

**CIV/n: Not a One [Wo]man Job –
the Significance of Aileen Collins as Editor**

by

Jennifer Macquarrie, B.A. (Honours)

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

Master of Arts

Department of English
Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

September 21, 2006

© copyright 2006, Jennifer Macquarrie



Library and
Archives Canada

Bibliothèque et
Archives Canada

Published Heritage
Branch

Direction du
Patrimoine de l'édition

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file *Votre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-26223-8
Our file *Notre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-26223-8

NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.


Canada

Abstract

CIV/n, a little magazine in Montreal during the early fifties, has often been examined in terms of its significance to the growth of Canadian modernist poetry; however, most critics have focused on the importance of the dominant male poets, Louis Dudek and Irving Layton, as powers behind the magazine, despite the fact that Aileen Collins was listed on the masthead as editor. Through interviews with Aileen Collins, and through careful examination of correspondence between several of the magazine's key figures, the extent of Aileen Collins' contribution becomes clear, as the true editor of *CIV/n*.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my two supervisors, Collett Tracey and Michael Gnarowski, for inspiring both this project and a deep love for Canadian literature. Their guidance, passion, and knowledge of the realm of modernist little magazines have opened a world of possibilities for me. I have spent the last three years with them: travelling to Montreal, fervently arguing about modernism, listening raptly to stories about Louis Dudek, and eating smoked meat sandwiches. This project would not have been possible without them.

Nor could I have completed this paper without Aileen Collins and her generosity; I thank her for inviting me into her home, answering endless questions, and opening certain sealed correspondence for me at the Library and Archives Canada. Her boxes of *CIV/n*'s correspondence, photos, and original issues, along with her clear memories, have made this time real to me in a way I never expected.

I would also like to acknowledge the kindness of the archivists and librarians of the Library and Archives Canada, and Annie Murray of Concordia University, who helped me strike gold in the Irving Layton collection. In addition, my family, my friends – in particular, Andrée Charlebois and Brooke Humphrey – and my professors at Carleton University supported me in every way conceivable, and deserve more gratitude than I can ever give them.

Finally, I thank my partner in research, Michèle Rackham. Together, we accomplished so much more than we ever could have on our own, sharing ideas, travelling to Montreal and Toronto, and keeping each other inspired.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE	
A Star-Studded Cast:	
the Critical History of <i>CIV/n</i>	4
CHAPTER TWO	
The Other Side of the Story:	
Collins and <i>CIV/n</i>	30
CHAPTER THREE	
Understanding her Absence:	
Collins and the Literary Record	61
CONCLUSION	88
WORKS CITED	90

CIV/n: Not a One [Wo]man Job – the Significance of Aileen Collins as Editor

Literary success is a tenuous term, fleeting and ephemeral at best, hotly contested and almost impossible to measure. Do we determine success through popularity, sales of the literary work, or scholastic and critical attention? Particularly difficult to categorize are the forms of literature that do not easily conform to the standards of their contemporary audience. Among these forms, we find the little magazines. Little magazines perform the function of creating what Pauline Butling and Susan Rady refer to as “experimental literary communities” (17), which present to new and emerging writers and artists the opportunity to print the poetry, short stories, and artwork that would not necessarily have been able to find a venue in the more conservative large publishing houses. According to Hoffman, Allen, and Ulrich, the little magazine can be defined as having “a small circulation, usually no more than a hundred readers. It serves as an alternative outlet for literature, usually for the purpose of attacking conventional modes of expression and of bringing into the open new and unorthodox literary theories and practices” (qtd. in Norris 6). As Dudek and Gnarowski assert, in their seminal work on the little magazine, “all the important events in poetry and most of the initiating manifestoes and examples of change are to be found in the little magazines” (*The Making of Modern Poetry* 203).

These community-based, writer-run magazines are usually formed through the passions of the individual, who, as Norris notes, is usually characterized as “one who prints a magazine of small circulation, who is prepared to lose money, and who is

essentially a rebel against the literary standards of the time” (7). In the cosmopolitan air of Montreal, several little magazines sprang up, each passionate editor working towards the vision of modern poetry, as they saw it. The differences between the little magazines, of course, lay in the personalities of these editors and contributors to each magazine. Brian Trehearne comments on the “sheer coincidence we must submit to as literary historians, in the gathering together of particular poetic personalities at focal moments of cultural change: to fail to acknowledge that random luck would be hubris” (*Aestheticism* 316). One such focal moment of luck occurred in 1953, with the founding of the little magazine, *CIV/n*.

CIV/n, which was a Poundian abbreviation of the word “civilization,” was a little magazine published in Montreal during the early fifties, edited by Aileen Collins, with Wanda Staniszevska as the associate editor, and Buddy Rozynski as the artistic director. The magazine ran seven issues from 1953 to 1955, with the first five being mimeographed, and the last two printed. The list of poets published in the magazine is impressive; as Elspeth Cameron notes, by the end of their run, young up-and-coming writers like “Leonard Norman Cohen...Phyllis Webb, Gael Turnbull, Doug Jones, Eli Mandel and Avi Boxer had been printed alongside work by older writers such as Souster, Patrick Anderson and F.R. Scott and three American writers with whom Layton and Dudek were quickly becoming more familiar, Cid Corman, Robert Creeley and Charles Olson” (Cameron, *Irving Layton*, 204). The magazine included a large amount of artwork, from illustrations and sketches by Buddy Rozynski and Betty Sutherland, to photographs of Rozynski’s wood sculptures.

The success of this little magazine can be found in the amount of critical attention focused on the magazine, its contributors, and its effects on the field of modernism in Canadian literature. But there is one key element missing from the criticism as it currently stands, and that is the truth behind the role of *CIV/n*'s editor. Aileen Collins, while listed on the masthead as the editor of the magazine, has been not only neglected, but also dismissed almost completely from the literary history. To date, critics have focused their attention exclusively on Louis Dudek and Irving Layton as the key figures behind the magazine, relegating Collins to a footnote or a figurehead.

It is the purpose of this paper to question the standard, conventional literary history of *CIV/n*, and to integrate new knowledge gained from archival research into the scholarly debate surrounding the editorial position of Aileen Collins. Through interviews with Collins, and through documents and correspondence between several people connected to the magazine, another perspective of the literary history is available, which challenges the previous critical assumptions. Collins, when seen through this archival lens, is not a puppet editor of a magazine run by Dudek and Layton, but the true editor of *CIV/n*, a little magazine which she created and ran with her editorial associates.

A Star-Studded Cast: the Critical History of *CIV/n*

As Pauline Butling and Susan Rady note, a good distinction between a “literary periodical” and a “little magazine” is based on “their purpose rather than their appearance” as opposed to Norris’ more commonly used distinction which is “based on the differences in appearance (glossy versus cheap production values)” (37). In this case, *CIV/n* qualifies under both modes of categorization; the mimeographed magazine was inexpensively made, and far more concerned with its poetic content than its appearance. Louis Dudek, in his article, “The Role of Little Magazines in Canada” (1958), argues that little magazines

provide the setting where new poetry and new poets have their beginning. The key developments of modern poetry in Canada take place on this makeshift stage – usually a very unpretentious, modestly-printed (or even mimeographed) periodical, edited by beginning writers of no standing and having little relation to the general reading public or the large-circulation media of communication. The little magazine is a form of semi-private publication which aims at public success and eventual victory over whatever is established in literary taste. (203)

CIV/n’s poetic agenda has exactly this blend of youthful and rebellious determination to change the face of Canadian poetry.

In *CIV/n*’s issue number five, Collins sent what Ken Norris describes as a “call for a realistic and vital poetry” (66). In a furious “Letter From the Editor,” Collins denounces “Canadian Culture,” arguing that “Nothing will be done until we start concentrating on producing *poetry* without qualifications as to nation. But a poet in Canada is forced to

write with maple syrup on birch bark – (which will insure his being included in any later anthologies edited by Birney, probably under the classification ‘Natural Resources’)” (Collins 129). She demands a new and different poetry:

The kind of poetry we want will be a vital representation of what things are done, done in strong language (if necessary) or any language, but it will rouse the reader to see just what the world around him is like. The Canadian mind has been protected and insured too long. It is time now to get it out of storage. For Kulchur’s sake, at least, let’s have a lot of bad *good* poetry in future, instead of more *good* bad poetry – and let the dead-head critics hold their peace until the call of the last moose. (129)

The magazine held to this credo; Layton refers to it in a letter to Robert Creeley in 1954 as “civilized social realism,” claiming that “We want to make it clear that for us there is no turning back to mysticism, genteel catholicism, and the social pessimism of original sin. Anyway it’s all in the battle, that’s what matters, win or lose, and the honest man keeps fighting: one’s health, if nothing else, demands that he do so” (Faas and Reed 44). Of course, the individual poets in the magazine all held varying views; however, the overall tone of *CIV/n* remained constant: a new and vigorous style of poetry was promoted.

The time was right; as Dudek and Gnarowski note, “From about 1948 modern Canadian poetry, as represented in the movement centered in Montreal, began to show distinct signs of self-doubt and reorientation” (113). At the same time, “a more central reintegration of the poetry movement occurred among poets in Toronto and Montreal”

(Dudek and Gnarowski, *Making of Modern Poetry*, 141). The modernism that had peaked in the forties was showing signs of change. Margaret Atwood points out that the changing scene meant that “in the fifties it had to all be built up again” with a shift away from the old, feuding magazines like *First Statement* and *Preview* to the newer magazines like *Contact* and *CIV/n* (Daurio 23). By 1954, Desmond Pacey claimed that “In the last year or two there have been signs of a revival of interest and energy in Canadian poetry. New anthologies have been edited by Earle Birney and (jointly) by Louis Dudek and Irving Layton; new magazines (*Contact*, *CIV/n*) have been established and older ones (notably *The Fiddlehead*) expanded in scope” (168). Tracey notes in her PhD dissertation that “what should also be remembered is that the early 1950s was a time of great change. The war was over and the united sense of purpose that it provided was gone, leaving a vacuum waiting to be filled. Everything was changing, including poetry” (150). Layton, in his essay “Recalling the 50's” in *CIV/n*'s published book, remembers that “I had a very strong feeling in the early 1950's that poetry in Canada had come in from the cold and was starting to gain momentum” (249).

CIV/n's role as a literary magazine is a substantial part of Canadian literary history, and deserves its place of significance. In “The Role of Little Magazines in Canada,” Louis Dudek prophetically wrote about the status of little magazines in critical thought, noting that:

In Canada such “small and obscure papers and reviews” are continuing at present on several fronts, and they promise quietly to create a vital literature of salutary value for this country before they run their course. They have few readers; but

their eventual influence will be measured by the survey of Canadian Literature in A.D. 2000, not by the readers they had within their time. (212)

His prediction was accurate; as time passed, *CIV/n* came to be seen as an integral part of the body of Canadian literary history. It became clear that *CIV/n*'s passionate attitude about poetry, combined with a wealth of contributors who were now achieving greater and greater fame, had provided a venue for artists in which to further the demands of modernism. In a review of the reprinted book of *CIV/n*'s issues, Michael Benazon remarked that while "*CIV/n* appeared only seven times, from 1953 to 1955, yet the liveliness of the magazine, the fervour with which the group pursued its objectives, the poets it published and the role it played in re-establishing Montreal as the literary centre of Canada gave *CIV/n* a significance that went well beyond its size and modest format" (18).

CIV/n was scrutinized more and more, in connection with the big names of little magazines like *First Statement*, *Northern Review*, and *Contact*, as a key element in the evolving Canadian modernism. Wynne Francis, in 1967, lists *CIV/n* as one of the more important little magazines of the fifties, which played "the role of keeping Modern literature alive in Canada, of fostering new talent, and of steering Canadian letters into the contemporary international stream" (Francis, "Literary Underground," 68). Ken Norris, in 1984, mentions the significance of the magazine as promoting the third stage of Canadian modernism, which he sees "was developing in the pages of...*CIV/n*" (53). Since *Contemporary Verse* had ended in 1952, and *Northern Review* soon after, Norris refers to the new magazines of *Contact* and *CIV/n* as ushering in "a new period" of

Canadian poetry (27). Elspeth Cameron agrees with Norris' claims, as she emphasizes that "*CIV/n* was a vehicle for presenting a new evolutionary development in modern Canadian poetry" (Cameron, *Irving Layton*, 205). As a vehicle for this movement of the fifties, *CIV/n* was "short-lived but extraordinarily influential," publishing new Canadian poets and poetry, exploring the social issues of a post-war community, and balancing the fine line between international scope and Canadian identity (Benazon 18).

The magazine was hailed as a sign of "a revival of interest and energy in Canadian poetry" (Pacey 168). It was seen as counteracting the "regressive tendency in poetry that stemmed out of the late forties and also pushed poetry forward to a condition of Modernism resting on the most solid of foundations" (Norris 68). While the socialist impulses that had propelled so much of the poetry of the previous decades had suffered after the war, the rebellious fire that marks modernist poetry, as well as the awareness of social and political issues, is still pervasive throughout *CIV/n*. In their introduction to the section "Resurgence" of the ground-breaking *The Making of Modern Poetry*, Dudek and Gnarowski mention *CIV/n*'s desire to "stir up the fires of revolt," citing as an example Robert Currie's "swipe at the conservative position of these older critics...dissecting the Canadian sentimental syndrome in his witty review piece" (141), the "older critics" being the generation of Rhodenizer and Pierce, who were aghast at modernism's growth.

It was obvious, too, that *CIV/n*'s group atmosphere and collective system provided a perfect forum for discussion among a wide range of poets. Frank Davey points out that "more and more, with magazines like *Direction*, *CIV/n*, *Yes*, *Delta*, et cetera, the little

magazine of Montreal was published not so much by as for the young poet. The new function of the little magazine was to publish as much as possible of the material made available to it" (Davey, "Anything But Reluctant," 221). Michael Benazon agrees, highlighting the importance that a literary magazine can serve "not merely as an outlet, but as a means of bringing poets and critics together," and stating that "*CIV/n* admirably performed this function" (32).

In *CIV/n*, this group atmosphere not only conquered the poets' isolation, but allowed for a broad range of debate and discussion, which was, as Ralph Gustafson remembers, full of "indignation and protest" (Collins 9). Benazon comments on "its characteristic passion, confidence, irreverence and unity" (33) that preserved its "workshop" feel, a testimony to the openness of the cooperation that took place within the magazine. The magazine provided an opportunity for poets – particularly young, unpublished poets, to practice their art in a challenging environment. In his review of *CIV/n: A Literary Magazine of the 50's*, Bruce Whiteman makes clear the integral place which the magazine has to offer literary historians with regards to these young poets. He points out that it is here that "one finds the earliest published poems of Leonard Cohen" as well as "Robert Creeley's fine, subdued, early work" (128). This collective atmosphere contrasted sharply with the view of the poet as separate and alone; Trehearne notes that:

Both he [Layton] and Dudek have persistently construed themselves as the last sentinels at the barricades, calling out imprecations against the uncouth hordes who come to violate human liberty, imagination, and power. The sense of having been called alone to arms, of a responsibility to live and write an exemplary life

against a swelling barbarism, is powerful in each – and a typical vocation,
Comfort says, of the poet schooled in the forties.

(Trehearne, *The Montreal Forties*, 237)

This new Canadian modernism spelled a time of collectivity for poets, and *CIV/n* was very much a part of this new tradition.

Despite this less individualistic environment surrounding the magazine, when it became clear that *CIV/n* had an important place in the literary tradition of Canada, critics immediately began to stake claims for the individual powers behind it. As the significance of *CIV/n* as a little magazine in the wave of the early fifties modernism became obvious, the push to find a suitable candidate to praise became stronger. Academics did not have to look very far to find, in Louis Dudek and Irving Layton, two candidates who fit the profile: male poets of great intellectual capacity, vivid personalities, and a clear connection to literary magazines. While critics like Brian Trehearne believe that “It is the poetry that matters, obviously, not the colourful personalities” (Trehearne, *The Montreal Forties*, 3), even he bows to the necessity of literary-historical methods when dealing “with poets whose writing lives have been as vivid as these” (Trehearne, *The Montreal Forties*, 4). These striking characters, as we will see, have provided critics with a star-studded cast, to the detriment of those whom they overshadow.

