University of Alberta

Canadian Writers, McClelland & Stewart, and the Paperback Book:
Remediation, Publishing, and Cultural Context

by

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Abstract

 This dissertation analyzes the relationship between literature and new media through an investigation of the book in a Canadian context and draws on book history and new media studies. To better understand the relationship between print and digital forms of publishing, I look backwards to a similar moment in Canadian history, when paperback publishing became common practice, providing new opportunities and challenges for Canada's cultural industries. I focus on the Canadian publishing firm McClelland & Stewart (M&S) and three of its authors, Pierre Berton, Sheila Watson, and Leonard Cohen. I thus resist the tendency of new media studies to focus on the most recent innovations and instead historicize the dialectic between established and emerging media. **Chapter One** introduces the vocabulary of new media studies to the discipline of book history. **Chapter Two** applies this theoretical framework to the rise of the paperback in Canada. It then provides a brief history of M&S and its prince of publishing, Jack McClelland, to reveal how McClelland's personal politics shaped the publishing firm. **Chapter Three** examines how Pierre Berton harnessed emerging media to grow his audience. The rapidity with which he published, combined with his frequent presence on Canadian television programs, launched Berton as a Canadian cultural celebrity. **Chapter Four** situates Sheila Watson within a media discourse for which she is little known to demonstrate her ongoing exploration of the relationship between technology and power. It then locates Watson's reticence to employ new media as a promotional strategy

for her creative work within the context of her theorization of emerging technologies. **Chapter Five** demonstrates Leonard Cohen's chameleon-like response to emerging technologies as he sought to reposition poetry as a mass cultural phenomenon. Both embracing and resenting poetry's elite status, Cohen desired a larger audience, a goal at odds with his chosen genre. As a whole, this dissertation's historically situated media analysis reveals intersections between Canadian nationalism and new media. Moreover, it demonstrates how the routinized social patterns that develop alongside media do not naturally derive from technology, but rather reflect the political and aesthetic investments of writers, publishers, and policy makers.

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List of Abbreviations

CBC   Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

CPR   Canadian Pacific Railway

CRTC   Canadian Radio-Television Commission

HMMP   H. Marshall McLuhan Papers

JMP   Jack McClelland Papers

M&S   McClelland & Stewart

MSF   McClelland & Stewart Fonds

NCL   New Canadian Library

PBF   Pierre Berton Fonds

SWF   Sheila Watson Fonds

Introduction
The Codex, the Digital Book, and the Anxious Myth of Extinction

Last month, flying back from Chicago, I plugged my ear-buds into the in-flight entertainment system and pressed my index finger to the touch-screen on the back of the chair in front of me until I found CBC News. There, I heard the voice of Lisa Laco introduce her guest, Kristy Chen, an economist with the Bank of Montreal who specializes in the pulp and paper industry. In the interview, Chen charted the decline of Canadian paper manufacturing, with the pessimistic prophecy that this trend will only get worse. She gave three reasons: first, the slow pace of global economic recovery; second, the steady decline in the demand for newsprint as a result of the rising popularity of new media; and third, the rapid growth of China's pulp and paper industry, which is reducing the need for Canada's products on the global market. Positioned between the economic realities of a recession and the rising power of Eastern markets was the comment that caught my attention. My surprise was echoed in Laco's follow up question: have e-readers really changed the face of the paper industry so dramatically? Yes, Chen assured the audience, the e-reader has changed the face of publishing, most notably impacting newsprint.

Perhaps this announcement should not have felt so shocking. I am used to radical statements about how new technology is ushering in the death of print. The relationship between emerging and established media is, after all, the subject of my dissertation. What startled me was the way that Chen's point renders obvious the connection between the publishing

industry and the paper industry. A focus on the materiality of the book is supposedly the central object of study of book history, yet I rarely think about the connection between the out-of-work loggers who were a staple of my Vancouver Island upbringing and my current urban preoccupation with the future of the book. Chen's argument adds digital publishing to the list of reasons why the paper industry is failing. In so doing, she perpetuates the myth of supersession: digital publishing is replacing print publishing. With her focus on newsprint, she attempts to complicate the assertion —implying that the industry is nuanced and diverse, and thus it is difficult to homogenize the entire publishing sector—but the lasting impression she gives her audience is that new technology replaces old technology, and thus, paper is the way of the past. Anyone who has to synthesize an industry crisis in a matter of minutes is bound to cut a few corners; yet, I cannot help but notice that this sort of analysis, the sort of analysis that claims that new technologies produce radical change, is commonplace.

In 2008 when I began this project, The University of Alberta Bookstore was the only place in Canada with an Espresso Book Machine, a device that can print and bind a book on demand in less than three minutes. Five years later, there are 14 of these machines in Canada, most of which are located on University campuses ("Espresso"). With this device, the bookstore can customize a text for a student or professor's needs by pulling material from an online database and placing it in the customer's hands in minutes. This is just one example of how new technology is changing the face of

publishing. Innovative print-on-demand technologies are situated in a plethora of new delivery technologies that are challenging the publishing industry: these include portable reading devices (Kindle, Sony Reader, Kobo, etc.); tablets and smart phones (iPad, iPhone, Blackberry, Android, etc.); laptops and netbooks; and desktop computers. The rapidity of innovation has resulted in an environment of uncertainty and anxiety as to the future of the book in the new media world. Yet the challenges presented by this technological innovation are not a new dilemma: historically, writers and publishers have always been forced to negotiate the relationship between established and emerging media.

An analysis of this dynamic requires not only an understanding of delivery technologies but also an awareness of the routinized social practices in which these technologies are embedded. Media analysis investigates the "ritualized collocation of different people on the same mental map, sharing or engaged with popular ontologies of representation" that constitute "socially realized structures of communication" (Gitelman 7). Moreover, an analysis of the relationship between established and emerging media adds the additional complication of acknowledging these media as historical phenomena. Media are historical subjects, and the concept of new media is not solely a contemporary problem.

The new media of today will become the established media of tomorrow. An illustrative example of this is the paperback book; although it may seem ubiquitously unremarkable today, its advent had revolutionary

consequences, making "the book, for the first time in its long history, one of the mass media" (Morpurgo 12). The paperback transformed the democratization of literacy into "a marketable commodity" (Joicey 56) and took the book to the pockets and purses of the public. Histories of the paperback revolution often isolate Allen Lane's launch of Penguin in the United Kingdom in 1935 as the turning point in paperback publishing history (Gustafson, Morpurgo, Ogle). This narrative highlights Lane as a visionary and asserts that this one specific venture was a site of radical rupture. The new technology for print delivery was celebrated for making books affordable; derided for the way it destroyed the aura of the book by implying that the intellectual contents held within it were discardable; and employed to open new markets for distribution, especially in the realms of educational publishing. Further, it altered the economies of scale necessary for publishers to make a profit and encouraged new reading practices as students and scholars felt free to scribble notes in the margins, mark passages with the obnoxious colours of highlighter pens, and in the absence of bookmarks dog-ear pages .

Despite all of these traits presumed to be revolutionary, the paperback, in fact, has a more gradual and nuanced history; historical antecedents complicate the narrative that the paperback is a twentieth-century invention. John Tebbel argues that we can see the paperback as "a continuing phenomenon whose origins date back to the 1840s" (67). Janet Friskney expands on Tebbel's work and acknowledges that, "even prior to

that decade, certain types of publications, such as almanacs or works issued

in instalments had often appeared in paper covers" (7). By the beginning of

the 1840s, an industry of "extras"—reprints of serial fiction in the form of

"complete novels produced cheaply in quarto format" (7) and bound in paper

covers—were being produced by American newspaper publishers and

distributed by mail order. Notably, Christian Bernhard von Tauchnitz

launched Tauchnitz Editions in 1837, a series of paperback reprints of

Anglophone classics marketed in continental Europe (Davis 19). Lane's

revolutionary venture evolved out of these earlier practices. Nevertheless,

the launch of Penguin Books marks the moment when book historians can

pinpoint a specific paperback business venture that was the turning point for

the publishing industry.

　　　　Not only is it difficult to isolate the paperback's exact time and place of

birth, it is also difficult to integrate the paperback into a binary model of old

and new media. Undeniably, the paperback changed the publishing industry

and forced publishers to renegotiate the role of the hardcover book, a

process that is still underway today.[1] While the advent of the paperback

altered the industry, it is nevertheless a variation of the codex, an established

delivery technology that has existed since the third century CE (Darnton 23).

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[1] While the 1950s and '60s saw the backlist paperback as the backbone of the publishing industry, John B. Thompson examines how the price wars of American big box stores have challenged this dynamic: by "the early 2000s, paperback sales, especially in the mass-market format, had begun to fall off, undercut by the decline in the price differential between hardcover and paperback editions and in the widespread availability of attractively produced, heavily discounted hardcovers" (378).

To acknowledge the paperback as a codex is to classify it as an established technology. It is precisely because the paperback confounds simple classification that it is an ideal object of study to think through the complex relationship between established and emerging media.

The digital book is also an object of study that confounds this binary. While the delivery technology has changed—the book is no longer a codex— the majority of the publishing practice remains the same. The publisher is still responsible for acquiring, editing, designing, typesetting, and publicizing the book. These tasks account for the majority of the expenses of publication: "the costs associated with the production of the physical book—print, paper, and binding—are in fact a relatively small proportion of the publisher's costs" (Thompson 337). In this way, the digital book marks a radical shift in delivery technologies and simultaneously attests to the consistent and stable nature of textual production. Both the paperback and the digital book resist easy classification and are inherently paradoxical in their ability to be viewed as both old and new at the same time. Unfortunately, the discourse that surrounds the emergence of digital publishing is inflected with a vocabulary of radical newness that prevents an awareness of historical antecedents that can help us think through the introduction of this new technology.

This dissertation analyzes the relationship between literature and new media through an investigation of the book in a Canadian context and draws on conversations in the disciplines of English, book history, sociology, and new media studies. To better understand the relationship between print

and digital forms of publishing, I propose a look backwards, to a similar

moment in Canadian history, when paperback publishing became common

practice and provided new opportunities and challenges for Canada's cultural

industries. Focused on the post-WWII nation-building period, when

publishing in Canada struggled to determine not only the place of the

paperback in the book trade but also the relationship of the book to other

mass-market communications technologies, such as radio and television, this

dissertation analyzes the move of Canadian publishing firm McClelland &

Stewart toward paperback publishing as the process gained prominence and

the varying effects this move had on three of its writers: Pierre Berton, Sheila

Watson, and Leonard Cohen. I examine McClelland & Stewart's (M&S's)

publishing practice under the rubric of the theory of remediation (Bolter &

Grusin, Druick): the ways new technology draws on the cultural capital of old

media to gain cultural legitimacy, and the ways established media are forced

in turn to respond to new media, creating a dialectical relationship. I then

examine the manifestations of this process in the national context of Canada's

other cultural industries, especially the development of the new medium of

television. Although a private publishing house, M&S emulates the logic of

cultural policy associated with nation building on a governmental level,

challenging the belief that nation building is always a top-down, state-funded

project. This unified view of M&S' employment of new media in the service of

Canadian content is then complicated by case studies that show how three

different M&S authors took very diverse approaches to technological

development. These case studies position M&S authors in their historical milieux to create a spectrum of analysis that spans from populist to modernist engagements with the rise of new media. In doing so, I locate a tension between communication models—that is the simplification of book production at a particular moment in history—and the case histories of individual authors. I argue for the importance of analyzing new media not as objects, but as "cultural systems" mobilized by individuals with various political and aesthetic investments (Jenkins 14).

This dissertation consists of five chapters, divided into two parts: **Part One** provides a theoretical and historical framework and consists of two chapters. **Chapter One** introduces the vocabulary of new media studies to the discipline of book history. It draws upon the theory of remediation (Bolter & Grusin) and is grounded in the belief that old media are not superseded by new technology but rather forced to adapt to and evolve with new developments (Duguid). This chapter defines media as more than just technological delivery systems: media are also the cultural logics that have evolved alongside these technologies. That is to say, media are "cultural systems," not a stagnant set of practices but an ongoing negotiation between users and producers (Jenkins 14). As Marshall McLuhan has argued, technology shapes the environments in which we live (*Understanding* vi). While I build on McLuhan's assertion that new media changes our perception of the world, I trouble his rhetoric—a rhetoric common to many contributors to new media studies—that depicts new technologies as acting agents

divorced from human players with political, economic, or personal motivation. This theoretical investigation is then grounded in the specific medium of the paperback to show how an analysis of the paperback necessitates an investigation of the physical, social, aesthetic, and economic networks in which it is situated.

Chapter Two places the theoretical framework within a Canadian context and examines the intersections among the established media of the book, the rise of the paperback, and the interaction between publishing and other forms of media. This conversation about the role of the paperback—a conversation that has direct parallels to current debates around new media—is situated in a larger conversation around the relationship between technology and artistic practices; aesthetics and morality; technology and nation building; and the economic survival of the cultural industries. In Canada, this conversation is inflected with nationalist anxieties concerned with the vitality of local production in the face of international media networks, distribution channels, and artistic circles. The end of this chapter provides a brief history of M&S and its prince of publishing, Jack McClelland, and reveals how McClelland's personal politics shaped the publishing firm he inherited from his father. This example demonstrates how human agents shape the ways in which new technology is integrated into social practice.

To complicate Ryan Edwardson's argument in *Canadian Content: Culture and the Quest for Nationhood* (2008) that Canadian culture transitioned in the latter half of the twentieth century from a period of high

culture and British influence towards a cultural-industries model, **Part Two** investigates three M&S authors. By demonstrating that multiple positions (from middlebrow to avant-garde) are occupied—even by the same publishing house—at any one time, I illuminate the ways in which three different authors shaped their work in response to the cultural systems of Canada's publishing industry. Each of the writers examined in this section established a unique audience by either recoiling from technology or embracing it in its many varieties.

Chapter Three turns to the work of Canadian historian Pierre Berton, who dedicated his life to cultivating and promoting a distinctly Canadian mythology through the use of print, radio, and television. While Berton was marginalized from the educational sector, M&S promoted him as Canada's best-selling author, whose books were featured on the coffee tables of many Canadian households while his image reached the country as a frequent contestant on *Front Page Challenge*. Berton harnessed new media to tell Canadian stories that strengthened the country's national self-image. Simultaneously, he used mass communications technologies to grow his readership and build the Berton brand. To illustrate this multimedia approach, this chapter focuses on Berton's investigation of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), a venture he believed was Canada's great epic battle against the country's harsh natural environment. *The National Dream: The Great Railway 1871-1881* (1970) and *The Last Spike: The Great Railway 1881-1885* (1972) both hit the best-sellers list, and it has been estimated that in

1971 Berton "accounted for 20 percent of McClelland & Stewart's net profits"

(Parker qtd. in McKillop 525). In addition to an illustrated, coffee-table book

on the same subject, *The Great Railway: Illustrated* (1972), Berton narrated a

eight-part miniseries for the CBC based on his books (1974). The miniseries

demonstrates Berton's vision of a symbiotic relationship between print and

television. As narrator, he reminds the audience that if the viewer is left with

questions at the end of the program, he or she should consult Berton's

award-winning publications.[2] This tactic simultaneously solidifies his

qualifications as narrator and advertises his print publications. In this way,

the miniseries does not replace the book, but rather works to promote print

media. His work as a historian, public intellectual, and celebrity all sought to

use media as a form of national infrastructure to join the country: to use

technological nationalism to safeguard Canada's sovereignty by

disseminating a distinct national mythology.

   Chapter Four analyzes Canadian modernist author Sheila Watson's

relationship to communications technology by correlating her critical work

on the British modernist writer and artist Wyndham Lewis, her unpublished

and largely unexamined correspondence with her dissertation supervisor

Marshall McLuhan, her writings on photography and mechanization in the

journal *White Pelican*, and her correspondence with McClelland and Stewart

on the publication and promotion of her fiction, especially her letters

regarding radio and television reproduction rights. McClelland's publisher's

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[2] Although the series was based on Berton's books, it was written by William
Whitehead and Timothy Findley, with Berton serving as consultant.

foreword to her most famous novel, *The Double Hook* (1959), is noteworthy for its assertion that it was M&S's "first original publication in paper covers" (McClelland, qtd. in Watson n.p.). While McClelland concedes that "first publication of novels and other serious literary forms in paper-covered editions is standard practice in France," he asserts that in Canada "it is still an experimental concept" (McClelland, qtd. in Watson n.p.). Of course, this gambit "lays claim to inaugurating a practice of issuing books in paper covers that much smaller experimental Canadian publishers of avant-garde books […] had been doing for decades" (Irvine 2). Nevertheless, M&S's innovative marketing campaign linked the experimental nature of the novel with a radically new publishing practice of launching books in paperback.

Chapter Five merges archival evidence with literary analysis to analyze Leonard Cohen's liminal position between a high-art persona and a desire for greater distribution and publicity. I focus on two series of correspondence: letters between Cohen and editor Claire Pratt of M&S regarding the writer's self-fashioning and his shift from hardcover to paperback publication as a way to cultivate his audience; and letters between Cohen and Jack McClelland pertaining to the publisher's mounting frustration with a reclusive author who complains of a lack of royalties while refusing to make public appearances. The McGill Poetry Series published Cohen's first volume of poetry, *Let Us Compare Mythologies*, in 1956. Five years later, M&S published Cohen's second poetry collection, *The Spice-Box of Earth* (1961). In the few years between these two publications, Cohen shifted from a desire to

see his work bound in hard cover—he paid $300 out of his own pocket to have *Let Us Compare Mythologies* produced in cloth, rather than paperback (Nadel 44)—to a belief that paperback publication would increase his sales. M&S's initial plan was to launch *The Spice-Box of Earth* as a part of their elegant Indian File Series (McClelland and Stewart Papers Box 20, File 6). In response, Cohen penned an animated letter to Clare Pratt to express his belief that "the expensive, hard-bound poetry book is obsolete" and that he would hate to have his work "isolated in some prestige production aimed at libraries and Governor-General Award Committees." Instead, he asks Pratt to work with him "on a cheap, beautiful cover and format which would appeal to inner-directed adolescents, lovers in all degrees of anguish[,] [. . .] unpublished writers, curious musicians" and the general rabble which constitute a popular audience (Box 20, File 6). In response to Cohen's wishes, the book was published simultaneously in hardcover and paperback (Box 20, File 6). This chapter pairs these archival documents with an investigation of the themes of mechanization and technology in Cohen's novel *Beautiful Losers* (1966) and the abstract-expressionist art of Harold Town that was used in the novel's publicity schemes. I trace how McClelland strategically constructed an association between Town and Cohen to place Cohen in the conflicted position between national darling and rebellious artist. McClelland selected Town because he believed that his abstract expressionist style appealed to the same potential consumers who constituted Cohen's audience. At times waffling on his stance on the place of technology in the human

landscape and his relationship to the book as a form of mass-market communication, Cohen nevertheless shifted from hardcover to paperback publication as a way to cultivate his audience.

The examination of these three very different authors highlights the complex and conflicted role of the paperback in M&S's publishing practice. This attests to not only each author's unique position on new media but also the ways in which the paperback is located in a constellation of delivery technologies (the hardcover book, radio, television, etc.). To investigate the rise of the paperback in Canada, one must look at the entire media field, taking up the dialectic and codependent relationship among media. The project as a whole argues that the rhetoric of radical "newness" that surrounds emerging media blinds us to the fact that similar trends in publishing have happened before. Discourse analysis allows us to see how the crisis occasioned by new media is both historically ubiquitous and predicated upon a simplification of a network of practices to arrive at media-ready sound-bites that flatten a plethora of interrelated concerns. What is lost in this manufactured state of crisis is not only the ability to think clearly through the cultivated sense of public panic and uncertainty, but also an understanding of the ways in which media are codependent. The threat of extinction, the belief that the codex will not endure, is predicated upon a misunderstanding of the very nature of media itself. To discuss the future of publishing at all is problematic in that it homogenizes multiple industries: trade publishing, children's publishing, educational publishing, genre specific

practices and markets, etc. The future of the book will most certainly have

economic ramifications. As Kristy Chen reminds us, this extends beyond the

publishing industry to the pulp and paper manufactures that transform trees

into the tactile pages of books. Yet, the debate concerning the future of new

media is not only a conversation about natural resources and economic

prospects but also a hotly contested site of cultural capital, aesthetic

practices, and national sentiments. This tension between the practical

realities of business and the fervent passions of cultural producers is the

heart of the enigma that is publishing. This particular enigma is situated at

the nexus of the "broader social, political and cultural environment" as well

as "government policies towards the book" (Kovac 64). To begin to

understand this complex phenomena, one must look at all the strata that

make up the terrain of this industry, from the abstractly theoretical to the

legacies of individual writers who position themselves in an evolving

environment of technological practices.

Chapter One:
At the Intersections of Book History, New Media Studies, and Sociology

There are two competing histories of the development of communications technologies. One has boiled away the flesh of history, until there is nothing left but a clearly demarcated skeleton. In the process of distillation, the voices of designers, marketers, artists, and users evaporate. The other is so attuned to the fat of detail that it becomes difficult to see any paradigmatic development. Instead, individual histories complicate any ability to generalize.

One example of a fleshless skeleton is Don Tapscott's recent lecture, "Innovation, Technology, and the Social Impact of Technology," at the University of Alberta as part of the *Festival of Ideas* (2012), which distilled the history of man into three distinct ages: 1) Agrarian, 2) Industrial, and 3) the present age of Networked Intelligence and Collaboration. Tapscott asserts that the printing press paved the path for the Industrial Revolution, just as the Internet advanced society into a new dawn of networked intelligence. In a utopic vision, Tapscott asserts that humanity is building a machine that will allow everyone to collaborate. A new dawn has arrived, severing the past from the present.

At first glance, this skeletal narrative resembles the work of Robert Darnton, who distills the history of the book into four major inventions: the development of writing (4000 BCE); the replacement of the scroll by the codex (3rd century CE); the invention of movable type (1450s); and the invention of electronic communication (recent past). However, Darnton

cautions that these four dramatic shifts are countered by the consistency of "the inherent instability of texts" (*The Case* 21-23). He argues, "every age was an age of information, each in its own way, and that information has always been unstable" (23). This work follows from the work of Febvre and Martin, who sought to dispel the myth that Gutenberg shifted the mode of production overnight; instead, Darton argues, "they detected long-lasting patterns of structural stability, which led them to challenge accepted wisdom, including the belief that Gutenberg produced an immediate revolution in the publishing industry" (144). While the four inventions that Darnton notes may be isolated as dramatic factors in the history of communication, their effects were more gradual.

Febvre and Martin's argument, however, although foundational for book history, did not permeate more mass-market narratives of the development of print, such as *Life* magazine's list of the most groundbreaking discoveries in human history. The cover of the Millennium issue (Fall 1997) boasts a ranked list of the "100 incredible discoveries[,] cataclysmic events[, and] magnificent moments of the past 1,000 years." Like many such lists, *Life's* narrative of radical rupture asserts that the single most important invention of the last 1,000 years was Gutenberg's printing press in the 15th century, which "unleashed an information epidemic that rages to this day" (133). These examples of skeletal histories metonymically represent a problematic discourse of rupture that prevents us from seeing a more nuanced version of the history of technology.

United by an attempt to articulate the effects of new communications technologies, all of these examples delineate a relationship between old and new media. A single medium cannot be understood in isolation. The rise of a new communications technology must be contextualized within the larger system of which it is a part. My analysis hinges on viewing the larger context in which media coexist. In this chapter I draw on book history, sociology, and new media studies, all of which seek to understand the larger fields in which cultural production operates. This interdisciplinary approach to significant relations demonstrates the dialectical relationship between established and emerging media.

As discussed in the introduction, the paperback is provocative because it is an object of study that complicates the binary logic of new media studies: at its inception it was an established medium (it is a form of the codex) and it was an emerging medium (as a disposable commodity that altered the place of the book in society). I focus on the contradictory logic associated with paperback publication, a logic that defies the old-new media binary, to demonstrate the value of connecting the disciplines of book history and new media studies. In so doing, I draw on the historical range of book history to counter the inclination of new media studies to focus on the present moment—the disciplines very name references 'the new'—and to counter a binary opposition between old and new media.

The Communications Circuit

It would be nearly impossible to write a dissertation grounded, at least partially as this one is, in book history without building on the work of Robert Darnton. His seminal article, "What is the History of Books," was published in *Daedalus* in 1982 and worked to carve out the discipline and define the goals of book history. Darnton worried that the history of books had "become so crowded with ancillary disciplines" that one could "no longer see its general contours" (179). In response, his famous diagram charts the stages in the production of texts, the "communications circuit that runs from the author to the publisher . . ., the printer, the shipper, the bookseller, and the reader" (179), as a way to counteract the tendency for both academic and industry conversations to fragment into smaller, specialized groups. This is its function: to keep the book-binders talking to those who study distribution or bibliography. Thus, his iconic diagram (figure 1) was a way to pull splintering voices into a common conversation and develop a vocabulary that helped delineate the territory of the emerging discipline of book history.

Darnton's diagram is not total synecdoche, but reductive simplification. Its truncated nature makes a visually satisfying teaching-tool that instructors can easily use in PowerPoint presentations for classrooms and conferences. As a result, it often circulates divorced from the article in which it was originally only one, smaller part. This is ironic, considering that Darnton's methodology seeks to address this very problem. Aware that
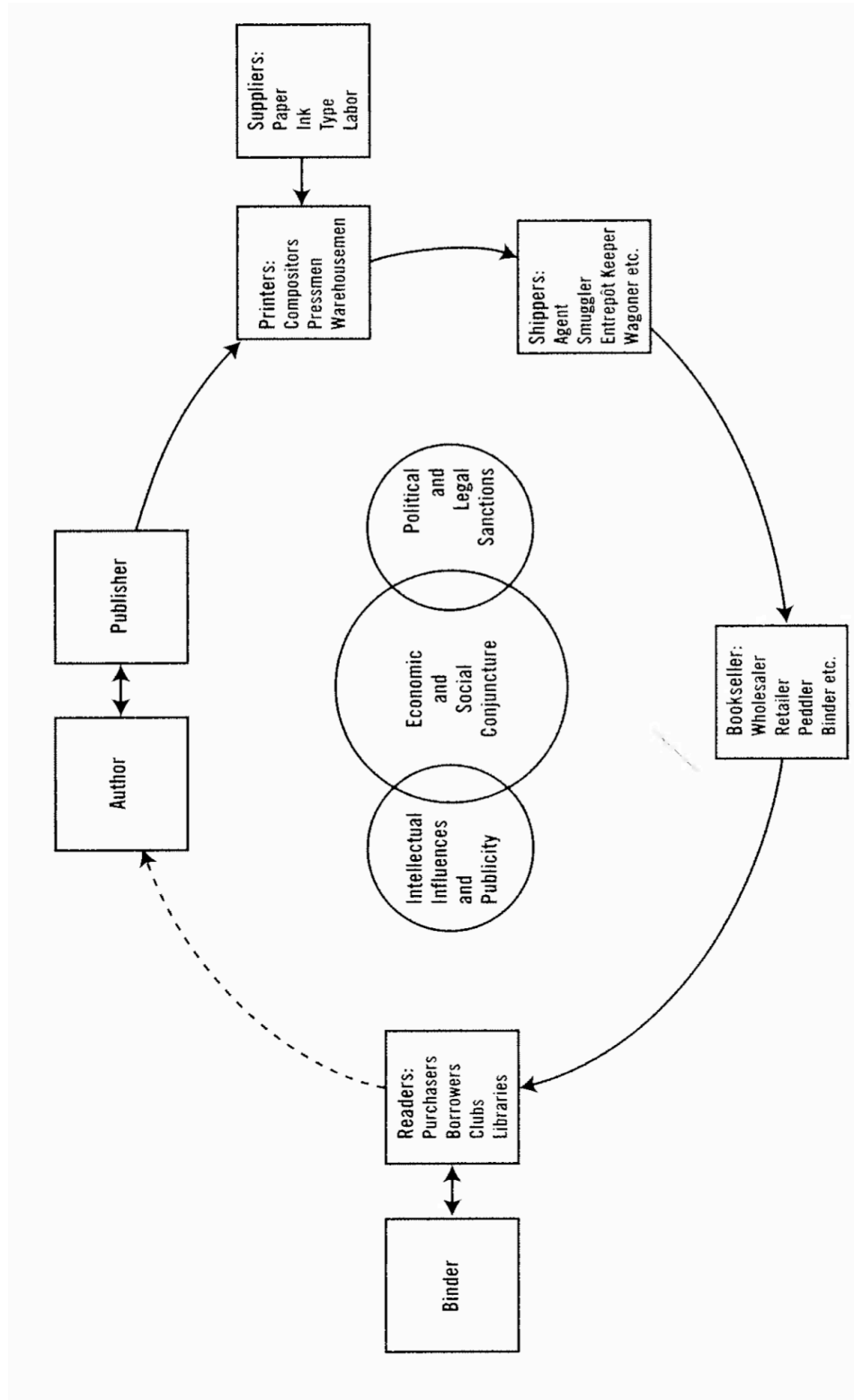
Figure 1 "Communications Circuit" (Darnton, "The Case" 182)

"[m]odels have a way of freezing human beings out of history" (181), he counteracts this abridgement by combining the diagram with a nuanced case study of Voltaire. In this regard, I am indebted to him not only because he helped develop the vocabulary of book history, but also because his technique was the inspiration for my methodology: the theoretical investigation of this dissertation is counterbalanced by the specificity of the case studies.

Let us return to Darnton's diagram, just as he did almost thirty years later in the journal of *Modern Intellectual History*. Darnton suggests four improvements he would make, given the gift of hindsight: 1) he would introduce McKenzie's notion of the sociology of texts: the way meaning is "modified by page design, new modes of presenting scenes, and the typographical articulation of all the parts" (506); 2) he would emphasize the role of paratextuality; 3) he would emphasize the role of intertextuality; and 4) he would draw on Roger Chartier's work of comparative histories, accounting for international circulation, multiple editions, translations, and censorship. While I agree with Darnton that "diagrams are merely meant to sharpen perceptions of complex relationships…[and that t]here may be a limit to the usefulness of a debate about how to place boxes in different positions, provide them with appropriate labels, and connect them with arrows pointed in one direction or another" (Darnton "History of Books Revisited" 505), I want to note that none of these four additions deal directly with new media. This lacuna is exactly the space in which I would like to

make an intervention by drawing the conversations of new media studies into book history.

I am obviously not alone in this impulse. In his more recent publication *The Case for Books* (2009), even Darnton addresses new technological developments. His book launch was paired with radio interviews and stops on the conference circuit (including a keynote address at the 2010 Congress of the Social Sciences and Humanities) where he argued that more codex books continue to be sold every year, which proves that while the e-book reader has found its footing in the marketplace, the old-fashioned book has not been hurt by new technology: book sales are steadily rising (xiii-xiv). Similar to new media theorist Paul Duguid, Darnton rejects the myth of supersession, the belief that new media replaces old media, and instead argues that "the staying power of the old-fashioned codex illustrates a general principle in the history of communication: one medium does not displace another, at least not in the short run" (xiv). I agree with Darnton on this general principle, but I find *The Case for Books* provokes as many questions as it answers.

The cover-design contradicts the text's thesis that the codex will not be replaced and instead depicts an evolved hard cover book, into which has been plugged a series of electrical wires and USB cables to create a hybrid object that shows the merger of book and computer. This metamorphosized codex is wrapped in a dust jacket with the title of Darnton's work *The Case for Books: Past, Present, and Future*. The subtitle for the text moves out of

history into the future and implies that this book-computer assemblage is a prophecy of things to come. Yet the chapters of Darnton's analysis are organized in reverse order: Future, Present, and Past. What remains most perplexing about Darnton's analysis is that he uses his original 1982 essay as the final chapter to the text. Although Darnton mentions the 2007 revised essay in the introduction, it is the thirty-year-old essay that serves as the conclusion to his new book. It is included in a section entitled "Past," the counterweight to the opening section entitled "Future," but it is also the final word in a text without a conclusion. Perhaps it is a reiteration of the book's opening premise, which is that print is actually a growth industry; that is to say, the model of the communications circuit is not being replaced. The order of the chapters creates a structural argument: while the work begins with e-books, Google Books, and the Book Rights Registry, Darnton works to ground this conversation in the larger context of book history and the continuity of textual production. The structure of his book inverts a linear trajectory and ends with the past. The final word is that the diagram is not only still relevant, but also that it does not need to be tampered with to accommodate the technological developments of the last thirty years. All this amounts to a contradictory text, one that leaves many questions about the relationship between the book and new technology unanswered.

Remediation

  To address this question, I investigate how new media has reshaped the communications circuit by introducing the theory of remediation to the vocabulary of book history to examine the relationship among the established media of the book, the rise of the paperback, and the interaction between the publishing sector and other forms of media. Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin published *Remediation: Understanding New Media* in 1999, and since this time the word remediation has become common parlance, most often used as a synonym for repurposing: the way the content from one medium is adapted to another, such as in the digitization of a book, the movie rendition of a popular novel, or the remixing of a popular song over a dance track. This reductive definition of remediation fails to engage with the paradox at the heart of this term.

  Bolter and Grusin begin their work by charting the relationship between *immediacy* and *hypermediacy*. *Immediacy* is the desire to look through technology. They use the example of virtual reality to explain the ambition to have technology recede into the background; the user wants to be within the virtual environment, unimpeded or unaware of the apparatus that makes this experience possible. They contrast this with the term *hypermediacy*, which is the desire to look at. In this form of mediation, the user's attention is drawn towards the technology or apparatus he or she is using. This is the method of the illuminated manuscript, which calls attention to the book as a material object by embellishing the page. These two impulses

are always at play in our society (although Bolter and Grusin believe

immediacy is the dominant mode) and are inextricably combined, because

the only way to move towards *immediacy*, ironically, is through more

mediation. Technological development is what leads to improvements in

computer graphics and our ability to create the artificial landscapes of virtual

reality. The drive to *immediacy* is the logic of trying to achieve an unmediated

environment through the proliferation of media. These two scholars begin

their work with this contradiction, and build their work from this tension. It

is from this position—the tension between looking at and looking through—

that they introduce the term *remediation*.

Remediation is more than repurposing content; for Bolter and Grusin,

it is the mediation of mediation. Media have a co-dependent relationship and

exist in a dialectic (48). New media reference their predecessors to gain

cultural capital. Older media follow one of two possible paths: they are

adapted, drawing on the innovations of new technology; or they are reframed

as offering something that new technology cannot. In this process of reform

and rehabilitation, media ameliorate not just a particular medium (like the

book) but also reality (56). This is because the introduction of any new

technology necessitates a redefinition of the real. In fact, until this has been

done, our society would be unable to recognize the new technology at all.

This argument is founded on an etymological analysis of the Latin root,

remederi, which means to heal. The redefinition of the real produces a lack

that new media can fill, and this improvement is the justification of its

existence (59). For example, the marketers of e-readers explain that the problem with the paperback is that it takes up too much space (it is hard to carry around multiple books at one time and books are burdensome to store once they have been read), and then they offer a device like the Kindle as the solution, since it affords access to multiple texts on a single, portable reader. This depiction of society as comprised of mobile individuals who value lightweight objects and the immediate gratification of downloading their reading material is motivated by a desire to sell a product. Yet any new medium, that is to say, anything that remediates, (65) "remains dependent on…[established media] in acknowledged or unacknowledged ways" (47). Until a new device is interpolated into a pre-existing cultural debate and positioned in relation to older media, it cannot be acknowledged as a medium (65). Therefore, to change the delivery device is impossible without affecting a change on the social landscape. This is because media "technologies constitute networks or hybrids that can be expressed in physical, social, aesthetic, and economic terms" (19).

