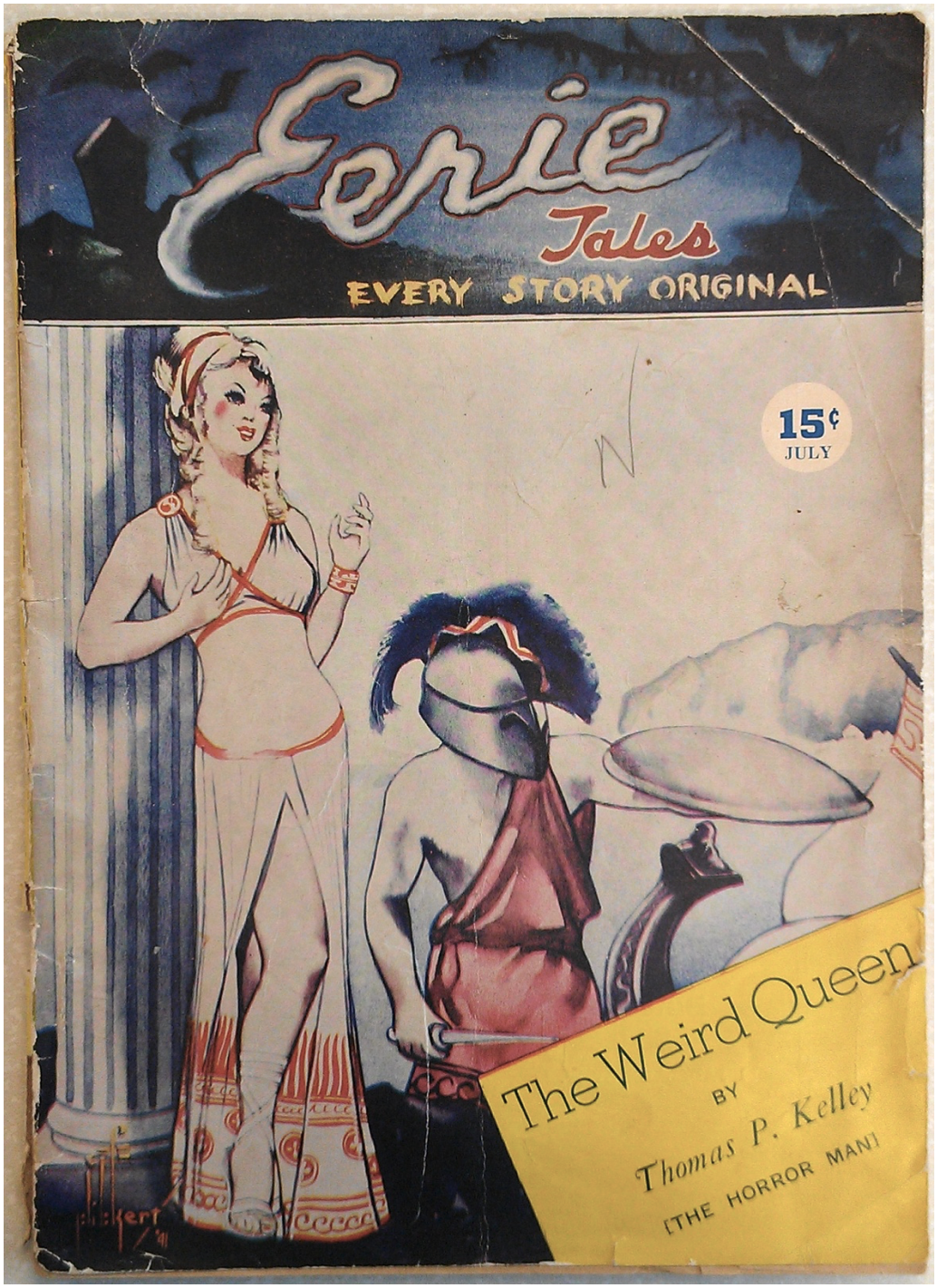


Figure 4.8: Front cover of the sole issue of *Eerie Tales*, held at University of Calgary's Bob Gibson Collection. Photographer: Marcelle Kosman, 2015.

Appendix B:

Comprehensive Bibliography of Canadian Women's Proto-/sf, 1896 – 1964

The following bibliography lists works of sf (including proto-sf, science fiction, fantasy, and weird fiction) written by Canadian women between 1896 and 1964. Although it is not exhaustive, I have included here works written by women who, to the best of my knowledge, identified as Canadian at the time of their publication. I have not, for example, included Judith Merril who moved to Toronto in the late 1960s. As an anomaly, however, I have included the three short stories written by Thomas P. Kelley and published under feminine pseudonyms.