In addition to the vibrant company of Canadian and international poets found in *CIV/n*, Louis Dudek and Irving Layton were involved in the magazine as advisors to the editorial board. Dean Irvine notes that they “attended editorial meetings and read

submissions, but neither appeared on the masthead” (300). According to Collins, Rozynski “sought the advice of his cousin, Louis Dudek” on how to create a little magazine, and Dudek then introduced Irving Layton to the young editors (7). The fame of these two poets has led to a certain reading of *CIV/n*’s editorial activity, which will be examined closely throughout this paper.

Ken Norris points out the importance of these two men in Canada’s literary history, maintaining that they “would push Canadian poetry into new realms” (41). He emphasizes the work that they had done, through *First Statement*, and later with Ray Souster and *Contact*, as establishing the new wave of modernism in the fifties and sixties. For Norris, it was inconceivable that two such literary giants could be relegated to a back seat in the creation of a new magazine. Although Dudek, in “The Making of *CIV/n*” claims that not only did he and Layton purposefully refrain from interfering “with the editorial freedom of the actual editors” (230), but also that the magazine “was free-wheeling to a degree that neither Layton nor myself probably would have made it” (231), Norris cannot accept Dudek’s statement. He insists that “despite Dudek’s contention that he and Layton tried to stay in the background, their presence was very much felt” (63). Not only this, but he also claims that “much of the energy expressed in the magazine stems from Layton and Dudek, and particularly from Dudek” (64), although Collins was the manifestly declared editor of the magazine, dismissively acknowledging that “the production work and distribution were handled by Aileen Collins and the Rozynskis” (64).

In his article on *CIV/n*’s reprinted book, Bruce Whiteman disagrees with Norris on

several other points, but seems to agree with him regarding this aspect. He claims that “Louis Dudek and Irving Layton, though never on the masthead, were clearly the grey eminences behind the magazine; its list of contributors owed a good deal to the contacts that they had made through *Contact* and Contact Press and the writers whom Dudek had come to know in New York City” (127). Whiteman is clearly caught up in the timing of events; *CIV/n* came at a time of great importance for both Dudek and Layton. Trehearne notes that “There seems grounds here for the identification of mid-1953 to mid-1954 as an *annus mirabilis* for Layton” (Trehearne, *The Montreal Forties*, 229), and adds later that “The years 1953 and 1954 are critical for Dudek’s development” (262). Although Whiteman clearly links this productive period for the two poets with their work in *CIV/n*, even he is concerned that some of the story may be missing. Whiteman argues that:

Though I have not read much of Dudek’s correspondence from the period...even Souster’s letters suggest that there are aspects to the history of both *Contact* and *CIV/n* of which Gnarowski and Norris are unaware...Norris, I think, would have done well to read more widely in the unpublished correspondence of the main poets involved with the magazines. (128)

In the second section of this paper, we will see that Whiteman’s suggestion, though he never followed up on it, is very worthwhile.

In certain circles of literary criticism, Dudek became the *cause célèbre*, as the poet who has been underestimated by the critical community. As early as 1980, Davey champions Dudek’s cause, noting Dudek’s long-standing academic interest in little

magazines, pointing out that “As a result of his doctoral research, he was also an authority on both the history of poetry and the role of the little magazine editor...Dudek hoped to be able to use his own contacts, knowledge and authority to change the direction of poetry in Canada” (Davey, *Dudek and Souster*, 11). According to his critics, Dudek did, indeed, accomplish his goal. Tony Tremblay writes that despite neglect during his career, “Canadian critics as diverse as Wynne Francis, Douglas Barbour, Ralph Gustafson, and John Robert Colombo speak in unison about Dudek's near-singular importance as the pioneering force behind the modernist revival in Canadian poetry in the 1950s and 1960s” (26).

Norris, then, with the weight of this critical force behind him, not only assumes that Layton and Dudek were the forces behind *CIV/n*, but argues that Dudek played the primary role in the magazine, claiming that in later years, “the spadework that had been done by Souster and Dudek in *Contact* and *CIV/n* was taken for granted. There was no need to chart a new course for Canadian poetry: a positive direction had already been established” (68). Although he credits the “Cerberus threesome” (41) – Souster, Layton, and Dudek – as the force of Canadian poetry in the fifties, Norris clearly highlights Dudek's role more than that of Layton or Souster in regards to the little magazine movement, from *CIV/n*, to *Delta*, Dudek's own magazine. Dean Irvine, in his PhD thesis, points out that Norris' viewpoint has since been carried along through subsequent generations of critics, particularly with Wynne Francis “reiterating Norris's narrative” (306).

Francis laments that “in the extensive coverage of Dudek's career provided by the

various contributions to the Dudek revival, *CIV/n*, and Dudek's role in relation to it, have so far received too little attention" (88). She quotes from Dudek's letter to the editors of *The Golden Dog* (No. 4, November 1974) about the group dynamics inherent in a collective magazine: "when we study these group magazines we always find that the group is made up of antithetical individuals, and the interaction of the individuals is the real dramatic story of the magazine, not the unity of the magazine or group as such" (90). Dudek was referring to the *First Statement* group, but Francis applies the statement more broadly to little magazine collectives in general. For Francis, the "truly 'antithetical' individuals involved with *CIV/n* were Louis Dudek and Irving Layton, and the 'real dramatic story' of this magazine derives from the tensions between them" (90). Francis concludes that:

Neither *Contact* nor *CIV/n* would have much historical importance had not Souster, Dudek, and Layton later developed into three important, and very different poets. The "significance" of *CIV/n*, especially, lies not merely in its resistance to *Northern Review* (and to *Contact*) but also in the fact that it marked a decisive (and divisive) point in the careers of Dudek and Layton – a fact that (for those who are not wearing a patch over one eye) has had truly remarkable consequences for contemporary Canadian poetry. (92)

Francis overlooks the presence of such contributors to the magazine as Miriam Waddington, Leonard Cohen, Avi Boxer, Anne Wilkinson, Robert Creeley, Charles Olson, Ray Souster, and Phyllis Webb, all of whom provide *CIV/n* with "historical importance" and "significance". She is also erroneous in her assumption that *CIV/n*

worked in resistance to *Contact* magazine; we will see later in this paper that the two magazines worked very closely together. More importantly, for our purposes, Francis overlooks the presence of Aileen Collins as editor.

Francis' position – that Layton and Dudek are the only figures of note in *CIV/n* – has been adopted as the traditional critical viewpoint. Frank Davey subscribes to this view, although he prefers to highlight Dudek's involvement in *CIV/n* over the editors actually listed on its masthead, rather than Layton. Although Davey does give the credit for the idea to start a little magazine to “four young Montreal writers – Aileen Collins, Wanda Staniszevska, Stan Rozynski and Jackie Gallagher,” he only refers to them as seeking Dudek's assistance and advice (*Dudek and Souster*, 17). According to Davey, Dudek not only agreed to help them, but also “later christened the magazine *CIV/n*” (*Dudek and Souster*, 18). In almost the same breath, Davey says that “after founding *CIV/n*,” Dudek decided to distance himself from *Contact*, clearly implying that Dudek was the power behind the magazine (18).

Faas and Reed, editors of *Irving Layton and Robert Creeley: The Complete Correspondence, 1953-1978*, continue to uphold this traditional view into the nineties. In their notes at the back of the book, they describe *CIV/n* as “a little magazine published in Montreal from 1953 to 1955, with Aileen Collins as its official editor and Dudek and Layton as major influences on its policies” (260). By using the phrase “official editor” for Collins, they manage to dismiss her while still acknowledging her presence, elevating Dudek and Layton as “major influences”.

In the introduction to their book, Faas and Reed also marry *CIV/n* and *Contact*, stating that “*Contact* ceased publication early in 1954. But at that time, *CIV/n*, Montreal’s ‘companion magazine’ of the Toronto-based *Contact*, was already in full operation” (x). This linking further contributes to the critical view of Dudek and Layton as the major authorities of the magazine. By subsuming *CIV/n* into merely a “companion magazine” of *Contact*, in which both Layton and Dudek participated to some degree, they bind the two poets even more closely with *CIV/n*.

The critics, however, were not completely without foundation in their assumptions of the roles within *CIV/n*; their perceptions were greatly influenced by Louis Dudek and Irving Layton, themselves. Both Dudek and Layton helped, either intentionally or inadvertently, to continue the myth of Aileen Collins as merely a figurehead. Layton, as we will soon see, constantly strove for greater power within *CIV/n*, both during its run and after.

Dudek’s position is slightly more ambiguous. Throughout his life, he quietly argued on behalf of Collins, who was later to become his second wife, but his comments generally went unheard. Dean Irvine, one of the more recent critics of little magazines, and more skeptical of the traditional viewpoint, argues that “both Norris and Francis dispute Dudek’s retrospective in the Index to *CIV/n*,” effectively dismissing Dudek’s assertions (306). Irvine singles out Norris, especially, as one who “diminishes Collins’s role to that of an adjunct,” despite Dudek’s statements to the contrary (Irvine 306).

Perhaps Norris' viewpoint can be understood by looking at some of these statements concerning *CIV/n*. Dudek's enthusiasm for the poetry sometimes obscured his real position within certain magazines; for example, he says:

our underlying position in *Contact* (as well as in *CIV/n*, the Montreal magazine) is one of sharp social criticism, but not a criticism based on political or economic grounds alone: it is a cultural attack, a criticism of contemporary life in the name of the whole range of liberal values; and the poetry that we make on this basis is as varied as the personalities of poets can be.

(Dudek, "The State of Canadian Poetry," 172)

It is clear from his tone that he is happily allied to both magazines; what is unclear is his position within them – in both Souster's *Contact*, and Collins' *CIV/n*. His ambiguous message was passed down to Susan Stromberg-Stein, one of Dudek's students, as well. She writes in her biography of Dudek that the "little magazines *First Statement* and *CIV/n* flourished under his enthusiastic and devoted labours. He believed in them. They provided the setting where new poetry and new poets have their beginning" (66).

Stromberg-Stein records other students' impressions of Dudek's importance; Leonard Cohen, in an interview on March 10, 1982, comments that "I had started writing before I met him but it was he who published me first in *CIV/n* 4, a piece called "An Halloween Poem to Delight My Young Friends" (qtd. in Stromberg-Stein 96). This statement is intriguing, since Cohen clearly credits Dudek with *CIV/n*'s editorial decision, yet Dudek was not even back from his European trip, having left directly after issue number three was published (Stromberg-Stein 56). Other young poets bolster

Dudek's claim as editor, including D.G. Jones, who says, "He also accepted one or two of my poems for *CIV/n* during that period...outside the university magazine my first poems were published in Souster's *Contact* and Louis' *CIV/n*" (qtd. in Stromberg-Stein 109).

Besides allowing his students to see him as the face of *CIV/n*, Dudek also occasionally refrained from actively promoting Collins' importance as the editor of *CIV/n*. In his book, *Dk/: Some Letters of Ezra Pound*, Dudek does not go into detail of any kind concerning her role in the magazine. When Pound demanded to know, in a letter dated April 21, 1955, "who is the CIV/N female. No civilization without civic sense. which I can't recall hitting HIGH in Civ/n. tell me more about the gal's Anschauung," Dudek left the question unanswered (Dudek, *D/k*, 111). Dudek merely footnoted blankly that "the *CIV/n* female was Aileen Collins, the editor of the magazine," but added no commentary, as he does elsewhere in the book (Dudek, *D/k*, 110). Dean Irvine notes, "apart from identifying Collins as the editor of *CIV/n*, Dudek provides no annotation on her editorial ideas or 'outlook'" (304).

Dudek's reticence on the subject of Aileen Collins is nothing compared to the damage done by Irving Layton, the other candidate for critics' attentions with regards to *CIV/n*. Layton's forceful personality pushed itself to the fore, as always, when it became clear to him that the magazine was garnering a significant amount of critical attention. As we will see later, this self-aggrandizing aspect of his personality was already present during *CIV/n*'s run. Unfortunately, due to the critical fascination with Layton and his

claims, Layton's strongly biased viewpoint has often been accepted as the truth of the times.

The most obviously distorted of these viewpoints can be seen in Faas and Reed's book, *Irving Layton and Robert Creeley: The Complete Correspondence, 1953-1978*. Of course, in his personal letters to a poet whom he greatly admired and respected, it is perfectly reasonable to expect Layton to slant the events in his favour. When Layton first tells Creeley about *CIV/n*, in March, 1953, he says:

Louis Dudek and I are the active spirits behind it, our idea being to see how much money can be lost in a venture like that in one year. So fortified, we hit the astonished eyes of no-one-in-particular with our first issue three months ago. We sold every one of the eighty-odd copies we mimeographed, losing about twenty cents on every copy we sold. You can imagine that we look upon the possibility of increased sales with rather mixed feelings. *CIV/N* number 2 will be out in about a week, I'll send you a copy, and would be glad to get your critical comments. Give me some dope on your baby, we'll run an ad for it or anything-you-say, in our third number. (Faas and Reed 44)

Layton blithely assumes the mantle of editorship, without even mentioning any of the actual editors. In fact, he does not even mention Collins' name until December, 1953, and that she is, in fact, the editor until September, 1954.

Layton maintains the illusion of complete control of the magazine to Creeley; although he first claims a dual role between Dudek and himself, Creeley's denigration of Dudek's poetry soon leads Layton to drop all mentions of Dudek as co-editor. He tells

Creeley that they will be very glad to put anything of Creeley's in the next issue. His attitude of casual possession is very clear, as he says:

Did you receive CIV/N, No. 3? What's your reaction to it? We're going to put some of your things in the next issue. I wonder if you have any prose handy, say, a review, or a short article on the state of present-day poetry. Anything you feel like getting off your chest. We want to raise the dust with this and succeeding numbers. Or what's a magazine for? (Faas and Reed 38)

It is not until December, 1953, that Layton first mentions Collins. Significantly, he only brings her up to deflect fault: "Which reminds me: the poem you wrote for me has been lost: it has not yet been settled whether I or Miss Collins of Civ/n is to blame. Will you send me, please, another copy – and some more poems for Civ/n" (Faas and Reed 73).

Layton does not mention Collins again until almost a year later, in September, 1954, when he rants to Creeley that:

Civ/n is out and Miss Collins is sending you two copies. How in the hell, how in the name of Jesus was I supposed to know that you weren't getting your copies of Civ/n? A/C is supposed to look after that end of it, she's the editor of the mag and the chief cook and bottle-washer: I cd cheerfully wring her neck sometimes and this is one of them. (Faas and Reed 130)

Layton goes on to say that now that circulation is up, "it won't do to be lax about such things. So we've decided to all pitch in and help with correspondence, mailing, etc" (Faas and Reed 130). By calling Collins the chief cook and bottle-washer in the same breath as the editor, as well as his comments about correspondence and mailing, Layton

effectively paints her as a mere under-secretary, and a not terribly competent one, at that. The date of this letter, the first time he mentions Collins as editor, is interesting, given its proximity to Layton's failed attempt at a take-over of *CIV/n* the previous month, as we will see in the second section of this paper.

After his mention of Collins as the editor, Layton backs off a little in his letters, possibly because Creeley makes a point of asking "if it bugs the editor of *CIV/N*, to have me submit via you. I.e., don't want to crowd them or anything. Ok. I'm damn grateful for their interest as it is" (Faas and Reed 147). From then on, Layton is careful to maintain at least a semblance of Collins' editorial control, saying things like "Olson enclosed a poem which I think we can use; I'll hand it on to Miss Collins sometime this week" (Faas and Reed 159), and "your poem in the current number of *Civ/n* – one of my favourites. I think Aileen Collins has some others of yours for the next number, but I'd better check on it" (Faas and Reed 199). Creeley seems to take this as an opportunity to attack the problems he sees in *CIV/n* without having to attack his friend Layton. He begins to complain more and more about certain aspects of the magazine; when they tentatively discuss the possibility of Creeley helping to print the magazine, in October of 1954, Creeley feels free to express his displeasure, saying:

I had a letter from Aileen Collins, and answered her with the same information – sadly enuf...but my one absolute objection to *CIV/n* is, finally, that cover – it looks too goddamn much like a Senior Yearbook etc. Not at all to be simple, but it does drag it, I think. (I note that AC/ says the one thing she wants to kept is cover – o well.) (Faas and Reed 171)

Creeley continues, adding a note in the margin of the same letter, “Wd maybe keep AC/ cool at that, i.e., apt to bug people like JW/ [Jonathan Williams] didn’t know his poem was even accepted, much less in print. Also DO tell her (if there is occasion to write again) address is NOT RC, Mallorca, Spain – i.e. BANALBUFAR, Malloretc” (Faas and Reed 171).