Medium

Bolter and Grusin do not specifically elaborate on what forms the "physical, social, aesthetic, and economic" (19) networks that constitute a medium, but for the purposes of my investigation, I define the physical network as both print and digital reproductions of texts. It is the object that we call a medium. The physical network of remedial practices is concerned

with research and development; it is the knowledge of how to reproduce a

text in a given form and is comprised of such delivery technologies as the

scroll, the codex, and the computer.[3] To define the social network, I adopt the

thinking of Henry Jenkins, who draws on the work of Lisa Gitelman, to define

a medium as both "a technology that enables communication" and "a set of

'protocols' and cultural practices that have grown up around that technology"

(13). The social network is comprised of ritualized behaviours. As

communities alter their practices in response to new technology, society's

definition of what constitutes culture evolves. At its most reductive, the

aesthetic network is comprised of a series of conversations about what

constitutes art; what constitutes good art; what constitutes art's function;

who should consume art; and how it should be consumed. Even more simply,

the aesthetic network consists of a debate over what constitutes culture. The

economic field is everything that regulates the economic profit that can be

derived from artistic production. This includes, but is not limited to

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[3] I am aware that digital tools are both changing the books that we read and
the ways that we can read them. These include computer languages (XML
(Extensible Mark-up Language), etc); Geographical Information Systems
(GIS); Augmented Reality (AR) applications (smartphone applications which
allow for interactive tours of cities, buildings, or archives); and new tools for
the analysis of these digital objects, genetic editions, and large digital archival
repositories including interfaces, databases, and concept mapping (such as
wordclouds). This list, while in no way exhaustive, does not even begin to
touch on the plethora of developments in data storage that have emerged
alongside these digital tools. I want to bracket an evaluative analysis of these
tools and leave this work to the digital humanists, so that I can focus on how
the social landscape expands with technological innovation and does not
always annex old technology in favour of the new.

copyright[4], the notion of authorship, and intellectual property legislation, as

well as the marketing and publicity teams that work alongside artistic

producers to help them build an audience. It also includes material

constraints, like the cost of paper, the cost of printing, or the economies of

scale that determine whether there is a sufficient audience to offset the cost

of production.[5] In order to adequately examine any medium, one must try to

keep all of these networks in view.

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[4] "[C]opyright laws recognize only individual invention or composition (or that by a small group). In general, they do not recognize oral traditions or folk music as copyrightable, and do not establish rights to an invention or idea" (Seeger, qtd. in McLeod 242). This concept of intellectual ownership is based on Enlightenment thought (245) and entrenches private property rights alongside the commercialization of publishing. In addition, it perpetuates the myth that brilliant individuals produce works of significant importance as a result of divine inspiration. This does not help us see the way in which texts are often the result of collective conversations, writers' circles, and complicated editorial processes.

[5] In a Canadian context, the economic field includes Canadian content legislation; buy local campaigns; and national book clubs, like CBC's Canada Reads. This sort of cultural-capitalist policy attests to the impossibility of addressing any one these fields without invoking the others, as is necessary when discussing Canada's cultural industries. A pure "capitalist logic is, of course, opposed to the development of public funds in the service of an ethically derived set of preferences" (Lewis 4), and yet we know that the dominant logic of capitalism is constantly tempered by other socialist, nationalist, religious, moral, ethical, humanitarian, and aesthetic debates. As a result, the government has developed a series of subsidies that make artistic practices viable, despite the fact that many producers are unable to attract an audience large enough to offset the cost of their production. This practice redefines culture as an "endangered species" (4) that must be protected from the violent and destructive tendencies of the market. This field is further complicated by the fuzzy boundary between industries. For example, the service industry is tied to the arts and entertainment industry by the fact that people often go out for diner before seeing a play or stop for a drink on the way home from a film. As a result, economists have a difficult time delineating what constitutes the boundaries of the economic benefits of the arts and entertainment industry.

Technology

Bolter & Grusin were certainly not the first scholars to draw attention to the complex strata of networks affected by media technologies. This parsing of technological practice has correlatives in the philosophy of Heidegger, the communications theory of Marshall McLuhan, and the new media theory of Matthew Kirschenbaum (to name perhaps the most famous examples from a variety of disciplines), all of whom work to articulate the implications of technological development beyond the physical. For Heidegger, every aspect of contemporary life—science, art, religion, and culture—is the essence of technology (Lovitt xxxii); it is the will to reveal through understanding, and this is the will to alter.[6] The desire to know becomes the desire to systematize, to order, which is inherently technological. In this definition, technology is not merely the ontic manifestation of a material object, but also an ontological condition, a will to mastery that is approached but never achieved.[7] In a similar vein, McLuhan works to direct his readers away from the red herring that is the content of

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[6] Technology is rooted to the arts through its Greek etymology; *techne* "is the name not only for the activities and skills of the craftsman, but also for the arts of the mind and the fine arts. *Techne* belongs to the bringing-forth, to *poiesis*; it is something poietic" (Heidegger 13). It precedes modern science: from "the earliest times until Plato the word *techne* is linked to the word *episteme*. Both words are names for knowing in the widest sense. They mean to be entirely at home in something, to understand and be expert in it" (13).
[7] Ironically, the "will to mastery becomes all the more urgent the more technology threatens to slip from human control" (Heidegger 5). In this analysis is the logic of science-fiction-horror, where technology slips from human command and comes to dominate the very minds that gave it birth. This assertion is the root of the technological determinism that permeates media studies.

media and towards the cultural systems created through mediation; he clarifies that "any technology gradually creates a totally new human environment. Environments are not passive wrappings but active processes" (*Understanding* vi). In analyzing language as a technology, McLuhan forces his readers to abandon any definition of technology as something tangible, and instead, like Heidegger, asserts that technology is a logic. Kirschenbaum's award-winning intervention into both book history and new media studies, *Mechanisms: New Media and the Forensic Imagination* (2008), draws on poststructuralist literary theory to remind readers that there is always a logical, sign level to digital media. I draw on various disciplines here not only to argue that the need to discuss technology as a cultural logic spans the disciplines, but also to show that each of these authors foregrounds this information because it is easily overlooked. This is exactly what is neglected when the word remediation is used as a synonym for repurposing: this definition fails to engage with the shift in cultural systems that result from the introduction of any new medium.

Commentaries that focus on the intersection of technology and society range from optimistic speculation to anxious eulogies. On both sides of this binary, it is important to look for the context out of which the author makes his or her argument. Those who stand to make economic gains from new developments optimistically speculate, while those who feel that their careers are in jeopardy and that they are about to be displaced condemn new media. The tragedy of potential supersession is constructed from fear, the

terror of potential redundancy. Time and again, these motivations go

unnoticed because of a common linguistic trap, where "any mention of

human agents…[have been trimmed out], as if media were naturally the way

they are, without authors, designers, engineers, entrepreneurs,

programmers, investors, owners, or audiences" (Gitelman 9). Lisa Gitelman

attributes this rhetorical flaw—a flaw perpetrated by Bolter and Grusin—to

the concentration of ownership that results in media conglomerates (both

vertical and horizontal integration) and produces a discourse that reduces

the media to a unified acting force. In a similar vein, Paul Duguid notes that

by a simple slip of the tongue we have shifted from talking about freedom of

information to the belief that technology wants to be free. In this transition,

technology becomes personified in a dangerous manner similar to "the

media" (74). In both of these arguments human players are erased from the

conversation. Essentially, we have a problem with the way we talk about

media. The reductive terminology blinds us to the political and economic

because an evaluative conversation on technological capabilities eclipses an

analysis of the ways technologies are mobilized in our society.

No one is more aware of this problem than post-humanist digital

scholar N. Katherine Hayles, who uses a Deluzian rhetoric of assemblages to

challenge the binary between human and machine and employs a vocabulary

of "post-biological subjectivities" (Hayles *My*, 6) and "digital creatures" (10),

yet accuses authors who make anthropomorphic slippages of creating

(mis)understandings about the computer's functioning. Mystifying the computer's actual operation, anthropomorphic projection creates a cultural imaginary in which digital subjects are understood as autonomous creatures imbued with human-like motives, goals, and strategies. This projection also has a reverse undertow, for it brings into question the extent to which human beings can be understood as computer programs. (5)

Instead, Hayles explains the relationship between man and machine as one of technogenesis, that is, the ways in which "humans and technics have coevolved over time" (*How* 10). Her work employs a paleoanthropological methodology to examine how tools play an inextricable part in human evolution. At the core of this analysis is the belief that technology and people are mutually constitutive in a manner that would make it impossible to ever fully bracket tools from consciousness. The full implication of this work is most readily eveident in the provocative title of her 2005 work, *My Mother Was a Computer: Digital Subjects and Literary Texts*. Playfully toying with the relationship between gender and technology, her title simultaneously makes reference to clerical workers—often female—who were referred to as computers during the inter-war years; to the way in which this labour has been largely replaced by computational machinery; and finally to the possibility that human consciousness may one day live on in some sort of machine prosthesis. Despite complicating the binary between man and

machine, she is careful to avoid both humanoid descriptions of computers and programs and the technological fetishism that often permeates media studies.[8]

For a quintessential example of the anthropomorphic rhetorical strategy Hayles cautions her readers against, we can turn to Ursula M. Franklin's 1990 Massey Lectures. Franklin examines what "social transformations will be needed for the real world of technology to become a healthy and sane habitat for human beings" (4). Franklin begins her first lecture with the assertion that "technology has built the house in which we all live" (1). Not only is society bound by technology, but it is also "an agent of power and control" (3) acting of its own accord. There is no mention of the human players that shape this force. The impetus for the conversation, then, is a power struggle between the agent of technology and a humanity that struggles to quell, contain, and conquer it. What terrifies Franklin about the technological agent is its ability to control the human population; if "we do not wish to visualize people as sources of problems and machines and devices as sources of solutions, then we need to consider machines and devices as cohabitants of this earth within the limiting parameters applied to human populations," she writes (25). Technology is described as an inorganic "cohabitant" (25) with equal status to human communities, a Frankenstein-like creation no longer under the master's control.

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[8] Technological fetishism endows technology with "self-contained, mysterious, or even magical powers to move and shape the world in distinctive ways" (Harvey 3)

There are two aspects of this argument that warrant attention: one is a fear of the perfectibility of the human form occasioned by technological innovation; the other is a belief that technology exerts control over humanity, a control that must be resisted, whether by government policy or individual awareness. This fear of the perfectibility of man long predates Franklin's lecture series and has deep roots in modernity; it was a common modernist reaction to The Second Industrial Revolution, "which entailed nothing less than the mechanization of the whole city" (Kenner 25).[9] I want to bracket this first anxiety, so that I can address it more fully in my fourth chapter on modernist writer Sheila Watson. For now, I want to focus on the second aspect of Franklin's concern. Although her technological pessimism is not ubiquitous among media theorists, the tendency to speak about technology as an agent of social change, divorced from human players, occurs at all points on the technological spectrum. Technological optimists equally employ a discourse of technological agency; only in this form of discourse, technology is an agent of good.

What, then, is a functional definition of technology? Shall we use Heidegger's definition that technology is both "a means to an end…[and] a human activity" (4) or Kenneth Boulding's definition that technology is a way of doing something, for it consists not only of artifacts, but "also of the skills and habits of the people who use these artifacts, for the artifacts themselves

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[9] Kenner acknowledges that the term "The Second Industrial Revolution" originates from vorticist scholar Richard Cork.

are useless unless people know how to use them" (126).[10] Both definitions

move beyond material incarnations to the ways in which technology is

integrated into social practice: technology is not merely an object, but also a

logic. A functional definition of the term must incorporate both the physical

and the social, to acknowledge the human players that design, employ, and

sell new technologies.

Culture

Any discussion about the evolution of cultural practices necessitates a

turn to history; that is, we need to situate media in the historical contexts out

of which they evolved. Of course, this is to acknowledge the new historicist

(re)definition of history as itself a text or non-stable narrative open to

constant revision and subject to local perspectives, as opposed to a "holistic

master story of large-scale structural elements directing a whole society"

(Veeser xiii). Central to this methodology is the belief that "literary and non-

literary 'texts' circulate inseparably," and thus it is difficult to delineate the

boundaries between foreground (literature) and background (history) (xi).

Instead, material practices are forever enmeshed in artistic production in

such a way that analysis necessitates an engagement with history.

This approach is potentially out of vogue or at least counter to what

Alan Liu has diagnosed as a tendency of problematic post-modern

historicism: a time of artistic and theoretical movements that "cut themselves

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[10] Franklin draws on Boulding in her Massey Lectures.

from the past with the prefix *post-* (the successor to the twentieth-century movements signed *avant-*)" (*Local* 1). Technology is at the heart of the whole sea of post-theoretical paradigms, and the Canadian grounding for this work is my attempt to speak back to one of its most prevalent iterations: the post-national. Cultural practices are rooted in a time and a place. Even the current trend to speak of the internet as facilitating the dissolution of national identities and the move towards global consciousness is itself a historical product of the conditions of modernity that paved the intellectual space for this supposed freedom from nationalism. To address the cultural practices that are inseparable from technology, one must look at history, which inevitably includes an awareness of both time and place.

One possible way through this history is to examine how culture has been defined over time. My search for a definition of this term has lead me to agree with Raymond Williams' belief that culture "is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language" (76). With the ultimate goal of demonstrating how static concepts are fluid, he reminds us that "[c]ulture in all its early uses was a noun of process: the tending of something, basically crops or animals" (77). It is a logic that stems from agriculture, the desire to improve nature to maximize food production. Cultivation of the natural world "was extended to human development" (77) until "the idea of a general process of intellectual, spiritual, and aesthetic development was applied and effectively transferred to the works and practices which represent and sustain it" (80). From this derives the Arnoldian belief that culture is the best

of what has been thought and made. I am not interested in validating

positions in the culture debate; instead, I use discourse analysis to reveal

how these truth claims constitute a process that creates value or what

Bourdieu has called a "belief in the value of the work" ("Field" 37).

According to Liu's *The Laws of Cool: Knowledge Work and the Culture

of Information* (2004), this sort of historical work, work that intervenes in

discussions about the ontology of art, is threatened by the current state of the

university. Where is the place for humanities scholarship, which is inherently

historical, in the current climate where there is no longer a distinction

between the university and industry, but instead, the two impulses have

become synonymous? Here I return to my conjecture that history is out of

vogue. Liu pushes this argument beyond the discipline of English and writes

in opposition to what he sees as a university-wide apathy to historical

investigation. The contemporary moment, Liu argues, is a landscape of

information systems administration, which is without aesthetic or moral

debates; instead, the university has shifted to a corporate model devoted to

the information economy. Liu's project is both to question the place for the

humanities in this new world and lobby for the reinsertion of ethical and

aesthetic debates in the current climate. While Hayles reads Liu as trying to

make alliances between the "cool" makers (graphic designers, knowledge

workers, etc.) and humanities scholars, who can add historical depth (*How*

32), I find Liu's call for "creative destruction" (1), "destructive creativity"

(317), and "ethical hackers" (8) to preclude any sense of a collaborative

merger. In his diction we can hear a dismissive summation of the current

information economy, one that produces a lack that only cultural criticism,

with its sense of history, is qualified to fill. His prescriptive hypothesis that

literature and history departments should merge with film studies and (new)

media studies (318) is a tactic in which the contemporary "cool" of digital

media is employed to disseminate the knowledge of the humanities. This is

not a collaborative blending of disciplines. It is a strategic remedial practice

in which the caché of cool is usurped and used against the very knowledge

economy that made it possible. In his later works, published after September

11, 2001, Liu tempers his vocabulary, but in *The Laws of Cool*, the majority of

which was composed before the United States embarked on its "War on

Terror," Liu's vocabulary is polemical, calling for a political-artistic uprising.

One way through Liu's argument is to read his discomfort as resulting

from a collapse of the perceived boundaries between symbolic and economic

capital. Liu's lament for the sacred space of aesthetic pursuits may sound

excessive, until he reminds us that "what is being mourned is not so much

literature as the 'literary culture' that is the very possibility of literature" (3).

It is not the artifact (the work of art) but the cultural milieu that creates the

conditions of the possible from which this artifact can arise. This sentiment is

at the heart of the dying medium tragedy: fear about the death of the book

encompasses a phobia that future literary production will be precluded in a

dystopic post-print climate. Against this phobia, Liu lobbies for the sacred

space of the University, the central location for the production of symbolic

capital. Of course, symbolic capital never exists in a vacuum; there is no space completely divorced from material, economic constraint. Liu's struggle to maintain the humanities' prerogative to "the monopoly over [the right to define] literary legitimacy" (Bourdieu 42) reaffirms the belief that the cultural elite are necessary custodians of society.

As Bourdieu has taught us, the artistic field works on the logic of "loser wins" ("Field" 39): the less economic capital artists or academics procure, the more cultural capital they have at their disposal. As a result, those in the humanities and literary fields have "an interest in disinterestedness" (40). Bourdieu's argument positions the aesthetic and economic networks in opposition yet demonstrates their dependence on one another. Without "the disavowal of power and of the 'economy' which lies at the" centre of the field of cultural production, the symbolic field would not be visible" (Bourdieu, "Production" 105). Nevertheless, the disinterested artist, concerned with what constitutes art as opposed to economic profit is tied to the economic field in three important ways. The first, which I have already discussed, is that the cultural field is defined in an act of negation. It needs the economic field to position itself against. This "opposition between the 'commercial' and the 'non-commercial' reappears everywhere. It is the generative principle of most of the judgments which, in the theatre, cinema, painting or literature, claim to establish the frontier between what is and what is not art" (82). Second, this disinterestedness will eventually translate into economic profit, as the avant-garde works of today become, over time,

sound investments (101). In the world of publishing, this is the author's and

publisher's desire to cultivate their names as a form of branding that attests

to their ability to produce culturally legitimate works of art. Over time, of

course, it is this "trademark or signature" (75) that enables these producers

to derive an economic profit, all the while maintaining the facade that they

are above the debased economic realms of the field of production. Finally,

material constraints on artistic production form an inescapable economic

reality for artists. Materials cost money. Artists need to eat. Publishers need

viable business plans.

Economic and Social Conjuncture

I want to apply these definitions of a medium, technology, and culture

to Darnton's communications circuit. Of course, I am not the first person to

revise Darnton's model; the most famous revision being Adams and Barker's

diagram of "The Whole Socio-Economic Conjuncture" (14). Adams and

Barker counteract book history's focus on the relationship between texts and

society, what they call the social history of the book, with a focus on the

"sheer randomness, the speculative uncertainty of the book trade" (12).

Whereas Darnton places people at the centre of textual production, Adams

and Barker describe four zones of influence that exert pressure on the cycle

of the book. It is this cycle, the events of a book's life (publication,

manufacturing, distribution, reception, and survival) that occupies the

central location in their version of book history (figure 2). My revision of
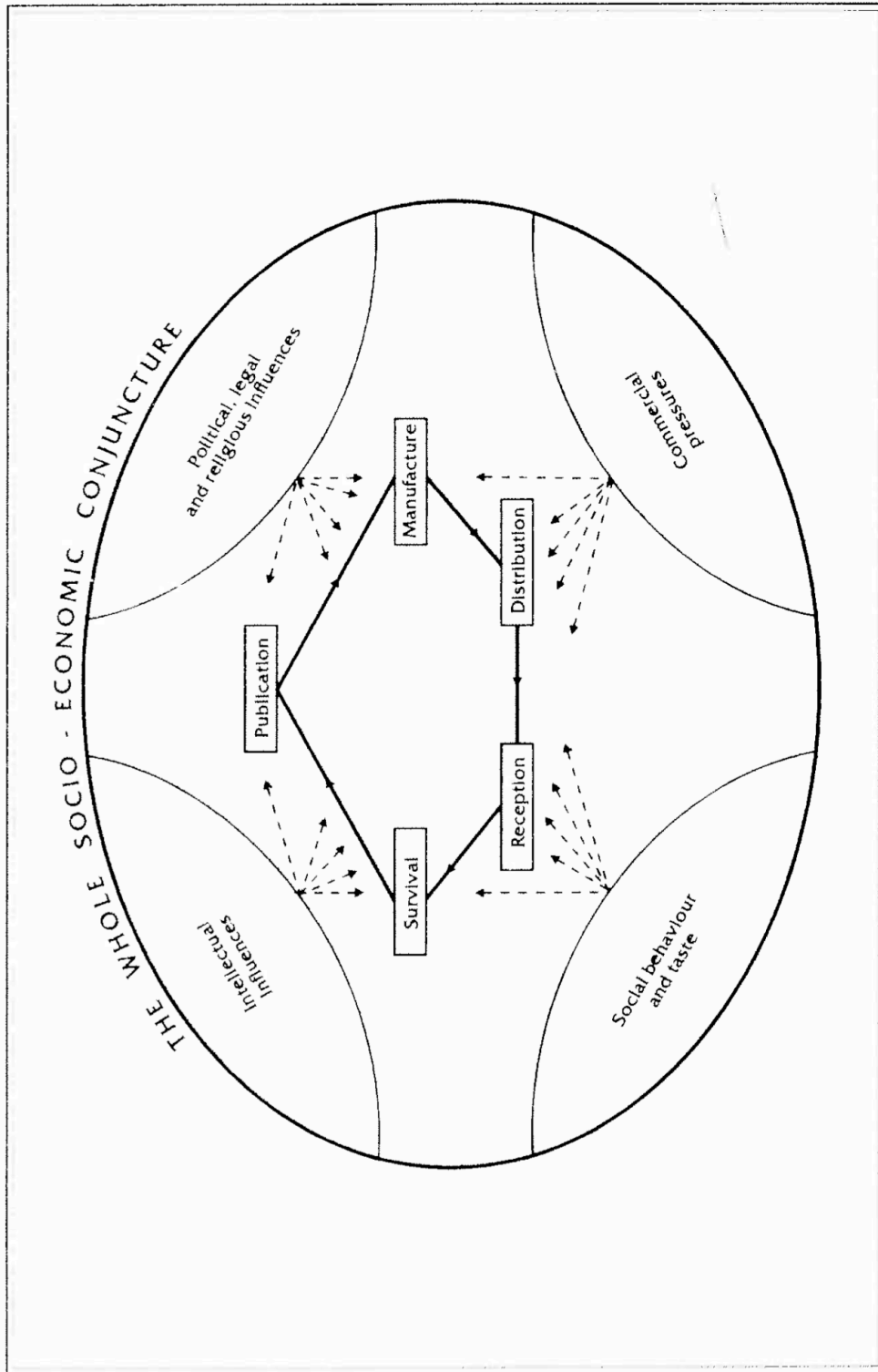
Figure 2 "The Whole Socio-Economic Conjuncture" (Adams 14)

Darnton differs from Adams and Barker in that I still remain focused on the people, the acting agents responsible for textual production. I am not convinced by Adams and Barker's attempt to efface human forces from their model, for their zones of influence (political influence, social behaviour, commercial pressures, etc.) need to be exerted upon people, a fact tidily absent from their diagram. My addition of the relationship between established and emerging media to Darnton's communication's circuit acknowledges the human element of textual production.

I do not want to redesign the shape of the communications circuit; I just want to augment the inner circle of Darnton's diagram—what he calls the "economic and social conjuncture"—in which all publishing practices are anchored. This central circle overlaps with two additional forces: "intellectual influences and publicity;" and "political and legal sanctions" (Darnton, "What" 12). In the centre of this diagram, I would inscribe the logics I have drawn from the fields of sociology and new media studies: first, mediums are historical subjects; second, technology is a logic; and third, the symbolic value of texts are inextricably linked to the economy. Inscribing these logics in Darnton's model inserts the dialectical relationship between established and emerging media into the discipline of book history. When any new medium is introduced into the publishing process, it alters both the inner circle, the social protocols of a society, and the outer circle, the circuit of textual production.

For example, the digital turn has altered every stage of textual production: "1) operating systems; 2) content management and the digital workflow; 3) sales and marketing; and 4) content delivery" (Thompson 326). John B. Thompson calls this publishing's "hidden revolution" (326), as delivery technologies distract us from the other stages in the publishing process. Even if readers are still reading books in printed form, these books are written, edited, and marketed using digital technologies. An e-book reader would be the final stage in this shift, but the absence of this device does not negate the dramatic effect new technology has had on the publishing process. Thompson's four stages of textual production correspond to Darnton's outer circle of the communications circuit. If we want to understand not only how the digital turn has changed the production process, but also its effects on the social landscape, then we need to look at the "economic and social conjuncture."

In so doing, we can see how digitization has altered the logic of the book by destabilizing the relationship between form and content. The codex has been the dominant form for the past 500 years,

> but it is not the only form in which it has been realized in the past, nor is it the only form in which it could be realized in the future. The digitization of content simply highlights a characteristic that was always part of the book but was obscured by the elegant union of content and form in a particular physical object. (335)

Digitization allows the content of the book to circulate divorced from the codex. Thompson argues that this proves that "the real value of the book lies in the content that is embedded in the physical form of the book" (335). Instead, I argue that the digital turn spurs debate as to what constitutes the book. Certainly many people agree with Thompson, yet a countermovement of bibliophiles respond by entrenching their appreciation of the physicality of reading. Rather than divorce form and content, the digital turn highlights the relationship between form and content and forces publishers and readers to examine what constitutes the book and how it should be delivered. These public debates are part of the process of remediation.

This conversation about how emerging media reshape the definition of culture is not new. As Lisa Gitelman reminds us, "all media were once new" (1). Her deceptively simple statement complicates the binary inherent in new media studies, the opposition between old and new, and asserts the need to merge new media studies with media studies. The paperback also resists the old vs. new media binary; it is compelling precisely because it defies such definitions.

The Paperback Book

The paperback was both dramatically new and the continuation of something well established. When analyzed through the lens of remediation, we see how the paperback illuminates the four networks affected by the advent of any new technology: the physical, the social, the aesthetic, and the

economic. Obviously, there was a physical change to the technology of the book: books became lighter; it became possible to peel the front cover, breaking the spine and curling the recto 360 degrees to rest on the back of the book, which changed the shape of the text in the reader's hands; books (often) became smaller, designed for pockets and purses, which inspired the logo for Pocket books; books became more fragile, as hardcover bindings protect the paper pages of the book in a way that water-permeable soft covers do not. These physical changes were accompanied by a shift in the social landscape or the place of books in the social fabric. As the paperback opened up new distribution networks—"paperbacks were being sold in newsagents, drugstores, supermarkets, airports, bus terminals and railway stations"—books moved beyond "conventional bookstores" (Thompson 36) and became more visible in everyday life.

Aesthetically, the paperback remediation of previously published works blurs the distinctions between high and low culture. The republication of previously published classic texts in paperback format marks a desire to harness the potential of mass communication technology to distribute the aesthetics and values of high culture, while at the same time utilizing the very mechanism (in this case the paperback) that high culture strives to surpass. Reprinting classic works in a disposable medium works both to make the work widely accessible, thereby expanding readership, while simultaneously to devalue a prestigious work of art by diminishing its scarcity and widening its audience. This investment in low culture ascribes prestige to cheap

formats that co-exist with more exalted forms. This dynamic is further complicated by Jason Epstein's invention of the trade paperback in the 1950s, which blurred the line between hardcover and paperbacks by "reprinting quality books in a sturdy paperback format, larger than the mass-market paperback, more expensive and on better-quality paper" (40). (I will expand on this contradictory logic in Chapter Two). Economically speaking, from "the 1940s on….[m]ass-market paperback sales became the financial driving force of the industry" (36). From the 1940s to the 1970s, "the paperback business depended on the hardcover business for product, the hardcover houses depended heavily on royalty income from paperback sales to run their businesses" (36).

These four networks are so tightly interconnected that it is difficult to draw clear boundaries between them; for example, the increased visibility of paperback publications, combined with the lower price point of paperbacks, made reading more accessible. This argument references both the social and economic networks simultaneously, and it shows how all of these networks are inextricably intertwined. When the term remediation is used as a synonym for repurposing, the rhizomatic interconnections among these networks are ignored. Despite all of these changes, the paperback is a new delivery technology that nevertheless reinscribes the communications circuit. While paperback publishers found new systems of distribution, piggy-backing on the networks developed for newspapers and magazines, and targeted more diverse points-of-sale than the hardcover book, the paperback

nevertheless replicates many of the same patterns of production: the development through authorship, editing, publication, distribution, sales, and readership.

The Importance of Specificity

To more fully address the paperback book as a remedial practice, it is important to settle on a specific example. As Gitelman, drawing on Benjamin, explains,

> it is as much of a mistake to write broadly of "the telephone,"
> "the camera," or "the computer" as it is "the media," and of—
> now, somehow, "the Internet" and "the Web"—naturalizing or
> essentializing technologies as if they were unchanging,
> "immutable objects with given, self-defining properties" around
> which changes swirl. . . . Instead it is better to specify telephones
> in 1890 in the rural United States, [or] broadcast telephones in
> Budapest in the 1920s. (8)

For this reason, I want to focus on the Canadian paperback in the 1950s and 1960s.

In the following chapter, I expand on the ways in which the theory of remediation can help us think through the paperback in a Canadian context. I add to this theoretical framework the national context of Canada's postwar culture industries to show how the remediation of Canadian texts for a mass-market audience is part of a process of nation building. To do so, I focus on

Canadian publishing firm McClelland & Stewart, with its iconic figurehead of

Jack McClelland, the "prince of publishing", and examine the ways in which

individual personalities helped shape the face of Canada's publishing sector.

This chapter illuminates how the state project of building the nation, best

articulated by the Massey Commission, was enacted not only by government

institutions but also through private industry, demonstrating how our

country's cultural industries are directly linked to citizenship formation. The

enrichment of Canadian arts was not solely the result of government policy

and the creation of institutions such as the Canada Council, but was also a

part of a national postwar movement that demonstrated an increased desire

to carve out a distinctly Canadian tradition from which Canada's citizens

could better articulate a sense of a deep national heritage.

Chapter Two: McClelland and Stewart, the 1950s Paperback, and National Remediation

As he informed his staff and the media that he was putting the company his father had built up for sale, Jack McClelland smoked incessantly. Unable to borrow more money from the banks, and with a significant portion of this investment trapped in inventory, the firm was $3 million overdue on its loan payments (Friskney 71). While he would prefer to sell to a Canadian buyer, McClelland was willing to look to the Americans, if they could meet his asking price of $1.5 million. As McClelland was a leading member of the Committee for an Independent Canada (CIC), his announcement elicited panic from not only those employed in the book industry but from the public as a whole and fueled a debate about the necessity of maintaining national publishers (MacSkimming 147).

On February 18, 1971, the evening of this announcement, Peter Sypnowich, of the *Toronto Daily Star*, called on prominent Canadians to comment on McClelland's announcement. Campbell Hughes, president of the Canadian Book Publisher's Council, characterized the declaration as "a cry of mayday" and Donald Creighton, historian, decried it as a "major calamity" (Sypnowich "Only"). According to Earle Birney, the tragedy hinged on McClelland's role as "a symbol of whatever independence there…[was] left in Canadian publishing" (Sypnowich). Whereas Farley Mowat felt that an American takeover of M&S would be a "clear indication of the intent of the political and business hierarchy to destroy what vestiges of national vigor"

Canada had left. Strangely, it was one of Canada's most international thinkers, Marshall McLuhan, who explained why the public should care about the domestic ownership of a family publisher. According to McLuhan,

> [t]hings like magazines and publishing houses are far more central to the Canadian identity than the CBC could ever be. The CBC is not an identity image builder. If Canadians have any concern about identity they should care about Jack McClelland. (Sypnowich)

This sentiment explains why, in 1971, the province of Ontario intervened to offer an alternate solution to McClelland's financial concerns. The province presented M&S with a $961,000 virtually interest-free loan in the form of convertible debentures (King 230). In this telling moment, the government treated publishing as a public institution in the service of a national discourse.

This decision to use public funds to salvage a private company arose within a particular cultural moment. The previous year had seen the American-owned McGraw-Hill Book Company of Canada take over Ryerson Press, Canada's oldest publishing house, which sparked national debate about the precarious position of Canadian publishing and the autonomy of Canada's cultural voice (Friskney "The Birth"). Re-named Ryerson Press in 1919, the Methodist Book Room and Publishing House was established in 1829. Originally a religious publisher, Ryerson Press soon began publishing Canadian writing. Importantly, it also trained many generations of the nation's publishers, including John McClelland, Jack McClelland's father

(MacSkimming 28-29). In addition to the sale of Ryerson, 1970 also saw the sale of Gage to Scott Foresman (Parker "The Publishing").[12]

In response to these sales, John Roberts, the premier of Ontario, established the Ontario Royal Commission on Book Publishing (1973), which followed closely on the heels of the first statistical and economic analysis of the Canadian publishing industry by Ernst & Ernst Management Consulting Service. The Royal Commission marked an effort to gather statistical data about the conditions of the nation's publishers, so as to offer a series of recommendations about how best to protect the industry. Before the Royal Commission had time to conduct its research and publish its findings, McClelland announced that he too might sell to American interests, eliciting panic that the entire national publishing industry might be purchased by foreign investors. Canadian culture was under threat from foreign investment, and the public feared cultural "annihilation" (147).

Arguably, the rise of Canadian publishing in the 1950s and '60s was never based on a viable business model. While McClelland strove to balance economic objectives with his nationalist ideals, he eventually concluded that publishing firms

> relying almost exclusively on made-in-Canada products had to be
> subsidized in the face of the high costs incurred in producing and
> distributing books for a relatively small population in such a large

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[12] Gage was repatriated in 1978 (Parker "The Publishing").

country, one that was literally attached to another with more than ten times the population. (King 228)

In his conclusion that government intervention was necessary to protect Canadian literature in the face of foreign products and challenging economies of scale, McClelland was not alone. In many ways, McClelland epitomizes the contradictory impulses of the industry: on the one hand, the desire to build a profitable company; on the other, the desire to build a nationalist company.

Working from Raymond Williams' belief that to understand a project, one must understand its formation (152), this chapter situates Jack McClelland's project of building an iconic Canadian publishing house in historical context. Internationally, this was a period of rapid decolonization, in which Canada, along with other post-colonial nations, sought to find independence on the world stage. McClelland's work arose in the postwar, nation-building period, as Canada continued to transition from a British to an American sphere of influence. As Canada became politically and economically tied to the USA, culture came to be viewed as one of the last fields of independence. Although nation-building is often understood to be a top-down project, the case of M&S demonstrates how McClelland mirrored the larger trend in nation-building that happened at both the level of government initiatives and private practices. In so doing, he serves as an example of how Canada's national legacy was shaped by individuals with personal, political, and economic interests.

The chapter then positions the Canadian paperback, specifically the establishment of the New Canadian Library, in this historical milieu. To exemplify the centrality of print to the nation-building process, I draw on McLuhan's argument that publishing imprints the nation across time and space; despite private ownership, M&S played an integral role in citizenship formation. M&S demonstrates the logic of technological nationalism, which seeks to transcend the geographical obstacles of the Canadian landscape through an investment in communications technologies to create "the condition of possibility for a Canadian mind" (Charland 201). This practice is the context in which the Canadian paperback came of age, and it is impossible to understand this medium outside of its historical context.