Works of sf authored by Canadian women, published in book form, listed in chronological order
Fergus, Dyjan (pseud. of Ida May Ferguson). *Tisab Ting; or, The Electrical Kiss*. Toronto: Hunter Rose, 1896. **[Archival location: Edmonton: University of Alberta Libraries]**
Williams, Frances Fenwick. *A Soul on Fire*. Toronto: S.B. Gundy, 1915; and New York: John Lane, 1915. **[Archival location: Edmonton: University of Alberta Libraries]**

Glynn-Ward, Hilda (pseud. of Hilda Howard). *The Writing on the Wall*. Vancouver: Sun Publishing Co., 1921.[98] **[Republished with an introduction by Patricia Roy, University of Toronto Press, 2010]**

Beck, L. Adams (Lily Adams Beck). "The Ninth Vibration." *The Ninth Vibration and Other Stories*. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1922. **[Archival location: Toronto: Merril Collection; Toronto Public Library]**

Moresby, Louis (Lily Adams Beck). *The Glory of Egypt*. New York: Doran, 1926; and London: Nelson, 1926. **[Archival location: Edmonton: University of Alberta Libraries]**

Macbeth, Madge. *Wings in the West*. London: John Hamilton Ltd., n.d.[99] **[Archival location: Toronto: Robarts Library, University of Toronto]**

Kerby, Susan Alice (pseud. of Alice Elizabeth Burton). *Miss Carter and the Ifrit*. London: Hutchinson, 1945. **[Archival location: Edmonton: University of Alberta Libraries]**

MacEwen, Gwendolyn. *Julian the Magician*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1963. **[Archival location: Edmonton: University of Alberta Libraries]**

Gotlieb, Phyllis. *Sunburst*. Greenwich, Conn: Fawcett, 1964. **[Archival location: Edmonton: University of Alberta Libraries]**

Works of sf authored by Canadian women, published in periodicals, listed in chronological order

Carleton, S. (pseud. of Susan Carleton Jones). "Lastluck Lake." *Popular Magazine* [**New York; Street & Smith Publications, Inc**] vol. 10, no. 2, Dec. 1907, pp. 1–72. **[Archival location: Ohio State University]**

Carleton, S. (Pseud. of Susan Carleton Jones). "Mystery Mine." *Top-Notch* [**New York; Street & Smith Publications, Inc**] vol. 35, no. 5, Sept 1 1918, pp. 1–72. **[Archival location: Washington: Library of Congress]**

Carleton, S. (pseud. of Susan Carleton Jones). "The Clasp of Rank." *Thrill Book* [**New York; Street & Smith publications**] vol. 1, no. 3, Apr 2 1919, pp. 21–27. **[Archival location: no known locations]**

Thomas, Lillian Beynon. "When Wires Are Down." *Thrill Book* [**New York; Street & Smith Publications, Inc**] vol. 2, no. 5, Sept 1 1919, pp. 52–63. **[Archival location: no known locations]**

Beck, L. Adams. (Lily Adams Beck.) "The Splendor of Asia." *Popular Magazine* [**New York; Street & Smith Publications, Inc**] vol. 65, no. 4, Sept 7, 1922, pp. 1–44. **[Archival location: author's personal collection]**

Campbell, Grace M. "The Law of the Hills." *Weird Tales* [**Chicago/Indianapolis; Popular Fiction Company**] vol. 16, no. 2, Aug 1930, pp. 216–222. **[Archival location: Toronto: Merril Collection; Toronto Public Library]**

Montgomery, L.M. (Lucy Maud Montgomery.) "The House Party at Smoky Island." *Weird Tales* [**Chicago/Indianapolis; Popular Fiction Company**] vol. 26, no. 2, Aug 1935, pp. 197–203. **[Archival location: Toronto: Merril Collection; Toronto Public Library]**

[98] The bibliography *CDN SF&F*, compiled by John Robert Colombo, Michael Richardson, John Bell, and Alexandre L. Amprimoz, dates the year of publication as 1922.

[99] David Ketterer lists the date of publication as 1937 in *Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy* (37), however the Internet Archive copyright note for the digital file lists the publication date as unknown.