Only months later, Layton wrote a short piece in *Prism* (1:1 1955) called “Canadian Poetry: Modern,” in which he distances himself from any aspect of editorial work in *CIV/n*:

With Northern Review hostile to our poetry, two new little magazines came into existence. One was Contact produced by Raymond Souster...The second of these avant-garde publications was Civ/n in Montreal. It started out as a mimeograph sheet edited by Aileen Collins and several other working girls...who paid for the expenses out of their own pockets. Now, after the seventh issue, Civ/n is printed although financially unstable due to the apathy of the public. (16)

Layton is careful to describe a collective of “girls” who run the magazine, instead of claiming editorial authority as his own, however patronizing his wording may sound.

It is significant that in Elspeth Cameron’s biography of Layton, though there are several extended chapters devoted to Layton’s time with *CIV/n*, Collins is mentioned by name only twice; one of those occasions as merely the woman with whom Dudek was having a relationship. There is no mention whatsoever of Layton’s connection with Collins. We do need to remember, however, that Layton had a penchant for deliberately

obscuring the truth; Elspeth Cameron notes in her introduction that his “hatred of being pinned down, of being made to be one defineable entity, frequently led Layton to alter or invent facts” (ii). Given Layton’s tempestuous and powerful nature, and what we will see about his attempts to take over the editorship of *CIV/n*, it is interesting that he has chosen, through his biographer, to deny Collins any kind of a role in her own magazine by refusing to mention her at all.

The debate between which of the two poets – Irving Layton or Louis Dudek – held the most authority still continues, obscuring the truth about Collins’ role as editor. It is not merely the emphasis of editorial ownership which must be re-examined, however, but also the issue of the editorial stance on national versus international poetry. This has been a subject of much debate among literary historians, and is especially interesting to those who wish to re-examine the literary history with Collins in mind, as the critics appear to be divided into two camps, depending on whether they backed Layton or Dudek as the more central figure in the magazine. How *CIV/n*’s editorial bias is viewed relies directly on which poet is seen to be the power behind the magazine.

Those who are proponents of Layton’s influence, as Faas and Reed are, maintain that, “like that of *Contact*, *CIV/n*’s editorial policy stressed the merging of national and international literatures” (260). They view Layton’s contact with poets like Robert Creeley, and the Black Mountain group, as integral to *CIV/n*’s decision to print international poets. Layton, himself, in letters to Creeley, more often mentions the international poets than the Canadian ones in the magazine, and is outspoken in his admiration for their work. For example, he writes that:

Civ/n will hit the stands in about a week or so. There are two poems in it of yours, as well as a poem TO you by one of your admirers, Gael Turnbull. There's also poetry by Olson, Jonathan Williams, and Stefanile. It's a strong issue, we're going about muttering to ourselves it's the best literary issue ever put out in Canada, not forgetting the venerable ancients of the past. Will send you a copy as soon as can. (Faas and Reed 122)

Souster also certainly believed that *CIV/n* was moving towards an international bias, whoever was in charge of the decision; in the final edition of *Contact*, he writes that "The companion magazine of Contact Press, *CIV/n*, is however still very much alive, and we know that many of our readers and poets will support this outstanding quarterly, which is now also international in scope and welcomes a wider range of material" (qtd. in Norris 62).

Norris, too, believes that *CIV/n* had a tendency towards expanding its international connections, though he does not give the credit solely to Layton. Instead, he seems to see a conflict between two forces being played out in the magazine, moving from one influence to another. He states that "*CIV/n* started out as a Canadian production and gradually worked towards a broader orientation," as the little magazine "at first, resisted this pull" (64). He allies *CIV/n* closely with *Contact* and its push for international criteria, saying, "In its poetry and critical views, *CIV/n*, with *Contact*, represented an opposition to the reactionary trends of *Northern Review*" (65). He also notes that "the last two issues of *CIV/n* continued to develop the contact between the American and Canadian groups," as the magazine "had its eyes open to the possibilities of poetry

beyond national and regional boundaries” (67).

Wynne Francis, like Norris, is aware of *CIV/n*'s editorial bias, but criticizes Norris for being unaware of “the incongruity of the presence of the Americans in *CIV/n*” (89). She claims that “he does not concern himself with the question of how or why they got there,” assuming that their presence must mean Layton's influence (89). Francis sees *CIV/n*'s shifting nationalist position as a constant battle between Dudek and Layton. She wonders, “given Dudek's declared antipathies, and his concern for the local and Canadian character of *CIV/n*, what do we make of the appearance therein of the *Origin/Black Mountain* poets?” (89). Francis reflects that “but, of course, we must remember that Dudek was not the editor of *CIV/n*; his role was ‘advisory’. We may conclude, then, that on this occasion at least, Creeley's piece appeared by the good grace of editor Aileen Collins, perhaps while Dudek was out of town,” thus effectively dismissing Collins from any real involvement, depicting her as only slipping in her poetic preferences when the man who ran the show was absent (89).

Other critics, like Frank Davey, who focus more on Dudek's position in *CIV/n*, argue that since “Dudek's role during this period was that of the unwavering advocate of...Canadian responsibility,” he used the magazine as a vehicle for the advancement of national poetry (*Dudek and Souster* 16). Interestingly, Davey also claims that Dudek found in *CIV/n* an opening to proclaim his views without interference:

CIV/n provided Dudek with another opportunity to influence Canadian writing indirectly. It not only embodied the desired “workshop” atmosphere but also seems to have allowed him to advance his own views without significant

opposition. *CIV/n* also embodied the Canadian emphasis he wished *Contact* to adopt. Almost all the contributors to *CIV/n* were Canadian; when the international writing world was represented, it was usually as the subject of a review or commentary. (Dudek and Souster 17)

Davey seems to take for granted that Collins, as well as the rest of the editorial board, played no significant role in any such important editorial decisions; he certainly assumes that they would offer no resistance or “significant opposition” to Dudek’s viewpoint.

Dudek was, indeed, very open about his determination to bring good Canadian poetry forward, and to create a place for literature within the country. What is interesting for us is his apparent conviction that the editors of *CIV/n* felt the same way. In *Dk: Some Letters of Ezra Pound*, he notes that, contrary to Pound’s pushes for international criteria within little magazines, *CIV/n* had not only its “own ego-personalities,” but “a very locally focused Canadian program, so that it could not be entirely subordinated to Pound’s internationalist ideas” (103). Davey argues that “even in the case of his proposed Pound issue, the contributors were to be predominantly Canadian. He was suspicious of many of the U.S. writers whom Corman recommended to Souster... The international work was intended chiefly to teach and stimulate Canadian writers and to counter the conservatism of *Northern Review*” (Dudek and Souster 16). This is intriguing not only because Layton was such a loud proponent of the internationalist agenda but because the magazine did move more and more to a borderless poetry.

It is here that we should remember Trehearne's caution, that "the Dudek-Souster pairing is maintained by a tradition of Layton-Dudek polarization that is hard to overcome" (Trehearne, *The Montreal Forties*, 239); though some, like Francis, would emphasize the "dramatic story" between these pairings, critics should be wary of simplistic and reductive strategies of categorizing. It is not simply that Layton was internationalist and Dudek was nationalist – there were other significant factors behind *CIV/n*'s editorial decisions, including the actual editor's opinions, as we shall see in the second section of this paper.

Pound's influence on *CIV/n*, in truth, is one more factor that has contributed to the exclusion of Collins and the other editors from Canadian literary history. Besides their stress on Dudek and Layton as the prime movers behind the magazine, critics of *CIV/n* have also laid great emphasis on the correspondence between Ezra Pound and Dudek. That Pound was a great influence on Louis Dudek can hardly be doubted; Tony Tremblay notes that Northrop Frye, Milton Wilson, and Dorothy Livesay, in addition to several other critics, "have referred to the Pound-Dudek association – one can hardly miss the centrality of Pound in Dudek's work or the many clues that Dudek has provided suggesting both his early indebtedness to Pound and the translation of that debt into his own cultural work" (32).

Collins does point out, however, in a critical footnote to Dudek's *1941 Diary*, that "It is remarkable that from the first Dudek had a bone to pick with Pound. Although Dudek is generally viewed as unequivocally pro-Pound, he has always been critical and wary of Pound" (78). Dudek certainly seems to have felt that Pound wanted to exert

pressure on *CIV/n*, at the cost of Dudek's own Canadian campaign. Davey observes that *CIV/n*'s "emphasis on local writing displeased Pound almost as much as the Canadian writing in *Contact* displeased Corman" (*Dudek and Souster* 17). As an example of this, we can look at Pound's letter to Dudek on March 27, 1952, in which he rants, "Hell No / git yr / eye off Canada and onto internat / criteria" (*Dudek, D/k*, 88). Dudek notes that Pound "did not look favourably upon the work *CIV/n* was doing," pointing to a letter received by Dudek in late April 1953, in which Pound ranted that "surely among all these bright young things yu OUGHT to be able to find the makings of at least one polemical writer" (101). Dudek defends *CIV/n*, claiming that "The magazine was in fact extremely 'polemical', but Pound only recognized as rightly polemical and 'useful' those magazines which parroted his little program to the letter... We were very much for Pound, but we could not possibly serve him in the way he wanted" (*Dudek, D/k*, 103).

Irvine agrees with Dudek, pointing out that not only would *CIV/n* "never be granted Pound's unconditional (or even conditional) approval" but also that after receiving the fourth issue in December 1953:

which contained a pamphlet reprinted at Pound's request, Dudek's review of The Translations of Ezra Pound and article "Why is Ezra Pound Being Held in St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington, D.C.," a translation of Camillio Pellizzi's article "Ezra Pound: A Difficult Man" from the Italian newspaper *Il Tempo*, and excerpts of letters in support of his release – Pound would even break off communication with Dudek and *CIV/n*. (304)

Unfortunately, as Irvine notes, “commentators have often noted Pound’s influence on *CIV/n*, especially through his correspondence with Dudek (circa 1949-55). As a consequence, Collins’ activities as an editor have been sidetracked by critics and historians exclusively interested in the Dudek-Pound correspondence” (301). If one is operating on the assumption that Dudek ran *CIV/n*, then the aspect of Pound’s influence would indeed be intriguing. If, however, we question the veracity of that assumption, then we must question the importance of Pound’s influence on the magazine.

In fact, as new information comes to light, through interviews with Collins, and through close examination of correspondence regarding *CIV/n* and its inner workings, we must question all of our assumptions about the magazine and its editors. Now that we have examined the critical work accumulated about the little magazine and the role of Dudek, Layton, and Collins, we can turn to the other side of the story, and hear what Collins herself has to say.

The Other Side of the Story: Collins and *CIV/n*

CIV/n, according to Collins, began “partly as an impulse – following the lines of e.e. cummings’ mock tirade: ‘let’s start a magazine / to hell with literature / we want something redblooded / lousy with pure / reeking with stark / and fearlessly obscene / but really clean / get what I mean’” (7). Even more than that, it was intended to be a means of expression “for some of the dissatisfactions felt by its editors about the state of literature in Canada at that time” (Collins 7).

Collins recalls this state of literature as a confusing blend of stolid Canadiana or British poetry taught at school and the more experimental American poetry which she read avidly with her friends (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). There was a void where Canadian experimental poetry belonged, especially since the little magazines that had focused on contemporary national poetry in the 1940s, like *First Statement* and *Preview*, were gone; *Northern Review*, the “uneasy” marriage between the two magazines (Tracey 106), though it lasted from 1945 to 1956, was affected by the “growing conservatism of Sutherland,” and could not offer the young Collins what she wanted (Tracey 122).

While Collins notes that she read *Contact*, Raymond Souster and Louis Dudek’s Toronto-based little magazine “all the time,” she refers to it in the same breath as Cid Corman’s *Origin* – an internationally focused magazine (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004). Collins comments that she and Wanda Staniszevska, as well as Buddy Rozynski, were “reading Pound, or reading Eliot, or reading Williams – kind of a modern, international, American poetry. And I think one of the problems was that we

were looking for that in Canadian poetry...for us. And it just wasn't there" (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004).

Collins and Staniszewska were not long out of college – Marianopolis, an all-women's Catholic school in Montreal – and were fed up with “the kind of literature we had studied...So we had been talking about it, saying that we should do something. Wanda and I had about 50 schemes going all the time, and this was one of them” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). The two women had started reading modern poetry immediately after they graduated, and were demanding to know “why hadn't we been taught all this – why hadn't we read all of the unclaimed poets who were out there?” The next question seemed obvious, according to Collins – “why don't we start a magazine?” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004).

Stanley “Buddy” Rozynski was inextricably involved in these schemes through Staniszewska, whom he later married. When asked how the third member of the editorial board came into the *CIV/n* picture, Collins said simply that he and her friend came as a pair – “it was Wanda and Buddy even then” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). At that time, the couple was engaged, and Staniszewska suggested that the three friends should talk to Rozynski's cousin, Louis Dudek. Rozynski was a relation to Dudek through Dudek's mother, Stanislawa Rozynska Dudek (Stromberg-Stein, 21). Collins notes that since Rozynski's father died when Rozynski was quite young, Dudek often acted as the “big brother or father figure to him” (Collins. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005). From this meeting with Dudek, Collins remembers, “an improbable fantasy just became reality” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004).

Collins laughingly remembers how simplistic the decisions were at the beginning; when asked how the trio decided on who would take what editorial role in the magazine, she recalls that “it was because I said, ‘okay, I’m going to be editor,’ and Wanda said ‘I’ll be associate editor’ and Buddy said ‘Okay, I’m now known as Rozynski’” (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004). In regards to this name change for Rozynski, Collins suggests that when “you’re twenty-one, twenty-two...it sounded more impressive than Buddy or Stanley, which is his real name” (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004).

Collins credits the name of the magazine as Dudek’s “big contribution” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). They were running through a variety of possible names, and had settled on *The Other Container*, or *Nova*. But, when Dudek suggested *CIV/n: not a one-man job*, they approved whole-heartedly. Collins remarks that “we were all semi-Poundists at the time...it was Pound, it was jazzy, it was short...and nobody knew what it meant” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). It was so enticingly cryptic that one reader once wrote in to ask what “104 over n” meant, a nickname which the group promptly adopted to refer to the magazine. Collins notes wryly that if she were to do it again now, “it certainly wouldn’t have been a ‘one-man job’ – I would have crossed out the ‘man’” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004).

Interviews with Collins also offer a new point of view regarding the hotly contested critical debate about *CIV/n*’s editorial policy regarding national versus international poetry. Despite Dudek’s well-known concern for fostering specifically Canadian talent, Collins maintains that “It wasn’t national in that sense at all – because we had a lot of contributors from the U.S. No, the program wasn’t Canadian literature” (Collins.

Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). Instead, the young editors of the magazine weren't interested in specifically Canadian literature as much as "something that had a little life to it, that was interesting, that wasn't the kind of stodgy stuff we studied at school" (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004).

There were not any explicit criteria for selecting or rejecting the poems; instead, the editor and associates simply "used anything really interesting that we got, regardless of where it came from" (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). The poems were chosen "mainly on whether we thought it was any good, whether it was lively, whether it was interesting, whether our readers would approve of this" (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). Although the editorial group held different views on poetry, Collins believes that "we all had one thing in common. It had to have an edge to it. It had to be destructive, in a positive way" (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004).