Canadian Publishing

While there have been publishers operating in Canada since the early nineteenth century, Canadian publishing is a phenomena that really established itself in the early 1950s; before this date, publishers operating in Canada were focused on supplying foreign books to the Canadian market (MacSkimming). The pocket book, which is a small, paperback format, was already well established in Canada at this time, as a result of British and American imports. As the Second World War made shipping more difficult, Canadian publishers took advantage of a vacant space in the market and began issuing pocket books. Although,

[u]ntil the early 1950s, pocket books were fundamentally a

mass-market format. Produced in large print runs to achieve

their 25-cent pricing, these books relied heavily on the

distribution networks developed for magazines. Large

production runs required by the format combined with limited

access to the predominantly American-controlled distribution

network discouraged most publishers in English Canada from

venturing into this field. (Friskney *Canadian* n.p.)

Problematically, in this country of vast distances and relatively sparse

population, Canada did not have a mass market, unless combined with

American distribution channels. When mass-market paperbacks arrived in

English-Canada "in the late 1930s and early 1940s, they were integrated into

the existing periodical system as a means of maximizing points of retail

display through rapid turnover and almost unlimited return of unsold copies"

(Brouillette 405). While this was not the case in Québec, where "the

predominance of the French language allowed greater domestic control,"

anglophone Canada was forced to rely on American networks until the

Periodical Distributors Association of Canada was formed in 1960 (404).[13]

Even with this national mechanism of distribution, Canadian publishers were

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[13] The Periodical Distributors Association of Canada was "an organization of
wholesalers whose members purchased from national distributors or
directly from publishers, acquiring physical stock which they then resold to
retailers" (Brouillette 405).

often required to form partnerships with American firms to benefit from combined markets.[14]

Of course, international partnerships raise the question of whether the term "Canadian publishing" refers to the content of the text or the location of the publisher. As highlighted above, publishers have existed in this country since the nineteenth century, where they functioned predominantly as importers of British and American titles. Until the 1891 US-Canada copyright agreement, many of these authors were never paid the royalties to which they were entitled, as Canadian law extended "copyright only to authors domiciled in Canada and mercilessly ripped off popular American writers and their publishers" (MacSkimming 27). Certainly, Canada was not the only country engaged in the act of literary piracy, as Britain was pirating American fiction, just as the Americans were refusing to pay royalties to British authors (Parker 107). On both continents, this practice helped make books more affordable, by shortchanging authors. As much as the lineage of Canadian publishing originates from these practices, I use the term "Canadian publishing" to refer specifically to an industry that serves the nation's writers. To this end, I draw on Roy MacSkimming's argument in *The Perilous Trade: Publishing Canada's Writers* (2003) that Canadian publishing began

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[14] One such example is McClelland & Stewart's partnership with Bantam 1977, "which issued works under the new imprint Seal Books" (Friskney *Canadian* n.p.).

circa 1950, with the careers of four men who founded the

industry we know today: John Gray of Macmillan of Canada, Jack

McClelland of McClelland & Stewart, Marsh Jeanneret of the

University of Toronto Press, and William Toye of Oxford

University Press. (2)

These men laid the groundwork for a new generation of publishers "who

were willing to stake everything on Canadian writing" (2). They helped

nurture Canada's literary community by providing the conditions for the

possibility of Canadian literature as we know it today.

Granted, Canadian writers existed before these endeavours. Canadian

literature has its roots in the nineteenth century, in the poetry of Oliver

Goldsmith (1794-1861), who was published in London; in the epistolary

narratives of Catherine Parr Traill (1802-1899), who was published in

British periodicals; and in the poetry, short stories, and autobiography of

Susanna Moodie (1803-1885), who was first published in London's literary

magazines, but who was later published in the Montréal magazine, the

Literary Garland (Lecker *Open*). With the exception of Moodie's later works,

these writers wrote in Canada, but they were published abroad. Following

these progenitors was another generation of Canadian writers and artists,

many of whom went to live and work in England or the United States, namely

New York or Chicago, because of more favorable conditions for artistic

production (Mount 6). More favorable artist conditions included more

publishers; better copyright protection; lower postage rates, resulting in

lower magazine subscription costs; and a larger reading public (12-13).

Writers such as Bliss Carman moved to these epicenters of cultural life and

were later repatriated as Canadian authors after building their reputation

abroad. Carman's story is not anomalous; in fact, Nick Mount asserts that in

the 1880s and 1890s close to fifty percent of Canadian writers moved to the

United States (21).

These earlier phases of Canadian writing are an important part of our

literary heritage. Nevertheless, I focus on the 1950s because this period

marks the moment when, as Nick Mount argues, Canadian literature received

> critical or institutional recognition as a literature, that is as a
>
> discrete body of writing, with its own history and its own set of
>
> works and characteristics. In its actual life any literature is far
>
> too internally disparate and too interwoven with other
>
> literatures to admit such definition. When we say 'a literature,'
>
> what we really mean is an object that exists only in perception,
>
> an object whose birth was simultaneous with its recognition
>
> and that survives only in restatements of that recognition. (5)

National publishers provide the mechanism through which Canadian writing

comes to be defined as a discrete body of work. While critical recognition of

Canadian writers, most prominently in the form of the Governor General's

Award, inaugurated in 1936, predates these publishers, the 1950s is the

moment when publishers within Canada's borders started to publish and

promote Canadian writers on a large scale. I do not say mass scale, because of

Canada's limited population, but I would say on an unprecedented national scale. This is not to negate the contribution of Ottawa-based Graphic Publishers, which operated from 1925-1932, before folding (King 26); left-wing literary and political magazine *Canadian Forum*, which ran from 1920-2000 (Djwa); or A.J.M. Smith and F.R. Scott's Canadian literary journal, the *McGill Fortnightly Review*, which ran from 1925-1927 (Dudek 206). Rather, it is to say that *circa* 1950 Canadian publishing gained a critical mass that brought it to the larger public's attention.

There are numerous factors that made the 1950s ripe for the growth of Canadian publishing: increased readership as a result of the postwar boom; the growth of post-secondary education; the legacy of reading habits cultivated in war time, when members of the military used reading as a portable form of entertainment; the growth and diversification of points of sale, including department stores, drugstores, and train stations; changes in national copyright law; the formation of the Periodical Distributors Association of Canada; and the growth of national patriotism, beginning in the First World War and carrying over into Canada's Cold War years. Remember that the end of the First World War brought the dissolution of the British Empire and the passage of the Statute of Westminster. Prior to this, many Canadians saw themselves as culturally tied to either their country of origin or one of the founding nations. One of Canada's cold war battles was to educate the United States, and the world more broadly, that Canada had become a sovereign nation.

John Gray, Jack McClelland, Marsh Jeanneret, and William Toye

capitalized on these changes in the Canadian landscape and provided what

the Ontario Royal Commission on Book Publishing (1973) termed "the

climate for authorship" (10). Four years earlier, in the first statistical and

economic analysis of the Canadian publishing industry, Ernst & Ernst found

that in 1969 Canadian book publishing's contribution to the national

economy was 0.06%, which was significantly lower than the 0.22% of the

American G.N.P contributed by American publishing at that time (3). This

statistic was used to argue that the Canadian book publishing industry had a

market potential "equivalent to three or four times its present annual sales"

(10). The Royal Commission drew on this projection, but prioritized "cultural

value to the community" over "profitability" (10). The economic potential of

the industry was tempered by the realization that

> the economies of scale possible for original Canadian publishing
>
> and original American (or British) publishing are weighted
>
> heavily in favour of the foreign product. [...] Thus the same
>
> percentage of publishing misjudgments is more costly in Canada
>
> and the same percentage of publishing successes provides less
>
> income with which to underwrite the mistakes. (11)

Regardless of these barriers to the success of the industry, the Commission

recommended publishers shift their focus from imports (which are good for

profit) towards domestic production because the

[c]ultural implications of book publishing far outweigh the

economic implications to society, whether the latter are

measured in jobs or in cost of possible measures to preserve the

industry. Thus although many of the problems that face

Canadian book publishing may be economic, the issues to be

weighed are cultural, and so will be the dividends that can flow

from sensible solutions. (4)

This position makes transparent a belief system that encourages financially

risky behaviour in the name of a national artistic tradition. It also promotes

qualitative analysis "by those who are competent to judge" (10). While

publishing is a "capital-intensive" industry, the "best publishers" are not

those with the greatest profits, but rather can be evaluated "by the

importance and quality of the authors he has been the first to publish, by the

imagination of his programs, by what authors think of his books, by what

critics say of them, and only rather farther along by what the banker

concludes" (10).

This qualitative discourse is rooted in the Arnoldian belief that

culture is "the pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to

know…the best that has been thought and said in the world" (Arnold viii). Of

course, this meritocracy requires that someone evaluate the calibre of such

works and sanction their virtues for the larger public. This elitist position sits

in opposition to cultural industrialism, or the belief that the value of culture

does not reside in its moral, spiritual, or radical provocations, but rather in

its economic success. Iconic opponents to cultural industrialism include T. S. Eliot and Clement Greenberg. Eliot defined culture as everything from manners to philosophy and advocated elite institutions for the preservation of refined art forms in the face of the debasing force of mass culture. American art critic Clement Greenberg championed avant-garde, non-representational, non-political art that was independent of meaning as the only defense against the invasion of kitsch, which he defined as a crippled form of artistic activity, associated with the masses and intended to alleviate the boredom of the rising working classes. Canada's cultural policy emanates from this same logic and attempts to cultivate a sacred space of artistic production that transcends the material constraints of the economy.

Canadian Cultural Policy

This position has its Canadian roots in the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (1949), better known as the Massey Commission, after its chairman Vincent Massey.[15] The commission arose from a postwar anxiety about a lack of definable Canadian culture and mandated an examination of existing national institutions to

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[15] The commission had five members in total: Vincent Massey, Canadian diplomat and future governor general; "Georges-Hénri Lévesque, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at Laval University; Norman A. M. MacKenzie, president of the University of British Columbia and member of the Wartime Information Board; Hilda Neatby, a professor of history from the University of Saskatchewan; and Arthur Surveyer, a civil engineer from Montréal" (Druick, "Remedy" 161).

make recommendations about their governing policies. The committee

adhered to the guiding principal that "institutions which express national

feeling, promote common understanding and add to the variety and richness

of Canadian life" are in the nation's best interest; while it is difficult to

measure cultural achievement, the intangible elements of art "serve to

inspire a nation's devotion and to prompt a people's action" (4). Although the

arts "may seem unimportant or even irrelevant in daily life[, they] may well

be the thing which endures, which may give a community its power to

survive" (4). Cultural traditions serve to galvanize a public in times of war or

crisis. Massey's viewpoint stemmed from the belief that

> the commission's great purpose was to reinforce and expand a
>
> unique culture which defined and protected Canadian
>
> nationhood. Cultural nationalism was central to Canada's
>
> survival. Thus it did not strike the commissioners as silly at all
>
> to ask questions such as "Does this music contribute in any way
>
> to an increased consciousness of the Canadian community?"
>
> (Litt 109)

As Canada transitioned from a British to an American sphere of influence,

culture became one of the main ways in which Canada could assert its

sovereignty. The development of a distinct Canadian culture served to

reinforce Canada's borders, both against the influx of American mass culture

from the south and the threat of communist ideology from Eastern Europe

and Asia. In this Cold War of ideas, and in the postwar era of uncertain

allegiances, culture became one of the fields within which political and national sensibilities were both explored and cultivated. At its most hyperbolic, the Massey Commission equated the fate of Canadian culture with the fate of Canadian civilization (11).

In "Remedy and Remediation: The Cultural Theory of the Massey Commission" (2007), Zoë Druick highlights the importance of the commission for providing the

> rationale for many of the national institutions that would play
> key roles in the subsequent half of the century: the Canadian
> Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), the National Film Board
> (NFB); the Canada Council; the National Gallery; the National
> Archives, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council
> [SSHRC]; and the National Library. (161)

These institutions forged a space for Canadian arts in the context of rising American mass media consumption and a phobia that Canada did not have a distinct cultural heritage to accompany the country's increased prominence in the world of international politics.

While the commission purports to survey the entire cultural field, it focuses on new media, dedicating only ten pages to literature and publishing, and forty-seven to what it termed "mass media": radio, television, and film. For the commissioners, the term "mass media" referred not only to new delivery technologies, but also to genres of artistic production. The commissioners were unable to deny that new communications technology

introduced variety and provided access to entertainment for those living in

more remote regions, yet it remained a "passive pleasure" (20). This lesser

form of cultural engagement threatened to displace live performance and the

erudite instruction of the church as the centre of cultural life. Accordingly,

the commission recommended the management of mass media. The

promotion of Canadian cultural industries was as much about blocking out—

erasing—foreign mass media, as it was about creating distinct cultural

industries.

The commission's struggle was actually twofold: it simultaneously

strove to mitigate the dual barbarism of American mass culture and

totalitarian communism. As Druick argues,

> This complex of political, economic, educational, and cultural
>
> objectives led the Massey commissioners to blend
>
> contradictory aspects of elite and mass culture. In the report,
>
> one finds discussion of the objectives of art as ennobling and
>
> identity-promoting thrown together with the promotion of
>
> national mass media, a tangle of problems embodied in
>
> UNESCO's mandate as well. As with UNESCO, the Massey
>
> Commission bore the contradictory impulses of creativity and
>
> institution, art and technology, culture and commerce. An
>
> attempt was made to resolve these contradictions by using

mass media to popularize the arts and to spread information

about Canadian arts and culture abroad. (164-165)[16]

A product of Canadian postwar anxiety, the Massey Commission "align[ed] Canadian arts with the objectives of the UN's cultural wing, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)" (Druick, "International" 182). In so doing, the commissioners created a historical document that describes the cultural field as an ideological battleground fought over by the liberal humanism of democratic nations and the fascist repression of communist regimes.

Druick applies Bolter and Grusin's theory of remediation to cultural policy, arguing that "there is a double logic of remediation at work in modernity" (160); yet, in using the word "logic," she introduces the human element effaced in Bolter and Grusin's analysis. Effectively, Druick highlights the contradictory logic that is the heart of remedial theory; quoting Bolter and Grusin, she reiterates, "[o]ur culture wants both to multiply its media and to erase all traces of mediation: ideally, it wants to erase its media in the very act of multiplying them" (160). The Massey Report condemns technology, while promoting its institutionalization. Its conflicted impulses recommend regulation to mitigate the deleterious consequences of new media's growth. This desire to reform and control new technology is "the desire to remediate—to use mass media against mass culture—a goal that can't help but contradict itself" (Druick 167). Its conflicted impulses reflect

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[16] Druick draws on the work of Cristiana Ziraldo in "The Massey Report: Enacting the Nation" (1998).

the belief systems of the people who wrote it and betray a desire to harness

new media to distribute sanctioned cultural products, which included both

elite and local culture.

Importantly, Canada's proximity to, and dependence on, the United

States, prevented it from banning, censoring, or taxing foreign cultural

products to create the conditions necessary for a thriving publishing

industry. While these options would have created a gap in the market that

local producers could fill, it would be counter to the principles of intellectual

and personal freedom to which democracy aspires. The question then

became how to foster local industries without repressing people's freedom.

Much of the contradictory logic of the commission stems from the

incompatibility of these two objectives. Of course, for the commissioners, the

stakes were much higher than the economic potential of the cultural

industries; rather, the cultural field was a space through which the Canadian

nation hoped to articulate its identity and present itself as a country worthy

of attention on the international stage.

Postwar Nationalism and Print Culture

While the commission's report is an important historical document

that renders visible the extent to which a desire for a national tradition was

the result of postwar anxiety, the "only direct help the Massey Commission

offered for the book came in two areas: its call for the establishment of a

National Library, and its recommendation that diplomatic posts expand their

libraries and distribute Canadian books abroad" (Litt 39). Writing

nevertheless overtook painting as the "standard bearer of Canadian cultural

nationalism, a success story that filled nationalists with hope for Canada's

future" (44). In actuality, it was publishers, more so than government, who

subsidized Canadian literature and created the climate for authorship

wherein writing became one of Canada's greatest cultural exports (40). While

the Massey Commission recommends government policy in response to a

lack of national unity, what remains interesting is how specific projects in

business mirrored the goals of the commission, thus creating cultural

industries that were in accordance with government institutions without

relying on government policies to guide their business practices.

This growth of local production occurred in what Ryan Edwardson

has termed the second wave of Canadian nation building. According to

Edwardson, Canada's quest for nationhood had three distinct periods: the

first wave, 1932-1958; the second, 1958-1966; and the third, 1967-1988. The

first wave is characterized by the Massey Commission, as a period of high

culture and British influence, but Edwardson shows that the rhetoric of the

Massey Commission has continuity with rhetoric concerning national funding

for the arts from as early as the 1920s. The second wave is characterized by

an increased interest in popular culture, or a multi-brow approach: "this new

generation of intellectuals consisted largely of middle-class elites and

cultural workers interested in encouraging domestic expression across the

board" (138); the third wave is characterized by framing culture as an

industry which could be used to foster national unity in a time of looming

Québec separatism. The arts and cultural policy of 1968 is very different from

Massey's vision: "the policy lay a foundation for a federal mobilization of

cultural activity in line with the needs of the state": it sought to study the

Canadian personality, forge national unity, assimilate native people and the

two founding cultures, promote bilingualism, uphold democracy, and

preserve the nation's cultural heritage (195). This third wave ends, according

to Edwardson, when the Free Trade Agreement negotiations of the 1980s

surrendered control over cultural policy to foreign markets (274).

      Although the wave theory can be used as an heuristic device to

illuminate the Canadian postwar era as a time of transition—from art for

art's sake to art for the economy's sake—this trajectory writes over the

ongoing debate on the role of culture in Canadian society. The Massey

Commission is a formative document in the history of Canadian cultural

policy, but it was hotly contested by critics, such as Marshall McLuhan, who

disagreed with placing the responsibility of culturing Canadians with the

federal government. He characterizes this move as "the highbrow's burden"

("Defrosting" 91), linking—through an allusion to Rudyard Kipling's poem,

"The White Man's Burden"—the Commission and its support of highbrow

culture with the colonization of the Canadian masses. An act of domestic

cultural colonialism, the Massey Commission echoes the logic of Victorian

patriarchs who suppose "culture is basically an unpleasant moral duty" (96).

Instead of waging a war on "the aggression of American pin-up girls" (91),

McLuhan proposes that the federal government should abandon their project of a "cultural Maginot line" (97) and instead embrace Canada's colonial status as a vantage point from which to develop the "critical insights" (95) afforded by our double-colonial position on the margins of Britain and the United States. McLuhan's article demonstrates that the Massey Commission was just one side of a multivocal deliberation about the role of the state in Canadian culture. Cultural and new media developments were contested issues. The Massey Commission reflects the officially sanctioned government position, but McLuhan's international perspective reminds us that there were opponents to the dominant position.

Nevertheless, Edwardson's work charts a continuous connection between cultural policy and national identity, with each wave bringing a changing sense of what constitutes the Canadian consciousness. National identities are powerful, as

> evidenced in their ability to galvanize otherwise diverse and
> disparate people, from the willingness to sacrifice life in battle
> against citizens aligned with other nations to the collective
> rejoicing at something as immaterial as the victorious final
> seconds of an international hockey series. Identifiers are key to
> placing the citizenry within an ideological communalism in
> which class, capital, and social standing are overshadowed by
> compatriotism. (7)

This intense patriotism encourages the population to support practices that may not be to their advantage, as nationalism "entrenches class and economic interests benefiting a minority" by equating the "public good" with the "national good" (24). Edwardson recalls Trudeau's frustration in learning that Radio-Canada, a national public institution, was being used by Québec separatists to spread their message. His incredulity stems from a belief that national institutions are inherently designed to foster a sense of communal identity.

Culture's ability to unite a citizenry has been well established, particularly in Benedict Anderson's study of nationalism, *Imagined Communities* (1983), where he draws on Hegel's observation that reading the paper is "a substitute for morning prayer" (35): although solitary, the reader is nevertheless aware that in thousands of other locations, other readers are performing the same ritual.[17] In the individual act of reading, the participant is aware that she is connected to potentially millions of people whom she has never met, by the mere fact that they have read the same article. This belief, that an individual action is part of a larger collective movement, is integral to imagining the nation. Modern nations are a collection of individuals confident that they are part of a whole, even though they often remain anonymous and unknown to one another (35).

Reading the paper is not an arbitrary example, for Anderson contends that print languages formed the basis for national consciousness in three

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[17] Rewritten and reissued, with new chapters, in 1991.

ways: first, they created unified language fields (a vernacular above the local dialect, but below Latin) and as a result, people became aware that there were thousands of others in their same language group; second, they fixed language and gave it a sense of permanency; and third, they created hierarchies of language, since certain discourse communities were closer to the printed (and thus official) dialect (44-45). While the cultural spaces created by the development of this new communications technology were not consciously constructed, they could be consciously exploited, once their existence became known (45). That is to say, historical factors converged to create the possibility for national consciousness, but once the ground had been paved for these new imagined communities, individual agents could exploit the power of print to create carefully constructed national narratives.

Anderson concludes that the commitment of the individual to the nation is formed through the intersection of three factors:

1) capitalism, 2) printing technology, and 3) the diversity of natural languages over space. When these three joined it became possible for large communities, peopled by individuals who had no filiative or personal or even historical relation to one another to imagine themselves as "fraternally" joined.

(During 253)

Simon During argues that Anderson's analysis fails to engage with other factors contributing to nationalism's appeal, including "the benefits that nation-states have provided their citizens; the relation between the

development of nationalism and military power; and the way that

nationalism is not simply a product of capitalism but also a reaction against

it" (253). During's last point reminds readers that national endeavours often

run counter to capitalism's tenets. This tension exists in the conflicted nature

of the Massey Commission, which tried to balance a desire to control the

public with its democratic ideals, and in the inherent tension of the

publishing process, which has one foot in artistic pursuits and the other in

economic reality.

Jack McClelland

As a publisher, Jack McClelland was situated in the space between

artistic pursuits and economic realities; he then paired these conflicting

impulses with a personal investment in publishing Canadian literature.

However, when he turned the firm he inherited from his father into Canada's

foremost publisher of Canadiana, it was still with one eye on the material

realities he had to meet to sustain his company, employees, and authors.

When Jack McClelland entered the world of Canadian publishing in

1952, it looked very different than it does today. If the 1880s and 1890s were

a time of artistic exodus, the First World War and the Great Depression

marked a time of stasis. Many publishers capped spending and tried to ride

out economic uncertainty. Concurrently, writers such as Bliss Carman and

Lucy Maud Montgomery began to build international reputations, but these

were founded on American publishers. According to Roy MacSkimming, the

two major attempts to build a national publisher in the 1920s were Louis

Carrier of Montréal and Graphic Press of Ottawa, but neither venture proved

financially viable (MacSkimming 30). The Second World War marked a

complicated time for publishing: on the one hand, a paper shortage

hampered domestic production (Hill xlvii); on the other hand, the war slowed

foreign imports, the result of which was an improved market for domestic

production. The effect of this was even more dramatic in francophone

Canada, with "publishing in Paris shackled by the Nazi occupation;" the firms

of Montréal responded by "supplying the book needs of the rest of the

francophone world, issuing reprints of standard French authors while

developing their own writers, such as Gabrielle Roy and Roger Lemelin" (31).

This being said, Anglophone publishing firms remained predominantly

focused on the agency system, envisioning themselves as the local publishers

of authors first published in Britain or the United States. Originally, Canada

was a subset of the British market, until after the Second World War, when it

became an adjunct of the USA's market. Therefore, any attempt at uniquely

Canadian publishing necessitated not just the publication of Canadian

authors but also the cultivation of a distinct Canadian market, despite

Canada's small population.

  As John Gray of Macmillan told the Kingston writer's conference in

1955, the "decision to publish a Canadian trade book equaled a decision to

lose money" (MacSkimming 31). Mind you, this belief did not prevent Gray

from investing in Canadian publishing, publishing the likes of Robertson

Davies, Ethel Wilson, and Morley Callaghan. However, when Malcolm Ross approached Macmillan with the idea for The *New Canadian Library*, Gray did not believe paperback reprints would prove profitable. In this regard, he underestimated the potential of the educational market. As a result, Ross brought his idea to M&S and helped Jack McClelland transform his father's firm—a transition that was already underway—from one focused on agency titles to the country's most prominent publisher of Canadian writers.

McClelland & Stewart was formed in 1919 by John McClelland, Jack McClelland's father, and George Stewart, Canada's top Bible salesman. Although Jack McClelland originally enrolled at the University of Toronto to study engineering, he returned from his Second World War service in the navy to complete a Bachelor of Arts. He toyed with the idea of a career as a writer or in advertising, but he soon realized he would much prefer to follow in his father's footsteps. Although McClelland worked in publishing from 1946-1987, it was not until 1952 that he became general manager of M&S, essentially taking over the firm from his father (King xx, 3, 27, 44).

Fourteen years later, he was honoured at the Guadalajara International Book fair, where he was named "the outstanding Canadian publisher of his generation" (MacSkimming 118). In support of the award, fellow publisher Anna Porter named Jack McClelland the "prince of publishing" (118), a nickname that stuck. In a letter to McClelland in 1996, after the prince had abdicated his throne and retired, Leonard Cohen wrote, "[y]ou were the real Prime Minister of Canada. You still are. And even though

it has all gone down the tubes, the country that you govern will never fall apart" (Cohen, qtd. in King n.p.). Cohen's elegy asserts Canadian publishing's integral contribution to nation building. His comment also mythologizes McClelland and contributes to the aura of grandeur that surrounds him. Public fascination with McClelland stems as much from this larger-than-life persona, one that the publisher carefully crafted with outrageous publicity stunts, as it does from his accomplishments in Canadian publishing (figures 3 and 4).

McClelland's flamboyant dedication to Canadian publishing was founded in an awareness of postwar trends. When McClelland took over the company in the early 1950s, he felt "that upswings in population numbers, education opportunities, leisure time and improved communications boded well for books" (King 43). This was a time of unprecedented growth in secondary and postsecondary education as a result of the baby boom. The ballooning of higher education translated into additional textbook acquisitions, the growth of libraries, and higher literacy rates. Ironically, McClelland feared that the next generation was not being trained to be good readers, the result of which was that they would not grow into book consumers. This fear was unfounded, given that he entered the industry at a time when national literacy rates were improving, and veterans were returning from war habituated to reading as one of the affordable leisure activities available in the field.

Figure 3, Jack McClelland delivering free books to the city of Saskatoon, 1976 (From the Jack McClelland Archives, McMaster University, reprinted in King 285)

Figure 4, Jack McClelland and Sylvia Fraser promoting *The Emperor's Virgin*, 1980 (From the Jack McClelland Archives, McMaster University, reprinted in King 345)

In the United States, mass market paperbacks "were aimed at a working-to middle-class male readership, largely a mass of ex-G.I.s who had picked up a taste for portable fiction while in uniform" (Server 12). The Canadian military was active in promoting reading as a leisure activity; *The Pelican Anthology of Canadian Poetry* originated as a "lightweight . . . anthology . . . for distribution to the Canadian armed services, something for the knapsacks" (Gustafson 74). This publication was marketed "as a weapon of self-defense" against "the occasionally insufferable condescension of the British intellectual towards the Canadian" (Sandwell, qtd. in Gustafson 76) armed forces while overseas. This particular example links the paperback book with the growth of Canadian literature, a topic I will discuss more fully in my examination of the *New Canadian Library.* More broadly, it demonstrates how reading became a habit, a practice, cultivated during the war.

Conversely, this increase in readership was complicated by the development of new media. The postwar period, which marked the rise of both the mass-market paperback and television, was a time of transition, when the first paperback-only bookstores opened on Canada's streets, yet many established book retailers refused to stock paperbacks (MacSkimming, Hurtig). The two Canadian companies that successfully "penetrated the mass-paperback market" were Harlequin and PaperJacks (Canada, Department 2). Both houses were dedicated to paperback publication. Harlequin was working to publish original works in paperback and to reprint works that

were originally published by other houses (Friskney "Canadian"). In contrast, M&S (as well as Macmillan, Ryerson, Clarke, and Irwin) were predominantly focused on original publications in hardcover. There were, of course, exceptions to these tendencies, as we will see in the following case studies.

Beyond this, because of a lack of statistical information, it is difficult to give exact figures of the percentage of the Canadian industry that was dedicated to paperback versus hardcover publication. The Canadian government did not start investigating the industry until the late 1960s, after the sale of Ryerson caused panic and instilled a desire to better understand the industry. There is not a comprehensive study of the sales figures from the 50s and 60s, and the first official study of the paperback industry came in 1974 with the Canadian Government's *An Analysis of The English-Language Mass Paperback Market in Canada*. This followed on the heels of the industry study by Ernst & Ernst (1970) and the Ontario Government's *Royal Commission on Book Publishing* (1973). The 1974 study focused on potential markets for paperback publication and was distributed to industry by the government as a tool to encourage new developments in "more popular subjects such as general fiction, historical novels, and mysteries" (6). The study provides a series of industry recommendations on how to diversify into underserviced genres and how to conceptualize the United States as a potential market. While it was published only a year after the *Royal Commission*, it lacks an interest in Canadian content, and defines Canadian publishing in terms of ownership.

During the 1950s and '60s, the publishing industry struggled to determine not only the place of the paperback in Canada's publishing sector, but also the relationship of the book to other mass-market communications technologies such as television, radio, film, and mass-market magazines. While the population was enjoying more idle hours, they were simultaneously offered new diversions: "by 1955, 96 per cent of Canadian homes had radios, [and] 63 per cent had televisions" (King 44). At times, these diversions were seen as the enemy of the book, forcing publishers and authors to vie for their share of the entertainment industry. According to James King, McClelland believed that people were

> apologetic about watching television, whereas the 'book has an
> aura of culture attached to it. The value of a good book can truly
> never be measured, but there is no value in a book simply
> because it is a book. Poor books will be replaced by television,
> much as the horse and buggy was replaced by the car.
> Television will never replace a good book.' (McClelland, qtd. in
> King 45)

In this statement are a number of assumptions: that television is a diversion; that not all books are considered high culture; that for the book to survive the invasion of television, it must draw on its potential as a vehicle of high culture, the value of which is both integral and unquantifiable. McClelland's comment needs to be contextualized in its historical moment. He not only creates a binary between entertainment (television) and art (the book), but

also defines legitimate publishing as morally good. This assertion comes in the face of the invasion of pulp magazines and risqué paperbacks that were competing against McClelland's publications.

The postwar moment also occasioned a debate about the debasing influence of genre fiction, such as fantasy, mystery, romance, and anti-communist military dramas. Paperback books were seen as particularly salacious, boasting covers that glorified violence and promoted promiscuity. Their risqué covers enraged religious leaders, educators, and parents, who were concerned about the "common availability of such depraved and dangerous reading matter" (Server19). Simultaneously, the 1950s saw comic books transition from being designed "for the 'sex and heroics' market of the troops on active service, who took easily to the portable, disposable, and quickly consumable" publications to being "thought of as a kid's product" (McHoul 156). Public debate over the conspicuous sex and violence of these cheap publications often focused on their alluring covers, made visible—specifically, placed in front of the susceptible eyes of youth—due to their distribution through family-oriented locations, such as corner stores, train stations and bus depots. This moral panic provides the context in which McClelland defines his company's publications as the tool through which readers can rise above the sleazy terrain of popular culture and invest in their intellectual and moral betterment.

Of course, this discourse is a marketing strategy. Jobbers, through the magazine distribution networks, placed paperback books in railway stations

and drugstores. Essentially thicker magazines with few advertisements, paperbacks needed to compete for readership. As magazines moved away from subscription-based revenue towards advertising-based profits, book publishers were forced to achieve more competitive pricing and to explain why readers should purchase books over alternative reading material. As McClelland's comments demonstrate, publishers asserted literature's ability to provoke self-reflection and moral betterment as the rationale for why readers should select books over comics or magazines.

In addition to this desire to publish works of lasting literary merit, McClelland wanted to focus on Canadian authors. Here we see the same goals as are articulated by the Massey Commission, the desire to uplift the people through art, while defining a distinctly Canadian culture in the process. These objectives are complicated in private practice because ideological goals are subservient to the economic survival of the company. McClelland represents these heterodoxical objectives: essentially, he was trying to run a profitable business, a service company, and a philanthropic enterprise (King 108). As McClelland said, the "objective of the company is not profit, but profit from a particular field of endeavour," specifically the service of Canadian authors (108). This is a variation of what Bourdieu calls "an interest in disinterestedness" ("The Field" 40). The publisher, like the art dealer or the critic, gains power by "making a name for oneself" and using this reputation to "consecrate objects" ("The Production" 74). However, in order for the

publishers to "reap the full 'economic' profits of their symbolic capital," they must "come to terms with . . . 'economic' constraints" (76).

Of course, as a sociologist, Bourdieu is interested in the bird's eye view of the entire field and not the individuals who populate any given cultural moment. Perhaps what initially looks like a contradictory impulse towards both symbolic and economic capital is the result of trying to locate an individual history within a sociological framework. Individuals are capable of simultaneously holding contradictory beliefs; they are not the embodiment of coherent ideologies, but rather a rhizomatic tangle of competing desires. The Massey Commission, as a product of the individuals who wrote it, also expresses these conflicted values. Both the people and the policies that they produced complicate the clearly demarcated quadrants of Bourdieu's field of cultural production. McClelland was interested in commercial success, yet he was willing to temper this objective in the service of a national tradition. While it may at first appear counterintuitive, this conflict is part of why McClelland was successful. His business practices were aligned with a cultural moment. At this point in history, Canadian writing proved fruitful because it harnessed the momentum of growing patriotism and aligned M&S with national cultural objectives.

The field of cultural production looks different from a Canadian perspective because of the country's colonial heritage, proximity to the United States, small population, and relatively short history as a nation. In a Canadian context, the world of symbolic capital aligns not so much with

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avant-garde artistic endeavors as with domestic production, because the

economically successful side of the field is occupied, almost entirely, by

foreign production. Thus, domestic production becomes symbolically

valuable as the antithesis to a British or American mass media invasion.

In opposition to this foreign cultural invasion, McClelland worked as

Co-Chairman for the Committee for an Independent Canada (CIC), an

organization that lobbied government for limits to foreign investment and

ownership.[18] His commitment to the organization was fraught: on the one

hand, he believed in free trade; on the other, he wanted to create restraints

that would aid Canadian publishing. These two impulses were at odds and

eventually this conflict caused him to quit the committee. He was also forced

to rethink his idealism about the role of M&S and eventually concluded that

the company must become focused on profit before it could tackle its service

objectives (King 109). This admission marks the moment McClelland realized

that he could not solely exist on the prestige of symbolic capital and had to

find an economically viable business strategy. While he wanted to focus on

"literary quality over marketability" (129), he realized that this objective

could only be realized if he also worked to create a market for these cultural

products.

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[18] The desire to block out American investment was complicated later in his
career by McClelland's initiative to "create a larger market for Canadian
books by forming an association with [...] Bantam Canada" (King 308). This
new option, which had been forbidden by Canada's Foreign Investment
Review Agency until 1977, allowed Jack to benefit from the improvement to
the economies of scale that arise from combined markets.