Burton, A.E. (Alice Elizabeth Burton.) "The Discovery of Nil." *Fantasy* [**London; George Newnes, Ltd.**] vol. 1, no. 2, Mar 1939, 93–99. **[Archival location: Toronto: Merril Collection; Toronto Public Library]**

Brumell, Nadine Booth. "The Swamps Come Back." *Uncanny Tales* [**Toronto; Adam Publishing**] vol. 2, no. 8, Aug 1941, pp. 28–37. **[Archival location: Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada]**

Hull, E. Mayne. (Edna Mayne Hull.) "The Flight that Failed" *Astounding Science Fiction* [**New York; Street & Smith Publications, Inc**] vol. 30, no. 4, Dec 1942, pp. 28–37. **[Archival location: Toronto: Merril Collection; Toronto Public Library]**

Hull, E. Mayne. (Edna Mayne Hull.) "The Ultimate Wish" *Unknown Worlds* [**New York; Street & Smith Publications, Inc**] vol. 6, no. 5, Feb 1943, pp. 71–78. **[Archival location: Toronto: Merril Collection; Toronto Public Library]**

Hull, E. Mayne. (Edna Mayne Hull.) "Abdication" *Astounding Science Fiction* [**New York; Street & Smith Publications, Inc**] vol. 31, no. 2, April 1943, pp. 72–80. **[Archival location: Toronto: Merril Collection; Toronto Public Library]**

Hull, E. Mayne. (Edna Mayne Hull.) "Competition" *Astounding Science Fiction* [**New York; Street & Smith Publications, Inc**] vol. 31, no. 4, June 1943, pp. 44–59. **[Archival location: Toronto: Merril Collection; Toronto Public Library]**

Hull, E. Mayne. (Edna Mayne Hull.) "The Debt" *Astounding Science Fiction* [**New York; Street & Smith Publications, Inc**] vol. 32, no. 4, Dec 1943, pp. 7–31. **[Archival location: Toronto: Merril Collection; Toronto Public Library]**

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Appendix C:

Table of Letters to the Editor, *Uncanny Tales*

The following table provides a breakdown of the letter-writers published in "Around the Cauldron," *Uncanny Tales*' letters-to-the-editor section, with an emphasis on those letters appearing to be from women. "Around the Cauldron" first appeared in the magazine's eighth issue and remained a staple throughout *Uncanny*'s regular publication. It must be noted that letters appearing to be authored by women are printed in all but one issue (February 1942), suggesting the magazine had an engaged and committed female readership throughout its run.

***Uncanny Tales* "Around the Cauldron": Table Representing Women's Letters to the Editor**				
Date and Volume, Number	**Total number of letters**	**Number presumed to be women**	**Number of Canadian provinces represented**	**Additional notes**
June 1941	4	1	4: BC, ON, QC, NS	This is the first issue with the new letters to the editor section, titled: "Around the Cauldron."
July 1941	6	2	3: ON, QC, NS	

Vol. 2, No. 8 (August 1941)	6	2	2: ON, BC	Editor notes the ratio of male letter writers exceeds female letter writers; offers a one-year subscription prize for the best letter as incentive to boost reader communication.
Vol. 2, No. 9 (September 1941)	7	4	3: NS, BC, ON	Best letter subscription is awarded to a woman; letter in verse appears, written by a woman.
Vol. 2, No. 10 (October 1941)	9	2	4: ON, BC, QC, NS	One woman's letter includes a "true tale"; another woman's letter expresses appreciation for the "Cauldron." In addition to the nine printed letters the editors refer to an additional 14 that are unprinted. Two of those unprinted letters were also by women.
Vol. 2, No. 11 (November 1941)	7	3	4: ON, SK, NB, BC	The section includes two stories authored by women readers of *UT*. In addition to the seven printed letters, the editors refer to another five that are unprinted, one of which is authored by a woman.
Vol. 2, No. 12 (December 1941)	14	4	5: BC, ON, NS, QC, MB	One woman reader notes in her letter that *UT* is the only magazine she has ever written to.
Vol. 2, No. 13 (January 1942)	14	4	6: NS, MB, QC, SK, BC, ON	
Vol. 2, No. 14 (February 1942)	9	0	2: ON, NS; plus 1: US	This is the only issue in which none of the letters appear to be from women.
Vol. 2, No. 15 (March 1942)	10	1	5: BC, QC, PEI, NS, ON	
Vol. 2, No. 16 (May 1942)	9	4	4: QC, ON, MB, SK	First letter writer complains that she couldn't "understand" the stories; letter writer Lorraine Smith wants to know how many authors printed in *UT* are Canadian.
Vol. 2, No. 17 (June 1942)	8	1	3: BC, ON, QC; plus 2: UK, "Mars"	First appearance of the letter writer who refers to

				himself as the "Man from Mars"
Vol. 2, No. 18 (July 1942)	11	1	1: ON; plus 2: US, "Mars"	*UT* publication slows to bi-monthly.
Vol. 2, No. 19 (September 1942)	9	1 (from US)	3: BC, ON, QC; plus 1: US	American woman describes trading US magazines with another reader for *UT*.
Vol. 2, No. 20 (December 1942)	9	1	4: BC, MB, ON, QC; plus 1: "Mars"	So-called Quarterly issue; this is the last issue with "Around the Cauldron."
Vol. 2, No. 21 (September/ October 1943)	0	0	N/A	This is *UT*'s final issue.