The Canadian content of the magazine, particularly in the beginning, is acknowledged by Collins, as she notes that *CIV/n* "was Canadian in a sense, because most of our contributors were all local, when we first started" (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). Shortly after the magazine's first issues, however, Collins notes that:

we got hooked up with Raymond Souster and *Contact*, and he gave us some of his mailing list, and subscribers and he had little ads in *Contact* for us, and we started receiving contributions from other people, a lot of Americans who were published in *Contact*. We were kind of in that circle, so we used contacts with some of those other people. (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004)

The determination of the magazine's content was not dependent on a national or international basis, but depended "a lot on what came in. And who joined the group, and what kind of connections we made through them" (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004).

Not only were Ray Souster's connections important to the growing magazine, but the fledgling magazine also benefitted from Dudek and Layton's contacts, particularly of their students. Collins remembers that poets like Avi Boxer, Doug Jones, and Leonard Cohen joined the *CIV/n* group through their contacts with Dudek and Layton (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004). Layton was teaching English at Sir George Williams (now Concordia University), and Dudek was teaching English at McGill University, attracting young poets with his "course in Modern English and American Poetry given in the Extension Department" (Stromberg-Stein 44). Around issue number three, she feels, they moved out from the smaller group into a bigger circle, and "hit our stride" (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004). Bob Currie joined the group later in the magazine's run, and "almost became part of the editorial board in the last two numbers, because everyone else was dropping off. Bob Currie and I did the last two numbers practically on our own" (Collins. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005).

It is clear that Collins felt strongly about the necessity to move Canadian poetry out of the realm of the constricted national setting, and into a broader, international base. *CIV/n* number five starts off with a strongly voiced "Letter from the Editor" entitled "Canadian Culture":

Now, to me, it doesn't matter half a damn whether we ever achieve a "Canadian

Culture” – or not. Nothing will be done until we start concentrating on producing *poetry* without qualifications as to nation. But a poet in Canada is forced to write with maple syrup on birch bark – (which will insure his being included in any later anthologies edited by Birney, probably under the classification “Natural Resources”). . . .let’s have a lot of bad *good* poetry in future, instead of more *good* bad poetry – and let the dead-head critics hold their peace until the call of the last moose. (129)

From this, it can be seen that Dean Irvine is correct in commenting that “contrary to Pound’s assessment, then, Collins edited *CIV/n* with an eye on international criteria, contributors, and literary-magazine culture” (Irvine 306). This is pertinent, if we remember that advocates of Dudek’s influence, like Davey, argue that *CIV/n* allowed Dudek “to advance his own views without significant opposition...embodied the Canadian emphasis he wished *Contact* to adopt. Almost all the contributors to *CIV/n* were Canadian; when the international writing world was represented, it was usually as the subject of a review or commentary” (*Dudek and Souster* 17). This is, of course, a direct contradiction of both Collins’ own editorial statement, and the actual number of American and international contributors. Robert Creeley, in particular, had almost a dozen poems published in the seven issues, and Cid Corman, Charles Olson, and Jonathan Williams were all represented by poems as well as reviews, among other American and international poets.

Although the young group of editors and poets of *CIV/n* originally had no notion of establishing themselves as part of a significant literary movement, it soon became clear

that the magazine was rapidly gaining importance in the literary tradition. The magazine had garnered a great deal of attention during its production, and gained even more in the following decades. The increasing importance of Canadian literature in academia during the sixties meant that “people started finding it interesting, and Canadian lit became a very good area of research” (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004). Indeed, the sixties saw seminal work on Canadian little magazines like *The Making of Modern Poetry in Canada: Essential Articles on Contemporary Canadian Poetry in English* (1967) edited by Louis Dudek and Michael Gnarowski; several important anthologies of literature and poetry were also published at this time – among them *Oxford Book of Canadian Verse* (1960), *Modern Canadian Verse* (1967), *Poets between the Wars* (1967), and *The Penguin Book of Canadian Verse* (1967).

As the critics began to recognize the significance of *CIV/n*, the claims for editorial authority became widespread. Collins remarks dryly that “At one point everyone edited the magazine except us. Louis edited it, Irving edited it, they had everybody out there. And I used to say to Wanda – what did we do? All these people said they did all the work, but what did we do?” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). The realization that *CIV/n* truly had a place in the critical literary tradition came for Collins “when people started making claims on it – right away...it tells you something instantly” (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004). Collins notes that the lack of attention given to the actual editors of the magazine “has developed since *CIV/n* became interesting to people, to research, and to critics,” while her own editorial position had

never been overlooked during the magazine's run, as we will see (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004).

Especially after the publication of the retrospective book of *CIV/n* in 1983, which allowed greater access to *CIV/n*'s body of work, critical attention focused on Dudek and Layton. Although this focus had already been in place earlier, as we have seen, particularly in Wynne Francis' work, Collins recalls the book's publication as the first time when she noticed the intensity of the focus on the two men, noting that "when we brought out the collection, the book on the making of *CIV/n*, we had a party and a reception for it. Everybody was interviewing Louis and Irving, and Wanda and I were just standing there like the orphans" (Collins. Personal interview 14 Oct. 2004). Doris Giller, who knew Rozynski and Staniszewska through a mutual friend, came to do a review for the *Montreal Gazette*. The review, and the picture that accompanied it, Collins remembers, turned out to be exclusively about Irving Layton, Frank Scott, and Louis Dudek, the three captivating men of modernist poetry (Collins. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005).

In Layton's official biography, Elspeth Cameron describes this same occasion, and her portrayal of it is very telling. She writes that the party for the launching of the reprint of *CIV/n*, "is a warm tribute, a reunion of many of the front-runners from *CIV/n*" (Cameron 452), and reels off a list of these "front-runners": Frank Scott and his wife Marian, Louise Scott, Layton and Dudek, Rozynski and another sculptor, a pair of journalists (only one of whom wrote for *CIV/n*), Leo Kennedy and Seymour Mayne.

Not once does she mention Collins or Staniszewksa. Cameron concludes the section by speaking of the importance and eminence of Scott, Dudek, and Layton:

These white-haired men, now well past their prime, had once thrust modern poetry into the forefront in Canada. The little magazines that spun from presses bought and worked by these men had widened the audience for poetry in Canada. They had been among the vanguard that prepared the way for generations to come. It is, as the media report, a great night for Canadian poetry.

(Cameron 452)

Note the media's attention on the three older male poets, the star-studded cast of Canadian poetry. Of those three, Frank Scott's only connection to *CIV/n*, besides his avid interest, was that two of his poems had been published in the magazine. In fact, of that list of "front-runners," only Rozynski was on the editorial board at all, as the art director. Regardless of the fact that the party was to celebrate the publication of her book, a reprint of her magazine, Collins went unnoticed by both the media and the critics alike.

CIV/n had become "a star thing," with Dudek and Layton being not very reluctant literary heroes (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). Their unusual fame and status in a country that persistently underemphasizes the literary contribution of its poets seemed to strike a pleasant note with the two men; "they kind of liked that very much, that they were thought to be the big stars" (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). After the debacle with the press, Collins remembers that Dudek protested to her that it was not their fault – they had not done anything. She retorted that "maybe that's part of

the problem. You could have said something” (Collins. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005).

Regardless of the complications to the history engendered by Collins’ well-known reticence, which we will examine in the third section of this paper, it was certainly easier for critics to display the talents of two major Canadian poets than to examine a group of young unknowns. Layton’s fiery personality, as well as his explosive fame of the sixties and seventies, made him still great copy. Dudek, himself, by the eighties, had begun to be reassessed by critics. When asked why she felt that literary critics had been so resistant to the idea that her editorial position was not merely a front for Dudek and Layton, Collins says simply that their attitude appears to be that “nobody knows who we are, so what’s the point?” (Collins. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005).

The problem with dismissing the unknowns from the picture is compounded further with the danger of critics slotting complicated personalities into easy categories. Collins highlights the reductive critical reactions to Dudek’s and Layton’s long-standing and very public personal struggles:

It was very distressing, it really was. And it had reverberations well into the nineties, that whole time. Because what it did – it set up the camps – the Louis camp and the Irving camp and set it up as competition. With Louis being offended that Irving had succeeded and he hadn’t. All this personal bad blood on Louis’s part, which was so far from the truth. It was badly interpreted, which is a nice easy way out, looking at a very problematic situation.

(Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004)

This critical fascination with the “competition” between Dudek and Layton led to the complete neglect of the “nobodies” behind the scenes, and the reductive assessment of the magazine with a readily understandable façade. Collins places some of the blame on Irving Layton, since his “interpretation of events,” after he broke with the *CIV/n* group, became the catalyst for many critical viewpoints (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004).

Collins remains emphatic in her denial that Dudek and Layton ran *CIV/n*. While she acknowledges that they were “immensely helpful, both Louis and Irving, and we considered them part of the team,” she states clearly that they “weren’t the driving force in any sense” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). Although Collins is firm in this stance, she has always credited them with a great deal of inspiration. In a letter to Layton, thanking him for his article for the retrospective book, she writes, “In talking to Buddy and Wanda Rozynski...they too recalled the tremendous excitement we all felt. We agreed that our relationship to you and Louis had opened possibilities for us, a real ‘brave new world’” (28 June 1982. Layton Collection, Concordia University). As for other contenders for stardom, like Frank Scott, she notes that although he was a supporter of the magazine, as well as an occasional contributor, he “wasn’t actually involved,” being of a different generation of poets altogether (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004). His involvement with the group extended primarily to parties and get-togethers at his house where poets, musicians, actors and dancers could meet and mingle (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004).

If, as Norris states, the “little magazine is always a reflection of the orientation and poetic policies of its editor or editorial group, and can only be as good as this editorial judgement permits,” then *CIV/n*’s significance within the literary tradition is tied irrevocably to its editors (Norris 8). It is the work of those editors which warrants acknowledgment. As Dean Irvine observes, “while others would rather have the more sensational figures of Layton and Dudek dominate the history of *CIV/n*, Collins herself deserves final recognition for her central role in its editing and its physical production” (Irvine 308).

Collins did, indeed, have a central role in *CIV/n*; while it was a cooperative style magazine, the actual work was done by her and her editorial board, as we can see if we turn to the physical production of the magazine. In one sense, she remembers, it “was really a cooperative. We had these sessions, usually at Irving’s house, where we sat on the floor and dirty chairs and manuscripts were passed around” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). People would initial the poems, and put a check on the manuscript to show whether they approved the poem for publication or not. But the collective group did not have to come to consensus, since “the editorial board – Buddy, Wanda, and I – had the last say on that” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). The trio was the power behind the decision-making process; for example, “if Louis and Irving wanted something, and Buddy and Wanda and I didn’t, then it didn’t go in the magazine. So we had veto power in that way” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004).

After the “round robin of selection, Buddy and Wanda and I would take over and do everything else,” remembers Collins (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). Practical concerns dictated as much as poetical issues – the question “do we have enough paper for 25 pages?” determined poem selections as much as the group readings (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). None of the group had significant financial resources; Collins’ father had died the year before, leaving little in the way of extra money, and Wanda “had to support herself at that time, too” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). Instead of being full-time artists, the young group had menial jobs, Collins working for a government census project and Wanda as a receptionist for a sewing company (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004).

The editorial board also shared the facilities that they had. Most of the group was young enough to be still living at home; a lot of activity in terms of the editorial meetings took place at Layton’s house, because he had a home of his own (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004). This fact alone gives Layton an understandable amount of influence in the magazine. His wife, Betty Sutherland, was on the editorial board, as well; besides being involved in the group selection of poems, she was the guest art director for issue number three, and provided illustrations for issue number four. Collins points out the difference in age between *CIV/n*’s editors and their advisors, noting that “we were in our early twenties, and those guys were in their mid-thirties” (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004); Layton and Dudek had careers and homes of their own, while most of the young *CIV/n* group was just out of school.

Other people came and left the group as they saw fit. Collins notes that there were “two other friends who were associated...they came at the beginning and kind of dropped off” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). One of them, Anna Azzuolo, went to stay with relations in Rome for a year and a half, to study, but still sent articles to *CIV/n* as their “foreign correspondent” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). The other, Jackie Gallagher, who was a friend from Marianopolis, left Montreal during *CIV/n*’s run, and then came back to “quite a nice job...her interests had changed” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). Bob Currie, originally from Ottawa, and his wife Ursula, joined the meetings, as did Bill Fournier, the actor, who was a friend of Aileen Collins’ sister, and Louise Scott, Betty Sutherland’s cousin (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004).

Collins underlines the fact that all of these people “saw themselves, like Irving and Louis, as an advisor. It was the way the thing was run. It was kind of open. Betty [Sutherland] was in on the editorial positions...and anybody that was around that was at these meetings” (Collins. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005). While Dudek and Layton certainly formed the backbone of the magazine in terms of submissions, and clearly influenced the poetics of the magazine in that way, the collective atmosphere guaranteed that *CIV/n* was not merely a vehicle for poetic agendas, but a vital and vivid cooperative of poets and artists, all under the editorial board of Aileen Collins, Wanda Stanieszewska, and Buddy Rozynski.

This trio did the physical work of creating the magazine, as well as making the editorial decisions. Rozynski silk-screened the covers of *CIV/n* in the studio where he

worked, changing the colour for each issue, and he painstakingly illustrated the pages with stencils (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). They had an old manual typewriter, which, “if you made a mistake, was hell to correct” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). After the pages were run off, they would be laid out on Collins’ dining room table, and everyone “went round and round, collating” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). The physical work was intense, but “it was part of the fun. It was the making of solidarity by just the doing of it” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004).

The magazine was distributed through a mailing list. Collins sent out copies to writers and readers of other magazines, “hoping people would subscribe” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). Rozynski brought copies to various bookstores near his work downtown, “like a door-to-door salesman,” and copies were passed out among the group, and given to their acquaintances (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). As this distribution became larger, Collins mentions, “we didn’t have time or resources to keep up with the mail – we would send them a little note saying this has been accepted, but beyond that there wasn’t a great deal of correspondence” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). We have seen Layton’s frustrated complaints to Creeley about the correspondence; interestingly, Dudek had a similar problem later, with his own magazine, *Delta*. Ten years after the magazine had folded, he was still receiving letters demanding to know what had happened to manuscripts poets had sent him during the magazine’s run (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004).

The move to print, for the last two issues of *CIV/n*, came out of a desire “to give it a more professional look, to make our place...we had illusions of grandeur” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). Regardless of the motive, the decision affirms Collins’ right to be acknowledged as the director of the magazine, as she is the one who paid for and used the new electric typewriter. The typewriter was rented from Millerand Typewriter and Office Appliances, with a down-payment of twenty dollars (Rental agreement from Millerand, confirming rental and delivery to Miss Aileen Collins. 5 Aug. 1954). After the second printed number, Collins could not make the payments, and the typewriter was repossessed. Typically enough, Layton wrote to Robert Creeley that “we’ve paid money down on an electric typewriter” (Faas and Reed 125), seeming to include himself in that “we”.

Collins recalls the summers of the print numbers, *CIV/n* six and seven, when she and Bob Currie were the only members of the group in town, everyone else having taken the summer off, remarking that “it was just enormous work...but we were very proud of those numbers” (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). Dean Irvine points out that this physical work of running a little magazine is often overlooked and neglected, particularly in regard to women poets and magazine editors:

actively and variously involved in the business of little magazines: they conducted promotional tours, solicited and collected subscriptions, courted advertisers, typed stencils, cut and pasted dummies, answered correspondence, and so on. Most little magazines routinely employed women (and, less frequently, men) in clerical roles, sometimes acknowledged on the masthead, often not. Though crucial to the

little magazine's non-commercial economy, these menial jobs have regularly been deemed inferior to editorial work and summarily disregarded by little-magazine historians. (Irvine 11)

The mental and physical effort it takes to create and operate a little magazine is enormous, and should be recognized. Collins stresses that "if Irving and Louis were the masterminds behind this, they should have thrown in a little money to help finance it. My philosophy is – if you're paying for it and you're doing the work, it's yours. We paid for it and did the work. The dirty work" (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004).