The *New Canadian Library* and The Egghead Paperback

As part of his desire to serve the nation's writers, McClelland collaborated with Malcolm Ross, who had been his English professor at the University of Toronto, to start the *New Canadian Library* (NCL), which has been credited with establishing the foundation of the Canadian literary canon (Lecker, Groening, Friskney). The NCL built on Penguin Books, the Albatross Modern Continental Library, and the New American Library, from which the title of the Canadian series was derived, to launch a series of Canadian paperback reprints. McClelland and Ross published each text in the NCL with an Introduction (now Afterword) by a Canadian academic, forming a critical framework through which the text was to be understood. The inclusion of an academic analysis was not only an aid to students, who would read these texts in their literature classes, but also provided the method for instructing a mass audience on how Canadian literature was to be read. The Introductions reshape the aesthetic network, discussed in Chapter One as one of the four networks affected by the introduction of any new technology. The Introductions to NCL editions cultivate a readership by legitimating each edition's position in a newly constituted Canadian canon and thus contribute to the debate over what should constitute (Canadian) culture. They orient readers as to the relevance of each text, shepherding the public's engagement with literature by explaining how and why it should be consumed. As Bourdieu would say, the Introductions produce a "belief in the value of the work" of art (37). This process resulted in what is now studied as a coherent

national tradition; just as the United States and Britain have distinct literary

histories, the NCL helped articulate a coherent Canadian canon, pulling works

out of the past, resituating them in the present, and demonstrating the depth

of Canadian literary heritage.

Importantly, this practice also helped McClelland reframe the medium

of the paperback in contradistinction to the deleterious effects of pulp

production. Recall that McClelland believed that for the book to survive the

threat of television, it must be employed in the service of works of literary

merit. In producing a "quality paperback" series of Canadian literature, the

NCL exemplifies the same contradictory practice of remediation that Druick

finds in the Massey Commission. Quality paperbacks are distinguished from

mass-market paperbacks by their conservative covers; higher production

values; different distribution channels (primarily campus bookstores)[19];

smaller print runs, but with more potential for re-prints, as a result of being

assigned as required classroom reading; and higher price points (Friskney

New 10). All of these characteristics push back against the disposable format

of the paperback, asserting the literary value of the text, while denying the

throwaway nature of the form. A form of *hypermediacy*, a key aspect of

remediation, discussed in Chapter One, the NCL's serialization promotes an

awareness of the materiality of the text by encouraging readers to collect all

of the volumes to complete the series. Matching cover designs draw readers'

attention to the book as a collectible, displayable object. These characteristics

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[19] This was true until 1971, when "52.4% of titles were sold outside the educational sector" (Friskney 162).

encourage the reader to overlook the reality of the form: a cheap book, with a binding of poor quality. The text will deteriorate relatively quickly, especially if the glue of the binding is exposed to humidity, and yet the NCL asserts the lasting importance of the quality of its literature to the nation.

In the series, we can see the logic of amelioration that is key to remediation. The problems that the NCL addresses are twofold: there is not a discernable body of work that constitutes Canadian literature, and there is a lack of economically accessible reproductions of Canadian works. In offering a solution to these problems, Ross and McClelland redefined Canadian literary history by offering an alternative to more expensive hardcover books and described a literary field that contributed to the growth of a national literature. At that time, relatively few university courses in Canadian literature existed. Ross partially attributed this fact to the lack of readily available cheap reprints of Canadian literature. By publishing Canadian books in an economical format, the NCL opened the possibility for the study of a national literature. Of course, the NCL soon had competitors: University of Toronto Press' *Canadian University Paperbacks* (1963) and Macmillan of Canada's *Laurentian Library* (1967), to name a few (Friskney 63). The growth of the Canadian literary reprint had a direct effect on the study of Canadian literature: between "1967 and 1974, the proportion of Anglophone universities offering at least one undergraduate course dedicated to Canadian literature increased from about 60 per cent to 100 per cent" (67). The growth of Canadian literature as a discipline coincided with new venues

(journals) for scholarship about Canadian writing and new Canadian-owned publishing houses (67-68). While this phenomenon was the result of more than one company's publishing initiatives, M&S was the first in English Canada to venture into this field, despite the small market for Canadian books (10).

The launch of the NCL occurred less than a decade after the release of the Massey Report and exemplifies how the government project of nation building, best articulated by the Massey Commission, was enacted not only by government institutions but also in the private sector. This was neither mandated initiative, nor random coincidence; rather, McClelland's business plan and the government's cultural policy align because of the similar politics of all involved. The country's cultural policies are directly linked to citizenship formation, but so are initiatives in the private sector. Of course, "there is no doubt at all that the New Canadian Library contributed a great deal towards the very situation from which it benefitted" (78). In promoting a national literature, M&S cultivated the tastes of the public and created a market for its products in the process.

In celebrating a national literature, the NCL also promoted patriotic values; McClelland then exploited these values. When trying to get a project's price point down, "Jack appealed to the patriotic instincts of his paper suppliers and printers in exchange for reduced production costs" (King 49). In the name of Canada's poetic tradition, McClelland was able to receive a discount on the raw materials of book production. Furthermore the Ontario

government's decision to support M&S through a $961,000 virtually interest-free loan highlights the ways in which M&S was seen as integral to the province's cultural objectives.

Part of McClelland's business success can be attributed to the ways in which his personal politics aligned with national trends, but the ways in which he organized M&S' lists to address different target audiences were key to M&S' market dominance. This happened at the levels of both form and content. M&S employed the established medium of the hardcover book and the newer medium of the paperback; it also published a diverse range of authors whose styles appealed to different kinds of readers. Writers such as Sheila Watson and Leonard Cohen were promoted by M&S to the university market through the NCL series. Simultaneously, M&S cultivated writers such as Pierre Berton, who was marginalized from the educational sector, but whose popular histories sold well to a more general readership. In 1971 NCL sales accounted for 8% of M&S' total net sales (Friskney 75). In this same year, Berton's sales account for 20% of M&S' total net sales (Parker, King, McKillop)[20]. These statistics help calibrate an impulse to overvalue the place of the NCL in M&S' catalogue. While the NCL attracts critical attention for its nation-building practices, Berton remains marginalized within academic discourse. The following case studies suture the middlebrow to the avant-

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[20] George L. Parker notes in "Trade and Regional Publishing in Central Canada" that in 1971, one fifth of M&S' profits came from the sale of Berton's *The Last Spike* (the second and final installment of his *The National Dream* series).

garde by examining a spectrum of responses to paperback publication by M&S authors.

Case by Case

   In the previous two chapters, I have provided a theoretical framework and the historical context within which the rise of the paperback in Canada can be understood. In the following three chapters, I examine the discussions McClelland had with three of his authors about format, and the ways in which form is related to the authors' understanding of their potential audiences. When read together, these case studies demonstrate how book history can be applied to new media studies to illuminate the ways in which the personal politics and artistic beliefs of authors shape the legacy of new media.

   These three M&S authors illustrate how media are historical subjects, embedded in not just cultural policy but also in personal politics. Human agents form the ways in which new technologies are employed. The paperback, or any new technology, is not just an object, but also a set of protocols that have developed around how that object is integrated into society. To understand the rise of the Canadian paperback, one must look at the entire media field, the dialectic codependent relationship among media; this means both the ways in which M&S used the paperback alongside the more established medium of the cloth-bound book and the ways in which McClelland fought for publishing's privileged place as an entertainment industry. The crisis of television and the threat of pulp publications are both

historical examples of the constant tensions between established and emerging media. This tension is formed in discourse and is articulated as radically new, but as we see from McClelland, there is nothing new about this manufactured state of crisis. If anything, it is historically recurrent. As we know, the book survived the threat of television and the invasion of pulp. This cannot be discussed as a simple media relationship but needs to be grounded in the people, institutions, and practices that shaped the medium's legacy. Together, these case studies argue that the history of Canadian publishing cannot be understood outside of the relationship between emergent and established communications technologies and therefore the importance of bridging the gap between the disciplines of book history and new media studies.

Whereas, media is often discussed "as heading a certain 'coherent and directional' way along an inevitable path, a History, toward a specific and not-so-distant end," (Gitelman 3), these case studies prove that new media's nuanced development is filled with resistance, as well as enthusiasm. The narrative that emerges, as a result of reading these case studies against one another, resists equating the rise of a new medium with a paradigm shift. The paperback book, as well as television, film, and photography, "are less points of epistemic rupture than they are socially embedded sites for the ongoing negotiation of meaning" (6).

Chapter Three
Pierre Berton: Best-sellers, Branding, and Nation Building

The most difficult problem a writer faces is to make people, even friends, aware
that he has actually written something
(Pierre Berton, *My Times* 331)

Pierre Berton wrote popular histories of Canadian events, in an attempt to articulate his country's national identity. In 1995, reflecting on a long, successful career as a writer and media personality, he ascribed his fame as contingent on the post-war moment. "Would *The National Dream* be as big a best-seller if it were published today rather than in 1970?" he mused: "somehow I doubt it" (Berton *My* 420). This reflection, a few years before the turn of the century, reveals the way in which Berton capitalized on the Cold War moment, becoming a voice for nationalism, just as these beliefs gained momentum. In this way, Berton's project—his desire to describe the mythology of Canada on which the country could found a national consciousness—aligned itself with the public's growing interest in local production. As such, Berton's objectives mirror McClelland's desire to build a national publishing house, as both were a product of growing post-war patriotism.

Nationally celebrated as one of Canada's best non-fiction writers, Berton was known for challenging the boundaries between fiction and fact. While he worked in the discipline of history, Berton was most interested in captivating readers. Although this resulted in high sales figures, it alienated him from the academic community. His biographer, A.B. McKillop, acknowledges that "there was little of the scholar in him...[and that] he was

not the contemplative type (136). Rather, he was an expert in self-fashioning

and a very prolific writer, two characteristics that challenged McKillop in the

writing of his biography, as Berton's version of events (in letters home and in

his memoirs) did not match historical records or other witness accounts

(182). Scholarship on, and critical opinion of, Berton has been as varied as his

career. His sales figures alone testify to the breadth of his audience. Although

extremely popular with the general public, there were those, including some

of the editorial staff at M&S, who were disappointed by the way Berton

recycled his material and criticized many of his books as potboilers. Berton's

history books sold to popular audiences more than to the educational

market, and academic historians derided his "lack of critical perspective"

(Nelles 272) and "unfortunate distortions" (Swainson 144). H.V. Nelles,

Professor of History at York University[21], sought to distinguish between

academic history, characterized by intellectual rigor, and Berton's form of

popular "narrative history" (270). The most authoritative study of the author

to date, McKillop's *Pierre Berton: A Biography* (2008), hinges on the question,

"[i]s history a story to be told or a problem to be solved?" (xii), and it neither

condemns Berton nor denies his persistent belief that telling a good story

trumps fidelity to the archive.

       In their book *Tell it Slant: Writing and Shaping Creative Nonfiction*

(2005), Brenda Miller and Suzanne Paola investigate the ethical boundaries

of non-fiction and ask the question, "[d]oes 'nonfiction' mean 'no fiction'?"

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[21] Since 2004, H. V. Nelles has worked as the L.R. Wilson Professor of
Canadian History at McMaster University ("H.V. Nelles").

(75). Their writer's guide encourages authors to become cognizant of the way that writers shape narrative from memory to make past events interesting to potential readers. They draw on literary theorist Hayden White to explain how nonfiction operates "under the sign of the real" (76). Like photography, nonfiction operates "as though the medium itself were transparent" and gives readers the illusion that they are able to look through the medium of the book—"like looking through a window" (76)—at an unmediated version of the real world when, in fact, the author has crafted a series of scenes to move the reader. While more readily associated with memoir than history, Berton employed a similar technique, drawing on his personal background to create an emotional connection with his subject. His childhood in the Yukon rendered his research in the North a return home, so that as soon as he disembarked the plane in Whitehorse, "the memories came flooding back" (*My* 31). Thus, Berton inflected his writing with a personal investment in Canadian history, contrary to the objective detachment of academic historical accounts. This technique resulted in a connection with his readers that helped position history as a popular product.

Despite his preference for a good story over an archival fact, Berton became Canada's most decorated historian. He received three Governor-General's Awards (*The Mysterious North* (1956), *Klondike* (1958), *The Last Spike* (1972)); the Stephen Leacock Memorial Medal for Humour in 1960; and two National Newspaper Awards in 1961. In 1987, the Canadian Author's Association named him "Canada's Man of the Century," and in 1975

he was made an officer of the Order of Canada. Berton has also been awarded twelve honorary degrees.

This chapter focuses on the ways in which Berton cultivated a readership not only through his narrative strategy, but also his employment of emerging media to grow his audience. The rapidity with which he published, combined with his frequent presence on Canadian television programs, launched Berton as a Canadian cultural celebrity. Contingent on industrial relations, Berton's fame resulted from the combined efforts of multiple agents, demonstrating Lorraine York's position that literary celebrity is the product of the cooperative labour of an entire network of agents, including the publisher, the publicist, and of course, the author (8). This being said, the conditions of the Canadian post-war moment paved the path for Berton to emerge as the celebrity incarnation of nationalist discourse. In other words, Berton was in the right place at the right time.

An Expert in Self-Fashioning

Pierre Berton (1920-2004) was raised in the Yukon, a fact that helped him throughout his career, as he became known as the voice of the Canadian North. During his undergraduate education at the University of British Columbia, Berton declared his intention to become a journalist, moving from a job at the campus paper, the *Ubyssey*, to a position at Vancouver's *News-Herald*. The Second World War interrupted this career path, when he joined the war effort in 1942. Throughout his three years in

the service, "he found himself posted from one army base to another,

constantly preparing for the war but never in it" (McKillop 143). After

receiving military training in Canada, Berton was sent to England, where he

was given instruction that he found not only redundant, but also inferior. At

this time, Berton became critical of the Canadian inferiority complex, a belief

that was prominent in his writing throughout his career (167). Like Jack

McClelland, who also served in the war effort, Berton's military career

resulted in a strong sense of patriotism.

After the war, Berton returned to Vancouver and the *News-Herald*[22].

1946 marked a turning point for Berton's career, when he was hired by

Maclean's magazine to investigate the legend of Headless Valley.[23] While his

voyage proved the legend false, it nevertheless increased public interest in

the North. Importantly, this expedition helped build an association between

Berton and Northern Canada. Combined with his birth and childhood in the

Yukon, and his 1957 Governor Generals Award for *The Mysterious North*,

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[22] Although he was eventually fired from this job, he walked right out of the office of his former employer into a job with *The Vancouver Sun.* McKillop notes that "whatever the circumstances that led to Berton's dismissal from the *News-Herald*, the fact most noteworthy was that being fired from the newspaper was not part of the story he chose to tell in his memoirs. In his view, he quit to go on to better things. Memoirs, after all, involve acts of concealment as well as revelation, for whether of saints or sinners they are sketches of an acceptable self" (McKillop 182).
[23] Headless Valley, a region on the boarder of the province of British Columbia, the North-West Territories, and the Yukon Territory, was shrouded in mystery and wild rumors of gold guarded by "head hunting savages and pre-historic monsters" (McKillop 196). Berton made an expedition to the remote Canadian North to dispel the myths of the region, which resulted in a series in *The Sun* that was followed closely by *Maclean's* editor Arthur Irwin. Impressed by Berton's work, Irwin offered Berton a job, and Berton, and his wife Janet, relocated to Toronto (196-211).

Berton positioned himself as uniquely qualified to speak about Canada's

Territories, just as Prime Minister Diefenbaker was turning Canadians'

attention to the North. In 1958, a year after being elected, John Diefenbaker

claimed he saw "a new Canada—a Canada of the North" (Diefenbaker), fueled

by the natural resources available in the Territories. To access these

resources Diefenbaker proposed infrastructural development, power and

roads, to open this economic potential to the Canadian people. Northern

expansion combined with the Cold War to draw Canadian minds to the land

between the US and the USSR. As the Canadian public turned their attentions

northward, Berton offered a conduit to that region, as a man raised in

Dawson City and who had made countless voyages to the country's

romanticized North. As this space gained importance for the Canadian

psyche, Berton appeared as the voice of that landscape.[24]

Once in Toronto and employed full-time at *Maclean's*, Berton

began to diversify beyond print media. In 1946 he began to work as a

commentator for the CBC and started to write radio plays (McKillop 213,

236). As his name grew, aided by awards and prizes like the Governor

General's Award, Berton continued to work on a variety of projects: he wrote

and narrated for the National Film Board, including the twenty-one minute

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[24] Marshall McLuhan's review of the Massey Commission, "Defrosting
Canadian Culture" (1952) argues that the North represents the psychological
space that allows Canadians to deny their proximity to the USA (94). Berton,
in his desire to articulate a distinct Canadian mythology, participates in this
denial and reinforces its possibility by reminding his audience of the vast,
unpopulated territory that exists to the North of the majority of the
population.

film *City of Gold* (1957); he was the host of *Close-Up* (1957-1963), a Sunday

night televised news program; he was a reoccurring panelist on the game-

show *Front Page Challenge* (1957-1995); he hosted his own television

program, *The Pierre Berton Show* (1962-1973), which aired each evening,

Monday through Friday.[25] At the time, it was "the longest-running daily

program in the history of national television in Canada" (522); he edited and

narrated *Heritage Theatre* (1986-1987), dramatic reenactments of Canadian

historical moments, which aired Saturday evenings on the CBC; and in

addition to all of this, he made guest appearances on such shows as *Horizon*,

This Hour Had Seven Days, *Take 30*, and *Toronto Today*.

The Greatest Marketing Tool Ever Invented

Berton constructed a narrative of Canadian history across media.

CBC television launched its first broadcast on September 6, 1952, and three

days later, Berton "appeared on a televised version of *Court of Opinion*"

(McKillop 278).[26] Berton reflected:

> I left the studio that night resolving never again to let myself be put
>
> through such an ordeal. The following day, when the power of the
>
> medium was brought home to me, I did an about-face. People who had

---

[25] This television program originally aired in 1962 under the title *The Pierre Berton Hour*; when the format was changed from sixty to thirty minutes in 1963, the program was renamed *The Pierre Berton Show* (McKillop 389, 404).
[26] Screen Gem's biography contradicts McKillop's dates, stating that Berton "made his bow on Canadian TV two days after its inception" (*McClelland* Box 8 File 27). Regardless of this minor discrepancy, both biographies note the rapidity with which Berton engaged in the new medium of television.

seen the program professed to be in awe of me. "You're Pierre

Berton!" a taxi driver said to me as I stepped into his cab. "I saw you

on TV last night." No taxi driver had ever before called me by name. I

had written scores of articles for the largest magazine in the country,

but nobody knew me. I realized that, in spite of my lofty attitude and

my abject terror, I would have to come to terms with the new medium.

It was the greatest marketing tool yet devised, and since I was now

determined to write best-selling books, I would have to make use of it.

Television was not an end in itself, but it would be the means to

publicize my real work. (Berton, *My* 91)

Berton was quick to see the potential of new media to promote his political

agenda, as well as the Berton brand. Five years after his first appearance on

Court of Opinion, when *Front Page Challenge* aired for the first time, Berton

still did not own a television, but he was aware of the program, and a month

into the first season, he agreed to be a guest panelist. He appeared on the

game show weekly for the next thirty-seven years (McKillop 1, 315).

Although Berton's assertion that these television appearances merely served

to publicize his print publications may be just another form of self-

stylization, along the lines of his signature bow-tie, it also fits with Berton's

definition of what constitutes the profession of being a writer: someone who

composes language for various media forms.

In an undated[27] talk given on "A Writer and his Many Media," Berton

argues that writers move among many possible mediums: newspapers[,]

magazines[,] TV and radio[,] books[,] theatre[, and] film" (PBF Box 162, Card

2)[28]. In fact, some writers do not reach their audience in the form of the

printed word (Card 1). "[B]asic techniques" unite the profession; essentially,

writing always necessitates the "[a]rrangement of scenes . . . [and] ideas . . . [,]

dramatically or logically . . . to produce an effect" (Card 5). While this goal

remains consistent across media, each medium necessitates a shift in style.

Berton highlights the problems of writers "[u]sing techniques of [an] older

medium when moving to a new one" (Card 2). For example, when Berton

writes for radio, he cultivates a "less formal" style, constructed from an

increase in "ad lib[bing]," the insertion of "pauses [and] fluffs" and a

"conversational" tone, which combine to create a "purposeful sloppiness"

(Card 2). Ironically, Berton's notes unveil the labour-intensive art of

constructing dialogue that appears spontaneous. For Berton, a conscious

engagement with rhetorical strategies defines the act of writing, regardless of

medium.

Furthermore, he argues that each medium does not exist in isolation;

rather, there is "cross-fertilization" among media (4). This argument closely

mirrors Bolter and Grusin's definition of remediation, the "constant dialectic"

---

[27] These seven typed and annotated cue cards are undated: the finding aid for
the Pierre Berton Fonds conjectures that the cards come from circa the
1960s.
[28] Berton emphasizes that this is true "ESP in Canada," but his cue cards fail
to provide a reason for this assertion (PBF Box 162 2).

among media (Bolter 50). To explicate his point, Berton draws on the

opening of Orson Welles's *Citizen Kane* (1941), where media cross-

fertilization is demonstrated at the level of both form and content. The film's

titular character, Charles Foster Kane,[29] owns a media empire—"in its glory,

it held dominion over thirty-seven newspapers, two syndicates, [and] a radio

network" (*Citizen*)[30]. Kane diversified his investments and vertically

integrated every part of the media production process by owning the forests

and paper mills that provided the raw material for his newspapers, as well as

the printing presses that pump dailies at rapid speeds over conveyor belts. In

the film's opening sequence, the audience learns the history of the deceased

newspaper tycoon, through a ten-minute newsreel entitled "News on the

March." The newsreel draws on Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Kubla Khan"

(1797), writing "[i]n Xanadu did Kubla Khan a stately pleasure-dome decree"

on the screen in a style similar to the black and white narrative insertions of

a silent movie. In addition to the cultural capital of Romantic literature, the

newsreel draws on the established medium of print journalism, documenting

the fact that Kane's death garnered the cover story of every major world

paper.

Berton turned to *Citizen Kane* to show how in the opening of this

famous Hollywood film Welles draws on the traditions of literature, radio,

---

[29] Herman J. Mankiewicz based Kane on American newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst, whose powerful media empire consisted of thirty newspapers and fifteen magazines (Kael 21).
[30] A map of the USA, illustrating the range of his newspapers' distribution in the form of concentric circles that look like radio waves disseminating from the country's major city-centers, represents this dominion.

newspapers, silent movies, and television to demonstrate not only the diversity of Kane's investments, but also the ways in which new media itself often references or incorporates the content, styles, or techniques of more established media. Accordingly, Berton defines "the cross-fertilization of media" (PBF Box 162, Card 4) as the productive coexistence of multiple media forms. While this sounds similar to Bolter and Grusin's depiction of a constellation of media, Berton differs from Bolter and Gruisin in asserting that "competition" among media will result in the death not only of certain media, but certain genres (5, 7). According to Berton, "Scott, Thackery, James, Dickens, [and] Maugham" are "[u]nreadable," because they are "too leisurely" (5). The narrative pace of these authors has fallen out of vogue because new media, such as radio and film, have accustomed readers to faster-paced stories. This sounds familiar to present-day assertions that youth, who have grown up in the age of the Internet, cannot focus for extended periods of time on the linear format of the book because they are habituated to reading in a multidirectional fashion (hyperlinking).

Rather than lament the evolution of readership, Berton takes a progressive view. Berton asks, who "gives a damn if [canonical authors] . . . endure [?] . . . A lot of old media are dead. Who cares?" (7). While colloquial in its nature—free from the detailed definition of terms that marks academic discourse—Berton's thesis parallels discussions in the contemporary field of new media studies. As examples of media that did not stand the test of time, Berton cites "illuminated manuscripts . . . minstrels . . . [and] orators of

Demosthenes type" (7); these forms of communication represent past

mediums, replaced by more contemporary forms. Demonstrative of the

evolution of human communication, Berton nevertheless assures his

listeners that "[w]riters will always continue" (7). This analysis hinges upon a

distinction between media and delivery technologies.

In his "Introduction" to *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New*

Media Collide (2006) Henry Jenkins makes a similar differentiation: first, he

distinguishes between media (recorded sound) and delivery technologies (an

8-track, a tape, a CD, or an MP3 file); secondly, he argues that media never

die. Instead, they evolve. Delivery technologies, on the other hand, do perish.

In the example of recorded sound, the CD supplanted the tape as the

dominant form of delivering music, but listeners remained consistent in their

desire to hear songs in their homes (13). Berton's argument is almost

identical: the written word will endure, even if the delivery technologies

change. However, each new medium challenges the genre conventions of the

past delivery technology. For Berton, these developments are replete with

opportunities for cultivating readership.

The Berton Brand

Berton's disparaging comments regarding many British and American

canonical writers indicates his fervent belief that he understood what the

reading public desired in modern prose. His conviction led to multiple

disputes with the editorial staff at M&S. When Berton submitted the draft of

his first piece of juvenilia, *The Secret World of Og*, M&S contacted Doris Patee, of the Macmillan Company, "one of the most successful juvenile editors in the United States" (MSF Box 8, File 22). Patee, along with other independent reviewers, took issue with Berton's black sense of humor and his use of popular products, like Coca-Cola, in a children's story and provided Berton with a series of suggestions that would make the book more saleable to families. When McClelland delivered this news to Berton, he qualified it: "[y]ou have been right far more often than you have been wrong. The success of your career has depended on your being right. Here is a case where you are being judged wrong by the majority in advance. Who's to say who is right?" (File 22). He assured Berton that M&S "would be quite prepared to publish," even if he decided that, despite M&S' objections, it should be published without revision (File 22). Berton turned his back on the advice of the experts McClelland had contacted on his behalf and rejected Patee's feedback. Despite this, *The Secret World of Og* was a success, which reinforced Berton's confidence in his own viewpoint. Simultaneously, this assured McClelland that he was right in giving Berton more control over his own products.

However, the success of the book was not solely to Berton's credit, as it was also backed by an extensive marketing campaign from M&S, which included press releases to radio and TV stations; review copies; advertising in major newspapers; store displays (including an *Og* mask with a suction cup for window displays and a matching wall poster); and a radio recording

of Berton reading from the book to his children (JMP Box 8, File 22).[31] Under

the publicity direction of J. A. (Steve) Rankin[32], M&S orchestrated a

commission-sharing scheme to encourage bookstores and radio stations to

work together to market Berton's book. This consisted of a 50/50 split on the

commission between radio stations and book sellers, which Rankin referred

to as "[o]ur usual 50% business" (File 23). This marketing strategy highlights

how not only Berton, but also M&S grasped the importance of new media for

reaching book purchasers and regularly worked to integrate radio into

bookselling strategies. This worked particularly well with an author like

Berton, who was willing to participate in these schemes, not only embracing

new media, but also involving his entire family in promoting his latest

project.

　　　　Undoubtedly, Berton's willingness to integrate new media into his

writing career—and Berton remained adamant that his real profession was

as a writer—helps explain his Canadian celebrity status. McClelland saw

Berton as Canada's best-selling author; in a letter to American publisher

Seymour Lawrence, February 8, 1961, he confided, "we'll do cartwheels to

oblige him" (MSF Box 8, File 22). McClelland worked hard to keep his star

author happy; on May 22, 1963 he explained, "while Berton is just another

author in the U.S.A., he's very much Mr. Big in Canada and we have to be

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[31] This radio recording was available in five, ten, or fifteen-minute versions;
the majority of stations preferred the five-minute version (*McClelland* Box 8,
File 23).
[32] Joyce Anne Rankin (later Cumings) eventually worked her way up the
ladder at M&S, becoming in-house editor (Friskney 140).

awfully careful" (File 26).[33] In 1971, Berton "accounted for 20 per cent of

McClelland & Stewart's net profits (McKillop 525). Berton noted that most of

his books sold around 50-60,000 copies (exclusive of paperback and trade

paperback), but that *The National Dream* was more than double this. (MSF

Box 110, File 10); "[o]ver the years, Berton's titles had accumulated retail

sales of more than $12 million, without counting mass-market paperback

editions" (McKillop 571).

While McClelland remained determined to keep the author of the

Berton brand happy, well aware of the economic potential of the cultural

icon, not everyone at the M&S office was happy churning out Berton books on

an almost yearly basis, many of which were merely hurried collections of

editorials published elsewhere:

> [b]eneath the obvious desire to have McClelland & Stewart publish a
>
> money-making book there existed within the editorial group an
>
> underlying tone of disappointment that the company for which they
>
> toiled was willing to publish such apparent froth when works of great
>
> literary or intellectual merit risked too little editorial attention and
>
> publicity. (McKillop 364)[34]

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[33] This is in regards to Berton's frustration that his mother's book, *I Married the Klondike*, also published by M&S, had gone out of print.

[34] In a letter to D. B. Wallace, of the Public Relations Department at the CPR Company, December 9, 1963, McClelland calls upon the sales figures of these hurried collections to justify his belief that the CPR would benefit from a Berton account of the building of the CPR: "[e]ven when he collects his newspaper columns in book form we sell 10,000 copies almost automatically" (*McClelland* Box 8, File 29).

The editorial staff characterized Berton's rushed work as antithetical to works of "literary or intellectual merit" (364). In this way, they described economically successful, mass-market writing as a necessary evil to provide the economic stability necessary for M&S to fulfill its premier goal: cultivating Canadian works of artistic value.[35]

This argument promotes the belief that high culture "establishes itself as the antithesis of the most commercially successful products" (Goldman 3). Elite culture, epitomized by modernist art, "constituted itself through a conscious strategy of exclusion, an anxiety of contamination by its other: an increasingly consuming and engulfing mass culture" (Huyssen vii). Of course, modernist authors and artists never fully realized this dichotomous paradigm, as many consciously engaged with the iconography of popular culture; nevertheless, they entrenched the illusion of a firm divide between high and low culture. Thus, when the staff at M&S feared Berton's hastily-developed publications would sully the dignity of the publishing house, they reiterated what Andreas Huyseen calls "the Great Divide" between "high art and mass culture" (viii). Berton's commitment to publish frequently and to promote his work stood in opposition to the staff's desire to see their labour as serving works of artistic merit, not hurried publications

[35] Frustration regarding Berton resulted from not only the rapidity of his publications, but also the way in which he manipulated the staff to suit his needs. For example, he insisted that M&S publish his Mother's manuscript about her life in the Yukon, *I Married the Klondike*. M&S then packaged this book with Berton's book *Klondike* to improve her sales figures. Later, when Berton realizes his mother's book had gone out of print, he become irate and left McClelland to scramble to purchase sheets from England and get Mrs. Berton's book back on the shelves (*McClelland* Box 8, File 25).

for mass consumption. Recent work on modernism and celebrity (Jaffe, Goldman) has undone this dichotomy, confronting the myth that elite artists, epitomized by modernist writers, were free from the marketplace. Nevertheless, modernist promotional strategy often relied on the capital of scarcity, manifest in limited editions, magazines with small circulations, and the low output of authors (Jaffe 7-8). In so doing, they promoted the belief that a shortage of copies matched the reified thought patterns of avant-garde art.

Berton's promotional strategy and rapidity of publication situate his books in the realm of celebrity, a status "dependent on the reproducible image, [where] the image in question has to be an intertextual sign, invoking multiple forms of cultural production (Goldman 9). Berton built the 'Berton Brand' by flooding the market with both his image and his authorial signature. The design of his print publications exemplifies the importance of his name, what Jonathan Goldman refers to as a "trademark" (12): on the cover of his books, his name often appeared larger than the book's title. This visual hierarchy testifies to the way in which M&S marketed Berton as a consumable product. While the staff at M&S attempted to distance themselves from the debasing act of promoting a literary celebrity, and therefore to distance themselves from mass cultural production, Goldman argues that celebrity culture is a defining characteristic of elite culture. In fact, "the texts that have come to define elite culture . . . [make the] idea of the exceptional personality available to popular culture" (2). Modernist authors,

such as James Joyce, Gertrude Stein, and Virginia Woolf, generate "a figure of the author as a unique, larger-than-life personality" (2). The concept of genius, with its investment in the individual, links elite artists and celebrities, as both "strive to reaffirm the centrality of the individual within mass society (2).

Of course, M&S also has a signature, an imprint represented in the form of a logo that marks each publication to attest to its merits. Dissent at M&S made public the debate as to where M&S wanted to locate itself in the field of cultural production. Interestingly, this large (by Canadian standards) publishing house was unable to settle on a particular identity. The case of M&S proves the necessity of modifying Bourdieu's concept of the cultural field for a Canadian context. Bourdieu's Parisian analysis positions the heteronomy of the market in opposition to the autonomous zone of avant-garde art (figure 5) ("Field" 48). However, M&S could be located in multiple locations within this field. With Berton, M&S targeted a mass audience, therefore servicing the market. Large print runs make good business sense, as they lower the economies of scale necessary to make a profit; best sellers improve profits by moving stock quickly out of warehouses, and thus lower the overhead of storage costs. These ventures were integral to the economic viability of the company. At other times, M&S invested in prestige publications, such as the experimental poems of unknown author James Reaney (King 48), or the writings of authors who firmly refused to participate in publicity schemes designed to market their work, such as

heteronomy (market)

rich

institutionalized consecration: BOURGEOIS AUDIENCE

high degree of consecration: old

RIGHT

BOURGEOIS ART

Academy

DRAMA
boulevard theatre

INDUSTRIAL ART

vaudeville

psychological novel

'society' novel

NOVEL

naturalist novel (Zola)

'novel of manners'

popular novel (serial)
rural novel
journalism
cabaret (chansonniers)

charismatic consecration: 'INTELLECTUAL' AUDIENCE

Parnassians

Symbolists (Mallarmé)

Théâtre libre (Antoine)

'ART FOR ART'S SAKE'

POETRY

Decadents (Verlaine)

little review

'Bohemia' (poor; young) unknown

low degree of consecration: young

'MASS AUDIENCE'

LEFT

NO AUDIENCE

autonomy (no audience, no economic profit)

poor

+

Figure 2   *French literary field in the second half of the 19th century; + = positive pole, implying a dominant position, − = negative pole, implying a dominated position*

Figure 5 Pierre Bourdieu's "Field of Cultural Production" ("Field" 49)

109

Gabrielle Roy (103).[36] This aspect of M&S' publication history will be

developed more fully in the following chapter on Sheila Watson.

In this way, M&S was very different from the small press

movement: First Statement Press (founded in 1946), Contact Press (founded

in 1952); Fiddlehead (founded in 1954); Talon Books (founded in 1963);

Coach House (founded in 1965); etc. ("About Us: A"; MacSkimming 168, 176,

248-249; "About Us"). Small presses have a more coherent sense of purpose;

by only publishing a few authors each year, they quickly articulate their niche

market, and thus their specialized audience. These presses did not prioritize

financial success, as many of the editors worked for little or no money—

Victor Coleman worked as editor at Coach House Press for free (167)—or

financed production out of their own pockets—Fred Cogswell personally

financed *The Fiddlehead* on his professor's salary (248). In this respect,

Coleman and Cogswell labored at a loss, in the service of Canadian literature.

M&S, on the other hand, buttressed risks on experimental authors with the

profits derived from popular authors such as Pierre Berton and Farley

Mowat. Despite the fact that some of the editorial staff at M&S staff wanted to

distance themselves from Berton and concentrate on more literary

publications, Berton became increasingly involved with his publisher. In the

face of financial trouble, M&S fell behind in paying Berton his royalties, which

gave Berton "considerable power over Jack" (King 249). This displeased

---

[36] McClelland elected to publish Reaney in lieu of a collection of poems by the
late Duncan Campbell Scott. This infuriated Jack McClelland's father, who
perceived Scott as the more commercially viable poet (King 48).

some staff members, as well as other M&S authors, who believed Berton

received special attention. Berton's appointment to the Board of Directors at

M&S in 1964, and the fact that he became a shareholder in the company,

further imbricated him with his publisher (McKillop 434, 570). He then

became the editor-in-chief of the Canadian Centennial Library[37] in 1967,

investing some of his own money in the venture (MacSkimming 138). In

addition to all of these official roles, Berton and McClelland forged a genuine

friendship, the two united by their common desire to shape a national

consciousness. In service to this common goal, they labored side by side on

the Committee for an Independent Canada (CIC), an organization that formed

in 1970 to lobby for state protection of Canada's cultural industries (McKillop

495).

Technological Nationalism

Berton's celebrity status emerged not only from the proliferation of

his name across media, but also from the way in which he erected himself as

a figure of nationalism at a particular moment in history. Since 1946, Berton

wrote for *Maclean's*, the

> voice of Canadian nationalism several years before the landmark
>
> Massey Commission. . . . For the remainder of the decade, and well

---

[37] Berton and McClelland modeled The Canadian Centennial Library on Time-Life books. Each edition in the illustrated series had a first printing of 100,000 copies. *Weekend* magazine co-published the series and ran advertisements that included mail-in coupons for the books (MacSkimming 138).

beyond, *Maclean's* served as a major forum for those who supported

the nationalist principles, positions, and ambitions of the Massey

Commission. (McKillop 253)

Maclean's positioned itself as the venue for nationalist discourse at the very

moment that this became the dominant rhetoric of Canadian political

conversation. In 1950, *Maclean's* had a circulation of approximately 411,000

(Sutherland). An audit report two years earlier testified that outside of

francophone Canada the magazine sold equally well across the country,

allowing *Maclean's* to boast the title of Canada's national magazine

(Mackenzie 209). Publicity posters for the weekly invited perspective readers

to find out "why more Canadians read *Maclean's* than any other Canadian

magazine" (n.p.). As one of its principal writers, Berton cultivated a

readership and forged an association between his name and nationalist

principles.

Berton used his position at *Maclean's* as a soapbox from which to

disseminate his political opinions. His 1950 article "Everyone Boos the CBC"

supported public broadcasting: both arguing that it financially supported

Canadian artists and that it was an integral method for Canadians to be in

touch with Canadian issues (253). As part of this work for the CIC, in March

of 1970, Berton delivered a talk to the Senate on the state of mass media in

Canada.[38] His cue cards for the speech highlight the key points of his

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[38] This speech was reported in various newspapers on Thursday, 26 March
1970. Although the notes for Berton's talk remain undated, I presume the
speech was delivered on, or close to, Wednesday, 25 March 1970.

argument: the Canadian philosophy on broadcasting has been corrupted by

American influences. To remain autonomous, public broadcasting "in Canada

should not be concerned with ratings or commercials or revenue" (PBF Box

161 TV-2). Public broadcasting exists not to generate a profit, but rather to

"strengthen national sentiment" (TV-3). This rhetoric closely echoes the logic

of the Massey Commission and predates the sentiments of the Ontario Royal

Commission on Book Publishing. Like both of these documents, Berton

argues that communications technology holds the country together by

creating the conditions for the possibility of nationalism. This has, in Berton's

mind, always been the case: "[s]ince [the] days of [the] Intercolonial and [the]

CPR," the private and public sectors of communications have worked to unite

the country: "railways[,] telegraph lines[,] pipelines[,] airlines[, and]

radio/TV networks[...c]reate a national idiom...a national mythology...[and

i]nterpret Canada to Canadians...[: w]ho we are...where we came

from...where we're going" (TV-3).

In this speech, Berton equates media with infrastructure or what

Maurice Charland labels "space-binding technology" (196). As Charland

argues in his 1986 essay "Technological Nationalism," the railway and the

radio make Canada possible:

> [i]n the popular mind, Canada exists more because of the
>
> technological transcendence of geographical obstacles than because of
>
> any politician's will. Thus, technology itself is at the centre of the

Canadian imagination, for it provides the condition of possibility for a

Canadian mind. (201)

While foundational for Canada, the space-binding potential of new media also

facilitated "the rise of empire…[and] increasingly drew Canada into the

American cultural system" (209). Whereas the CPR knit eastern and western

Canada, media infrastructure threatens Canadian sovereignty: radio waves

traverse the Canadian border with the United States. Furthering the US

cultural invasion, Canadian television channels purchase American

programming at reduced rates, and the economies of scale of US production

allow local programming to be displaced.

Berton deplores Canada's participation in American cultural

imperialism, focusing on the syndication of foreign product: channels replay

past episodes of "I Love Lucy" (PBF Box 161 TV-4), to the detriment of

Canadian writers, actors, and producers. In the 1970s, "American prime-time

programming was 22 percent the cost of the Canadian equivalent, while its

revenues [from advertising] were 163 per cent higher" (Edwardson 225).

The Canadian Radio-Television Commission (CRTC), established in 1968 to

replace the Board of Broadcast Governors, legislated Canadian content

quotas to buffer the economic incentives of foreign product (198-199), but

this did not fully address the problem, as "it made most sense to produce

low-cost Canadian content just to fill regulatory hours, rather than risk

spending money on something that might actually attract advertisers" (120).

Canadian news, low-cost interview programs, hockey, and low-budget

creative productions fulfilled Canadian content quotas, and left prime-time television hours open for the foreign products that attracted top advertising dollars (121). For Berton, this insidious cultural imperialism threatened Canada's sovereignty. Beyond securing the means of production, he argues, Canadians should fill these platforms with Canadian stories that strengthen their national image in the process of creating a distinct Canadian idiom; dutifully, we must "sing our own songs, create our own heroes, and dream our own dreams or we won't have a country" (PBF Box 161 TV-4). Furthermore, he argues, these programs should not be concerned with ratings, since their objective is to knit the diverse regions of Canada into a complex national story. Almost twenty years after the Massey Commission, Berton's speech echoes the commissioners' call for the management of mass media. While the commissioners wanted erudite programming to block out the infiltration of debasing American popular culture, Berton's motivation stems from a desire to cultivate local talent.

This speech demonstrates how individuals lobbied the Canadian government to legislate public policy in the name of nationalism. This evidence complicates recent scholarship under the umbrella of the TransCanada Institute, founded by Smaro Kamboureli, which asserts that the "study of Canadian literature can no longer take place in isolation from larger external forces" ("About the TransCanada"). The project draws attention to the ways in which texts are shaped by institutional forces, at both the level of government and academia. This version of Canadian history seeks to depict

the larger paradigms within which cultural production takes place; in doing so, it depicts a top-down model of nation building, in which the government objective of citizenship formation is cultivated through artist grants and awards. Berton's work, as well as McClelland's, illustrates a bottom-up version of nation building, in which individuals seek a government response to their personal investments in Canadian culture. Public policy and institutions are, after all, the legacies of the people who built them. Of course, once established, these institutions shape the work and lives of the artists who operate within them. In this sense, cultural production resembles an möbius strip: the individual both shapes and is shaped by public policy.

You Cannot Afford to Say No

Of all the nation-building ventures Berton undertook throughout his lifetime, he is perhaps most famous for his work on the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), which culminated in the two-volume series, *The National Dream: The Great Railway 1871-1881* (1970) and *The Last Spike: The Great Railway 1881-1885* (1971). McClelland played a substantial role in the inception of this project, approaching D.B. Wallace, an executive in the Public Relations Department of the CPR Company, on July 5, 1962, with the idea to revise John Murray Gibbon's *Steel of Empire* (1935). However, quickly after he made initial contact with the CPR Company, McClelland abandoned this initial idea and instead decided to highlight Berton's interest in the construction of Canada's national railway. McClelland attempted to gain

Wallace's approval for the project with the argument that Berton was

"undoubtedly the best writer in Canada…for this particular sort of book" and

assured him that the result would be a "major book, readable and dramatic,

[and] written for a wide, popular market" (MSF Box 8, File 29). He supported

this assertion with sales figures from Berton's book *Klondike* (1958):

"although the retail price is $7.50, [it] continues to sell at the rate of about

3,000 copies a year and it's [sic] total sale in Canada alone in our regular

edition would now have exceeded the 30,000 copy mark" (File 29). Thus,

Berton's sales figures attest to the breadth of Berton's readership, a

readership the CPR could access to advertise their company.

　　Thus, it seemed reasonable to McClelland to request that the CPR

cover a portion of the $50,000 advance that Berton required in order to

research and write the book in time for Canada's centenary in 1967. Although

M&S was willing to guarantee $15,000, the publisher hoped the other

$35,000 would be "found" from the CPR Company (File 29). Wallace rejected

this proposal on the grounds that the topic of the last spike had been

"extensively documented" (File 29). Instead, he contended that any new book

should focus on the growth of the CPR after this important historic event and

draw readers' attention to the diversity of the company's current operations.

On December 9, 1963, McClelland responded with a five-page letter outlining

the flaws in Wallace's logic. Although McClelland originally contacted the CPR

with the goal of updating *Steel of Empire*, in this letter, he argued that the

story of the CPR had "never been dramatically told;" in fact, *Steel of Empire* is

characterized by McClelland as "a very dull book" (File 29). Instead, McClelland argued that a Berton book had the potential to capture "the public imagination" and would garner significant reviews and publicity (File 29).

In this same letter, McClelland crafts a complex response to new media; he informs Wallace that he does not "listen to radio and T.V. but inadvertently in the past several days [he has]…heard two television promotions and three radio promotions [for Berton's latest book] just in passing" (File 29). In this statement McClelland both distances himself from new media (he is far too busy with the work of publishing to occupy his time with television programs) and simultaneously asserts both its ubiquitous presence and unavoidable power. McClelland sketches a hierarchical relationship among media, where television and radio can be harnessed as promotional tools to support important publications. Berton's career path heightens this potential, despite the fact that Berton does not use his radio or television programs to promote his own work. Instead, the radio stations on which Berton appears "promote his books. The same is true of television. The number of free minutes of television time that would be devoted to the C.P.R. as the result of such a book would at advertiser's rates cost tens of thousands of dollars" (File 29). McClelland elucidates that, "advertising dollars can't match [that]…sort of publicity," and asserts that the CPR company "simply[,…] cannot afford to say no" (File 29). In conclusion, he admits, "Berton is not pressing this thing. I am. Occasionally in my career as a book publisher I've known that I am right. This is one of those occasions" (File 29).

On December 26, 1963, Wallace rejected the proposal on the basis of

McClelland's request that the CPR contribute $35,000 to the project.[39] While

astounded that Wallace did not understand how Berton's mass media appeal

would direct significant attention to the CPR, McClelland eventually accepted

Wallace's decision.

Despite Wallace's refusal to commit company money towards the

project, Berton began research on the CPR in 1966, with the aid of Norman

Kelly.[40] In 1968, Berton was able to devote the majority of his time to the

project and used his celebrity status to forge a connection with the CPR's

president, N.R. (Buck) Crump. Through Crump, Berton was able to gain

access to the CPR archives (McKillop 484).[41] While the CPR never succumbed

to McClelland's idea of a book advance for Berton's troubles, in July 1968,

Travers Coleman, supervisor of news services, placed company resources at

Berton's disposal: he flew Kelly to the west coast, "put him up at the Hotel

Vancouver, and sent him by train" to Winnipeg. In addition, he gave Berton

unlimited access to the superintendent's business car so that he could

[39] After this initial correspondence, McClelland and Wallace arranged a meeting in Montréal, and McClelland followed up with another letter on January 15, 1964, reiterating his main argument. Again, on January 28, 1964, Wallace refused the proposal. On February 4, 1964, McClelland incredulously accepted the CPR Company's refusal to financially contribute to the project with the admission that he was "astounded." (File 29).

[40] A PhD student at Queen's University, Norman Kelly began working for Berton in 1966 by locating historical sources and compiling a bibliography. By 1968, when Berton began to devote the majority of his time to the CPR project, Berton and Kelly began to travel together on research trips. As the project developed, Kelly conducted interviews, as well as extensive archival research on Berton's behalf (McKillop 484).

[41] In addition to Kelly, the project was greatly aided by CPR archivist J.C. Bonar and Berton's secretary Ennis Armstrong.

familiarize himself with the transcontinental trip (485). McKillop notes that this "level of research assistance was not the sort that Canadian historians could expect from cash-strapped universities or from the earnestly accountable Canada Council, almost their only source of funding" and conjectures that "it helps explain the churlish reception some historians gave Berton's CPR saga" (485). Regardless of the alliance between the CPR and Berton, the company's financial records remained closed to the author, even though Berton felt they were a key aspect of the CPR's history.

Eight years after McClelland had originally pitched the idea to the CPR, Berton published *The National Dream: The Great Railway 1871-1881* (1970); Berton followed this publication with a second volume in the series, *The Last Spike: The Great Railway 1881-1885* (1971); he then capitalized on the success of the first two books with the publication of *The Great Railway: Illustrated* (1972), a condensed version of the first two publications, accompanied by 336 archival photographs, illustrations, and maps. In 1974, the CBC produced an eight-part mini-series, based on Berton's books. These three publications, combined with the television mini-series, represent Berton's magnum opus, his great contribution to Canadian history: a creation story for Canada.

M&S launched *The National Dream* in cloth at $9.95 a book, a relatively high price-point for 1970 (Berton, *My* 330). Despite this economic barrier, M&S anticipated the book would sell well and ordered an initial print run of 10,000 copies (499). While McClelland made much of the size of this

first printing—the extremely large cake at the launch for *The National Dream* sported 10,000 candles in honour of the size of the first print run—multiple reprintings had to be ordered within the first year, bringing total sales to 50,000 before Christmas (331). As a lesson learned, M&S ran the first print run of *The Last Spike* at 65,000 copies (25,000 of which were designated for the Book-of-the-Month-Club, which had selected Berton's book) and ordered paper to print another 20,000 copies (JMP Box 9, File 11). Two thousand copies from the first printing were bound in a special binding for the two-volume special edition, which included *The National Dream* and came joined in a special slipcase (File 11). As mentioned earlier, *The Last Spike* was so successful, that in 1971, Berton "accounted for 20 per cent of McClelland & Stewart's net profits (McKillop 525). *The Great Railway: Illustrated* (1972), another hardcover publication, was also packaged in a slipcase. Designed by Frank Newfeld, this oversized codex concludes with information on "the making of this book" (335). The colophon,

> *Type was set by* Mono Lino Typesetting Co. Ltd.,
>
> *The book was prepared for lithograph by* Herzig Somerville Ltd.,
>
> *Printed by* Ashton-Potter Ltd.,
>
> *And bound by* Hunter Rose Company, (335)

draws attention to the art of book-making. This information encourages readers to investigate the materiality of the publication: the circular imprint of a train crossing a trestle bridge inlaid on the front cover; the mustard coloured endpaper; the thickness of each individual page; the gold coloured

type used to embellish the footnotes or titles on each page; and the size and weightiness of the book itself. This prestige publication asserts the importance of the contents with an apposite materiality.

Despite the economic barriers to publication, all three books reached a wide audience. In fact, in 1972, Berton had four books on the best-sellers list: *The National Dream*, *The Last Spike*, *The Great Railway*, and *Klondike*. Berton boasts, that this "record has never been exceeded, and, I suspect, never will be" (*My* 333). Here we can see that the established medium of the hardcover book remained a saleable product in the Canadian market, despite the prevalence of paperback publications. Of course, paperback editions followed these hardcover publications; yet, since they sold at a lower price, Berton pressured M&S to keep as many hardcover books on the shelf as possible.

In addition to these paperback editions, McClelland convinced Berton to edit an abridged version of *The National Dream* and *The Last Spike* specifically for paperback, which he published with ninety-six colour photographs from the CBC mini-series. This version of the book capitalized on the popularity of the mini-series to attract an audience and sold 175,000 copies (Berton, *My* 333). In this example, the mini-series did not replace the book, but rather redirects its audience towards the print publication.

These examples demonstrate a symbiotic relationship between emerging and established media: the mini-series repurposed the hardcover book, and then the paperback repurposed the television documentary.

Throughout all of these iterations, the established medium of the hardcover

book argues for the validity of Berton's scholarship, counterbalancing his

reputation as a popular author. While he furthered his star status through

television, his hardcover books testify to the weightiness of his scholarship.

In this way, M&S resisted marketing Berton as a cultural commodity, and

instead positioned Berton's work as important to Canadian culture.

The National Dream

In 1992 the CBC rebroadcast its 1974 production of *The National*

Dream. It updated the original series via interviews with Berton that

introduced each episode. The first episode begins with a close-up of an aged

Berton, balding in a khaki coloured sportsman's vest. He greets the audience:

"Good evening. I'm Pierre Berton. Tonight we present a story that all

Canadians will recognize. It's the story of one nation's determination to find

itself, a struggle for identity, which continues to this day" (Disc 1). With this

declaration, the camera zooms out to reveal Berton standing on the back of a

CPR train. These new introductions have two functions: to contextualize the

historical content and to contextualize the mini-series itself, a production

that Berton informs the viewer is "one of Canada's most successful television

programs, ever" (Disc 1). If one of Berton's projects is to frame Canadian

history in the rhetoric of scandal—the building of the CPR is a story of

"political squabbles, scandals, engineering impossibilities, and financial ruin"

(Disc 1)—to create a distinct Canadian mythology, his other project is to

promote the success of his own ventures so that his accomplishments become part of this same Canadian mythology. As our tour-guide, Berton reminds the viewer that he is qualified to lead us through history because the series is "based on [his]…books" (Disc 1).[42] In addition to solidifying Berton's qualifications, the series serves as a marketing platform for his books. Questions that remain at the end of the program can be answered by consulting Berton's award-winning publications. In this way, the mini-series does not replace the book, but rather works in tandem with it to promote print media.

After this updated introduction, the episode begins, as it would have when it first aired, with a montage of pastoral images: through golden coloured sheaths of wheat we see a flock of birds flying over the prairie sky; the craggy peaks of a snow-topped mountain; a grazing elk; a blue-jay; a field of bison; and lastly, a close up of a First Nations man, his jet-black hair plaited at either side of his chiseled face. A score of reed instruments, which lilts in soothing tones, accompanies these images of pre-industrialized Canada, until the piercing whistle of a train in the distance punctures the landscape. The man onscreen cocks his head, as if searching for the source of this dissonant sound. Suddenly, a steam engine emerges from a mountain tunnel, breaking through the natural landscape. Louis Applebaum's musical score shifts pace: brass instruments emerge to bring a triumphant *marcato* which is blended

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[42] Although the series was based on Berton's *The National Dream* and *The Last Spike*, William Whitehead and Timothy Findley wrote the series, with Berton serving as consultant.

with the insistent pulse of the engine's wheels churning over steel rails. This orchestration mirrors the transition from the pastoral to the modern. The swell in the score frames the engine as iconic of progress and power and serves as a sonic indicator of modernization. The title of the series is then superimposed over an image of labourers (the first visual image of the non-native Canadian population) laying railroad ties and tracks: *The National Dream/ Building the Impossible Railway/ With Pierre Berton* (Disc 1). Here, the use of "with" is key; the show is not "narrated" by Berton, or "written" by Berton, or "based on the best-selling books" of Berton, but rather Berton's physical presence in the documentary is a key selling feature. In this way, Berton becomes a character in the narrative drama. The montage continues: the parliament buildings in Ottawa; a blacksmith crafting the molten metal that will become part of the track; and finally, the montage culminates in what Berton terms "the most famous photo in Canadian history" (Disc 8), Donald Smith, senior director of the CPR, bent over the rails in his black top hat and grey suit, driving the last spike.

Berton narrates the "story of the railway they said was impossible and the story of the nation of Canada along the way" (Disc 1), situating the country as contingent on the railway, but secondary to its importance. Before the CPR, three-quarters of Canadians lived on isolated farms, "cut off from civilization" (Disc 1). The CPR knit this diverse constituency together, which ushered in the growth of the Canadian city. Accordingly, the documentary frames nature as an obstacle—the "terrifying world of snow," as well as the

engineering impossibility of the "wall of mountains"— that threatens the unity of the nation (Disc 1). As narrator, Berton must negotiate these two landscapes: on the one hand, the cultivated grounds outside the House of Parliament in Ottawa and, on the other hand, the harsh landscape of the Canadian Rockies. To demonstrate his fluency with these two diametrically positioned environments, Berton moves between a tweed blazer, paired with his signature bow tie, and a wilderness safari outfit. These costume changes demonstrate his fluency, his ability to move between the world of politics and the world of nature. This double-persona, which draws on both Berton's youth in the Yukon and his celebrity career in urban Toronto, makes him ideally positioned to guide the viewer through the epic drama of Canadian history, with its distinct mix of political scandal and Western expansion.

An investment in the individual as a powerful agent of social change constitutes the core of Berton's narrative strategy. Although the collective labour of tens of thousands of people built the railroad, Berton focuses his story on a few provocative characters: Prime Minister John A. Macdonald, who had the idea to build the spine of the Canadian nation in the form of a railway;[43] Prime Minister Alexander Mackenzie, who serves as Macdonald's

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[43] The focal character for the series, the script denotes that the camera should keep John A. Macdonald (JAM) as "the central figure" in all camera shots, isolating him as a "lone figure" in the crowded House of Parliament. The audience should be given "the time to look at this man and to establish his undoubted 'charisma' and charm." The film crew compiled footage of JAM looking "pensive . . . delighted . . . concerned about difficulties . . . at peace . . . [and my personal favorite] determined to push his dream in spite of opposition." This list of directions for actor William Hutt testifies to the

nemesis, attempting to block Macdonald's great ambition; William Cornelius

Van Horne, who oversaw the railway's construction[44]; surveyor Major Albert

Bowman Rogers, who became famous for finding a pass through the Selkirk

Mountains (known today as Roger's Pass); and surveyor and engineer Sir

Sanford Fleming, who in addition to being the level-headed chief engineer on

the project, went on to develop the idea of standard time zones. These

characters become the larger than life players whose inspiration and iron

fists culminate in the railroad, which marks the victory of man over nature. In

so doing, the series frames a large-scale public works project as the personal

victories of a handful of exceptional men.

In *The National Dream*, Berton asks,

[w]hy did they do it? Why did any of them do it? Not for profit,

certainly, there was little enough of that; nor for adventure, there was

too much of that. The answer seems clear from their actions and their

words: each man did it for glory, spurred on by the slender but ever-

present hope that someday his name would be enshrined on a

mountain peak or a river or an inlet, or—glory of glories—would go

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extent to which the series focuses on the personality of one man (JAM) as the
guiding will of an entire nation (*Pierre* Box 93, Episode 1).

[44] Berton describes Van Horne as "a true Renaissance man…he was tireless.
In another age he might have been a prince of the church or a Roman
conqueror. In this age, he was certainly the man to build the impossible
railway" (Disc 5). Berton compares Van Horn's struggles to the epic battles of
world history; his warrior-like stamina is combined with a fierce intellectual
prowess, so that "his employees started to view him as a superman" (Disc 5).
The repetition of the word "superman" reinforces the herculean strength of
Van Horn, who is able to direct the herd of labourers in order to conquer the
western mountains.

into the history books as the one who had bested all others and

located the route for the great railway. (155)

Berton's work serves to honour these men, bestowing upon them what

Berton believes they desired most: to be remembered. As such, the series

serves as a eulogy delivered to the country, crafted to instill in the national

consciousness the belief that the dreams and ambitions of a handful of heroes

comprise Canada's national legacy.

The National Dream, both the book and the television series, construct

Macdonald and Van Horne as exceptional men to attest to the epic nature of

confederation. In so doing, these works fashion a creation myth to unify the

Canadian people. Remember, Berton believed a distinct Canadian mythology

would ensure national sovereignty. Provocatively, the mini-series also

constructs Berton as one of these exceptional men, with his unique

qualifications to serve as Canada's custodian of its heritage. As discussed

earlier, an investment in celebrity culture necessitates a belief in exceptional

individuals. In contrast, the hundreds of men who lost their lives in the

construction of the railway become a mere footnote to the personal

biographies of Canada's great leaders.

While the ambitions of politicians overshadow the labourers who

actually built the CPR, women remain almost entirely absent from the mini-

series. In eight hours of television, there are only seven female characters,

each of whom has a marginal place in the narrative drama.[45] Equally

problematically, the series evokes common visual stereotypes of First

Nations people, their long hair trailing through the breeze as they trot

shirtless on barebacked horses. Synonymous with nature, aboriginal people

constitute a major obstacle for the construction of the CPR. In the final

episode of the series, the railway proves its worth when it transports the

Canadian military in ten days to quash the Louis Riel Métis uprising. This war

justifies the importance of the CPR and encourages the public to support the

project and save the railway from impending financial ruin with a second

relief bill.[46]

Throughout the series, Berton interjects his personal opinions and

assumptions. These moments are tagged with the phrase "I think" (Disc 2),

marking these insertions as distinct from the voice of objectivity that

characterizes historical discourse. These moments often occur in response to

historical ambiguity (a 1916 fire in Ottawa destroyed the barracks building

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[45] Macdonald's wife; Macdonald's disabled daughter; Lady Duffrin, the Governor General's wife; three unnamed train travelers; and a single sex-trade worker in one of the saloon towns that springs up in response to railway construction. Other than the sex trade worker, these women occupy domestic space, lack political conviction, and are only marginally relevant to Canadian history because the men who established the nation loved them.
[46] In 1976 Gamma Two Games Ltd., a board-game company based in Vancouver Canada, capitalized on the popularity of Berton's narrative with *The Last Spike* board game. To win, players must "build the railway from Montréal to Vancouver and speculate in land seeking to make the most money before the last spike is laid." "Indian Land Claims" impede players' progress. The family-oriented board game not only speaks to the popularity of the series, but the way in which *The National Dream* vilified First Nations people as the nemeses of modernization (*Last*).

that housed the records of the first surveys for the CPR) or to embellish the character sketches of the key figures in Canadian history. In this way, Berton solves the problem of historical uncertainty and creates a palatable narrative of the construction of Canada. These collegial interjections—"I get the impression, you know…" (Disc 3)—lend a conversational tone to the documentary. His diction assures viewers that their host is a man of the people, rather than an egg-headed academic. After all, Berton grounds his expertise in life experience, rather than a formal education. This strategy targets a non-specialized audience, giving Berton mass market appeal.

Berton paired this colloquial language with hyperbolic descriptions of the importance of the CPR:

> [t]he CPR had entered the national lexicon. Men would set their watches by its train whistles and couples awakened by the passing of the midnight cars would conceive their children to the sound of wheels on steel. The CPR would affect the lives of almost every Canadian. (Disc 5)

The melodramatic tone exemplified in this passage made Berton unpalatable to many historians, literary critics, or highbrow audiences. His conversational nature and his investment in the dramatic spectacle of history alienated Berton from academic historians; meanwhile, his overwrought diction segregated him from the creative writing community invested in the craft of storytelling. The result was an accessible narrative of Canadian history, unmarred by the trappings of any one specific discourse community.

Reaction to the series mirrors reactions to Berton in general. In the *Toronto Star*, March 6, 1974, media critic and journalist Dennis Braithwaite cried, "make Berton give us back our history." In response to the extensive advertising for the series that Braithwaite received (which included promotional commercials featuring Berton; invitations to an advanced screening of the series; a full colour brochure that arrived in his mailbox; as well as extensive magazine and newspaper advertisements), he claimed that while "watching television on Sunday night I half expected an officer of the [M]inistry of [C]ulture to knock on the door and demand to know whether our set was tuned to *The National Dream*"(Braithwaite). Yet the series, in Braithaite's estimation, failed to meet the high expectations created by this media frenzy. Instead, Braithwaite bemoans the way in which "a belligerently nationalist Berton" became the focus of the miniseries, overshadowing both the CBC and the CPR. In a scathing condemnation, Braithwaite accuses Berton of "over-research[ing]…, over-writ[ing]…and over-verbaliz[ing]" Canadian history (Braithwaite). What he found even more inflammatory than Berton's many costume changes was his continual assertion that the audience was "being exposed to an epic" (Braithwaite). Braithwaite was not alone in his criticism. Bob Hill wrote in the *Edmonton Journal*, 1 March 1974, that the CBC's low budget, "truncated" camerawork failed to capture the vast expanse of the prairies:

> [t]hat's why, no doubt, we have Pierre Berton popping up every few
> minutes—jarringly—to tell us what's going on, trying to tie together

all the brief dramatized episodes, explaining what the camera has not

shown us. When you have to call in a narrator so often, it's a pretty

sure sign your film is failing to tell the story. (Hill)

While professional critics panned Berton's presence in the mini-series, the

general public expressed admiration for not only the mini-series, but also

Berton's role as narrator.

In response to the negative reviews the series received, the CBC

conducted a research report on audience responses to the series (PBF Box

347, File 1). When the series aired, it "attracted an average audience of 25%

or about three million viewers, aged 12 and over" (Box 347, File 1). It aired in

the 9:00–10:00 PM timeslot and received more viewers than any other

program that aired during this spot in CBC schedule, including the 1973

Royal Wedding special[47]. Audience members "liked" the miniseries, giving it

an "average enjoyment index of 83…among the highest recorded for

historical productions by the CBC" (File 1). When asked, "almost two-thirds

of the audience thought that Pierre Berton did a very good job as host. The

appreciation index for Pierre Berton was 84, a value much higher than that

usually accorded hosts of CBC information programs" (File 1). Only 9% of

viewers believed that Berton "appeared too often;" while only 5% found him

"distracting" (File 1). In conclusion, the study found that the "criticisms made

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[47] Audience "interest in the series was highest in the Prairie and B.C. regions," and the demographic was predominantly "older and more educated viewers" (File 1). In this context, "more educated" is defined as members of the population with a university education. This statistic is "in line with the audience history of other historical productions" (File 1).

by professional critics of Pierre Berton's role on the program were certainly not shared by the audience as a whole" (File 1). While the academic community derided the way in which the series celebrated Berton's role as a Canadian celebrity, the Canadian public relished Berton's presence. His celebrity status made him a familiar tour-guide through Canadian history and his didactic rhetorical strategies clearly communicated the link between the CPR and Canadian identity.

As the correspondence between McClelland and Wallace makes clear, the story of the last spike was part of Canadian history lessons, and books, long before Berton engaged with the story. Berton's version of events, however, brought the story out of the classroom and into the living room of the Canadian people. His contribution to the CPR's legacy builds on the same logic of technological nationalism that makes Canada possible. In using a multi-media strategy to disseminate the history of "technological transcendence" (Charland 201), the way in which technology binds the Canadian people despite geographical distance and regional differences, Berton uses a Canadian publisher and CBC Television to bring the Canadian people the story of how the railroad connected the nation, despite vast geographical obstacles. This multi-media approach harnessed the established medium of print and the new medium of television. All of these technologies, both old and new, however, were harnessed in the name of nationalism.

This strategy exemplifies Druick's understanding of cultural remediation, described in the previous chapter. Berton's desire to fill

Canada's communications infrastructure with Canadian content exemplifies

the "double logic of remediation at work in modernity: 'our culture wants

both to multiply its media and to erase all traces of mediation: ideally, it

wants to erase its media in the very act of multiplying them'" (Druick 5). In

producing Canadian television programs, Berton sought to divert audience

attention away from American programming. Simultaneously, his print

publications demand his readers' attention, attention that could otherwise be

dedicated to American publications. In filling all forms of communications

technology with Canadian content, Berton countered an American cultural

invasion with the proliferation of media. In so doing, he sought to remediate

a problem in the Canadian psyche and prove Canada's rightful position on the

world stage.

Chapter Four
Sheila Watson: Anxious Engagements with Mechanization

*I've wanted what is on the page to speak for itself. I've never . . . wanted to talk
about what I have written, which—after all—is a very small body of work*
(Sheila Watson "It's What You Say" 167)

George Bowering celebrates Sheila Watson's *The Double Hook* (1958)
as "the first and last modernist novel in English-speaking Canada," a book
honoured as "holy . . . by the few postmodernists of the following period" (4).
While historically inaccurate, this hyperbolic assertion testifies to the extent
to which readers and critics readily associate the name Watson with a
modernist aesthetic. McClelland reinforced this association in the complex
promotional scheme he launched on Watson's behalf. With his penchant for
publicity, McClelland forged an association between the experimental nature
of the novel and the form of the book, claiming the launch of *The Double Hook*
marked the first original paperback publication in Canada. Regardless of the
falsity of this assertion, McClelland marketed both Watson and the paperback
as avant-garde, drawing readers' attention to how the form of the novel
mirrored its content. As such, he positioned Watson at the vanguard of
technological innovation, as both the medium and technique of the novel
could be viewed as innovative.

Watson worked from 1956 to 1965 on her dissertation *Wyndham
Lewis and Expressionism*, under the supervision of Marshall McLuhan (Flahiff
176). This work began in Toronto, until the last four years of her doctoral
program, which she spent in Edmonton with her husband, poet, playwright

and academic Wilfred Watson (246). This move, combined with McLuhan's propensity for travel, resulted in a correspondence between supervisee and supervisor that engages with Lewis's work and poses questions about technology more broadly. Chronologically, this conversation occurred after Watson had already written the majority of her creative work: *Deep Hollow Creek*, *The Double Hook*, "Rough Answer," "Brother Oedipus," and "The Black Farm."[48] Nevertheless, her dialogue with McLuhan is an important resource for reading her academic articles in *White Pelican* and her later short story, "The Rumble Seat."

By situating Sheila Watson within a media discourse for which she is little known, this chapter demonstrates her ongoing exploration of the relationship between technology and power. In so doing, it locates Watson's hesitance to employ new media as a promotional strategy for her creative work within the context of her theorization of emerging technologies. In addition, it situates "The Rumble Seat" within the context of Watson's academic writing to render visible the ways in which this seemingly anomalous short story is instead part of her ongoing interrogation of technological innovation and its effects on the human condition.

An investigation of Watson's lesser known media interests has been made possible by the confluence of two initiatives: first, the republication of Watson's dissertation on Wyndham Lewis in 2003, prepared for the press by

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[48] Watson Composed *Deep Hollow Creek* in 1938, but she did not publish it until 1992 (Flahiff 46-47). She extensively revised this first novel, most predominantly in 1952-1954, creating *The Double Hook*, but she did not publish *The Double Hook* until 1959 (77).

Paul Tiessen and introduced by Fred Flahiff; and second, the official opening

of the Watson archive in 2009, at St. Michael's College, University of Toronto.

Prior to this, Watson criticism has been primarily dominated by close

readings of *The Double Hook* (Bowering, Grube) and a desire to situate her

work in relation to expressionism and/or modernism more broadly (Grace,

Scobie). Her dialogue with McLuhan and her interests in media have been,

until recently, mostly buried in the archive.

An Experimental Practice

Generally speaking, Watson shied away from self-promotion, giving

few public presentations. However, in her archive sits the long list of

publishers that she approached, attempting to get *The Double Hook* into

circulation. Rejecting Wilfred Watson's suggestion that avant-garde writers

should circulate their manuscripts through literary communities outside of

official publishing mechanisms, Sheila Watson struggled to place her novel

with an official publishing house (SWF Box 29, File 2006-01-514, Folder 1).

Eventually, after multiple rejections, the novel found a publisher in Jack

McClelland (Box 36, File 2006-01-618). Watson's resolve to see her work in

print speaks to the value she placed on expanding her readership through

conventional publication.

When Watson submitted her novel to M&S, she included a foreword

by F.M. Salter, then Chair of the English Department at the University of

Alberta. Salter's support for the novel proved integral to its publication and

the marketing campaign that followed. In a query letter, December 3, 1957,

Salter sought to convince McClelland to publish *The Double Hook*, claiming it

was "the most brilliant piece of fiction ever written in Canada" and offering

suggestions towards a marketing strategy for the novel. He conjectured that

the novel would "not make money, or not immediately, but it is a sound

investment" (MSF Box 63, File 17); although it was bound to be a "flop" with

the general public, Salter argued that "a few discriminating readers will talk

about it to their friends, and they to their friends, and the circle will widen

until Mrs. Watson is recognized for the genius that she is" (File 17). To

expedite this process of recognition, Salter suggested that McClelland's

advertising department prove its worth by staging a national competition,

mirroring the phenomenon of *Gone with the Wind* in the United States.