There is no doubt that Collins' work demands proper critical recognition from today's literary historians; intriguingly, this work was recognized and respected by her peers at the time. During *CIV/n*'s run, Collins was the acknowledged editor of the magazine. No one disputed her right to make editorial decisions, and everyone was aware of her contribution to the magazine. We can find this through the careful analysis of the correspondence between several key figures involved in *CIV/n*, and through the working process of the magazine. Only later did critics attribute the editorial credit elsewhere.

One of the most obvious sources of evidence can be found in the submissions to the magazine. Some submissions were brought in directly by members of the collective, either their own work, or the work of those they knew. Some came from Ray Souster, often "stuff he couldn't use" in *Contact*, while still more was sent directly to the magazine (Collins. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005). Collins notes that most of the

poetry “from the U.S. came directly to our mailing address” (Collins. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005). This mailing address was Rozynski’s home (Stromberg-Stein 55), and all outgoing mail was signed by “CIV/n, Aileen Collins” (*CIV/n* correspondence).

The pattern of the submission letters appears to have been straightforward. If the hopeful contributor was not familiar with *CIV/n*, then the letter tended to be addressed to the editors as “Dear sirs,” “sirs,” or occasionally “gentlemen”. If the writer knew *CIV/n*’s editorial board, then it was addressed to Aileen Collins, herself. We can find examples in letters like one from Marianne Macdonald asking to continue her subscription, addressed to “Miss A. Collins, *CIV/n* editor” (*CIV/n* correspondence, 11 Sept. 1954), or from George Walton, commenting on the previous issue and submitting several poems, which is addressed to “Miss Aileen Collins, Editor, *CIV/n*” (*CIV/n* correspondence, 19 Sept. 1954). Collins points out that the pattern of “dear sirs” was not uncommon for the time period, noting that “Madam just wasn’t an option” (Collins. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005).

These simple points reinforce the plain fact that Collins undertook the editorial jobs of *CIV/n* during its run, not merely acting as a figurehead. Instead of being only a shadowed name on the masthead, she was the one who signed the letters, who received the mail – at her house – and she was the one to whom correspondence with both subscribers and poets were addressed. To the outside world, she was the face of *CIV/n*; but what about within the world of the magazine itself? Did she hold the same

acknowledged position among those who understood the workings of *CIV/n*? The answer can be found in the correspondence between several people involved in *CIV/n*.

One of the most fruitful sources of this correspondence is the letters of Louis Dudek, one of the critics' favourite candidates for *CIV/n*'s editorial authority, which are on file in the Library and Archives Canada. In one example, Dudek responds acerbically to Frank Scott on July 15, 1955, about the Kingston conference of poets, to which Collins, Staniszewska, and Rozyński were not invited:

Having had some correspondence from Montreal and Toronto, I feel now that this business of invitations has become embarrassing and confusing. I am as you know active with the group which in my opinion has been publishing the most new and valuable poetry in Canada (unless Fiddlehead is included in this) – ie. CIV/n and Contact. But I understand (maybe wrongly) that among your 65 or so invited guests to the Conference none of the people around this group are included (I believe not even the editor, though I don't know), except Layton, myself, and Souster, who are not new writers. As a result, perhaps, Souster writes me that he will not appear at the Conference. Yet you suggest I might "bring up a carload" of people to Kingston: it can hardly be proposed to them with much enthusiasm, since they would all be paying their own way while dozens of much less active people in the cause of literature would be getting official recognition and hospitality. It seems to me any scale of values which excludes this bunch is as bad as can be, like the reviews in the quarterlies which ignore us or call Layton "a negligible poet", or like the CAA point of view. You

are always with us, I know, and have even published in *CIV/n* and came to the Keewaydin affair last summer. Was the argument presented there (it should have been) that – “if we have an academic conference 9/10 of the people here will not even have an invitation”? I will of course come, but not with the spirit that I’d like to have; nor can I urge others to come along under these conditions. (15 July 1955. Dudek Fonds)

When asked about this conference, Collins laughingly remembers that “we went anyhow...we didn’t need an invitation” (Collins. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005). In any case, that Dudek writes so feelingly about the exclusion of *CIV/n*’s editorial board indicates that he accepts that Collins played an important role within her magazine.

Another example of this can be found more than a decade later. On April 8, 1969, Dudek received a letter from Robin Skelton, of the University of Victoria, regarding a series of reprints of Canadian Little Magazines for the Kraus Organization (Dudek Fonds). Professor Skelton wanted to include *First Statement* and *Delta* in the reprints, and was asking for Dudek’s permission. Dudek responded on August 18, 1969, and at the end of his letter mentions that “A short-lived but important little magazine was CIVn (Civilization abbreviated), edited by Aileen Collins. You could get reprint rights for this” (Dudek Fonds). Again, his affirmation of Collins as the unquestioned editor of the magazine is clear.

Raymond Souster, editor of *Contact*, is another who clearly supports Collins as the indisputable head of *CIV/n*. In fact, he is one of the magazine’s most vocal and enthusiastic supporters. He writes Dudek on several occasions to comment on issues of

CIV/n, for example saying “I think you’ve hit it when you say that *CIV/n* and *CONTACT* supplement each other, overlapping a little; but with little duplication. *CIV/n* is more noisy, outspoken, youthful, a tonic to dip into, and number 2 was damn fine I thought” (undated, Dudek Fonds). On January 12, 1954, he writes that issue four was “easily the best to date. The mag has a fighting spirit that I wish we had in *CONTACT* – but then you have the fighters” (Dudek Fonds).

Souster also operates on the assumption that Collins was, indeed, in charge, making several references to her as making editorial choices, whether he agreed with them or not. On February 22, 1953, he writes Dudek regarding the reviews of an anthology published by Contact Press, saying “Seeing I’ve run one already in *CONTACT*, it might be a good idea to run one in *CIV/n*, would look a little less obvious there. So I’ll send it along to Aileen and she can use it or not as she thinks best” (Dudek Fonds). Later, in February 21, 1954, after deciding to discontinue *Contact*, he writes that “I’m going to give Aileen a complete list of my subscribers” (Dudek Fonds) to help *CIV/n* build its contacts.

Even Ezra Pound’s correspondence can provide a glimpse into Collins’ role in the magazine. Although Ezra Pound could be considered an exception, in that he directs all of his correspondence to Dudek as if the latter were the editor of *CIV/n* instead of only an advisor, he clearly was aware of the existence of the other editors. In fact, he even questions the masthead’s listing of editors, asking “WHOM wd/ Dudek function UNDER/ what editor wd/ he pick for a real magazine / leaving Dud/ to correlate and instigate and gather in the “purely” licherary contributors” (Dudek, *D/k*, 88). In a letter

dated April 21, 1955, he demands to know “who is the CIV/N female. No civilization without civic sense. which I can’t recall hitting HIGH in Civ/n. tell me more about the gal’s *Anschauung*” (Dudek, *D/k*, 111). Pound’s question was left unanswered by Dudek, and is still, as Dean Irvine points out, one that is “too rarely considered by literary historians” (Irvine 306).

These letters provide insight into the irrefutable evidence of Collins’ authority. There is other evidence, however, which provides an even more intriguing look into an attempted attack on this position of authority in *CIV/n*. The issue of a more inclusive editorial list had possibly raised its head in 1954, as can be seen in a letter from Souster to Dudek, dated February 21, 1954, in which Souster agrees that “what I’d like to see is a printed CIV/n with your idea of an inclusive editorial list” (Dudek Fonds). This seems to indicate that Dudek had suggested the proposal; however, as nothing came of it, the concept seems to have been temporarily discarded. Collins remembers the issue being raised regarding *Contact*, as well. She claims that Dudek told her about a letter he wrote to Souster around that time, in which he suggested that if *Contact* was becoming too much work for him, he should “become an advisor like we are and let them do all the work” (Collins. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005); Collins notes that Dudek was referring to Souster’s associate Lee Seymour.

Shortly after this, in the summer of 1954, after issue six had been printed, Layton resurrected the question of editorial authority. Layton felt that, according to Collins, “the editorial board should be reconstructed, to include him and Louis and maybe somebody else, and that they would take over the magazine. He said essentially that

because now with all of these important names, the magazine was going to go somewhere, and it had to have somebody more impressive” (Collins. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005).

In a letter dated August 15, 1954, Collins wrote to Dudek about Layton’s interference, saying that Layton wanted “Smith and Scott to be asked to be contributing editors,” and Layton, Dudek, and Bob Currie to be “listed as associate editors” (Dudek Fonds) . She accused Layton of saying “that you can’t have unknowns listed in editorial capacity in the magazine any more – because now we have important names in it and the civ/n will increase and people must know who really run it, hence, inspire confidence. Staniszewska, Collins, Rozynski – who ever heard of those three weirdies?” (Dudek Fonds). Collins appears frustrated and angry in the letter, stating that:

I am just about ready to pull out – but will see this issue through – Layton is an overpowering son of a, and is also crazy now for names and a policy to cater to said names. Maybe I’m being too sensitive and “childish” about it – but I feel strongly – why does he want to be publicly ass/d with the editorial staff now? – it is quite obvious and if he wants it that way, I am not staying as editor to do the typing and send out the mail. (Dudek Fonds)

Collins was not simply imagining an attack on her authority, as we will see; Layton was, indeed, making a determined play at the editorial position.

On August 17, 1954, Souster telegraphed Dudek, regarding the conflict:

TOOK ADVICE RE SOFT WORDS EVERYTHING FINE NO SPLIT IRV
AGREES AILEEN TO BE REAL EDITOR LET MATTER DROP DONT

MENTION SECOND PHONE CALL IRVING AGREES ADVISE HELP AS
BEFORE BUT AILEEN MAKES FINAL DECISION EVERYTHING GOING
AS SCHEDULED THANKS TO YOU POOR NAMELESS MACHINE SEND
REGARDS. (Dudek Fonds)

According to this telegram, Layton failed in his attempt to take over *CIV/n*, and Collins stayed in power.

Directly after this dramatic turn of events, on Aug. 20, 1954, Dudek tried once more to reconcile with Layton, carefully outlining his reasons for believing that Collins was, and should remain, the editor of *CIV/n*. The following letter is both interesting and pertinent enough to be quoted in its entirety:

You know I want to keep Aileen as our editor, for the reasons I've always argued.

1) She's very much of the *CIV/n* temperament & can be depended on to keep the policy going (whereas someone, say, like Peter Scott, or Ian Clark – assuming we'd make one of them editor – would be sure to back-slide into conformism & 'gentility'; 2) she's a good arbiter to have between all of us – I don't think you or I could stand each other as editor, and any other *man* would grow up to be a tough ego on his own – the virtue of Aileen is that she is independent, and not aggressive in the wrong way; 3) she can do work, of putting the magazine together, laying it all out, adding various notices and announcements, deciding on things we disagree on, or that have been left up to her, doing a lot of business, dealing with the printer, addressing, taking care of correspondence – neither you nor I can practically take over this kind of work, John Sutherland

never found the right solution to this problem of production, I think we have it: the people who do the physical work on the magazine are in fact the editors on the masthead, and have the further satisfaction of doing editorial work of correspondence of minor writing in the magazine; i.e. they get a great deal of personal reward, while we apply our ability to poems, articles, advice, and the pleasant work of reading and criticizing manuscripts.

It's not my idea that you and I should necessarily read and approve everything that goes into the mag. While you were in Keewaydin, we had a meeting at Bob's, at which he and Aileen railroaded me into saying ok to a lot of stuff they wanted, letting the mag expand way beyond the 24 pages. I didn't mind that. (You ask Bob if I didn't protest in fear, while they just piled it on.) And of course, you didn't even see those MSS. (The earlier nucleus, you had practically chosen single-handed, if I remember.) Then, since I've been here, you people have added Olson (whom I'm supposed to be against) and Williams (who has been insulting me in a letter). I don't mind, as I didn't mind Aileen's putting in Creeley's note on poetry – "to give him a chance to defend himself" – right after my review of him. Unless we really step on each other's toes, all this kind of thing is just fine.

Don't forget we're twenty years older than she is, and we're so-called poets. On the whole, she has really edited this mag, despite our possible assumption that we are so important. After all, Aileen mimeod, sent out, produced the first five numbers – we didn't do a stroke of physical work. She (with Bob) has undertaken

to buy this new machine for \$350, without asking either you or me – which shows a lot of initiative and a kind of property-right in the mag. She has put this 6th number together, very largely, with Bob. The present machinery, I'd say, is working very well.

(Pencil note in margin - also, we didn't put in as much *cash* as the kids did).

Don't worry about credits. The editors of magazines usually suffer in their reputations as creative writers, they don't gain from it (e.g. Corman would be more seriously considered as a poet if he were not the editor of *Origin*, one assumes that his editorial influence is pushing his poetry; he is probably no worse than Creeley, but Creeley strikes us much more as a poet in his own right, just poet). Also the Smith-Scott addition to the contributors is not as big an event as it may seem. You'll see this in perspective when winter comes.

So much for all that. I'm all for considering it as technically Aileen's magazine, not ours: by rights, it was her original idea in the first place, we put our shoulders to it and helped build it up; it was her physical work all along; it would be very unfair, either directly or by a kind of indirect pressure, to try to take over now.

There's nothing eternal in this. If and when *CIV/n*, like all little mags, passes out, we can start or continue a new deal on some new principle. I don't think we've yet used up the possibilities of this one. (Layton Collection)

This letter is proof positive that Collins deserves greater critical attention for her role in *CIV/n*; Dudek is unflinching in his remarks about Collins' work being the true defining factor in editorial authority. In addition, it displays intriguing views on what it means to

actually be an editor of a little magazine, and the difficulties – both physical and in terms of critical attention – of being the leader of a little magazine.

An answering, slightly sarcastic, letter from Layton to Dudek, dated August 25, 1954, confirms that Layton had, indeed, backed off in his bid to take over *CIV/n*:

Of course I agree with you that A/C stays on as editor. But, pray, when did I say different? I don't know who's twisting your ear: the plain fact is that I have no more aspiration than your modest self to be conspicuously laid out on the masthead. For me it was and is entirely a matter of responsibility – call me a crank, but I like to do my sniping in broad daylight. I thought that since we were responsible for what goes into the trash heap we were under obligation to own up to the deed. If however as you point out A/C is free to pick and choose among our respective opinions then we exist only in an advisory capacity and the final responsibility rests with her. That rests my soul, and I am content.

(Dudek Fonds)

The matter had evidently been dealt with almost immediately; in a letter to Charles Olson, dated August 16, 1954, Layton writes “I gave your poem to Miss Collins – who's the one & only, the actual editor of *CIV/n*,” in a very pointed manner (Mansbridge 40). He emphasizes his lack of power in the magazine again, saying that “It's not a matter of my letting Dudek write a review – he just up and did it, & Collins thought it ought to go in...we make it a rule not to censor each other's work and opinions, though criticism is freely offered” (Mansbridge 40).

It is intriguing to speculate about the depth of Layton's involvement in *CIV/n*, given his other commitments, and his obvious thirst for critical recognition. In 1954, the middle of *CIV/n*'s run, he joined the editorial board of *Black Mountain Review* as a contributing editor, at the request of Creeley. At first, Layton declined the offer, pleading lack of time; he writes to Creeley that "I spoke to Louis about reviews, articles, etc. but he's in the same fix as I am: limited time....I have even less – much, much less – time than he has (Faas and Ekbert 72). However, after Creeley "flipped" (Faas and Ekbert 73), threatening to break off their friendship and correspondence, Layton hastily changed his mind, agreeing to contribute occasionally to the magazine.

Given Dudek's above comments in his letter to Layton about the nature of running a magazine, and the inherent difficulties involving both time and finances, it is possible to speculate that Layton was involved in *CIV/n* for many of the same reasons as *Black Mountain Review* – contacts and prestige. It would be almost impossible, given his teaching schedule, and the rate at which he was producing poetry, to be fully committed to both magazines as an editor, but as long as his name was associated with both, Layton was content. Tracey notes this pattern with Layton, pointing out in regards to his involvement with Contact Press that "as was the case with Sutherland's First Statement Press, Layton remained uninterested in the mechanics and process of publishing. Both Dudek and Souster have reported that Layton was primarily interested only in getting his own books published" (Tracey 169). Indeed, his connections with the Black Mountain poets proved to be very useful; *The Improved Binoculars* was published by Jonathan Williams in 1956 through Jargon Press in Highlands, North Carolina, a book that, with

its endorsement from William Carlos Williams was “seen as an event of major consequence for Canadian poetry” (Gnarowski, “The Improved Binoculars,” 124).