Instead of readers competing to see who had read more of *Gone with the*

Wind's 1,200 pages, Salter suggested M&S challenge readers to interpret *The*

Double Hook: "I would get the book into the hands of avant-garde groups, and

I would try to set up the same sort of competition. The advertising copy

should say: 'We don't know what it means. Can you understand it? . . .'" (File

17). As such, M&S could promote the novel's enigmatic quality as its greatest

selling feature.

McClelland's response to Salter's letter traces the process of sending

Watson's book for review and the mixed readers' reports that followed.

Interestingly, readers often revised their negative opinions after reading

Salter's forward to the novel (File 17). The readers' reports convinced

McClelland that publishing the novel would result in a "substantial loss" for

M&S (File 17); regardless, he desired to do so. This ambition attests to

McClelland's goal of publishing works of artistic merit, despite the potential

financial loss for his company. For McClelland, the question became how to

cultivate an audience for this kind of work. Believing the novel to be

"something of an egghead piece, " he first proposed to release it in the NCL

series, as a way to link it with a potential market (File 17). Contingent on the

sales figures of the first four NCL titles, this plan would have launched

Watson's novel in paperback at the price of $1.00. Although Ross and

McClelland originally conceived of the NCL as a collection of classic Canadian

literature, McClelland believed the NCL would help flag the text for an

educational market. If this plan had come to fruition, McClelland hoped to

follow the novel's paperback NCL release with a hardcover publication.

However, this initial plan never materialized, and the NCL did not include the

novel until 1966.

 Instead, McClelland launched *The Double Hook* with a first printing of

3,000 copies, 2,500 of which were in paperback. The other 500 were bound

in cloth, presumably for the library trade (McClelland, Box 63 File 16-17)[49].

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[49] Two distinct narratives about the format of the novel's first publication
exist: one, a promotional strategy that only speaks of paperback publication
and two, correspondence from the M&S office that speaks of simultaneous
publication, with the hardcover book representing 1/6th of total production
(SWF Box 34, File 2006 01 586). In my opinion, the absence of the hardcover
book from the marketing strategy for the text confirms McClelland's
intention to market the paperback to the general public and reserve the
hardcover binding for the library trade. This separate market requires the
durability of hardcover books to protect the text from many readings and the

The paperback format served as the anchor of McClelland's marketing

strategy, as the press release for the novel, printed on the back of off-prints of

the novel's cover, testifies:

> The publication of *The Double Hook*...marks [M&S's]...first venture
>
> into the field of original publishing in paper covers. We hope that
>
> this will open a new market for Canadian writing, since it offers to
>
> Canadians in all walks of life a chance to read and to own new
>
> Canadian books in attractive but inexpensive editions. Our books
>
> in this group will be designed by Frank Newfeld, one of Canada's
>
> foremost typographical artists. The jacket of *The Double Hook* on
>
> which this note is written will give you some idea of the striking
>
> quality of his work. (SWF Box 34, File 2006 01 586)

Three assertions in this paragraph warrant attention. First, McClelland

defines the paperback as fresh and original, despite its presence in Canada

long before M&S employed the format. Second, McClelland frames the

medium of the paperback as financially accessible, and therefore democratic,

opening the beautifully crafted text to a wider audience. Remember that

twenty years earlier, Allan Lane positioned Penguin paperbacks as the

democratizers of reading (Joicey). In this way, McClelland builds on a pre-

established association between paperbacks and an ethos of access. Finally,

McClelland mitigates the cheap nature of the format with a prestigious design

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impact of book return chutes. These two separate markets explicate the
diversity of reading practices present at the same moment in history, and
thus the ability of multiple media forms to coexist productively .

by Frank Newfeld. Integral to the logic of the quality paperback, the calibre of Newfeld's work highlights the conflicted status of the medium, as both disposable and high quality.

All three statements demonstrate McClelland's desire to shape the paperback's reputation and to inform consumers how best to integrate this technology into their daily lives. In so doing, he positions the paperback as a tool for upward social mobility, giving access to those who would have been previously denied the opportunity to own beautiful books. McClelland's signature at the bottom of the advertisement demonstrates how he uses his reputation to testify to the validity of these statements, employing his cultural capital to consecrate an unknown author.

In the preliminary material to the first paperback edition of the novel, McClelland builds on the associations cultivated in the press release, arguing that

> Although first publication of novels and other serious literary
> forms in paper-covered editions is standard practice in France
> and in other European countries, it is a relatively new approach in
> English-language publishing. In Canada it is still an experimental
> concept. There is much to be said in its favour. We believe that
> many new Canadian works will make their appearance in this way
> in the future.
>
> As this is our first original publication in paper covers we are
> pleased to have been able to select a work that we consider to be,

in itself, exceptional. It is a first novel, its form is challenging, and

its style is fresh and compelling. ("Prelims" n.p.)

Linking an experimental publishing practice with an experimental novel,

McClelland argues that *The Double Hook*'s form mirrors its content.

Historically inaccurate, this note "lays claim to inaugurating a practice of

issuing books in paper covers that much smaller experimental Canadian

publishers of avant-garde books such as Contact Press and First Statement

Press had been doing for decades before M&S" (Irvine 2). Marketing the

format as bohemian, through an association with France as the country at the

forefront of modern, artistic progress, McClelland claims to introduce a

European practice to a Canadian audience. This revisionist history

contributes to a rhetoric of rupture, embellishing the newness of the

paperback in order to attract potential readers.[50]

When analyzed through Elizabeth Outka's concept of the

"commodified authentic," we can see McClelland's promotional strategy as

typically modernist (4). Outka defines the "commodified authentic" as the

paradoxical employment of claims of authenticity and consumer culture:

better yet, the way in which modernist marketing recasts "commerce as the

powerful and appealing purveyor of bountiful aesthetic pleasures previously

reserved for the upper class" (10). Outka's work complicates Andreas

Huyssen's concept of "the great divide" between high and low culture,

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[50] The hardcover first edition does not include a "Note from the Publisher."
Instead, the epigraph to the novel is spread out over five pages, occupying the
space of the "Note from the Publisher" (Watson, *The Double* n.p.)

showing how the power of modernist marketing strategy lay in the way it

embraced market culture; the reproduction of modernist cultural objects

promises that "middle-class consumers might (allegedly) have both the

genuine article and something they could easily purchase, both the exclusive

and the accessible, the original as the perfect reproduction" (10). When

placed in this framework, McClelland's claim signifies as typically modernist:

he both cultivates the "mystique of the originary object" (9), claiming *The*

Double Hook as alluringly new, and promises consumers access to this avant-

garde object through paperback publication. As such, McClelland merges

market culture and modernism; he also demonstrates the way in which the

"commodified authentic" created the possibility for the ubiquity of the new.

As John Xiros Copper argues, with modernism, "Bohemia is no longer the

exception, it becomes the rule" (25). Accordingly, McClelland imports a new

practice from France, while informing the public of its assured prominence in

the future. His attempt to popularize the paperback as exceptional

simultaneously argues that all consumers should have access to this

authentically different object.

Following this promotion of an authentic consumable, McClelland's

"Note from the Publisher" asserts the brilliance of Watson's work by quoting

from Salter's foreword, providing a figure of institutional authority in

Canadian literature to vouch for the calibre of Watson's novel. Salter argues:

Mrs. Watson offers participation; and she makes no concession

whatever to blotting-paper readers. She will find her audience

143

among those whose reading muscles are capable of exercise and

development. (Salter, qtd. in McClelland "Prelims" n.p.)

Salter's condescending term, "blotting-paper readers," positions readers in

the home, reading letters written by dip pens and then blotted with paper to

remove any excessive ink. Contrasting correspondences filled with gossip in

opposition to real works of literature, Salter incites the reader to rise to the

challenge of a serious work of art. With this provocation, he invites domestic

readers into the fold of academic debate and a rigorous interpretive practice.

In so doing, he frames any dislike of Watson's work as a failure on the part of

the reader to flex his or her "reading muscles."

McClelland distances himself from the term "blotting-paper readers"

by leaving the phrase in quotation marks, attributing it to Salter. This allows

McClelland to assert his concern for the common reader (by making

experimental works economically approachable through paperback

publication) and yet frame the novel as an elitist text. In an unpublished draft

of the publisher's note, McClelland considered including the admission that,

"[t]his, then, is our first attempt at testing the truth of the oft expressed belief

that good books will sell far more readily at lower prices" (MSF Box 63 File

17). This phrase commercializes the theme of accessibility developed in the

press release. While McClelland eventually removed this commercial

admission from the "Prelims," he nevertheless lets Salter's analysis stand as

the literary authority, while his own voice testifies as the publishing

authority. The dynamic of these two expert figures informs the reader that

failing to embrace either the paperback format or the experimental content

would be the mark of a provincial.

While McClelland strove to market *The Double Hook* as a Canadian

foray into the new world of paperback publishing, he manufactured the text

in Britain "solely in order to keep the price down" (MSF Box 63 File 17). In a

letter to Marjorie King, an M&S reader unimpressed with the foreign

production of the novel, McClelland explained,

> in a work of this type the publisher has little hope of making
>
> money and for this reason may wish to keep the cost as low as
>
> possible. . . . We prefer to print in Canada where we can do so, but
>
> it was impossible in this particular case. (File 17)

In a demonstration of his business acumen, McClelland publicized the

venture as a milestone in Canadian publishing, yet he made the necessary

concessions to ensure its financial viability. Watson herself worried that her

avant-garde writing would lose M&S money, closing a letter to McClelland,

"[i]ncidentally I hope that I am not a financial liability. That thought would

really disturb my peace" (Series C, Box CA 17, File 56). Repeatedly,

McClelland assured Watson that she was not a financial burden and that she

had "added prestige to [M&S's] . . . imprint" (File 56); yet for all her concern,

Watson demonstrated little effort in the promotion of her own work, shying

away from both public presentations and new media adaptations.[51]

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[51] In fact, Watson's novel sold better than expected, and continues to sell
copies, mostly due to its inclusion on reading lists for classes in Canadian
Literature. While after 1966 the NCL edition served the university market, in

On Dec 21, 1965, the CBC offered her "$1,000 for the right to broadcast a 90-minute television adaptation of *The Double Hook*" on the program "*Festival*" (File 56). Watson considered the offer, but she insisted that she have creative control over the production. The CBC's interest in the novel "waned considerably," as it took Watson "almost a year" to respond, insisting that "she be allowed to approve the adaptation" (File 56). Conversely, the CBC wanted film director Ronald Kelly to handle the project and informed McClelland's office, "any arrangement whereby an author has a veto right over one of their staff writers is unacceptable" (File 56). Accordingly, the CBC rescinded its offer. Watson's approach displays a hesitancy both to collaborate on an adaptation and to participate in a multi-media approach to authorship. Ultimately, Watson understood the profession of authorship to involve creative control and to manifest in print publication.

Sam Koplowicz, one of Watson's former students, attempted to script *The Double Hook* for film. Although Watson approved the project, she asserts

> [h]ad they managed to film it, it would have been their thing. They were completely involved. Otherwise I was never anxious to see it filmed because I've seen too many novels ruined on film. You can't always translate from one medium to another: *The Double Hook* was written to be read. (Watson "It's What" 164)

1965 M&S ordered 6,000 photo-offset reprints, expressly to hold the university market until the novel's NCL release. These reprints sold at $1.25 a copy and speak to the persistent demand for the novel.

For Watson, films that repurpose content from print, as opposed to works specifically crafted for the screen, fail to capture the original essence of the novel.[52] With this, she explains, even if *The Double Hook* "seems to be written in a cinematic fashion it really isn't. The images are not really visual images although they may seem photographic. The novel depends on its verbal structure" (164). Watson's comment responds to a larger conversation regarding modernist aesthetic technique. Later in this chapter I will discuss Watson's response to Gertrude Stein's technique of beginning again and again, a technique Watson critiqued for importing the form language of photography into a verbal medium. For now, I want to focus on the way in which her comments position her profession. Whereas Berton understood rhetorical construction to be the essence of all writerly pursuits, regardless of the medium, Watson understood her profession as dedicated to print publication. As such, her resolve not to participate in adaptations of her work resulted in a persona of discerning conviction.

If celebrity depends on a reproducible image, as discussed in Chapter Three, then Watson's Bartelby-like resolve positioned her as antithetical to popular culture. As Ezra Pound noted, it is either the abundance or the scarcity of the reproduction that results in its success (Jaffe 7). Drawing on a similar logic, Watson aligned herself with a modernist ethos of scarcity. Her few public talks admit to her tireless revision process, further adding to an

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[52] Watson's comments help explain why she also declined Australian David Rapsey's attempt to option film rights to the novel (*Sheila* Box 34 File 3).

atmosphere of refined perfection. The publication of *Deep Hollow Creek*

(1992), an earlier version of the novel, allows the diligent reader to trace the

novel's development from realist fiction to modernist abstraction. When

combined with her fervent control over reproduction of her work, the result

is an aura of elite cultivation. Rather than distance Watson from potential

readers, this attitude helps signify the prestigious nature of her prose and

attests to the merits of her work.

An Absent Author's Photograph

Although professional publication forced Watson to collaborate with

other artists and designers, she sought creative control as much as possible.

While I have highlighted her determination to circulate her work, she was,

nevertheless, vigilant to ensure that her writing circulated in accordance

with her own aesthetic impulse. While Watson spoke of her "enormous

pleasure" in witnessing Frank Newfeld transform a double hook into the

marrow-like design of *The Double Hook*'s front-cover, she nevertheless

exerted control over what sorts of designs would be suitable. When Newfeld

requested an author's photo for the cover, Watson responded, "'[n]o you

can't have the photograph, I'm not going to have one'" and gave him a double

hook, instead (14). This was not the only time Watson refused to include an

author's portrait with her writing and speaks to her hesitance to engage with mediums other than print.[53]

In the early 1980s, two graduate students at the University of Toronto sought to remedy a lack of recent material on Canadian authors. The result was Bruce Meyer and Brian O'Riordan's *In Their Words: Interviews with Fourteen Canadian Writers* (1984). The book, published by Anansi, pairs interviews on the creative process with brief bibliographies and author photographs; even the biographies of Meyer and O'Riordan are accompanied by a photograph of the pair, their hands hidden in their pockets as their smiles tilt upward towards the camera. Every person is visually represented; all that is, except Watson, whose photo page reads, "photo not available" (156). The title of the interview—"Sheila Watson: It's What You Say"—is printed on the page opposite this absence. Meyer and O'Riordan borrow the subtitle for this section from an anecdote recalled later in the interview, when Watson offers her father's comment, "[i]t's not what you mean, it's what you say" (166), as "the most fundamental single influence on [her] . . . attitude to language" (166). Juxtaposed with the absent author's photo, the

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[53] Later in her career, Watson repeated this process, rejecting the original cover design for her story collection with Coach House Press, *Five Stories*. Instead, she presented them with "an old bronze tint of the mental hospital taken about the time" she was born (Watson "It's What" 165). Watson's selection of the image mirrors her gift to Frank Newfeld of a double hook; both gestures demonstrate Watson's involvement with the design of her texts. When M&S republished *The Double Hook* as part of its NCL series, the cover design did not satisfy Watson, and McClelland wrote her to apologize, rectifying the problem for the next printing (*Sheila*, Box 35 (2006-01-586), Folder 4 of 5).

title creates an additional assertion: words are more important than other modes of representation. Situated within the context of her academic work, Watson's refusal to augment print with a visual image is consistent with her aesthetic critique of photography and her pessimistic theorization of technological development.

Watson's investigation of photography was a preoccupation of her academic work for decades, beginning with her dissertation on Wyndham Lewis and her conversations with Marshall McLuhan, and continuing in essays she published in *White Pelican*. Her work warns of the danger of arresting experience in photographic renderings. Instead, Watson argues that art's function is not to explain the world, but rather to encourage readers to embrace the mystic and mythical, to accept the world of shadows. Beyond being an aesthetic imperative, it is an ethical one. Photography records the outline of its subject, but fails to document its "intensity of being" (HMMP Vol. 40, Box 28).

Productive Disagreements

While it would be easy to misread McLuhan and Watson's supervisor-supervisee relationship as one of influence, in fact, the relationship is far more complex. Watson was older than McLuhan when he accepted her as his student, and their letters demonstrate a collegiality of mutual respect (Flahiff 177). They also prove Watson's ability to discuss, debate, and at times, resist McLuhan's points of view. She brought to their conversation her own

preoccupations, specifically the relationship between technology and power. With a focus on their dialogue on photography, I will show how Watson politicized McLuhan's term "extension" and wrote with a sense of aesthetic morality.

McLuhan's friendship and professional relationship with Lewis made him uniquely qualified to supervise Watson's work. Written as a pastiche of observations about Lewis's philosophy, her dissertation outlines Lewis's impression of the "role of the artist in a world which is being transformed by technological magic" (Watson, *Wyndham* xvii). Lewis's view, that both art and the machine were moving away from local settings towards international networks, charts the political implications of these expansive systems that "provided unequal and unexpected extensions and amputations of power" (xviii). This relationship between mechanical reproduction and fascism became an ongoing fascination for Watson, visible in her letters, as well as in her academic and creative work.

Two years before the publication of McLuhan's *Understanding Media* (1964), Watson wrote to McLuhan and offered a lengthy analysis of her opinion of Gertrude Stein's technique. Through an analysis of form language, she then links Stein and photography. Her analysis reveals her position in relation to both Lewis and McLuhan. Watson closes the letter with an extended exposition on language, photography, typography, and Gestalt aesthetics. Here she responds to McLuhan's use of the word "language" in a letter he wrote two days earlier:

Photo is substitute for language. Enables things to say themselves

automatically. By e.g. of automation. Not as all mechanical, but

chemical-light. [. . .] Now, Stein and all those who accept photo

substitutes for language, who accept <u>gesture</u> and <u>gestalt</u> in place

of written word, are for Lewis enemies of language. (SWF, Box 21,

File 352, Folder 2)

Watson rejects McLuhan's assertion that the photograph is a "statement

without syntax" (File 352, Folder 2); rather, she asserts that the photograph

records light, obstruction to light, reflections of light, and relations of

light and shade—all in relation to an accidental or arbitrary position

of the chemically treated plate which determines the final image—

moreover it sees things with one eye. People say themselves in their

gestures in their responses, in their smile I suppose [. . .] and the

camera eye is a rough net which records something of this saying—a

photograph is a limitation not an extension of the person—though it

may extend the person[']s power[—]a recording is not the extension

of a voice or an instrument but a limitation of it—the more abstract

and limited the more range or operation in time but the less intensity

of being. At least this is Lewis['s] point. (HMMP, Vol. 40, Box 28)

As Paul Tiessen has noted, Watson's response shifts "attention from

McLuhan's photograph-as-process to Lewis's camera-as-machine" (272). She

defines the photograph as a representational medium incapable of capturing

nature in its totality, a slippery technique of chemical reactions in which

stereoscopic depth is lost in the camera's monocular perspective. From this

position, Watson rejects McLuhan's term "extension" and instead argues that

the camera limits the "intensity of being" of the subject (HMMP Vol. 40, Box

28). In so doing, she distinguishes "between extension and power" (Tiessen

272). Similar to Benjamin's work on the loss of the aura in works of

mechanical reproduction, Watson argues that the photographic image

circulates to extend the range of the subject, but the essence of the person is

absent from the document.[54]

In this same letter, she also takes issue with McLuhan's use of the

term language: "[y]ou say Stein etc. were for Lewis enemies of language. The

word "language" is misleading in the context of Lewis'[s] work" (*H. Marshall*,

Vol. 40, Box 28). Watson clarifies that Lewis is drawing on the work of

German philosopher and art collector Konrad Fiedler. In this context, Lewis

employs the term "language" to designate "form language," which is

constituted by the relationship between "significant form" and "inner

necessity." Each medium or art has its own form language, its own tradition

of enunciation, which arises from a combination of compulsion and

technique. The result of this analysis was Fiedler's belief that "it is not

possible to distinguish between form and content in any work of art'" (Lewis;

qtd. in Watson, *Wyndham* 42).

Watson's definition of inner necessity draws on Lewis's publication of

Wassily Kadinsky's work in *Blast* and asserts that the artist is driven by three

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[54] In reaction to the Nazi state, Benjamin linked mass communication
technologies to social domination and the rise of fascism in Western Europe.

needs: to express himself, to express his epoch, and to serve his art-form or

to express what is unique about art (37). It is "a progressive expression of the

eternally objective within the temporarily subjective" (Kandinsky 120).

Kandinsky's contribution to the term (as opposed to the way Fiedler

employed it) moves from speaking of intuitive consciousness to an

"insistence on the value of one's feelings as the only authentic impulse"

(Lewis, *Blast* 125). The emotional compulsion to create is harnessed in the

significant form of composition.[55] Watson, in keeping with Lewis, works from

Fiedler's original definition of *sinnvollste gliederung* or "significant

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[55] Simultaneously, the term "significant form" was popularized by Clive Bell
in *Art* (1913), where he defined the relationship between lines and colour in
visual art. Bell's definition solidified the role of the critic as important for
educating the audience on the significance of formal composition. His
assertion usurped the power of the spectator and championed the formally
educated as the lone few capable of elucidating the significance of
composition. In *Men Without Art*, Lewis discusses Bell's theory as an act of
'domination' (Watson 51). Lewis' call for a vortex in *The Caliph's Design*—
subtitled, *Architects, where is your Vortex ?*—was the desire to reunite the
"great Trinity of the plastic arts: Sculpture, Painting, and Architecture" (59),
or what Lewis suggested was a fusion of the painter and the engineer. For
Lewis, the Cubists were halfway there: they had recognized the
architecturally creative possibilities of their medium, but they had undercut
these possibilities in "a flagrant exhibition of second-rate wit and in an
exasperated interest in media within the studio itself" (59). The Cubists failed
to move out of the studio and into the city, which Lewis saw as the true
manifestation of the human spirit. In focusing on self-promotion, the Cubists
privileged the interpretive over the creative imagination and failed to realize
the true possibilities of their new style. Watson accuses Lewis of falling
victim to a similar impulse, struggling to straddle the creative and
interpretive modes. In Lewis's analysis, the articulation of the formal
principles of the movement jeopardizes the vitality of the form by ossifying it
in the realm of the critic. Unlike Bell, who saw significant form as the critic's
privilege, Lewis argued that the artist was stunted by the negative
capabilities of analysis.

articulation." This definition is more concerned with the architectural

possibilities of an art form.

Watson's quarrel with McLuhan's use of the term 'language' hinges on

her understanding of Lewis' use of the term 'form language.' As she writes in

her thesis,

> Gertrude Stein affirmed that her technique of beginning again and
>
> again developed only after she became interested in visual images and
>
> noticed that the motion picture film produces the illusion of life by
>
> joining to one picture another 'just that much different from the one
>
> before.' (Lewis; qtd. in Watson, *Wyndham* 46)

Stein's style draws from the mechanized quality of the photographic

revolution, which culminated in the motion picture. For Lewis, Stein lacked

the potential of the artist capable of transforming the city and was to be

distrusted for her fidelity to the form language of photography. In drawing

her influence from the minimal changes in each frame of film, Stein creates an

"illusion of life" (46) that should be distrusted, because while the camera

purports to reflect without alteration, it really deceives with its "built in

perspective" and "its accidental or mechanical distortions..." (HMMP Vol. 40,

Box 28). For both Lewis and Watson, Stein's style is not so much distasteful,

as it is something to be distrusted, for its form of repetition illuminates

aspects of the world without an attempt to transform it. Watson and Lewis

alike offer versions of the argument put forth by Fiedler that

[i]mitative pictures, technical drawings, photography, and death

masks only fix and explain objects. Imitation always takes us back to

the original, and reproduces something already present in our

consciousness. Art, on the other hand, gives form to something that

cannot be expressed otherwise. (Selz 4)

While interested in the idea of an objective science of art, Fiedler maintains a

focus on the individual artist over aesthetic traditions by separating art from

the idea of natural beauty. In arresting nature, the camera fails to rise above

the natural world, "for art is nothing else but a means by which man

conquers reality" (Fiedler; qtd. in Selz 5). Lewis's belief in the architectural

capabilities of art mirrors this analysis. He urges artists not to ape god in a

reiteration of the natural world but to sculpt a new future in the plastic arts.

Two years after their correspondence on photography, McLuhan

published *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (1964), which

includes a chapter entitled "The Photograph: The Brothel-without-Walls." In

this chapter he argues that "[b]oth the monocle and camera tend to turn

people into things, and the photograph extends and multiplies the human

image to the proportions of mass-produced merchandise" (189). Here

McLuhan echoes Watson's observation that the camera sees its subject with

"only one eye" (HMMP Vol. 40, Box 28), yet he does not condemn the

photograph. Rather, he argues that it signifies the transition from the age of

Typographic Man to the age of Graphic Man. Turning to Joyce, as he so often

does, McLuhan admits that the camera usurps the word, but posits that if

"there is indeed a terrible nihilism in the photo and a substitution of shadows for substance, then we are surely not the worse for knowing it" (*Understanding* 193). Rather, photography restored the world of gesture that was destroyed with the invention of the written word, until the motion picture freed humanity from the semantic universe and reunited the body and orality (193). Both Freud and Jung, McLuhan argues, were able to build on the gestalt, or language of gestures, captured in the photo to build a better understanding of the collective. In shifting from the temporality of gestures towards a sempiternal theory of movement, these thinkers moved away from the isolated aspect of each photo and towards theories pertaining to archetypal gestures.

In *From Cliché to Archetype* (1970), McLuhan and Wilfred Watson, Sheila Watson's husband, argue that the repetition and development of archetypal images leads to their inevitable state of redundancy; "the most masterful images, when complete, are tossed aside and the process begins anew" (20). Thus, the fall of language into cliché is not a cause for concern, but rather the impetus to create new modes of expression. The fact that the "human city is a waste land of abandoned images" is nothing more than the perpetual call for artistic action (20). McLuhan saw the photograph as the tool for emancipation from the typographic environment because it marked a return to embodied voice. Alongside this return was a heightened awareness, a self-reflective stance, becoming newly possible through human ingenuity.

Sheila Watson resisted McLuhan's reading; for her, the form language of photography does not empower the artist to shape his or her subject. This tension is visible in the contrast between her dissertation chapter title, "The dead hand of the nineteenth-century robot: the camera eye" (97) and the title of McLuhan's chapter "The Photograph: The Brothel without Walls" (188). Her title is "apocalyptic, sober, cryptic; his, playful, teasing, audacious" (Tiessen 271). Tiessen argues that in the following years, Watson started "drawing away" from McLuhan, believing that they were "operating within different registers, drawing on different frames of thought" (274). Although Watson drew away from McLuhan's assertions regarding the role of photography, she was so deeply invested in this conversation that almost a decade later she published an academic article on the subject.

The Mechanization of Death

In "Michael Ondaatje: The Mechanization of Death" (1972) Watson continues her thinking on developments in the photographic process, expanding on the relationship between power and mechanization. She focuses on the horror of human ingenuity, while responding to Ondaatje's long poem *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid* (1970). It begins, "Michael Ondaatje was born in 1943. Two years before that Sigfried Giedion published *Space, Time and Architecture, the Growth of a New Tradition*" (158). While Ondaatje's text references open-range photographer L.A. Huffman and uses Eadweard Muybridge's photography in its cover design, Watson turns to

158

Giedion as a key figure for analyzing Ondaatje's work. She further emphasizes

this point by using a phrase of Giedion's as the subtitle for her article: "The

Mechanization of Death." Although Watson's essay uses Ondaatje's

engagement with photography as the centre from which to analyze the

monstrosity of efficiency, Ondaatje is really a springboard for her discussion

of the work of Giedion. In addition to these two writers, Watson introduces

the writings of Wyndham Lewis, Upton Sinclair and Kurt Vonnegut.

Watson connects these writers through their mutual interest in the

ways in which mechanization has penetrated man and the abominations that

this penetration made possible. In so doing, she links the assembly line of *The

Jungle* with the banal evil that ran the efficient trains of the Holocaust.

Ondaatje's method, she writes, "is paratactic and explosive. He does not

speak of the slaughterhouse. However, the centre of which the trains, the

telegraph, and the refrigerated cars are extensions makes itself felt in phrase

after phrase" (63). Here, Watson customizes McLuhan's term "extensions" to

signify an extension of power. In listing the telegraph after the (death)trains,

Watson argues that communications technology spread fascist ideology and

made the Holocaust possible. Of course, it was not the telegraph, but modern

communication technology, such as film, radio, and photography, that the

Nazi state employed to distribute its propaganda (During 59). Regardless,

both transportation and communication technology extend the horror that is

Hitler. Aligning her thinking with Lewis's, she highlights the ways in which

technology amplifies inequalities of power and extends those inequalities

over increasing territory.

In Ondaatje's work, Watson sees a similar concern with mechanization

(increasing from *The Dainty Monsters* and *The Man with Seven Toes* to *The*

Collected Works of Billy the Kid), as technology comes to haunt every aspect of

organic life. To characterize this transition, Watson borrows Giedeon's

phrase "the mechanization of death," which Watson defines as "death in its

'biological nakedness' . . . 'the sudden, incalculable destruction of organic

creatures'" (61). Watson turns to Giedion, just as McLuhan had a decade

earlier in *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962), for an explanation of the

technological developments that opened the doors for this preoccupation

with efficiency.[56] In *Space, Time and Architecture* (1941) Giedion analyzes the

rupture of thought and feeling. In *Mechanization Takes Command: A*

Contribution to Anonymous History (1948) he expands on his previous work,

positing mechanization as the cause of this rupture. With a sweeping

historical synopsis, Giedion claims that the rise of rationalism resulted in a

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[56] McLuhan was also deeply impacted by Giedion's thinking. Richard Cavell
argues in *McLuhan and Space: A Cultural Geography* that McLuhan's thinking
on the relationship between time and space fluctuated over his career. In
1949 McLuhan reviewed Siegfried Giedion's book, *Mechanization Takes*
Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History, in which Giedion "argues
that the unifying element in the history of mechanization is the attempt to
capture movement" (Cavell 38). At this time, McLuhan was interested in the
interfusion of space and time in the process of mechanization. By 1953, he
became interested in the work of Harold Innis, which proposes that space
and time are binaries that must be brought into balance to achieve a stable
society. Only one year after assuming "a position characterizing space and
time as oppositional (as Lewis and Innis had done), McLuhan reconfigured
these notions dynamically and relationally," coining the term "spacetime"
(Cavell 35).

marginalization of feelings through an investment in productivity and a belief

in the "perfectibility of man" (*Mechanization* 30). The nineteenth century (c.

1860) saw the culmination of this desire in its efforts to capture movement in

graphic form, to literally learn "to feel the pulse of nature" (17). For Giedion,

the nineteenth century desire to perfect the human form is best exemplified

by the work of Étienne Jules Marey, inventor of the spymorgraph, which

rendered visible the human pulse. Marey's photography (he is perhaps most

famous for his invention of the photogun) captured what escapes the human

eye. His experiments harnessed animals and sought to chart the movement of

a wing or the gait of a leg. These photos traced trajectories; the spectres of

these movements were rendered visible in the "luminous trails" (28) they left

behind. Marey notes that these stereoscopic images "might be called the

language of the phenomena themselves" (20). For Marey, these photos had

"an impressiveness that needs no further explanation" (22), rendering

linguistic representation obsolete. Note here the similarity to McLuhan's

assertion that the photograph is "a statement without syntax" (SWF, Box 21,

File 352). For Marey, a language that emerges from the movement of the

organism replaces the need for verbal communication. He rendered visible

an honesty of movement, and his images remain haunting for reading the

body back to the viewer, parsing everyday activities to the point of

defamiliarization.[57]

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[57] Giedeon contextualizes Marey's experiments inside a milieu that includes
the photographic experiments of Muybridge; the paintings of Marcel
Duchamp; the paintings of Wassily Kandinsky; and the philosophy of

While both Ondaatje and Giedion are interested in mechanization—in

Billy the Kid and *Mechanization Takes Command* both authors show particular

attention to the innovations of the 1860s-90s—the main point of connection

between these two thinkers is their interest in photography. It is Giedion's

work on Marey and Muybridge that strikes Watson as particularily relevant

to her analysis of Ondaatje: both Marey and Muybridge were interested in

how the technology of photography could capture organic processes in the

name of scientific investigation. Muybridge used a series of cameras, whereas

Marey captured successive phases of movement on a single film, but both

photographers' experiments render visible nuances of movement. In so

doing, they created the opportunity for quantitative measurements of fluid

processes. Motion could be parsed into a series of steps and analyzed in

terms of a measurable cadence, tracking, for example, how many times a bird

might flap its wings over a demarcated space. While, the work of Marey may

have translated movement to the world, the language of organisms began to

change with the "malady" (58) of technology. Documenting movement

opened the possibility of mechanically reproducing these actions.

    While Marey's experiments helped expose the patterns of the human

form, Giedeon argues that the body is actually ill-suited to automation.

Bergson. By placing Marey's photos in this context, Giedion presents a unified
representation of a movement that spanned the disciplines. Giedion's
analysis employs an interdisciplinary approach, where he works to show the
cross-pollination between scientific experiment, political thought, and artistic
practice. To this end, he implores his readers to consider the social
implications of innovation and shows the way mechanization has affected
different aspects of their world: the body, the soil, the professions, and the
home.

Isolating the hand as the symbolic limb, he explains that organic forms repeat

movements with variability, yet automation strives to make movement

consistent. The industrial revolution strove towards standardization and

interchangeability: the mechanization of movement aims to transform the

"pushing, pulling, pressing of the hand into continuous rotation" (47). The

nuances of the fist—sewing the handicraft, kneading the bread, and working

the soil—have been replaced by the synchronous efficiency of the assembly

line. It is through this tension between the wheel and the hand that Watson

links Giedion to Ondaatje.

Ondaatje's anthropomorphic descriptions fascinate Watson: the way

Billy's hand churns "within itself, each finger circling alternately like a train

wheel" (Ondaatje, qtd. in Watson, "Michael" 57). She writes, "Ondaatje's

monsters are flesh and like all flesh are grass but they are also machines.

They fly with the precision of watches and arch their feet like compasses"

(59). In Ondaatje, the blend of the biological and the technological blurs the

boundaries between the human and the industrial. Whereas Giedion argues

that the hand will never roll like a wheel and therefore must be replaced by a

machine, Ondaatje describes a hybridized body that echoes McLuhan's

observation that technologies are "extension[s] of ourselves" (*Understanding*

7).

While Watson describes Ondaatje's characters as "monsters" (59),

Ondaatje's text is far more invested in ambiguity. Watson is preoccupied with

the use of photography in scientific investigations, but Ondaatje's project

speaks back to these experiments and reveals the photograph as a tricky medium. *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid* opens, "I send you a picture of Billy made with the Perry shutter as quick as it can be worked" (5). These words sit under a "frame enframing nothing," as Smaro Kamboureli has called it (185), four black lines arranged in a square, not unlike a Polaroid yet to be developed. This photograph is attributed to open-range photographer L.A. Huffman, who applied his camera's shutter "as quick as it could be worked" to capture the elusive outlaw. Later in the letter, he conjectures, "I will send you proofs some time," aligning photography with evidence and linking the single print taken during the printmaking process with the photograph as averment. The absent photograph documents Billy's equivocal nature, the impossibility of accurately depicting his character. Later in the text, Billy states,

> I remember, when they took the picture of me there was a white block
> down the fountain road where somebody had come out of a building
> and got off the porch onto his horse and ridden away while I was
> waiting standing still for the acid in the camera to dry firm. (68)

This direct reference to photographic emulsion reiterates photography's inability to document moving subjects. In this description we can also hear the echo of Watson's belief that the photograph is like a net, unable to ensnare the totality of its subject. Despite the overlaps in the analysis of these two thinkers, there are still important differences. Ondaatje's long poem offers readers an alternative interpretive framework through which to

engage with photography. In showing the slippery nature of the medium, he

resists the assumption that photographs hold any sort of truth status. For

Ondaatje, the problem is not the photographic process, but rather the ways in

which photographs are read as documents. His long poem finds a playful

relationship to photography and encourages readers to see the photo as art,

not science.

Watson, however, remains apprehensive, and the key to this

apprehension is the way in which photography claims to see the world more

clearly than the human eye. At the same time that Huffman was taking photos

"from the saddle" (5), Eadweard Muybridge was threading twenty-four

cameras to trip wires, capturing the gallop of a horse and settling the debate

as to whether all four hooves are ever concurrently suspended: his photos

prove that there is a moment mid-stride where all four limbs tuck upward.[58]

His experiment proved the ability of the photographic process to remedy a

shortcoming in human perception by isolating movement into specific

moments more efficiently than the naked eye. This both made the world alien

from the ways in which we experience it and opened the door for an

obsession with precision and efficiency.

Watson's investigation of photography preoccupied her for decades

and eventually moved beyond her engagement with Lewis and McLuhan. For

Watson, the function of art is not to explain the world but to encourage

readers to embrace the mystic and mythical, to accept the world of shadows.

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[58] Leland Stanford, the American industrialist, asked Muybridge to use his
knowledge of photography to help him resolve a bet (Wood 161).

Beyond being an aesthetic imperative, it is an ethical one. The net-like nature

of photography allows the viewer to miss the "intensity of being" of the

subject (HMMF, Vol. 40, Box 28). This omission allows for the belief that man

is a machine, a dispensable object. This objectification of human gestures

results in a lack of regard for the human spirit, which then enables the belief

in the disposability of human life. While Watson's academic writing and

correspondence demonstrates this consistent preoccupation, her creative

work is notably devoid of photography and film, that is, until we get to her

anomalous work, "The Rumble Seat" (1974).

Mechanized Man

The last story in Watson's mythic cycle, "The Rumble Seat" was

written considerably later than the first three stories. Although "Brother

Oedipus" (1954), "The Black Farm" (1956), and "Antigone" (1959), were

published in the 1950s, "The Rumble Seat" was not published until the

special Sheila Watson issue of the journal *Open Letter* in 1974. Read in the

context of the mythic cycle, the story is a strange digression into foreign

territory, yet read in the context of Watson's larger oeuvre, the story is the

culmination of Watson's theorization of technology.

In "The Rumble Seat" the uncle and the unnamed narrator sit in their

living room, watching their television set as Pierre Berton interviews

Oedipus on his talk show. The story moves between the internal action of the

television program and the meta-commentary of the uncle, who hurls

vitriolic frustration at the dialogue unfolding onscreen. On set, there is

something insidious about the technological apparatus that films the

interview as "the cameras circle" (57) host and guest. The crooks of

"mechanical arms" move the cameras "like vultures" (57) around their

subjects; circumscribing their prey, they bring "Pierre's face into full

focus…[then pan] to include Oedipus" (65). In this description, the

technological apparatus has agency: it is the camera that frames its subject,

acting devoid of human intervention. As "Pierre's deceptively small image

dilate[s]" (57) onscreen, the camera lens is linked with ocular expansion.

Meanwhile, the viewer maintains a position of passive observance, noting

that he must wait for the camera to adjust the focus on his behalf (60). In this

world, the camera has supplanted the pupil. As the descriptions of the

biological and the mechanical merge, Watson posits technology as an

insidious invention that has gained control over the very hands that made it.

Divisions between the biological and the mechanical begin to

disintegrate: "Oedipus's voice had become a mere rumble. Then it rose

suddenly as if some mechanism had adjusted efficiently" (59). The body is

mechanized, just as the camera is anthropomorphized. Dual hybridization

confuses the distinction between the organic and the mechanical: the body as

machine, machine as body. Just as Ondaatje's mechanized bodies fascinated

Watson, the way the fingers of Billy's hand circle "like a train wheel"

(Ondaatje, qtd. in Watson, "Michael" 57), the characters of "The Rumble Seat"

are described as mechanized man. Their voices are disembodied, as their

enunciations enter the program from offstage. As the camera's gaze pans away from the speaker, it severs voice from body (Watson, "Rumble" 64). At home, the viewer is subjected to the camera's line of sight, unable to witness an embodied voice. In contradistinction to McLuhan's argument that Graphic Man reunites the body and orality, Watson describes "bodiless voice[s]" (59) and a fractured graphic subject.

These menacing descriptions frame *The Pierre Berton Show* as ghoulish. Given that M&S published both Berton and Watson, the setting for the story can be read as Watson's awareness of the growing prominence of television as a promotional tool. Although Watson originally imagined that the story would be a satire of Pierre Berton's book, *The Comfortable Pew*, she shifted her focus to Berton's television work (Watson, "It's What" 164). The macabre nature of the story's technological apparatus suggests that this added exposure may come at a heavy price.

Within the narrative, the uncle vocalizes this critique; watching Pierre and Oedipus from his living-room. He rants, "[m]ust we . . . live by the clock after the clock-maker has been sacked? Are we a mechanical sequence, an organized seriality? Has not Bergson proved beyond a doubt that we are snaky and submarine?" (63). Engaging with the concept of simultaneity expounded by Bergson in *Time and Free Will*, the uncle laments that Berton rushes Oedipus to finish his story before the program comes to its scheduled conclusion. In spatialized time, moments are divided into the artificial constructions of months, days, and minutes. Bergson proposes that although

this notion of time as a structured constant is necessary for the organization

of our daily lives, it is in opposition to pure time, which is time immaterial.

Pure time "forms both the past and the present states into an organic whole,

as happens when we recall the notes of a tune, melting, so to speak, into one

another" (Bergson 60).

The uncle's question, are "we a mechanical sequence, an organized

seriality?" (Watson, "Rumble" 63), could easily address Muybridge's

photographic investigations. Caught in the tension between the mechanical

and the biological, the uncle struggles with the changing world, with the

unstable foundations of his universe, uttering, "[w]e float, we flood, we

flounder. Finally we are redundant" (63). The uncle lives in a world post-

Muybridge, whose photos were the debut of the slippery slope that ends in

the view that man is a machine, a dispensable object. In this context,

redundancy is the product of the mechanical lens, which allows for new ways

of seeing. For Watson, the function of art is not to explain the world, as

Muybridge did, but to encourage readers to embrace the mystic and mythical,

to accept the world of shadows. However, in the uncle's dystopic landscape,

the oppression of technological development looms in the living room.

Where is the space for the lithe movement of consciousness in the sterile

environment of "uncompromising vertical" (63) blinds? The uncle is trapped;

imprisoned by the seemingly innocuous décor, he remains seduced by "the

gluey surface which solicit[s] . . . his attention (61-62).

As Watson's most biting condemnation of new technology, this story marks the culmination of decades of reflection on the ways in which photographs extend power and limit the body. As Watson's move out of her modernist milieu and into the contemporary moment, it broadens her theorization of technology with the introduction of television. This transition is not as random as it may first appear. Remember that Muybridge's invention of the Zoopraxiscope is a precursor to film. At the time of its unveiling, the *Illustrated London News* described it as "a magic lantern run mad" (Wood 163). Its fear-inducing images were hauntingly familiar in their "illusion of life."[59] "The Rumble Seat" conjectures that the logical extension of photography's chemical reactions is a film camera that moves divorced from the cameraman. Technology has become so efficient that there is no longer a need for the artist.

In light of Watson's critique of new media, her refusal to sit for author's photos and her hesitance to participate in adaptations of *The Double Hook* takes on a new significance. For Watson, the technological apparatus of new media removes art's spiritual potential, failing to capture the soul of its subject. These dead images have the potential to render the artist redundant in a world of pure mechanization. For this reason, Watson focused her career on verbal structures, on the transformative potential of enigmatic art. As a consequence of this aesthetic philosophy, Watson "wanted to disappear from" her writing (SWF "It's What" 167). Her efforts to remove the narrator

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[59] As discussed earlier, this is how Lewis described the writing of Gertrude Stein (Lewis, qtd. in Watson, Wyndham 46).

from *The Double Hook*, as seen in its revision from *Deep Hollow Creek*, mirror

her efforts to remove her authorial persona from the circulation of her work.

This typically modernist self-fashioning contributes to an authorial persona

of exceptional genius, of the elusive artist whose works are so brilliant that

their value is self-evident. This rejection of the industrial apparatus that

supports authors (reading tours, promotional campaigns, etc.) strives to free

art from the market, isolating the avant-garde as the antithesis of commercial

production.

Chapter Five
Leonard Cohen: National Darling of the Avant-Garde

Cohen collects his letters and makes certain he is heavily photographed. He does this simply because he feels he is becoming an important writer and that someday such material will be of value. And yet, he is totally devoid of arrogance and is deeply concerned with the style of his soul.
(Ladies and Gentleman . . . Mr. Leonard Cohen)

McClelland termed Leonard Cohen's position on publicity and publication, "fickle" (MSF Box 20, File 4b). In 1961, regarding the publication of *The Spice-Box of Earth*, Cohen told his editor, Claire Pratt, that he liked the idea of using an author's photo on the cover of the book, explaining, "[i]t gives the reader something to attach to. Also I like the idea of a book with my face on it. It means it's really mine." (Box 20, File 6). Then, in 1978, when M&S tried to use a photograph of Cohen on a billboard advertising *Death of a Lady's Man*, he argued that the author's photo "would make [the book] . . . seem too egotistical and turn people off" (Box 78, File 2). Similarly, he transitioned from wanting to see his first poetry collection bound in hardcover to lobbying to have his second poetry collection released in paperback. Stephen Scobie argues that Cohen "has always been a poet much in the public eye" ever since he stared in the National Film Board's (NFB) documentary *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen* (1965) and quite literally "invited an NFB film crew into his bathroom" ("Leonard" 59). However, Cohen later shied from this position in the spotlight, refusing to make television appearances when promoting *Death of a Lady's Man* (1978). Most notably, Cohen complained when he did not win the Governor General's

Award for *The Spice-Box of Earth*, but refused it when he was awarded it a few years later (1969) for his *Selected Poems 1956-1968*, on the grounds that it prevented Canadians from being read in the United States (Box 20, File 8).[60] On almost every major publication issue, Cohen managed to contradict his own assertions as his career evolved.

Cohen started his career as a poet, publishing his first volume of poetry, *Let Us Compare Mythologies* (1956) with The McGill Poetry Series. He published his second poetry collection with M&S, which remained his Canadian publisher from that time forward. In 1963 Cohen published his first novel, *The Favourite Game*, which he followed with *Beautiful Losers* in 1966, a book that Stan Dragland argues is "the first postmodernist Canadian novel" (261). Despite this literary contribution, Cohen never wrote another novel. Instead, in 1968 he released his first record, *Songs of Leonard Cohen*, "when he realized that he couldn't earn a decent, or even indecent, living as a writer" (Nadel 141). While he continued to publish poetry after this date, his world fame became primarily fueled by his work as a musician.

Linda Hutcheon argues that Cohen's career as a singer has hindered scholarship on his writing (*Leonard*). Certainly Cohen's own focus shifted towards his work as a singer-songwriter. As Cohen told Pratt, he wanted to grow an audience, and perhaps his move towards music can be seen as an

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[60] It was the first time that an English-speaking Canadian had ever refused the award, although the Québécoise separatist writer Hubert Aquin also refused the G.G. Award that same year (Nadel 173). However, Cohen changed his mind again, accepting a Governor General's Performing Arts Award in 1993 for his contribution to Canadian music (263).

extension of this desire. However, Cohen remained reluctant to embrace the full potential of new media to cultivate his reputation. Donald Brittain and Don Owen's 1965 documentary, *Ladies and Gentlemen . . . Mr. Leonard Cohen* exemplifies Cohen's ability to embrace new media as a way of reaching his audience, yet depicts Cohen himself as an artist and intellectual on the fringe of society. This vacillation, the fluctuation between public performance and reclusive seclusion, results in his inscrutable public persona.

This chapter focuses on Leonard Cohen's literary ambitions in his early career. I examine his shift from hardcover to paperback publication as a way of cultivating his audience and focus on two series of correspondence: letters between Cohen and M&S editor Claire Pratt, regarding the writer's self-fashioning; and letters between Cohen and Jack McClelland regarding the publicity scheme for Cohen's controversial novel *Beautiful Losers* (1966). This archival evidence demonstrates Cohen's chameleon-like response to emerging technologies as he sought to reposition poetry as a mass cultural phenomenon. Both embracing and resenting poetry's elite status, Cohen desired a larger audience, a goal at odds with his chosen genre. In tracing these themes through Cohen's early career, I position his second novel, *Beautiful Losers*, within the context of his investigation of the place of literature in a world flooded by mass culture.

Cheap and Beautiful

Cohen published *Let Us Compare Mythologies* (1956) in hardcover with The McGill Poetry Series. Five years later, Cohen published his second poetry collection, *The Spice-Box of Earth* (1961) in paperback with M&S. In the few years between these two publications, Cohen shifted from a desire to see his work bound in hardcover—he paid $300 out of his own pocket to have *Let Us Compare Mythologies* produced in cloth, rather than paperback— to a belief that paperback publication would increase his sales (Nadel 44). Initially, M&S planned to launch *The Spice-Box of Earth* as a part of its elegant, hardcover Indian File Series, which featured such poets as P.K. Page and Phyllis Webb (MSF Box 20, File 6). In response, Cohen penned a letter to associate editor Claire Pratt, dated 21 July 1959, to express his belief that the hardcover book had died, at least so far as poetry was concerned:

> May I say something about the format? I would prefer not to parade in the Indian File because it is not a parade at all but a depressingly-well-camouflaged retreat to the dustiest inch. I think the expensive, hard-bound poetry book is obsolete. Even ardent poem-lovers rarely buy one. But large numbers have been trained to buy bright soft covers. I know all this is familiar to you. Please understand I want an audience. I am not interested in the Academy. There are places where poems are being bought and embraced. I've read my own in the sweetest and unlikeliest places and I'm sure they have a popular appeal. I would hate to see them isolated in some prestige production aimed at

libraries and Governor-General Award Committees. I would love to

work with your designer on a cheap, beautiful cover and format which

would appeal to inner-directed adolescents, lovers in all degrees of

anguish, disappointed Platonists, pornography-peepers, hair-handed

monks and Popists, French-Canadian intellectuals, unpublished

writers, curious musicians etc.,--all that holy following of my Art (Box

20, File 6)

Three aspects of this letter warrant attention: Cohen's conjecture that the

hard cover book is an "obsolete" medium; his belief that a particular target

audience is being "trained" in how to use new media; and his interest in the

oxymoronic status of the paperback as both "cheap [and] beautiful" (Box 20

File 6).

Firstly, Cohen describes the post-war moment as an instance of

radical rupture capable of causing the death of the hardcover book. In so

doing, he glosses the much longer history of the paperback and promotes the

myth that the paperback book will kill the more established form of the

codex. Notice how Cohen describes a problem and then offers new media as

the solution, demonstrating Bolter and Grusin's assertion that new media is

framed as offering something that old technology cannot. In this process of

reform and rehabilitation, Cohen solves the problem of poetry's relatively

small following. In so doing, he ameliorates not just the book, but also reality.

For the problem is not so much the hardcover book, but the stuffy "academy"

that it represents (Box 20, File 6). His long list of potential readers, "inner-

directed adolescents, lovers in all degrees of anguish . . . etc.," defines his ideal audience and asserts the paperback as an accessible medium, which stands in opposition to prestige publications (Box 20, File 6).

Secondly, Cohen asserts that readers are being "trained" in how to use the newer medium of the paperback. This highlights Henry Jenkins' position that a new medium is both "a technology that enables communication" and "a set of 'protocols' and cultural practices that have grown up around that technology" (13). In the following sentence, Cohen uses an active construction and acknowledges the designers, authors, and publishers who work collaboratively to "aim" a publication at a specific target audience. The demographic of the campus bookstore was part of Cohen's imagined (and actual) readership, and these young penny-pinchers bought their reading in paperback. As a result, M&S began to time the release of Cohen's books with the start of the new semester and often distributed his texts through campus bookstores (Box 20, File 2). Marketing *The Spice-Box of Earth* to the post-secondary community proved a cunning strategy, as the collection "sold out in three months" (Nadel 100).

Thirdly, Cohen highlights the oxymoronic status of the paperback as both "cheap [and] beautiful" (MSF Box 20, File 6). This oxymoron acknowledges the disposable nature of the form at odds with the cultural value placed on poetry. Cohen argues that the contradictory logic of remediation is not only synonymous with the paperback reprint but also integral to all paperback publications. For Cohen, the beauty of the form

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derives from the way in which it enables high cultural elements to circulate in new and diverse locales. This interest builds off twenty-five years of precedents, even more if you take the long view of the rise of the paperback. However, Cohen's letter, which reads like a manifesto for the paperback, betrays a lack of awareness of how McClelland and the staff at M&S were already reflecting on this very issue, launching the NCL the previous year.

In response to Cohen's wishes, M&S simultaneously published the book in hardcover and paperback (MSF Box 20, File 6). This practice speaks back to Cohen's premonition of the hardcover book's death and instead takes a more nuanced approach to emergent technologies by employing both old and new forms of the codex simultaneously. In fact, the hardcover publication draws attention to the conventions of the established medium with colourful endpaper and a dust jacket that highlights its materiality in the form of a cutout window to reveal the author's portrait imprinted on the front cover. These conventions call attention to the prestige of the book as a cultural object, just as the softcover publication effaces these very gestures.

The softcover itself is at odds with the "cultural hierarchy of genre" that situates poetry in the most prestigious and least profitable position (Bourdieu, "Field" 47). While the format of the book may market the poetry collection as accessible, the genre carries its own cultural capital. As Pierre Bourdieu points out,

> [a]lthough the break between poetry and the mass readership has
> been virtually total since the late nineteenth century (it is one of the

sectors in which there are still many books published at the author's

expense), poetry continues to represent the ideal model of literature

for the least cultured consumers. (51)

Cohen's desire to widen his audience through paperback publication reveals

his desire to rethink poetry's place in the field of cultural production. Not

always an avant-garde genre, poetry only assumed this position once the

commercial success of the novel deprived poetry of its former audience (54).

Cohen's transition to song extends this project, literally educating his

audience on the accessibility of poetry by remediating his poems into lyrics.

McClelland's decision to publish *The Spice-Box of Earth* simultaneously in

hard and soft covers, however, demonstrates his awareness of the cultural

value placed on poetry, a tradition not easily upended.

Caveat Emptor

The precociously assertive voice that Cohen displays in this letter

became part of his charm, inspiring Don Owen's biopic about the author.

Originally, Owen set out to film a reading tour, organized by McClelland, for

Irving Layton, Earle Birney, Phyllis Gotlieb, and Leonard Cohen. Realizing

that Cohen's presence on film outshone his fellow poets, Owen abandoned

his initial project and teamed with Donald Brittain to make a film that

focused solely on Cohen's ability to connect with his youthful readers (Nadel

129). Brittain and Owen's NFB documentary, *Ladies and* Gentleman . . . Mr*.*

Leonard Cohen (1965) proved "crucial in launching his performance career,"

advertising the poet to John Hammond of Columbia Records (Harrison 69).

Famous for discovering the likes of Billie Holiday, Aretha Franklin, Bob Dylan,

and eventually Bruce Springsteen, Hammond viewed the documentary and

quickly invited Cohen to lunch. This meal launched Cohen's musical career, as

a week later he began work in Columbia Record's studio (Nadel 151).

The NFB documentary, which marked the beginning of Cohen's iconic

status as a writer, begins with footage of the poet cracking jokes to an

uproarious university student audience. The voiceover informs us that Cohen

is "not primarily a comic, but a novelist, poet, and very confident young man,"

(*Ladies*). In establishing Cohen's facility with entertaining a crowded room,

the directors highlight his ability to connect with an audience through public

performance. This approach, a technique that employs theatricality,

establishes the diversity of Cohen's talents and his comfort in the public

realm.

Firmly grounded in popular culture, Cohen speaks from the streets.

Again and again, the documentary returns to his path through *les rues de

Montréal*, eventually pausing, as Cohen does, at a news agent's street kiosk.

Here, as Cohen scans the tabloid headlines, the narrator tells us "Cohen is not

self-consciously cultured; he has not read extensively; he listens mostly to

pop music. He has, however, a hypersensitivity and an enormous curiosity"

(*Ladies*). Accordingly, Cohen composes his poems with "the popular sounds

of the day ringing in his ear," the music crystallizing in his words, as he

emerges as "the voice of a generation" (*Ladies*). This narration belies Cohen's

Westmount heritage, his university training, and his start in The McGill

Poetry Series, a publication primarily marketed to campus bookstores.

Determined to situate Cohen in a bohemian fray, the documentary ignores

privilege and training and instead promotes natural sensitivity as the source

of poetic talent.

The documentary reiterates the way in which Cohen embraces

popular culture, in the form of new media, by including a clip from his

appearance on *The Pierre Berton Show*. In this episode, Berton aggressively

challenges Cohen's elusive attitude, his assertion that he "hasn't a single

concern" (*Ladies*). "How can you be a good poet and not care about

something," Berton counters. "My real concern, when I get up in the

morning," Cohen replies, "is to discover whether or not I'm in a state of grace"

(*Ladies*). This esoteric answer does not satisfy Berton, who claims he does

not understand Cohen's response. In this exchange, Berton positions himself

as the layperson, baffled by Cohen's new-age spirituality; in opposition,

Cohen presents himself as the artist, concerned with higher questions than

the scope of Breton's practical inquiries. Later, to the documentary

filmmakers, however, Cohen glosses the interview, admitting that Berton

"really wanted me to cut my con out" (*Ladies*). This comment reveals Cohen's

respect for Berton's attempt to pierce through Cohen's highly crafted artistic

persona. In so doing, Cohen acknowledges his attitude to be a conscious

construct, a theme to which the documentary returns in its conclusion.

The resulting character sketch depicts the conundrum of Cohen's investments. Revisiting his time as a student at McGill University, the voiceover informs us that Cohen "won election as president of the debating union and then refused to call debates. He hated the concept of fraternities, but won election as president of a fraternity and then fought to retain its exclusive Jewish character" (*Ladies*). Even at this early stage, Cohen demonstrated an iconoclastic sense of politics. Brittain and Owen expose Cohen's capricious nature yet never condemn it. Rather, it constitutes a welcomed source of narrative tension, as Cohen's refusal to be classified makes him a fascinating object of study.

For all his variable inclinations, Cohen embraces the camera's gaze. The documentary employs old family films, from as early as 1937, to demonstrate Cohen's comfort, since adolescence, with performing for the camera.[61] At the end of filming, the directors invite Cohen to a private screening and catch his reactions on camera. These remarks close the documentary. The footage reveals Cohen in the intimate acts of domestic life: sleeping, bathing. Confessing the staged nature of these private moments, Cohen admits, "the fraud is that I am not really sleeping" (*Ladies*). While bathing, he writes in black marker on the wall behind the tub "*caveat emptor*" (*Ladies*). When asked to translate the phrase, Cohen explains it means "buyer

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[61] Cohen's father, Nathan Cohen, was an amateur filmmaker and used his children as the subjects of his films; his father's interest instilled in Cohen "an early fascination with photography and the pleasure of being photographed" (Nadel 16).

beware . . . I had to warn the public that [my performance] . . . is not entirely

devoid of the con" (*Ladies*). Paradoxically, as Keith Harrison has remarked,

> this exposure of a created persona lends credibility to both the
>
> filmmakers and their subject. By undermining the perceived truth of
>
> the on-screen biography, the directors invite trust and empathy
>
> through an honesty of understanding that involves deconstructing
>
> images. (78)

Cohen's work as a self-proclaimed "double-agent" productively effaces the

truth-claims of documentary film, proving him trustworthy.

This "ironic accommodation" of the documentary form constitutes a

fairly common modernist response to the institutions that promote literary

celebrity (Jaffe 177). Joe Moran, however, ascribes this quality to all literary

celebrities, who must present themselves as both extraordinary and familiar,

as their lives and work are "ransacked for their human interest at the same

time as they are lauded for their difference and aloofness" (Moran 8). This

celebration of paradox marks the reader's "nostalgia for some kind of

transcendent, anti-economic, creative element in a secular, debased,

commercialized culture" (9). By unmasking the apparatus—the conscious

techniques that support documentary's truth claims—Cohen appears to rise

above them. As such, in the viewer's eyes, he remains authentic, diffident

even. Cohen's "double agent" persona demonstrates his media savvy (*Ladies*).

Essentially, Cohen distances himself from the blatant act of self-promotion—

starring in a film that only furthers his presence in the public sphere—by

drawing the viewer's attention to the constructed nature of such projects. In

so doing, he becomes the biographical subject and the biographer at the same

time.

Managing Controversy

Published a year later, Cohen's second novel, *Beautiful Losers*, also

employs the technique of the double agent, showing both the horror and the

beauty of human desire. The novel sparked public debate: was it excessively

pornographic and worthy of condemnation, or was it daringly Canada's first

postmodern novel, worthy of national praise? Cohen's mixture of the sacred

and the profane; his experimentation with the formal elements of the novel;

and his incorporation of popular cultural products firmly root the text in the

sixties and result in comparisons between Cohen and the likes of William S.

Burroughs and Thomas Pynchon (Duffy, Wain). Despite these virtues, the

novel posed a challenge for McClelland, who feared it would be banned due

to its pornographic content. Regardless, he could not bear the thought that an

American firm might publish a new novel by one of Canada's great authors

before a Canadian publisher released it.[62] In a letter to Northrop Frye, dated

December 29, 1965, McClelland justified his decision:

> [b]ecause we consider Cohen an extremely important Canadian
>
> author, and because it is going to be published outside this country
>
> regardless of what we do, I have concluded that we must publish here

---

[62] In the end, M&S published simultaneously with Viking in the United States.

despite the fact that we are almost certain to run into an obscenity

charge either in Ontario or in the province of Quebec. The recent

action in connection with Dorothy Cameron has convinced me that we

are probably going to have trouble. (MSF Box 20, File 8)

In 1965, The Toronto Police Morality Squad raided Dorothy Cameron's Yonge

Street art gallery and confiscated Robert Markle's nudes, forcing her to close

the gallery while she awaited trial on obscenity charges ("Cops"). Fearing a

similar level of censorship, McClelland planned a preemptive strike against

public dissent.

This consisted of epitextual material—"paratextual element[s] not

materially appended to the text . . . but circulating, as it were, freely, in a

virtually limitless physical and social space" (Genette 344)—that sought to

cultivate an audience for the text while avoiding a sensational approach. In

accordance with this objective, McClelland orchestrated a seven-part

promotional scheme: first, a carefully planned launch party for 400 of

Toronto's most prominent artists and critics; second, a promotional card

including artwork by Harold Town that was mailed to bookstores, reviewers

and libraries; third, another promotional card including work by Town,

which was released the following week; fourth, a double poster, mailed to

bookstores a few days after the second promotional flyer; fifth, another

mailing, consisting of background on the novel's composition, accompanied

by quotations from Cohen's work; sixth, the release of more advanced

opinions by experts; and seventh, the purchase of ad space, with little more than the title, author and price of the book (MSF Box 20, File 1).

In selecting Harold Town to illustrate both the cover of the novel and many of the book's advertisements, McClelland linked this epitextual material to the publisher's peritext.[63] In a letter to Northrop Frye, December 29, 1965, McClelland explained,

> I am impressed by the fact that whereas the average reader does not seem to understand Cohen in this work, someone closer to the contemporary art-intellectual team—I think of Harold Town specifically—finds the book 'exquisitely tender.' (MSF Box 20, File 8)

For this reason, McClelland drew on Town's reputation to situate the book in a contemporary Canadian artistic tradition. As McClelland explained to Corlies M. Smith at Viking Press, on September 28, 1965, Town was not only a contemporary and a friend of Cohen, but also "Canada's best known and most highly regarded contemporary artist. At least to the younger group" (Box 20, File 8). In both letters, McClelland describes Cohen and Town as attracting a similar audience. Young and modern, this audience epitomized the next generation of contemporary art.

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[63] Genette defines the publisher's peritext as any aspect of the paratext over which the publisher has responsibility; this includes format, serialization, cover-design, the title page, typesetting, and printing (16-36). For Genette, the paratext "is what enables a text to become a book and to be offered as such to its readers, and, more generally, to the public (1). Both the epitext and the peritext help bridge the space between the interior world of the text and the exterior world of the reader.

In addition to providing visual interpretations of the text, Town

penned a review for *The Globe & Mail*, published December 25, 1965, entitled

"Confessions of a Literary Nibbler," that read,

> I was able to see an advance proof copy of *Beautiful Losers*, a novel by
>
> Leonard Cohen which will be published in the spring. It is the sort of
>
> work that inquisitional censors pray they will find under the
>
> Christmas tree; it makes *Tropic of Capricorn* seem like Winnie-the
>
> Pooh, but is, I think, the first real proof that Cohen has authentic
>
> genius and that rarest of abilities, the power to create tenderness in a
>
> horrifying context. (MSF Box 20, File 1)

Town, as a figure in Cohen's milieu, vouches for the writer's "authentic

genius" three months before the majority of the public could purchase the

work (Box 20, File 1). Town positions inquisitorial censors against

exceptional artists, shaping the public debate that follows. The censors'

inability to see the brilliance of the novel betrays their lack of understanding

of contemporary art. Thus, Town encourages readers to position themselves

on the side of artistic genius, in the face of an impending moral debate.

McClelland's extensive marketing campaign for *Beautiful Losers*

hinged on swaying public opinion with as many positive advanced critical

reviews as possible. In an outline for the promotional program, dated January

28 1966, McClelland concedes, the novel will "confound most of the critics,

and certainly most of the public unless they are told in advance what they

should believe" (MSF Box 20, File 1). This tactic sought to leverage the

reputations of esteemed professionals, like Town, in the service of Cohen's novel. Simultaneously, it dispersed responsibility over a larger body of critics, relying on the cultural capital of others employed in the creative industries not only to buttress Cohen's reputation, but also to protect M&S against public scrutiny.

In addition to the cover illustrations and the review in the *Globe and Mail*, McClelland employed Town's reputation in the promotional material for *Beautiful Losers*. The first advertisement consisted of a two-part series of black and white cards that were distributed to libraries, book reviewers, and employees of the book trade in advance of the launch (figure 6). These cards paired Town's abstract expressionist illustrations of the text with justifications for the publication of the controversial novel. Situated on a flap that folded over the script, Town's illustration could be turned, like opening the cover of a book, to reveal the full text of the advertisement below. The first card asserts,

> *Beautiful Losers* is unlike any book ever published in this country. . . . It would be foolish for us to suggest that we don't anticipate the probability of a censorship problem with this book. Ours is a serious publishing house. This is a serious and carefully written work by an important Canadian writer. We believe that it is not only our privilege but our obligation to publish it (MSF Box 20, File 1).

This justification shifts attention away from the novel and towards M&S. In so doing, McClelland leverages the "serious[ness]" of his brand to vouch for

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just published

"On March 23rd we shall be publishing an exceptional and highly controversial novel by a gifted Canadian writer. It is unlike any book ever published in this country. It will be highly praised in some quarters; it is certain to be condemned in others. It will be foolish for us to suggest that we don't anticipate the probability of a censorship problem with this book. Ours is a serious publishing house. This is a serious and carefully written work by an important Canadian writer. We believe that it is not only our privilege but our obligation to publish it. We do so with pride and with sure conviction that this book will be enthusiastically supported by those who care about Canadian writing. You will hear much more from us about this book in the next few weeks. Meanwhile we ask you to circle the date February 16th on your calendar. On that date the CBC will produce a National Film Board feature on the author. We commend the film to you. BEAUTIFUL LOSERS — Leonard Cohen, coming March 23rd, $5.95

McClelland and Stewart Limited

"Yes! The drawing is by Harold Town. It will be the basis for our jacket motif."

Leonard Cohen's controversial new novel BEAUTIFUL LOSERS has been called a work of genius by many advance readers. It is a complex, symbolic book that brilliantly illustrates Cohen's amazing poetic imagination and depth of insight into contemporary problems. BEAUTIFUL LOSERS will mean different things to many people. Here is one interpretation—

Driven by loneliness and despair, a contemporary Montrealer tries to heal himself by invoking the name and life of Catherine Tekakwitha, an Iroquois girl whom the Jesuits converted in the 17th Century, and the first Indian maiden to take an Oath of Virginity. Obsessed by the memory of his wife Edith, who committed suicide in an elevator shaft, his mind tyrannized by the presence of F., a powerful and mysterious personage who boasted of occult skills and who was Edith's lover, he embarks on a wild and alarming journey through the landscape of the soul. It is a journey which is impossible to describe and impossible to forget. Whether it is a sex ritual in an Indian village, a Separatist rally in Montreal, or a prayer mumbled on a Spring morning, the writing bursts into life, page after page. As the desperate man travels deeper and deeper into the life of Catherine Tekakwitha, he learns how hazardous it can be to love a saint. His personality disintegrates... the borders of conventional time begin to blur, and he is abandoned to an entirely new reality where nothing is familiar and where everything happens at once. Power fantasies assault him, hilarious sexual episodes involve him, boyhood humiliations return to humble him, brutal visions undermine his purpose, until he wonders whether he is empty enough to love selflessly. BEAUTIFUL LOSERS is a love story, a psalm, a Black Mass, a monument, a satire, a prayer, a shriek, a road map through the wilderness, a joke, a tasteless affront, an hallucination, a bore, an irrelevant display of diseased virtuosity, a Jesuitical tract, an Orange sneer, a scatological Lutheran extravagance, in short a disagreeable religious epic of incomparable beauty.

BEAUTIFUL LOSERS — Leonard Cohen
Coming March 23rd — $5.95

McClelland and Stewart Limited

P.S. You're right! That is another Harold Town illustration. It will be part of our jacket design.

Figure 6 Cards used to promote *Beautiful Losers*. McClelland & Stewart Fonds, William Ready Division of Archives and Research Collections, McMaster University Library, Hamilton, Canada.

the quality of the novel (Box 20, File 1). In framing M&S' decision to publish as an "obligation" to the country, McClelland invokes nationalist sentiments to explain his support for a controversial book (Box 20, File 1). Following this justification, he mentions the NFB documentary on Cohen and encourages people to view it. As such, McClelland leverages the reputations of Town, the NFB, and M&S to support Cohen's novel. Iconically Canadian, Town and the NFB reinforce Cohen's nationality, framing dissent against the novel as unpatriotic.

The second version of the card, mailed to the same recipients the following week, addresses Cohen's novel more directly. Although it begins with a reference to the work as a "controversial new novel," it concludes that it is a "disagreeable religious epic of incomparable beauty" (*McClelland* Box 20, File 1). While conceding that the novel "will mean different things to many people" the inclusion of an anonymous interpretation provides a positive reading of the novel that could be adopted by the general public (Box 20, File 1). McClelland often employed this tactic, including Salter's analysis in the foreword to *The Double Hook*, and employing introductions by Canadian scholars as a key feature of the NCL. These paratextual elements manage the reputations of the texts they envelop; as acts of canon-formation, they highlight M&S's role in cultivating the authority of its writers.