All of these cases strengthen Collins’ true role as the head of *CIV/n*; not only did the outside world during *CIV/n*’s time acknowledge her as the prime mover of the magazine, but so also did the major players within the magazine itself. The very fact of Layton’s attempted take-over reinforces this, since if he was the actual editor of *CIV/n*, he would have felt no need to gain the position. In fact, according to Collins, Layton’s attack on the editorial board led to the breakdown of the magazine itself.

Most critics do not delve deeply into the collapse of *CIV/n*, perhaps reasonably attributing its short run to the nature of little magazines in Canada; as John Sutherland notes, “We know that the life of the ‘little magazine’ in every country is likely to be erratic and brief, and this is especially true of the ‘little magazine’ in Canada” (77).

Dean Irvine, however, lays the blame directly on Collins. He claims that:

In the end, though, it was...the lack of sufficient economic base that brought about the demise of *CIV/n* – a direct and unfortunate result of Collins’s decision in the summer of 1954 “to venture into print” (Collins, Introduction, 9). While others would rather have the more sensational figures of Layton and Dudek dominate the history of *CIV/n*, Collins herself deserves final recognition for her central role in its editing and its physical production – and, ultimately, in its downfall. (Irvine 308)

While Collins acknowledges the financial issues that came with running the magazine, she says that it was the disintegrating dynamic of the group that prevented *CIV/n* from

continuing. During the last two numbers, “that’s when all the problems started, and the fights were going on” (Collins. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005). She observes that:

The group was very congenial, it wasn’t competitive, till the very end, when Dudek and Layton fell out, and Bob Currie, who did a lot of work on the magazine when we did the printed numbers, but he and Irving had a horrible, horrible fight. Irving said he was going to kill him. Bob was afraid Irving was going to come after him with an axe. The whole group started to fall apart.

Around ‘54, ‘55. (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004)

The tension of the last two numbers was causing rifts in the group; Collins says that Layton’s “battle was going on, and everything else was falling apart” (Collins. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005). Elspeth Cameron notes that Layton had also been angering Rozynski with disparaging remarks about his sculptures (Cameron, *Irving Layton*, 227). In a letter to Creeley at that time in 1955, Layton remarks that “You might be interested to learn that at this point my break with LD, which was in the offing for abt a year is now complete, and CIV/n is kaput” (Faas and Ekbert 216).

Although Layton wrote to Creeley, in May, 1955, that “It seems that CIV/N will be coming out again after all” (Faas and Ekbert 232), there were no further issues. In a fine piece of irony, Layton’s lament to Creeley on *CIV/n*’s demise seems the most moving epitaph, as he writes, “If Civ/n goes there’s nothing here, absolutely nothing. That wd be a crying shame because there’s more ferment now than there’s been here for over a decade. Without a mag, this huge country of ours becomes a frozen cemetery, a waste, a derisive epithet. Someone must give battle” (Faas and Ekbert 219).

During Collins' time as editor of *CIV/n*, the little magazine did indeed give battle, providing a safe space for progressive and experimental poetry from both emerging and established poets. Hopefully, the result of the recovery and archival work done here to restore Collins to her proper position in *CIV/n*'s history, will be to understand the basic facts of this new perspective of Collins' editorship: she conceived the idea for the magazine, gathered a group of like-minded people around her, and sought advice to make it work. It was Collins who financed the magazine, made the editorial decisions, and chose the magazine's international bias. She wrote pieces for the magazine, did the physical work of production, and fought to keep her position when it was threatened. This is the work of a true editor, not just a name on the masthead of a magazine run by two prominent poets.

Understanding her Absence: Collins and the Literary Record

Now that we have examined the critical treatment of *CIV/n*, and have heard another version of the story, through Aileen Collins' voice, and through the voices of those around her, there is one question that remains to be answered: why did the significance of Collins' role as editor become so easily dismissed by subsequent generations? If her editorial authority is so unquestionable when seen through the lens of new evidence, how did it slip through the historical record? If we examine Collins' life subsequent to *CIV/n*, we can see that her own personal circumstances, as they interacted with the timing of events around her, conspired against her. Collins' role as editor instead of poet, her eventual marriage to Dudek, and her decision to maintain silence, when combined with larger events such as the acceptance of Canadian literature as a valid area of research, Layton's explosive fame, and the feminism of the late seventies, made her eventual critical neglect up until now understandable, if not inevitable.

Although the literary history records the significance of Collins' role incorrectly, we must remember that it is a truism that editors, in general, are critically overlooked. Editors are the crux and heart of a little magazine, as many critics agree; Norris claims that "the little magazine is always a reflection of the orientation and poetic policies of its editor or editorial group, and can only be as good as this editorial judgement permits" (8). Dudek concurs, observing that "in the little magazines the editor or editorial board is the key factor. (Ezra Pound, the American impresario of little magazines, has said that no magazine can be better than its editor)" (Dudek, "The Role of Little Magazines in

Canada,” 203). Yet, undeniably, editors do not receive anywhere near the attention of the poets whom they champion.

Returning to the letter which Dudek wrote Layton, describing the reasons for Collins to remain as the only editor of *CIV/n*, we can see that even Dudek understands the drawbacks of editorship. He reminds Layton that “the editors of magazines usually suffer in their reputations as creative writers, they don’t gain from it (e.g. Corman would be more seriously considered as a poet if he were not the editor of *Origin*, one assumes that his editorial influence is pushing his poetry” (20 Aug. 1954, Layton Collection). Ray Souster and John Sutherland, as editors, remain of little interest to most – excluding, of course, scholars who take interest in their specific magazine – and they are easily glossed over in favour of more recognizable names. After all, if an academic is studying the literature, it is natural that they turn to the producers of that literature, the makers of the poems, short stories, or novels themselves, as opposed to the individuals who helped publish the works themselves. The editor plays an impressively important role in the production of the literature, but one of the inevitable consequences is that their contribution is often lost in the critical analysis of the work itself.

Of course, now that it is clear to what extent Collins’ contribution was as editor of *CIV/n*, further scholarly investigation is warranted. Given Collins’ attitude towards the struggle between an international and a Canadianist editorial bias, it would be intriguing to re-examine *CIV/n* with her editorial authority in mind, instead of merely assuming that Dudek and Layton found a tense balance in the magazine’s pages. Fruitful work could also be done on Collins’ role in promoting women poets, given the number of

female writers in *CIV/n*, from Phyllis Webb and Miriam Waddington, to Marianne MacDonald, Anne Wilkinson, Lee Seymour, and Doris Strachan. While some critics might be attracted by the more famous Waddington, Webb played a larger part in the magazine, having seven pieces published to Waddington's one, and attending meetings and parties associated with the magazine. It would also be worthwhile to thoroughly examine the lesser-known female poets like Seymour and MacDonald, and their creative and editorial contributions. There is, indeed, critical work to be done with regards to Collins and *CIV/n*.

Collins further obscured her own importance by turning to teaching after *CIV/n*'s ending in 1955. Instead of continuing in the editing or publishing field, where she might have been able to further influence the explosion of Canadian modernist poetry generated in the years after *CIV/n*, Collins worked first at the *Montreal Gazette* proofreading the classified ads, and then started teaching elementary school (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). She returned to graduate school, part-time, attending the Université de Montréal for her Master's degree, earning money while teaching at a Jewish private school (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004). She studied with, among others, Hugh Hood, (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004), eventually finishing her MA thesis in 1970, which was entitled "The 'ficelle' in the novels and stories of Henry James" (Catalogue. Université de Montréal).

Unfortunately, the specific dates of Collins' return to university, including the undergraduate work she must have completed before beginning her graduate studies, are undocumented; Collins herself is vague on dates, especially for the years after *CIV/n*,

during interviews. In fact, it should be noted that Collins is an almost obsessively private individual; while she is forthcoming about facts pertaining directly to *CIV/n*, she deliberately avoids any discussion of her own private life, from her family's origins and her early childhood, to her marriage with Dudek.

Later, Collins began working on her PhD at the Université de Montréal, focusing on Robertson Davies (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004). The academic profession, at the university level, as we have seen, is still a place of some significance for the canon-makers of our time; Dudek, Layton, Smith, and Scott all worked as professors at McGill University, Concordia University and York University, Michigan State University, and McGill University respectively, keeping in contact with aspiring young writers through their students. Through their positions within the institutions, they were able to inspire new writers, and express their own ideas about poetry.

Dudek edited poetry anthologies, including *Poetry of Our Time: an Introduction to Twentieth-Century Poetry* (1966), and *All Kinds of Everything: Worlds of Poetry* (1973); with Layton, he edited *Canadian Poems: 1850-1952* (1953). Layton was instrumental in editing two collections of student poems: *Shark Tank: York Poetry Workshop Anthology* (1977), and *Rawprint: Concordian Poetry Workshop 1989 Collection* (1989). Smith can be credited with two significant anthologies of Canadian poetry, *The Book of Canadian Poetry: A Critical and Historical Anthology* (1943), and *The Oxford Book of Canadian Verse: in English and French* (1960). Together with Scott, Smith also co-edited *New Provinces: Poems of Several Authors* (1936), and *The Blasted Pine: An Anthology of Satire, Invective and Disrespectful Verse Chiefly by*

Canadians (1957). As Roy Miki asserts, in his article “The Future’s Tense: Editing, Canadian Style,” “in the post-war years especially, the product of their (editors’) ‘tastes’, not only the literary journals but the plethora of anthologies, have been instrumental in the canonization of writers and critics, and in governing what comes to be judged of national relevance” (35). Indeed, he argues, “no one involved in the production or reception of literary texts – from the writer to publisher to bookseller to reader – is free of the boundaries that get drawn by editors in privileged positions” (35).

Although it would have been unlikely for Collins to achieve this kind of professorial and privileged status during this time period, she left graduate school before she could be tested in that profession. During her work on her doctorate, she became frustrated and disillusioned by the current state of Canadian literature – both with Robertson Davies specifically, and Canadian novels in general – and left, with everything finished but her dissertation (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004). After a year and a half of part-time teaching at the Jewish school, Collins had started substitute teaching for the Catholic school board, and when they offered her a job teaching high school, she left the university (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004). She has remained with the Catholic School Board, still working today in an advisory position as the school board revises its entire procedures for high school.

Of course, it was not merely a matter of her own choices of profession, but also a combination of external factors which led to Collins’ name slowly fading out of literary history. The first, and one of the most significant of these factors, can be found in the sixties, when Canadian literature began to be a viable area of research. Prior to this

time, Canadian literature was not a taboo field; it was simply not considered a field at all. Collins remembers that her sister tried to do an MA on E.J. Pratt at Columbia University, and was forced to change her thesis topic (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004).

With the centennial in 1967, patriotic fervour, combined with Canada Council grants available for both writers and publishers, seemed to garner the growing acceptance of Canadian literature, even as an approved academic pursuit. Dudek and Gnarowski's *The Making of Modern Poetry: Essential Articles on Contemporary Canadian Poetry in English* was published in this year, as was A.J.M. Smith's anthology, *Modern Canadian Verse*. Milton Wilson's volume, *Poets between the Wars*, was the New Canadian Library's centennial contribution; Ralph Gustafson's collection, *The Penguin Book of Canadian Verse*, revised edition, was also released in 1967.

As Michael Gnarowski pointed out, in conversation with Collins, "the centennial year was a big year for everything cultural; a lot of money became available, and the universities scrambled like crazy to teach courses. Before that they'd had no time for Canadian lit, really no time for it" (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004). Indeed, in 1967, after defending his PhD dissertation on Canadian literature, Gnarowski was asked by a professor in the English department of the University of Ottawa to help "develop and structure a Canadian program," while Carleton University invited him to become a Visiting Professor at the new Institute for Canadian Studies (Tracey 249).

It was during this time that *CIV/n* began to be recognized as an important advocate of Canadian modernism in Montreal. The little magazine, as a phenomenon, had been

studied extensively in regards to both British and American modernism, and now critics turned to such publications as *Preview*, *First Statement*, *Contact*, and *CIV/n*, to determine their place in the emerging Canadian literary canon. Given *CIV/n*'s locus for both new writers who had subsequently gained fame, like Leonard Cohen and Phyllis Webb, and already established writers like Miriam Waddington, Frank Scott, and A.J.M. Smith, it was a rich ground for academics.

The roll call of names from *CIV/n* alone would have swamped the significance of Collins' role as editor. It was not merely the list of the little magazine's poets who overshadowed the young editor during this time of intense criticism, however, but also her two advisors, Louis Dudek and Irving Layton. Although they were never listed on the masthead, and, as we have seen, performed the role of advisors and not editors, critics have found the dynamic pair irresistible. Layton, in particular, was gaining both popular fame and critical attention through the sixties and seventies, immediately after he won the Governor General's Award For Poetry for *A Red Carpet for the Sun* (1959).

Once the academic community turned its attention to Layton, his friendship with Dudek became almost as intriguing for scholars as Layton's own literary output, as it expressed perfectly the dynamic – and often destructive – force of Layton's personality. The two friends, who had met “in the late fall of 1941 at a lecture of McGill's English Literature Society” (Cameron, *Irving Layton*, 120), had a very public relationship, at times fiercely devoted to each other and their common goals of promoting and producing poetry; at times viciously feuding with each other. The friendship, ruptured

once before in 1947 (Tracey 122), but patched together during the Contact Press and *CIV/n* years, came “to an explosive end” (Stromberg-Stein 66) shortly afterwards.

The two poets embarked on a public battle through their literature. In an article called “Layton on the Carpet,” Dudek took shots at Layton’s ego, writing that “Some years ago Layton decided that he was a ‘major poet’ – about 1953 as I recall – and he has since sold this idea to his critics. Granted he is a very forceful, even fearful, personality, there is no excuse for indulgence of a poet’s major weakness” (*Delta*, Oct/Dec 1959, 17). Layton retaliated with his vicious attack in *Cataract* in 1962:

Well, Louis, I’m no intellectual, as you know, but I also know what is dead or dying...You Louis, have been dying slowly for several years. I have watched the process with heartburn and gaspains; its final stages, with vomity disgust. Editing *Delta*, writing your assorted pooperies for the *Montreal Star* and *Culture*, you may deceive others about the actual state of your health, but these activities are the convulsive twitches of a dying poet...Now as you pass, professors pick their noses less thoughtfully...Bats pluck at your garments, ravens fly out of your armpits. (qtd. in Stromberg-Stein 66)

Unfortunately for Collins, Layton’s forceful persona combined with his very public friendship and feud with Dudek made it irresistible for researchers to focus on them rather than her.

When critics looked at *CIV/n*, they could look no further than the two names associated with it that spoke volumes of literary power and personality. After all, Collins was a young woman, barely out of school, completely unknown, and

unpublished; she stood no chance against the current of public interest in the two men. Critics like Wynne Francis highlighted the captivating relationship between Layton and Dudek at the cost of dismissing Collins completely, claiming that “the truly ‘antithetical’ individuals involved with *CIV/n* were Louis Dudek and Irving Layton, and the ‘real dramatic story’ of this magazine derives from the tensions between them” (90).

For Francis, and those who were influenced by her, “neither *Contact* nor *CIV/n* would have much historical importance had not Souster, Dudek, and Layton later developed into three important, and very different poets” (92). Of course, this kind of focus completely obscures not only Collins, but major *CIV/n* poets like Leonard Cohen, Miriam Waddington, and Phyllis Webb, as well as lesser-known writers like Eli Mandel, Avi Boxer, and Bob Currie. Those critics who believed that Dudek deserved much greater recognition reassigned what little of Collins’ role which Layton had not already usurped, and attached it to Dudek. This concentration has since been disputed, primarily by scholars like Brian Trehearne and Dean Irvine; the former argues against this kind of easy categorization, noting that “the Dudek-Souster pairing is maintained by a tradition of Layton-Dudek polarization that is hard to overcome” (Trehearne, *The Montreal Forties*, 239).

We must also remember that both Dudek and Layton were teachers during this explosive time. While the academic community was beginning to embrace the field of Canadian literature as an acceptable critical endeavour, the students of these two men were ahead of the pack. Encouraged by their professors, these students had the resources and connections in the little magazine world. And when they turned their

attention to *CIV/n*, they quite normally – if perhaps unconsciously – focused on their teachers. Michael Gnarowski, Seymour Mayne, Wynne Francis, Brian Trehearne, and Ken Norris were all Dudek's students; Layton taught at Sir George Williams (now Concordia University), and later at York University, garnering outstanding accolades for teaching, with even Collins remembering him as “really incredible as a teacher” (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004).

Of course, we must not – and cannot – dismiss Dudek and Layton from *CIV/n*; although Collins deserves a closer examination of her use of the editorial role, Dudek and Layton certainly did dominate the magazine in terms of submissions, with 43 pieces in total throughout the magazine's run, whether poetry or reviews (including those of Alexander St. John Swift, Dudek's pseudonym). If we grant Collins the power she had over the magazine's submissions, we can see that her poetic policy would have either agreed with, or accepted the style and tone of, their poetry. While the two poets may not have influenced the magazine in terms of the editorial decisions with which they are often credited, they certainly helped perform the function of creating a certain style of modernist poetry within the magazine.

The critics in the field of Canadian little magazines might have eventually turned their attention to Collins, once they had exhausted the possibilities of the more important names around her, but for one significant event. On October 18, 1970, at the Unitarian Church in Montreal, Aileen Collins married Louis Dudek (Stromberg-Stein 80). Dudek's first marriage, to Stephanie Zuperko, had broken up some years before, in 1967. Layton told his biographer, Elspeth Cameron, that Collins and Dudek were

together during the *CIV/n* years, remarking first that “A.C. is Aileen Collins who was Louis Dudek’s mistress at the time and is now his wife” (21 Feb. 1985, Cameron Collection), and then sending a postcard on the same date, asking Cameron to “please change MISTRESS to LOVER. A.C. is a noble soul and mistress of no one but herself” (21 Feb. 1985, Cameron Collection). Collins, however, vehemently denies that she and Dudek had a relationship that consisted of anything other than friendship during the time they worked together on *CIV/n*. While we may speculate, none of the copious letters and journals examined for this paper showed any evidence to support the claim that Dudek and Collins had anything more than a firm friendship during his marriage. Regardless, not only did the critics have one more reason to ignore Collins in favour of her husband, but Collins, herself, participated in the process. Although she recognizes the importance of preserving the truth for subsequent generations, Collins ruefully acknowledges that a tell-all book is “not my mode. My lips are sealed is much more my style” (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004). She has consistently refused critical attention; Irvine comments on her retrospective introduction to the *CIV/n* book, noting that “in her memoir of *CIV/n*, Collins also emphasizes the collaborative nature of the editorial and production work on the magazine,” downplaying her own singular role (307). For decades, Collins has been denying interviews and personal comments, until she felt that it was the right time to speak. While Collins notes wryly that no critics have really tried very hard to discover her true function in the magazine, she also claims that she was waiting for the right time; she felt that “first, it had to be about women, and then it had to be genuine” (Collins. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005).

Instead of pushing her own version of events forward, Collins, as Dudek's wife, became his greatest supporter. She edited and introduced his *In Defence of Art: Critical Essays and Reviews* in 1988, and his *1941 Diary* in 1996. Although Dudek's name is well-known in connection with DC Books, the press which was one of the three to emerge out of Delta Canada (with Glen Siebrasse continuing the Delta title and Michael Gnarowski beginning The Golden Dog Press), a little-known fact is that he "collaborated with Aileen Collins in Montreal to begin DC Books" (Tracey 31). Although Collins had some involvement in the press, the extent of that involvement is not documented, and her name is not listed on the covers of any of their titles.

Jayne Marek, in *Women Editing Modernism: "Little" Magazines and Literary History*, cautions critics about the role of this silence in terms of gender studies; she argues that if women participated in self-silencing, that very silence "often served as a diversion so that they could work without attracting censure. If women served as mediators, the mediation need not be seen as acquiescent compromise but as a token of connection and interaction" (20). In other words, sometimes the silence was necessary for their own work to be done. Margaret Atwood, in an interview with Mark Abley, also remarks on the double bind that women faced during the fifties and sixties, saying that "if women said nice things, they were being female, therefore weak, and therefore bad writers. If they didn't say nice things they weren't proper women. Much better not to say anything at all" (18). Miriam Waddington seems to agree, as she remembers that, "For my part, I accepted that men were top dog in this world and that it would be a waste of time to try to change what John Stuart Mill called the received opinions of a

whole country” (34). With these continuous social dictates surrounding her, it is not surprising that Collins would have had one more reason to remain quiet about her true role in *CIV/n* until she was ready, decades later, to reinsert herself into the literary history.

Before that was to happen, however, feminism began to stir up the old orders everywhere, including the ivory tower of literary criticism. In the late seventies, the wave of feminism swept into both popular culture and academia. By the early eighties, there were calls for the re-evaluation of many women authors and editors, as well as the role of gender politics behind literary movements like modernism. In the early 1980s, Miriam Waddington, as we have seen, spoke out against her past encounters with Canada’s male-dominated literary scene; Dean Irvine argues that Waddington’s “call for a gendered reading of Canadian modernist little-magazine culture clearly illuminates the significance of gender relations in her own dealings with the central male figures in the First Statement group” (204).

It is perhaps significant that Collins’ retrospective book on *CIV/n* came out in 1983, renewing interest in both its creator and its poets. In light of the timing, the book could have generated some feminist interest, especially since Irvine claims that “while Collins would never comment on her gendered position as editor of the magazine, her contributions indicate that she was certainly aware of the representation of gender and its politics” (375). Regardless of Irvine’s claim, however, the 1983 memoir is, as even he admits, devoid of any female reclamation of power. Although Collins does state the facts of the strong editorial involvement of the women, she highlights both the collective

atmosphere of the magazine, as well as the involvement of Dudek and Layton. In fact, Collins chooses to include Norris' article "The Significance of Contact and *CIV/n*," in which Norris argues that Dudek and Layton were clearly the prime movers of the magazine in the book, as a final note.

In an ironic twist, one of the by-products of the seventies wave of feminism is a slightly skewed perspective of female literary activity. Irvine notes that when "reading Godard, it appears that the myth of Canadian modernism and its little magazines as masculinist phenomena has not yet been displaced by an alternate literary-historical narrative" (326). In her 1990 article, "Becoming My Hero, Becoming Myself: Notes Towards a Feminist Theory of Reading," Barbara Godard claims that women editors in little magazines did not appear until the 1970s, despite evidence to the contrary. Irvine reports that Dorothy Livesay, Anne Marriott, Floris McLaren, Doris Ferne, P.K. Page, Laura and Hilda Ridley, Myra Lazechko-Haas, Florence Custance, Eleanor Godfrey, Catherine Harmon, Yvonne Agazarian, and Margaret Fairley all "helped either to found or edit magazines" between 1926 and 1956 (1).

Butling, too, follows Godard's timeline, claiming in 1992 that "not until the 1970s, when the feminist movement as a whole began to challenge the male monopoly of power and public space, do women begin to formally take on the traditionally male dominated position of editors" ("Hall of Fame" 57). She perpetuates the canonical tradition of naming Dudek as editor of *CIV/n* over Collins, and makes no mention of Collins at all when speaking of the:

multi-generational group that brought neophyte writers such as herself [Webb] into the community of more established writers such as Sutherland, Dudek, and Scott who had the power to legitimize young writers by providing group acceptance, theoretical responsibility, and access to publishing. Partially as a result of the contacts Webb made through this group, Webb's poems began to appear regularly in the various little magazines of the time, including *Northern Review*, *CIV/n*, *Contemporary Verse*, *Combustion*, *PM Magazine*, *Forge*, and *Fiddlehead*. (Seeing in the Dark 132)

Butling claims the power for Sutherland, Dudek, and Scott, saying that it is through these men that Webb was able to publish – “Dudek, for instance, as an editor (*CIV/n*, *Delta*)”– ignoring the fact that *CIV/n* was edited by Collins (*Seeing in the Dark* 33) . So, the very fact of feminism appearing so strongly in the late 1970s has contributed to critical blindness regarding Collins, as she does not fit the appropriate timeline of feminist thought in the seventies and eighties as critics looked back to the literary activity of the 1950s.

More recent activity in the field of gender studies and modernism has opened up this narrow critical focus. Scholarly work has been undertaken in the last two decades amalgamating feminist literary theory with modernism, and discovering the gender issues that lie beneath the texts. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar describe modernism in their 1994 text as an “increasingly vexed topic,” which has been, and is in the process of being, scrutinized in terms of gender theory (xiv). Jayne Marek notes, in 1995, that “recent scholarship has begun to correct the neglect and misunderstanding that has

resulted from a masculine orientation in scholarship and criticism” (9). This neglect, as Bonnie Kime Scott argues in 1990, derives at least in part because, typically:

both the authors of original manifestos and the literary historians of modernism took as their norm a small set of its male participants, who were quoted, anthologized, taught, and consecrated as geniuses. Much of what even these select men had to say about the crisis in gender identification that underlies much of modernist literature was left out or read from a limited perspective. (2)

New scholarly work, which is enriching the field, provides an antidote to this problem, causing Kime Scott to “suspect that modernism is not the aesthetic, directed, monological sort of phenomenon sought in their own ways by authors of now-famous manifestos” (4).

Part of this monologic metanarrative about modernism can be found in what Dean Irvine refers to as a “masculinist discourse” (8); a tendency to “highlight the works of men...an approach that many literary historians have used” (Marek 8). While it is not my intention to argue that Collins is purely a victim of this masculinist discourse, it would be irresponsible to dismiss the current research in gender and feminist literary criticism without considering how it might contribute to our understanding of Collins’ disappearance from the lists of Canadian literary history.

Susan Stanford Friedman notes that the trend still had its followers in 1990, as some critics “narrate the story of modernism as if women existed primarily as mothers, wives, and lovers of men who were the significant agents of literary history” (3). This kind of

narration can be found in criticism about *CIV/n*, where Collins is referred to primarily as “Aileen Collins, editor of *CIV/n* and Dudek’s wife,” though she did not marry him until 15 years after the magazine folded (Trehearne, *The Montreal Forties*, 249). Elaine Showalter warns that this can turn into a “rather vicious circle. An androcentric canon generates androcentric interpretive strategies, which in turn favour the canonization of androcentric texts and the marginalization of gynocentric ones” (29). When this happens, as Toril Moi points out, the transience of female literary fame shows through, as “women writers celebrated in their own lifetimes seem to vanish without trace from the records of posterity” (55). Unfortunately, due to the lack of canonical stature of these women writers and editors, the scholarly material is often unavailable; a critical venture which investigates these women may find that “women whose actions were well known to every major male modernist sixty years ago are almost beyond recall now” (Benstock 10).

Of course, in Collins’ case, while it is true that scholarly materials about her are extraordinarily rare, and any recovery research must be done now, before the chance is lost, it is also true that her actions were not well known outside her own circle. As soon as *CIV/n* folded, she retreated from the spotlight, and allowed the more famous male poets to dominate her magazine in the criticism. We must maintain a balanced view of the feminist strategies, reviewing their effectiveness on each particular case; although the significance of Collins’ editorial decisions has been neglected, we can only speculate about the influence the two older male advisors may have had on those decisions.

Besides the presence of men like Dudek and Layton, Collins has even had to contend with Ezra Pound for critical attention. That giant icon of modernism has critically overshadowed many women, writers and editors, even touching Collins at the end of his long career. Years after his power had waned, Pound still tried to use his influence on little magazines. Pound is connected to Collins and *CIV/n*, as we have seen, through his correspondence with Dudek between 1940 and 1955. Irvine links Pound still further, observing Pound's desire to try to influence even *CIV/n*. Irvine argues:

One could even say that Pound's relationship to *CIV/n* bears residual resemblance to his transatlantic correspondence and editorial affiliations with Harriet Monroe and Alice Corbin Henderson of *Poetry* and Margaret Anderson and Jane Heap of the *Little Review*. Pound's attempts to manoeuvre *CIV/n* are tinged with his nostalgia for a modernist little-magazine culture of the 1910s and 1920s. His correspondence with Dudek is scattered with references to *Poetry* and the *Little Review*. (302)

Collins is aware of Pound's attitude towards her; she answers his question "Who is the CIV/N female?" (D/k, 111) by stating, simply, "that's me" (Collins. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004).

Irvine points out that "commentators have often noted Pound's influence on *CIV/n*, especially through his correspondence with Dudek" (301). As a consequence, then, he claims, "Collins's activities as an editor have been sidetracked by critics and historians exclusively interested in the Dudek-Pound correspondence; this tendency has also bypassed potential inquiry into Pound's influence on Collins" (301). Despite her

editorial decisions to promote Pound, through his writing, essays about him, and her own editorial about Poundian “Kulchur,” there is no evidence “to suggest that Pound was ever in correspondence with Collins” (Irvine 301). In fact, in the little magazine’s memoir published in 1983, Collins “carefully distances herself from any direct association with Pound...nowhere in her memoir does she indicate any direct association between Pound or his ideas and herself”(Irvine 302).

Jayne Marek, who has made an extensive survey of the women whom Pound’s massive critical presence has subsumed, states that:

Any study of modern little magazines and their editors – especially if those editors were women – must assess the influence of Ezra Pound and the mythology surrounding his many involvements with publications. Literary historians often presume that Pound was the most important editorial force behind little magazines, which is understandable given Pound’s high visibility during early modernism and the subsequent influence of his pronouncements about what was significant at the time. (167)

This kind of critical presumption, she argues, does much to simplify and distort the patterns of development within the little magazines; moreover, “such neglect is particularly telling when the editors were women” (167).

While it may be tempting to view modernism through the “single lens of Pound’s involvement...this attitude betrays an orientation toward men’s activities, particularly those of such strongly vocal men as Pound – that has skewed the assessments of

modernist literature away from acknowledging the nature and extent of women's accomplishments" (Marek 26). Instead, Marek argues, Pound's own attitude towards women editors "has greatly influenced treatments of Harriet Monroe and Margaret Anderson, among others, in literary history," as he highlighted his own involvement in the magazines (167). In fact, she continues, Pound frequently tried "to control the editorial direction of little magazines headed by women, and his statement about such magazines in articles and correspondence form an extreme expression of a male-oriented viewpoint through which modernist women's editorial and critical activities have often been viewed – or ignored" (167). Luckily for Collins, Pound's influence was waning by the time he tried to integrate *CIV/n* into his own programme.

Pound's treatment of editors, interestingly, "shows some similarities to his treatment of women. He expected editors (and women) to act according to certain roles helpful to literary men, roles in which either editors or women would provide money and encouragement for male writers, appreciation for men's critical and creative activity, and labor for the tasks of publication" (Marek 168). Pound's dismissal of editors has been accepted as the order of the day; Marek notes that he rarely gave credit "to the people who carried out the difficult work of keeping those magazines in operation, whose belief in the vitality of contemporary writing was as strong as Pound's, and whose opinions, efforts, and capital were derided by Pound even while he used them as extensively as possible" (170).

In Canada, with academics agreeing with Pound's own attitude, the early critical dismissal of editors was compounded when gender was involved. As Miriam

Waddington writes, in her collection of essays in *Apartment Seven*, “It would be interesting...to explore what part, if any, gender actually played in the development of the little magazines, in the selection of material and in their editing, and ultimately in the shaping of modern Canadian tastes and cultural attitudes” (34). Recently, Dean Irvine has taken up her challenge, agreeing that “Despite their major contributions to the making of little magazines since the mid-1920s, however, women have so far remained peripheral to historical narratives of the little magazine in Canada” (1). Irvine highlights Collins, in particular, as one of the neglected contributors, contending that “given her primary position as *CIV/n*’s editor, Collins’s role in these histories, memoirs, and biographies related to the magazine requires recasting” (301).