Both advertisements conclude with an aside to direct the reader back to the illustration by Town: "'Yes! The drawing is by Harold Town. It will be the basis for our jacket motif,'" and "P.S. You're right! That is another Harold

Town illustration. It will be part of our jacket design" (Box 20, File 1). These concluding statements encourage the reader to close the flap on the card, like closing a book, to look at the illustration on its cover. The emphasis on Town, Canada's most renowned abstract expressionist artist, anchors Cohen's novel at the forefront of the Canadian avant-garde.

Fiercely critical of the Canadian art world's lack of support for local artists, Town worked as an activist for Canada's creative community. While he exhibited around the world, Town refused to leave his home in Toronto for the beckoning art scene south of the border (Nowell 171). According to art historian Iris Nowell, Town's theatrical persona, combined with his

> prodigious output of prints, drawings, sculpture and paintings
> garnered for him more publicity than all other Canadian artists
> combined; in 1966 alone he appeared in seventy-two articles in the
> three Toronto daily newspapers, was mentioned and/or profiled in
> twelve articles in *Canadian Art*, in addition to appearing on countless
> radio and television shows. (166)

Town received the Order of Canada that same year and the Canada Centennial Medal the year after (162-167). Despite this distinguished solo career, Town remains most famous for his role in Painters Eleven. Influenced by the New York art scene, this group stood in opposition to the representational, landscape tradition of the Group of Seven and championed an abstract expressionist style.

Although Town was highly celebrated in the Canadian and international art worlds, his reputation was not without controversy. In 1964, Town represented Canada at the prestigious Venice Biennale. His exhibition consisted of paintings, collages, and prints, as well as a series of drawings, entitled *Enigma*. During the Biennale, a cardinal ordered two of the *Enigma* drawings removed (Nowell 165-166). The compositions depict professional men and woman (doctors and priests) in positions of submission and domination and, according to Town, investigate the "social wrongs and follies, of the hypocrisies, complacency, and self-seeking of those who hide behind the mystique of professionalism or the cosseted power of institutions" (Town, qtd. in Nowell 166). While Town referred to the drawings as his ""political cartoons[,]" others called them pornographic, misogynistic, obscene, bestial, savage, and satiric" (Nowell 166). When the CBC called Town to ask for a statement, he reveled in the criticism: "[i]t's such an honour being banned in Italy, the mother of sensuality [he explained.] It's like being asked to straighten your tie in a bordello" (Town, qtd. in Nowell 166). Relishing the controversy, Town capitalized on dissent to further his reputation as a cutting-edge artist.

The litany of criticism Town received for *Enigma* parallels the media frenzy that erupted concerning Cohen's work *Beautiful Losers*. Although the book was never banned, as McClelland feared it would be, its reception was polarized. Upon release, *The Globe and Mail* newspaper described it as "verbal masturbation" ("*Beautiful*") and critic Robert Fulford called it

the most revolting book ever written in Canada. . . . I believe

everything he writes is entirely within the proper range of literature,

but it seems to me his book is an important failure. At the same time it

is probably the most interesting Canadian book of the year. (Fulford)

Many bookstores, most notably W.H Smith and Simpson's, had decided they

did not want the risk of carrying it, a decision that considerably decreased

sales (MSF Box 20 File 1). In contrast, poet bill bisset raved, "i give th book of

cohens a good review, a great review, easily million stars [sic]" (94). When

asked to defend the book in an interview with Adrienne Clarkson on her

show *Take 30*, May 23 1966, Cohen responded,

I'd feel pretty lousy if I were praised by a lot of the people who had

come down pretty heavy on me. I think in a way there's a war on. It's

an old, old war . . . if I had to choose sides . . . I'd just as well be defined

as I have been by the establishment press. ("*Beautiful*")

Two years after Town's *Enigma* exhibition, Cohen, like Town, embraces

controversy and positions his work as deliberately counterculture. The old

war Cohen identifies pitted those who hold institutional power against a new

wave of creative energy. Like Town, Cohen identifies this youthful artistic

movement with a desire to confront the systems of the established order. The

controversial attacks on their work symbolize the success of their

antiestablishment artistic practices.

In pairing Town and Cohen, McClelland made a comparison between

the freedom of abstract expressionism and the scope of Cohen's work. As

Serge Guilbault notes, abstract expressionism came to be associated with the idea of freedom during the Cold War (201). A backlash to the realist propaganda employed in wartime, combined with both a resistance to Marxist thought in New York in the 1940s and the stifling effects of McCarthyism in the 1950s, produced a "self-proclaimed neutrality" among abstract expressionist artists (11). As a result, avant-garde artists "were soon enlisted by governmental agencies and private organizations in the fight against Soviet cultural expansion" (11). The dynamic colours and sweeping brushstrokes of this anti-representational style were "for many the expression of freedom: the freedom to create controversial works of art, the freedom symbolized by action painting, by the unbridled expressionism of artists completely without fetters" (201). Artistic abandon became synonymous with "the freedom inherent in the American system and contrasted with the restrictions placed on the artist by the Soviet system" (201). Accordingly, abstract expressionism became synonymous with free speech.

When McClelland selected Town to create the visual iconography for Cohen's controversial text, he leaned on the association between abstract expressionism and artistic freedom. In so doing, he wagered that those who found Cohen's work grotesque might still defend his right to free speech. Accordingly, the illustrations serve two purposes: they mitigate potential criticism of the novel, asserting Cohen's right to artistic freedom as an inherent right of a democratic nation; and they reiterate Cohen's position as a

prominent Canadian artist. Both objectives situate literary criticism in the political arena, employing the ideologies of democracy and nationalism to garner support for an artist's right to freedom of expression.

Fickle

M&S also placed Town's artwork on display at the launch party for *Beautiful Losers*, which was held almost a month before the novel's publication, on March 29 1966, at the Centennial Ballroom at the Inn On The Park, Toronto. While McClelland tried to schedule the party to coincide with the release of the NFB's production *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen*, he found it difficult to coordinate with the NFB. Regardless, he managed to screen the film at the party. The carefully orchestrated, open-bar affair catered to the "opinion makers from all the allied arts" (MSF Box 20, File 1). The 400 person all-star guest list included Pierre Berton, Marshall McLuhan, Harold Town, and almost every prominent writer in the Toronto region (Nadel 138). McClelland repeatedly instructed his promotional team that it should be a "very well planned party," as if having the right tablecloths would add an air of class to a scandalous book (MSF Box 20, File 1). In addition, M&S tied their spring list to the promotional scheme, using the party as a platform to promote other M&S authors in the shadow of Cohen's spotlight. However, Cohen failed to attend the party.

M&S launched *Beautiful Losers* in hardcover, with an "expensive jacket and a good binding," and priced the four thousand copies of its first print run

at $6.50 a book (Nadel 139). The format resists the pulpy sexuality of the novel, positioning the book as literature. Disappointed with sales figures, Cohen implored McClelland to mount a more extensive advertising campaign. On May 9 1966 McClelland composed a six-page response to defend the firm's efforts:

> We have sent out, given away, or distributed 300 copies of the book covering all publicity media across Canada. We have sent out three different printed promotion pieces, plus press releases, biographical data, specially printed coasters, a substantial number of posters to which we added a larger and rather expensive promotion party (the value of which was almost totally lost because you didn't think it suited your image or were unwilling to put yourself out). Now all that adds up to one helluva [sic] lot of promotion, and I dare say rather more direct promotional effort than any other book has received. The book has had radio publicity from coast-to-coast; it has been written about in *Time Magazine*, *Maclean's*, and the majority of major newspapers and the reviews in the little magazines will follow. (MSF Box 20, File 1)

McClelland's aside reveals even more than his long list of advertising gimmicks. Frustrated that Cohen did not feel the promotional part "suited [his] . . . image," McClelland acknowledges the importance of an author's cooperation in the industrial promotional complex (Box 20, File 1). Understandably, McClelland's response speaks to his mounting frustration

with Cohen's refusal to glad-hand opinion makers. The list of gimmicks

mirrors the sorts of tricks M&S employed in the service of star authors like

Berton, the big difference being that Berton fully embraced his celebrity

status. In an attempt to distance himself from the marketing of his work,

Cohen displayed discomfort with participating in blatant self-promotion.

Instead, he lobbied M&S to invest in more advertising for the book. In this

way, Cohen asked M&S to claim responsibility for the commoditization of his

art, so that he could maintain a critical distance from the tarnishing effects of

the market.

In response, McClelland informed him that "[t]he fact of the matter is

that one good recommendation by a columnist—someone like Dusty

Vineberg for example—will sell many more books than a string of ads" (MSF

Box 20, File 1).[64] Astutely aware of the role of the critic in shaping public

opinion, McClelland understood the importance of metaculture for improving

a book's circulation.[65] He concludes the letter: "[d]on't expect any goddam

[sic] miracles and forget your new self-appointed and somewhat unbecoming

role as an authority on typography, design, art, promotion and publicity,

advertising and market analysis" (Box 20, File 1). Cohen's self-appointed role

as book designer was hardly new. From his first poetry collection, Cohen had

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[64] Augusta (Dusty) Vineberg Solomon was a journalist for *The Montreal Star* (*Simply*).

[65] Greg Urban's *Metacultures* examines the agency of culture, asking the question, what does a collection of reviews produce that a single review cannot? The result of this mass of cultural discourse is not always deliberate or within the control of cultural producers. Instead, the future of the system is unpredictable. McClelland's understanding of metaculture is less nuanced, believing simply that circulation breeds more circulation.

insisted on the format of his texts. Deeply invested in cover design, layout, and promotions, Cohen always participated at every level of production.[66]

Ordinary Eternal Machinery

Critics read *Beautiful Losers*, a novel sprawling in its scope, as an allegory for Canada's political history (Hutcheon, Wilkins). The novel's four prominent nationalities—the First Nations (represented by Edith); the French (represented by the Québécois separatist F.); the English (represented by the Anglophone professor); and the American (represented by the invasion of American mass culture in the form of comic books, advertisements, and cinema)—create a hierarchy of domination. Situated in the middle of the hierarchy, F. and the professor both perpetrate and experience oppression, posing the ethical question of the novel: how do we "become 'beautiful losers' able to deal with our loss without taking it out on someone else" (Wilkins 25)?

Thematically, the book expands on Cohen's rejection of "psychological explanations for man's evil," a theme that preoccupied him during the composition of his third poetry collection, *Flowers for Hitler* (1964) (MSF Ca.

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[66] Eventually, this level of involvement became a problem for his relationship with M&S. In 1978, Cohen worked extensively with Lily Miller, his editor at M&S, on *Death of a Lady's Man*, offering suggestions on everything from *mise en page* to paper selection; after extensive collaboration, Cohen expressed dissatisfaction with the proofs, offering alternative suggestions on the typeface. His evolving sense of aesthetics caused financial concern for M&S, as they absorbed the cost of Cohen's fickle attitude (*McClelland* Box 20, File 4b). With Cohen's mounting fame, it became harder for the publishing house to exert control over production and deny Cohen his wishes.

2, File 18). In an interview with Michael Ballantyne of the *Montréal Star*, Cohen explained that *Flowers for Hitler* rejects "the atomic bomb, the cold war, [and] the fact that we're living under the threat of universal annihilation" as "alibis for evil" (Ca. 2, File 18). Instead, Cohen argues that technological development has not affected human morality: "[w]e live as men have always lived, a mixture of good and evil, of the glory and the garbage that our souls are made of" (Ca. 2, File 18). Accordingly, technology should not be used as a scapegoat to distract from the problems of human nature.

Cohen expands on this argument in *Beautiful Losers.* While the text draws on mass media technologies and popular cultural products to root the text firmly in the sixties, it also argues that technology has occupied a similar position throughout history. Catherine Tekakwitha, Edith's historical counterpart, uses a bed of thorns in a masochistic form of devotion that parallels the sexual liberation Edith experiences with the Danish Vibrator. Just as Edith ends her life curled up in an elevator shaft—the elevator symbolizing urbanization, allowing the city to expand into skyscrapers—Tekakwitha meets her demise through religious technology and ritual penance. Tekakwitha's technique of tortuous devotion mirrors F.'s philosophy when, in a trance-like state brought on by the masochistic ritual of sleeping on a bed of thorns, she answers the priests' question:

--What do we sound like?

--You sound like machinery.

--Is it nice?

--It is beautiful.

--What kind of machinery?

--Ordinary eternal machinery. (217)

From the bodies of the priests emanates the soothing sound of mechanization. Tekawitha describes this merger of the mechanical and the biological as "beautiful" in its organic hum (217). This historical flashback dismisses the idea of an Edenic past free from the problems of technology.

Throughout, the novel challenges any simple binary between the organic and the mechanical. In the Telephone Dance, Edith and F. escape the tyranny of the body, bypassing their intellects to exist as pure energy. When F. merges with Edith, they construct themselves "in an imitation of mechanical communication, a form of technological exchange without electronic intervention" (Markotic 33-34). With their fingers plunged into each other's ear canals, F. reveals that they literally become telephones (Cohen, *Beautiful* 33). In their Argentine hotel room, "[t]he Danish Vibrator, a mechanical invention for heightening sexual pleasure, has taken control of the techniques of desire" and runs without batteries (Markotic 36). Both of these moments of heightened arousal blur the boundaries between organic life and technology. Cohen furthers this association by invoking Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* when F. refers to himself as "Dr. Frankenstein with a deadline" (Cohen, *Beautiful* 186). For F., in his Promethean desire to recreate, improve, and direct Edith and the professor "invokes the mad scientist who

creates then abandons his creations" (Markotic 36). Just as Frankenstein's monster frees himself from his creator, the Danish Vibrator learns "*to feed itself*" and bursts through the hotel room window to free itself into the Atlantic (Cohen, *Beautiful* 190-192).

This depiction challenges both McLuhan's logic that technology extends the body, as the machine frees itself from the human agent, and Heidegger's definition of technology as technique, as F. preaches chaos. For F., in "all his hysteria, is obsessed and limited by systems: as such he envies the totally unsystemic" (Scobie 101). In fact, the potential of each system is only actualized in its destruction. This deterritorialization reveals a deeper rhizomatic order. If anything, Cohen's version of technology in *Beautiful Losers* more closely aligns with Ursula M. Franklin's 1990 Massey Lectures. While Cohen shares Franklin's belief in technological agency, he does not share her pessimism. Although Edith kills herself with the aid of an elevator, technology is also the agent of her sexual liberation and aids the characters in breaking free from the confinements of sexually normative behavior.

How to Write a Novel in the Mass Media Age

This attention to technology situates *Beautiful Losers* at the intersections of late modernism and postmodernism. While Dragland argues *Beautiful Losers* is "perhaps the first postmodernist Canadian novel" (261), he also acknowledges the plausibility of reading the novel as modernist, with its "underlying drive towards organic unity" (264). Late modernism

"overcame the elitism that hampered high modernism," accepting and even celebrating the techniques of popular culture as important rhetorical strategies for engaging with a larger public (Genter 10). While this attention to the aesthetics of mass media also concerned postmodernists, who found modernism "too esoteric, too devoid of playfulness, and too disconnected with popular concerns" (4), late modernists refused to reduce the self "to the context in which it was situated" (16). Accordingly, late modernism denotes a transitional period between modernism and postmodernism. It also extends modernist concerns into the Cold War era, thus destabilizing the Eurocentric notion that modernism peaked in the 1920s. Watson firmly fits in this category, while Cohen's work is harder to locate. *Beautiful Losers* sits at the threshold of late modernism and postmodernism, asking the question, as Christophe Leobold notes: how does one write a novel in the mass media age" (168)?

The book metamorphosizes, drawing on other forms of communication technology to become a hybrid form, just as the characters deterritorialize to become the homogenous voice of the text's conclusion. The scope of the novel, as the narrator moves through history and among the consciousnesses of various characters, creates a confluence of cultural contexts. Paralleling the novel's merging of various lexicons (English, French, Greek, Latin, Iroquois), the text incorporates the traditions of multiple genres—including advertising (Cohen, *Beautiful* 114-115), letter writing (155-241), and radio dramas (78-82)—to challenge the traditional format of

the book. Typographically, *Beautiful Losers* mimics the *mise en page* of

newspapers and magazines. The inclusion of a mail-in coupon for an

instructional manual on "Slenderizing Heavy Legs" positions the novel in the

realm of disposable ephemera, as the coupon invites the reader to cut into

the book to remove it (114). This postmodern technique—the celebration of

the tawdry habits of tabloids—embraces popular culture, placing the sacred

and the profane on a level field.

In refusing the privileged position of the book as a reified cultural

object, *Beautiful Losers* revels in the markers of commodity culture. All of

these typographical tricks force the reader to remain conscious of the

medium. This form of hypermediation, like the illuminated manuscript,

directs the reader towards the materiality of the book. As Robert Kroetsch

says, "we try to read, not what is in the book (that failing), but the book itself.

The poet, then, not as maker, but as bookmaker" (129). More than a vehicle

for the story, the book reflects Cohen's fascination with a diverse range of

media forms.

Within the narrative, the professor ponders the effect of these popular

cultural products, these commodified cultural objects: is "there a part of Jesus

in every stamped-out crucifix? I think there is"— (Cohen, *Beautiful* 5). In

opposition to Benjamin's assertion that reproduction compromises the aura

of the work of art, the professor asserts an alternate aesthetic theory:

synecdoche is not mere representation; rather, the replica contains an

authentic aspect of its referent. F.'s letter to the professor exemplifies this

assertion. The second book of the novel reproduces this letter, which the Professor opens five years after F.'s death. As a result, the letter (as an extension of F.'s voice), allows him to retain an active place in the narrative despite his death. Print extends the circulation of ideas, as F. continues to shape the professor's world-view from the grave. Hutcheon asserts that

> the actual written nature of F.'s letter (a text written by hand, that is),
> is exploited by the printed text we read: those black lines reproduced
> in the novel . . . were originally made by F. with a ruler to impress the
> nurse, but they end up impressing the reader with their self-conscious
> textuality. (Hutcheon *Leonard* 21)

This attention to the materiality of the book differs from the materiality of prestige productions, like Berton's *The Great Railway: Illustrated*. Rather, Cohen honours the materiality of the everyday: the pamphlet, the magazine, and the handwritten note. Similar to his argument in the NFB documentary that "there are no dirty words," *Beautiful Losers* asserts that there are no lesser mediums (*Ladies*). Provocatively, the publication history of the novel further complicates this argument; Town's illustrations, the hardcover book, and the price point all resist this argument, positioning Cohen's novel as culture, not pulp.

The novel's response to a diverse array of media moves beyond print culture to film, a medium also explored in *The Favourite Game*. As Ian Rae notes, in Cohen's first novel, "film only interests Breavman if he can melt, strain, mutilate, loop, and interrupt it" (63). This sense of play disrupts the

logic of the medium to reveal the conventions of cinematic technique. Just as painting experienced a crisis in response to the popularization of photography, literature, Cohen argues, has been thrust into a state of crisis with the advent of cinema, narrative's new popular medium.

In *Beautiful Losers*, the characters frequent the System Theater in search of "vicarious experience" or "a willed evasion of participation in life" (Hutcheon, *Leonard* 19). Whereas Breavman mutilates his family's home videos, the composite character of IF mutilates the self to become the blinking eye of the projector in the novel's conclusion.[67] Amongst the disrepair and broken machinery in the System Theater, IF assumes "the Yoga of the movie position" (Cohen, *Beautiful* 252). Surrounded by the sound of the "occasional mouth chewing mechanically," the movie becomes invisible to him: his eyes "blinking at the same rate as the shutter in the projector, times per second, and therefore the screen was merely black. It was automatic" (252). As body and machine merge, the novel moves towards "the point of Clear Light" (258). Like sand sliding through an hourglass, pulled towards its thin waist, "he disintegrated slowly" (258) and "greedily reassembled himself—into a movie of Ray Charles" (258). At its climax, the novel describes the beauty of the destruction of the self, where self melts into media. As Ian Rae notes, employing McLuhan's logic, "[h]aving merged with

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[67] Stephen Scobie names the composite character, marking the fusion of the first person narrator, who Scobie names I., and his best friend F., the narrator of the second book, IF. When these voices merge in the third book of the novel, they signify the "remote human possibility", on which Scobie plays with the name IF (Scobie, quoting Cohen, 97).

F., the historian is able to analyze the medium, instead of passively accepting

the message" (84). IF replicates shutter mechanics with his eyelids, finding

the darkness between each frame of the film to free himself from the confines

of content—"the movie was invisible to him" (Cohen 252)—and focuses on

the technique of cinema. With this gesture, he frees the movie from the

confines of the theatre and walks into the streets, redirecting the audience

towards the city and into the "delicious certainty that they were at the very

centre of the action" (256). The communal experience of the theatre merges

with the collective energy of a manifestation, drawing the viewers to a point

of collective climax.

IF's "yoga of the movie position" moves past the content to focus on

the unifying potential of mass communication; yet, his asana manifests in the

image of Ray Charles, a blind African-American musical icon (252).

Christophe Lebold reads the scene as apocalyptic: "that final scene is locked

in the victor/victim pattern with American popular culture perceived as an

oppressive enterprise. Clearly, the scene is an apocalypse—a revelation—,

but should it really be seen as the Apocalypse Now of Canadian identity?"

(167). With the "ultimate destruction of the world" ("apocalypse"), comes the

disclosure of the new, the potential of the stem that is revealed in the

destruction of the system.[68] If national boundaries are one form of

containment, a system that is breached in IF's merger with the projector, the

human body is another. Here I agree with Leobold that "Cohen advocates not

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[68] This philosophy is echoed in Cohen's song Anthem: "there is a crack in
everything / that's how the light gets in."

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so much a deterritoralization of Canada or North America as an erotic deterritorialization of the body" (Lebold 169). Yet the isolation of embodiment mirrors the macroscopic problem of citizenship. When IF begins to blink with the projector he frees himself from three constraints: he breaks through the isolation of the ego to become a composite character; he breaks through the isolation of the body to merge with the projector; he breaks through his nationality to become an American cultural icon.

Despite the heavy nature of these political concerns, *Beautiful Losers* employs a tremendous amount of humour, reminding the reader that F.'s philosophy may be more hoax than sacred scripture. Here again, Cohen walks the thin line between flippantly celebrating false idols and genuinely advocating a spiritual practice. With irony as a powerful defense mechanism, he engages with new media without ever fully embracing it. This being said, Cohen's move away from fiction demonstrates his continual desire to grow his audience. As correspondence with M&S makes clear, music became his dominant concern, as reading tours became afterthoughts to his concert tours.

McClelland saw the potential of this approach, noting that concerts draw crowds "considerably larger" than book readings (MSF Box 78 File 1). As such, M&S embraced the task of organizing Cohen's publication schedule, as well as his meetings with literary and student groups, around his tour schedule (Box 78, File 1). In one way, this shift in priorities repositions Cohen's literary works as concert-tour merchandise, on par with recordings

and commemorative t-shirts. In another, the books work as a form of cross-promotion, extending Cohen's presence over a larger media terrain and demonstrating the author's and publisher's abilities to reimagine the role of the book in response to emerging technologies.

This trajectory looks remarkably similar to Berton's self-branding, and yet the term 'brand' seems an ill fit for Cohen. In part, this results from the cultural capital he accrues as a poet, as poetry stands in opposition to more commercially viable forms of literature, and in part, this results from Cohen's demeanor, when he retreats from the public, hiding from the camera's eye. As celebrity involves the "meeting and exchange of the public and private realms," Cohen's shirking of the camera's gaze slows the process of image reproduction on which celebrity is founded (York 4). Of course, this same man leapt from bed in his underwear before the camera's eye in the NFB biopic about his life, but this public display remained carefully managed. Extremely image conscious, Cohen manages his reputation to locate his work between popular culture and cultural capital.

Conclusion:
Red Herrings and the Long View

In 2012, the Canadian literary community responded to the foreign takeover of M&S with concern, but not necessarily surprise. Admittedly, Avie Bennett, who purchased M&S from McClelland in 1985 (King 378), paved the way for foreign control twelve years earlier, when he sold 25% of M&S to Random House and donated the remaining 75% to the University of Toronto (Williams "Random"). Controlling shares in the company remained Canadian until 2012, when the University of Toronto transferred its shares to Random House, a deal made newly possible by the revised policy of the Federal Department of Heritage. Modifying its stance on foreign ownership, the Department of Heritage granted Random House, which is owned by German media conglomerate Bertelsmann, permission to control Canada's most prominent publisher (Woods).[69]

Under this new ownership, M&S no longer qualifies for support from the Canada Council for the Arts or the Department of Canadian Heritage. Although the company had received roughly $6 million in grants from these two organizations since 2000, M&S still faced financial challenges, which Random House attributes to "the difficult economy and digital-driven transitions" (Williams). No longer eligible for federal support, Random House

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[69] Bertelsmann owns Penguin Random House, "the world's largest trade publishing group," which is comprised of "nearly 250 editorially independent imprints across five continents. These include historic publishing houses such as Doubleday, Viking and Alfred A. Knopf (USA); Ebury, Hamish Hamilton and Transworld (UK); Plaza & Janés (Spain) and Sudamericana (Argentina);" and now, M&S (Canada) ("Penguin").

intends to make M&S financially viable by creating "efficiencies," namely printing in the United States, to save costs. Under the previous structure, M&S could not print abroad if it wanted to be eligible for federal grants. By shifting print production to the United States, Random House believes it can benefit from economies of scale south of the border (Woods).

Random House's press release partially blames digital publishing for the uncertain terrain of the book world (Williams "Random"). However, this ready-made explanation ignores the fact that M&S' financial problems started long before e-readers, print-on-demand and self-publishing became common industry terms. In Chapter Two, I discussed the Government of Ontario's 1971 involvement in rescuing M&S from financial ruin. This was certainly not the last time the publisher appealed for support. In 1980 "titles [were] selling at half the rate that could have been safely predicted in 1978," hurling M&S into yet another state of crisis (King 355). By 1984, the company was $5 million in debt. That same year, M&S had to delay publication of its fall titles, because it could not pay the printers (372). In response to this financial crisis, the Government of Ontario, through the Ontario Development Corporation (ODC), loaned M&S funds totalling $1 million, and twenty-one private investors, including Pierre Berton and future owner Avie Bennett, tried to salvage M&S from financial ruin at personal expense (364). Essentially, M&S experienced one forty-year long crisis before its purchase by Random House. Digital publishing can hardly be held accountable for this longer history.

In some ways, digital publishing is a red herring that distracts from another dramatic shift in the story, namely the Canadian government's decision to allow a foreign company to purchase M&S. As discussed in the Introduction, the main costs of publication—acquiring, editing, designing, typesetting, and publicizing the book—remain the dominant costs in digital production. Paper and printing, which Random House singles out as the main area in which foreign production will result in efficiencies, "are in fact a relatively small proportion of the publisher's costs" (Thompson 337). Perpetuating a common industry misconception, Random House equates the book with a tangible object, as opposed to an intangible text that can be accessed across a variety of delivery platforms. In promoting the belief that digital publishing marks a point of unprecedented rupture in the industry, a rupture that necessitates a transnational approach, Random House draws attention away from shifts in the political salience of cultural nationalism. In other words, Random House frames itself as struggling to respond to the challenges posed by new media. In so doing, media becomes the dominant force against which the publisher must compete for consumer dollars. This narrative of an industry thrust into a state of crisis against its will masks the conscious decisions of policy makers that reorients Canada towards a more globally integrated manufacturing model.

The fate of Gage and Ryerson, which shocked the Canadian public in the early 1970s, no longer garners the same level of concern. Instead, in an act of transnational cultural industrialism, the Department of Heritage

revised national policy to allow a foreign company to take control of a Canadian cultural asset. This shift speaks to the end of a certain form of nationalism. I will not employ the term postnationalism, as borders open to certain passports more readily than others, but I will say transnational, if not global, cultural industrialism. Whereas the Massey commissioners sought to employ "culture to combat the ills of industrialization, commercialization, and commodification," cultural industrialism requires economic evidence to prove the success of a given industry (Edwardson 253). Thus, the extent to which the government views cultural sovereignty as a shield for nationhood has been minimized. Instead, in supporting foreign ownership of M&S, the government puts faith in the market's ability to salvage culture from financial ruin.

The precariousness of M&S' finances may also seem counterintuitive to a public that has witnessed the recent international success of Canadian writers. Ryan Edwardson argues that Canadian authors' prominence as winners of literary awards allows the public to overlook the sale of Canadian publishing houses to international corporations (278). Admittedly, the awarding of prizes to Canadian authors has a longer history, beginning in 1936 with the first Governor General Awards. However, as Gillian Roberts highlights in *Prizing Literature: The Celebration and Circulation of National Culture*, "the high-profile, reasonably consistent international prizing of Canadian writers is relatively recent, its key moment being Michael Ondaatje's Booker Prize for *The English Patient* in 1992 (16). Carol Shields

rapidly followed this prestigious victory, winning the Pulitzer Prize for *The*

Stone Diaries in 1995 (16). Consequently, Roberts argues, the 1990s can be

viewed as

> a turning point for both the writers themselves and Canadian readers'
>
> awareness of Canadian literature's potential to travel outside the
>
> nation's borders . . . These celebrations generated outside the nation
>
> ultimately sold, and fed, the nation back to itself, as Canadian readers
>
> were encouraged by external arbiters to cultivate a taste for their own
>
> nation's cultural products and to welcome their own culture and its
>
> consumption. (16)[70]

The popularity of these texts in the global cultural marketplace serves as

evidence of the success of Canadian literature. Consequently, this same

literature is no longer seen to be emergent or under threat, but rather a fully-

formed product proven by an international array of judges. This form of

external validation sanctions Canadian artists, and signifies not only their

arrival but also their prominence on the world stage. Roberts' attention to

the 1990s ignores an earlier generation of writers, including Margaret

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[70] Roberts supports this argument with a long list of authors who have won prestigious international prizes since 1990: "Margaret Atwood, Austin Clarke, Rawi Hage, Lawrence Hill, Michael Ignatieff, Ann-Marie MacDonald, Alistair MacLeod, Yann Martel, Anne Michaels, Rohinton Mistry, Alice Munro, Michael Ondaatje, Mordecai Richler, and Carol Shields. These writers have been nominated for and/or have won such awards as the (Man) Booker Prize, the Commonwealth Writers' Prize, the IMPAC Dublin Award, the Man Booker International Prize, the Orange Prize, the Prix Médici (Etranger), and the Pulitzer Prize, among others" (4).

Atwood, Margaret Laurence, and even Leonard Cohen, who have been internationally celebrated. These writers, combined with the writers that Roberts mentions, have resulted in the belief that Canadian literature no longer necessitates the same forms of domestic protection from the global market. The irony is, of course, that Canadian literature's success has paved the way for an erosion of government support.

These literary prizes function across a diverse area of media platforms to advertise both the winning author and his or her book. In circulating the author's image beyond his or her "original area of specialization," literary prizes enhance an author's star status (York, *Literary* 37). Writers who make television appearances, walk the red carpet on Oscar night, give media interviews, speak to the public through a Twitter account, or give public readings, all branch into areas beyond their immediate area of specialization. These promotional tactics often rely on emerging media to reach a wider audience, and yet use new media to point back to the book. A remedial practice, these promotional platforms draw on the cultural capital of the book to assert their legitimacy. For example, when an author tweets a link to a review of her book, she fills Twitter's platform with content from a more established, and therefore reputable, source. Publishers and authors, must continually rethink the role of the book in this evolving network of media platforms.

As the case studies have demonstrated, multiple positions are available at any given time. The spectrum of Pierre Berton, Sheila Watson,

and Leonard Cohen's divergent positions complicates a simple narrative of rupture. Certainly all of these authors responded to the invention of television, yet the fact that each chose to position him or herself in a different manner speaks to the deliberate choice of authors. In addition, M&S's paratextual contributions add an additional layer of response, indicating that the publisher saw the value of employing multiple formats during the postwar period. M&S' remedial practice employed the established technology of the hardcover book to lend prestige to Berton, just as it employed the more emergent technology of the softcover book to highlight the avant-garde nature of Watson's novel. At odds with the argument that new media and mass media are synonymous, both of these examples demonstrate the publisher's cunning use of form to position authors in the literary marketplace. M&S employed emerging media to cultivate an audience for an avant-garde work, while it employed the more expensive tradition of hardcover publication to give weight to a popular author. These decisions arose, however, not only in the context of new media developments, but also the political milieux of postwar Canada.

Jack McClelland's project of building a national publisher has come to a close. While he tempered his fierce sense of nationalism throughout his career, it nevertheless remained one of his guiding tenets, which he explained in an undated memorandum to Len Cummings, vice president of finance at M&S from 1983: "[y]ou believe money management is a virtue. I do, but to a lesser degree. You are ambitious. So am I *now*, but only in a

context of what I value" (McClelland, qtd. in King 367). In opposition to Cummings' desire to salvage the company's finances, McClelland pursued a purpose beyond commerce and approached publishing as a political cause, more than as a business. For this reason, his biographer James King claims that McClelland "did more to unite Canada than any politician" (381). This mindset was the key to his success in the postwar era, as his convictions matched his country's. Decidedly, Canada's political climate has changed; this transition began with the negotiation of the Free Trade Agreement and is exemplified by the sale of an iconic Canadian cultural brand to foreign interests. This shift in the political landscape is not the result of emerging technology, so much as a conscious political decision about the shape and scope of Canada's cultural industries. While Random House vows to "continue to invest in and build the M&S name," Canadians have questions about the effect this will have on their national literature (Woods). For example, Lucie Hotte, president of the Association of Canadian and Quebéc Literatures (ACQL) recently contacted members to assess the number of instructors having problems ordering NCL titles for their Canadian literature classes (Hotte). While the scope of the problem remains unknown, Hotte's request demonstrates a concern that foreign ownership will mean a decreased investment in maintaining a backlist of Canadian titles. Her concern also highlights the routinized social practices in which the NCL has become embedded. Instructors of Canadian Literature courses depend on the NCL, and other paperback reprints of Canadian works, when ordering

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textbooks for their students. This sense of dependency demonstrates the inextricable nature of practice and media.

In tracing the historical political context in which M&S made strategic decisions about how to situate itself and its authors in response to emerging media, I have delineated one particular context within which new media emerged. In so doing, I have demonstrated the nuanced nature of media history, specifically, the intersection between Canadian nationalism and new media. Media history, therefore, must grapple with the user, as an embodied subject in a particular time and place, as much as with a technological object, for the personalities that shape the social practices in which media are embedded become inextricable from technology. In attending to the social milieux in which authors respond to new media, I have argued against a totalizing description of media transition.

The description of simultaneously divergent positions shows that the history of new media is comprised of a series of choices, selected by authors with particular political, aesthetic, and personal investments. Narratives of rupture, of chaos, of crisis, and of unprecedented rapid change are rhetorical strategies that all cloak the potential for strategic positioning. Alternately, narratives of the consistent and stable nature of textual production offer a "promise of continuity and a celebration of the continual march of progress in the name of humankind" (Zielinski 3). Historically situated media analysis, however, attends to the heterogeneous practices that develop alongside emerging media. In so doing, it resists the tendency of new media studies to

focus on the most recent innovations, and instead highlights the dialectic between the established and the emergent. The agents of this process of exchange and repositioning are people, and as such, they are capable of complex and even contradictory impulses.

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