In his own assessment of the Canadian little magazines, Irvine chooses four women to examine in depth (Dorothy Livesay, Miriam Waddington, Anne Marriott, and P.K. Page), claiming that the general masculinist criticism which has “so far shaped the historiography of Canadian little magazines” (8) has dismissed these important figures. He notes that:

Even though the range of scholarship on little magazines of this period is far more extensive than scholarship on previous generations of Canadian periodicals, women magazine editors and poets who were members of little magazine groups between 1926 and 1956 have continued to be minor figures in the historical record. (2)

The current of contemporary criticism vindicates Irvine’s interest in the neglected literary history. In an interview with Brenda Carr, Daphne Marlatt argues that “the filter

of history...says I'm the lone woman" (103), omitting the other women (Gladys Hindmarch, Pauline Butling, Ginny Smith, and Carol Johnson) who worked with her on *Tish*. Pauline Butling, in her article, "Hall of Fame Blocks Women – Re/Righting Literary History: Women and B.C. Little Magazines," offers another look at the four women (Dorothy Livesay, Floris McLaren, Anne Marriott, and Doris Ferne) who founded the little magazine *Contemporary Verse*.

Even Phyllis Webb, who worked closely with several little magazines, including *CIV/n*, speaks about the new process of historical evaluation, noting that:

I never questioned the patriarchal order when I was at the beginning of my writing life. I was surrounded by all these super-brilliant men and they allowed me in. It didn't feel sexist at the time. But now when I look back on the way that the history of Canadian literature has been written, it's been documented mainly by Frank Scott and A.J.M. Smith themselves and they have created their own little history. (qtd. in Butling, *Seeing in the Dark*, 55)

Again, we must be cautious when viewing Collins from this feminist position; while it cannot be ignored as a piece of the puzzle of Collins' critical neglect, it is, as we have seen, not the only crucial piece. In fact, Collins is different from most of the women whom Irvine and other feminist critics examine, because she was acknowledged as editor on the masthead. Most of the feminist recovery work is geared towards recognition for those women who worked unacknowledged and unseen; Collins was both seen and acknowledged, but has since lost any significance.

The interest engendered in reexamining the creation of the literary history, from the feminist standpoint, among others, has led to recent scholarship about canonicity. In Robert Lecker's collection, *Canadian Canons*, several critics debate the nature of the creation of this body of literature. Carole Gerson attacks the problem from a feminist perspective, examining the actual figures who "determined who and what got into print and into anthologies, and which works received prizes and plaudits" (47). She argues that:

The literary heroes and perceived traditions of a small country grasping for identity at the slippery edge of two gigantic English-speaking domains, while struggling to reconcile its Romantic inheritance with the encroaching wave of modernism, were not constructed by the reading public at large so much as by backstage decisions of publishers, editors, and English professors. These men formed a loose 'invisible college' distinctly masculine in gender and taste that determined who and what got into print and into anthologies, and which works received prizes and plaudits. (47)

Lecker claims that members of this 'invisible college' became "a masculine canonical institution whose members shared a self-conscious awareness of their role as cultural arbiters and shapers of their country's literary destiny" (11); ultimately, he argues, this "same valorization of male modernism, in Gerson's model, influences the canonical choices made today" (11). In the same way that Pound made sure to anthologize his own work, the poets who helped to form the Canadian canon, whether consciously or

not, placed considerable emphasis on their own projects, and the projects of which they approved.

We can see this perspective if we examine, even briefly, a few of the anthologies of criticism about Canadian literature published prior to the feminist activity of the 80s; in *The Literary History of Canada: Canadian Literature in English* (of which the six editors are all male), there are 46 articles by male critics, and only six by their female colleagues. *The Supplement to the Oxford Companion to Canadian History and Literature* provides a greater number of female critics, with 11 contributing, compared to the 25 men. The seminal work on Canadian modernist poetry, *The Making of Modern Poetry: Essential Articles on Contemporary Canadian Poetry in English*, however, has 50 articles by men, and only one – by P.K. Page – written by a woman.

Margaret Atwood refers to this concern of canon-formation as being “controlled by men with a distinct penchant for the buddy system, which in turn has led to the de facto exclusion of non-buddies, a good number of whom have been women” (19). As Donna Bennett points out, any discussion about a canon “also presumes a tacit assumption of the existence of a group for which agreement about the canon exists; we must know who the canon-makers are to understand the canon” (133). Collins herself, a “feminist from way, way back,” who studied at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute, argues that the significance of women in Canadian literature is an important area of research (Collins. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005). She believes that the potential neglect of our literary tradition, as formed by the canon, is an intriguing issue, and one that is “very important,

all the time, in every field, not only in literature” (Collins. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005).

Sutherland, Dudek, and Souster worked to promote the interest of the women poets around them through their presses; however, like Pound before them, their efforts were tinged with a certain amount of caution. None of them, though, were as blatantly dismissive of women as Irving Layton, who made his reputation as “the Lusty Poet Laureate from the Slums” (Callwood Feb. 6, 1960). Collins cautions scholarly researchers, saying that while “I wouldn’t dismiss him, I would examine very, very carefully anything he said about women. Because even though he might have been a lover of a woman, he was not a lover of women. Irving was a terrible misogynist. He really was, from the word go” (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004).

Layton, himself, contributes to this view, in such texts as his foreword to *A Red Carpet for the Sun*:

Modern women I see cast in the role of furies striving to castrate the male; their efforts aided by all the malignant forces of a technological civilization that has rendered the male’s creative role of revelation superfluous – if not an industrial hazard and a nuisance. We’re being feminized and proletarianized at one and the same time. This is the inglorious age of the mass-woman. (qtd. in Smith 142)

With outrageous statements like this capturing the attention of critics and reviewers alike (*A Red Carpet for the Sun* won the Governor General’s Award for Poetry in 1959),

Layton both perpetuated his own myth as poet and ensured the easy critical neglect of those women around him.

As we have seen, this aspect of Layton's personality created conflicts within various groups, a problem that critics like Frank Davey have been re-evaluating. Within the workings of the little magazine, the "group of writers of similar interest who are meeting, arguing, fighting, writing, almost every day – a group charged with literary energy that seems to keep continually overflowing into and out of their mimeographed pages" have problems inherent in their internal hierarchies ("Anything but Reluctant: Canada's Little Magazines," 223). In 1994, Davey comments that concealed within the work of publishing and printing "were gender tensions (both the old fogies and young Turks were nearly always male)," even if those tensions were not immediately apparent (*Canadian Literary Power* 8). In the case of *Tish*, Libby Scheier found that:

Community bonhomie often camouflages sexist and other oppressive or subordinating structures. Membership in a community does not guarantee empowerment for all its members. Viewed from the inside, my communities seemed expansive, open, and welcoming to everyone. I had not noticed the internal hierarchies. (141)

In fact, she theorizes that the nature of the art being produced within the group can contribute to these hierarchies, as "hierarchies in radical literary communities are often especially invisible to their members because of an assumption that aesthetic innovation goes hand in hand with progressive social relations" (141).

Reflecting on *CIV/n*, Collins remarks that to be a woman in a system which is male-dominated is “in that time...a drawback in the sense that you’re not taken that seriously. First, because you’re young, then because you’re a woman, than if you would be if you were a young man or an older man” (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004). While Collins believes that the “margin of difference that prevails” is still present today, however, she remembers that “we felt that there was nothing we couldn’t do, and there were no barriers that we couldn’t break down” (Collins. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004).

As we can see, despite the emphasis on archival recovery work of women writers and editors begun in the last few decades, Collins has not yet achieved a recognized place in the Canadian literary history. She is now ready to tell her side of the story, and the literary history is ready to receive it. As Collins herself reminds us, “it’s important to document what happened, even if it’s nine different versions” (Collins. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005). Although this paper speaks out firmly for Collins, she asks us to remember that the truth of any given situation can never really be fully known, no matter how much the historian digs. All we can do is ensure that all sides are given a proper hearing, evaluating and interpreting the versions of events, and memories of the time. It is essential to document all of the versions of the history, and to give voice to the narratives which have gone unheard. Instead of taking a purely intrinsic stance on the text regarding *CIV/n*, we must make use of a socially and historically engaged contextuality, looking at each individual figure in the magazine’s history, and taking the time to question their own biases and perspectives.

Although it is true that lines must be drawn in any canon, any canon is fluid and shifting, as it responds to the shaping of its time and place. Trehearne suggests, in his discussion of the Canadian modernists, that:

we have been content, in the past, to study these poets by analysing the canon largely *as they passed it on to us*; we have paid too little attention to their journals, manuscripts, and private papers...the present argument draws on such information whenever profitable, a practice that makes for a loose method, but which provides a surer footing for the critic than an orthodox analysis, however

perspicacious, of a volume of collected poems assembled by the poet”

(Aestheticism and the Canadian Modernists 5)

Part of engaging with our evolving canon includes the willingness of the literary historians to examine – and re-examine – all of the evidence, not merely taking the words of the dominant poets as law. As Trehearne points out, “without an archival and literary-historical interest,” too many fascinating and intriguing creators of Canadian literature “might well have gone...entirely unnoticed” *(Aestheticism and the Canadian Modernists 7)*. Irvine agrees with the importance of documenting all sides of the story, asserting that “Histories of these women may always remain incomplete for lack of resources, yet even partial histories are better than their exclusion from narratives about the literary cultures they helped to develop through their little magazines” (341).

The canonical line that is drawn around *CIV/n* is inconsistent. If *CIV/n*, as a little magazine, did not stand the test of time within the literary tradition, and did not find its place in the Canadian canon, then Collins’ dismissal would have been inevitable. But *CIV/n* has been lauded, praised, and studied. It has been included in the canon; Collins has not. As an editor, Collins may never have the same degree of recognition as those important poets she published; however, since her little magazine is highly respected in the literary community, she deserves a measure of that respect. This is the crux of the matter: if *CIV/n* is to be studied, so must be its editor. Now we know that Aileen Collins performed the work of an editor for *CIV/n*, she must take her place in the Canadian literary tradition, alongside her magazine.

WORKS CITED

- Abley, Mark. "Interview: Margaret Atwood." *Dream Elevators: Interviews with Canadian Poets*. Ed. Beverley Daurio. The Mercury Press, 2000.
- Atwood, Margaret. "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all." *Language in Her Eye: Views on Writing and Gender by Canadian Women Writing in English*. Eds. Libby Scheier, Sarah Sheard, Eleanor Wachtel. Toronto: Coach House Press, 1990.
- Baym, Nina. "The Madwoman and Her Languages: Why I Don't Do Feminist Literary Theory." *Feminist Issues in Literary Scholarship*. Ed. Shari Benstock. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987.
- Benazon, Michael. "Bright Young People." *Matrix*, Spring, 18.
- Bennett, Donna. "Conflicted Vision: A Consideration of Canon and Genre in English-Canadian Literature." *Canadian Canons: Essays in Literary Value*. Ed. Robert Lecker. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991.
- Benstock, Shari, ed. *Feminist Issues in Literary Scholarship*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987.
- Burke, Anne, ed. *Imprints and Casualties: Poets on Women and Language, Reinventing Memory*. Fredericton: Broken Jaw Press, 2000.
- Bush, Ronald. "Ezra Pound." *The Gender of Modernism: A Critical Anthology*. Ed. Bonnie Kime Scott. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.
- Butling, Pauline. "Hall of Fame Blocks Women – Re/Righting Literary History: Women

- and B.C. Little Magazines." *Women's Writing and the Literary Institution/L'écriture au féminin et l'institution littéraire*. Eds. C. Potvin and J. Williamson, in collaboration with S. Totosy de Zepetnek. Edmonton: University of Alberta, 1992.
- . *Seeing in the Dark: The Poetry of Phyllis Webb*. Waterloo, Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1997.
- Butling, Pauline and Susan Rady. *Writing in Our Time: Canada's Radical Poetries in English*. Waterloo, Wilfred Laurier Press, 2005.
- Callwood, June. "Layton - 'The Lusty Laureate from the Slums.'" *The Star Weekly Magazine*, Feb. 6, 1960.
- Cameron, Elspeth. "Biography and Feminism." *Language in Her Eye: Views on Writing and Gender by Canadian Women Writing in English*. Eds. Libby Scheier, Sarah Sheard, Eleanor Wachtel. Toronto: Coach House Press, 1990.
- . *Irving Layton: A Portrait*. Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Co., Ltd., 1985.
- Carr, Brenda. "Interview: Daphne Marlatt." *Dream Elevators: Interviews with Canadian Poets*. Ed. Beverley Daurio. The Mercury Press, 2000.
- Collins, Aileen. Personal interview. 14 Oct. 2004.
- . Personal interview. 15 Oct. 2004.
- . Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2005
- , ed. *CIV/n: A Literary Magazine of the 50's*. Montreal: Vehicule Press, 1983.
- . Letter to Irving Layton. 28 June 1982. Layton Collection, Concordia University.
- . Letter to Louis Dudek. 15 Aug. 1954. Dudek Fonds, Library and Archives Canada.

- Crozier, Lorna. "Speaking the Flesh." *Language in Her Eye: Views on Writing and Gender by Canadian Women Writing in English*. Eds. Libby Scheier, Sarah Sheard, Eleanor Wachtel. Toronto: Coach House Press, 1990.
- Daurio, Beverley, ed. *Dream Elevators: Interviews with Canadian Poets*. The Mercury Press, 2000.
- Davey, Frank. "Anything but Reluctant: Canada's Little Magazines." *The Making of Modern Poetry in Canada: Essential Articles on Contemporary Canadian Poetry in English*. Eds. Louis Dudek and Michael Gnarowski. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1967.
- . *Canadian Literary Power*. Edmonton, NeWest Publishers Limited, 1994.
- . *From There to Here: Our Nature – Our Voices II*. Erin, ON: Press Porcepic, 1974.
- . *Louis Dudek and Raymond Souster*. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1980.
- . "Some. (Canadian). Post-Modern. Texts." *Reading Canadian Reading*. Winnipeg: Turnstone, 1988.
- di Michele, Mary. "Conversations with the Living and the Dead.." *Language in Her Eye: Views on Writing and Gender by Canadian Women Writing in English*. Eds. Libby Scheier, Sarah Sheard, Eleanor Wachtel. Toronto: Coach House Press, 1990.
- Dudek, Louis. *1941 Diary*. Ed. Aileen Collins. Montreal: Empyrean, 1996.
- , ed. *All Kinds of Everything: Worlds of Poetry*. Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, 1973.
- . *Collected Poetry*. Montreal: Delta Canada, 1971.
- , ed. *Dk/: Some Letters of Ezra Pound*. Montreal: DC Books, 1974.

- . "Layton on the Carpet." *Delta*, Oct/Dec 5.
- . "Patterns of Recent Canadian Poetry." *The Making of Modern Poetry in Canada: Essential Articles on Contemporary Canadian Poetry in English*. Eds. Louis Dudek and Michael Gnarowski. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1967.
- , ed. *Poetry of Our Time: an Introduction to Twentieth-Century Poetry*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1966.
- . "The Making of CIV/n." *CIV/n: A Literary Magazine of the 50's*. Ed. Aileen Collins. Montreal: Véhicule Press, 1983.
- . "The Role of Little Magazines in Canada." *The Making of Modern Poetry in Canada: Essential Articles on Contemporary Canadian Poetry in English*. Eds. Louis Dudek and Michael Gnarowski. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1967.
- . "The State of Canadian Poetry: 1954." *The Making of Modern Poetry in Canada: Essential Articles on Contemporary Canadian Poetry in English*. Eds. Louis Dudek and Michael Gnarowski. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1967.
- . Letter to Frank Scott. 15 July 1955. Dudek Fonds, Library and Archives Canada.
- . Letter to Robin Skelton. 18 Aug. 1969. Dudek Fonds, Library and Archives Canada.
- . Letter to Irving Layton. 20 Aug. 1954. Layton Collection, Concordia University.
- Dudek, Louis and Michael Gnarowski, eds. *The Making of Modern Poetry in Canada: Essential Articles on Contemporary Canadian Poetry in English*. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1967.
- . and Irving Layton, eds. *Canadian Poems: 1850-1952*. Toronto: Contact Press, 1953.
- Faas, Ekbert and Sabrina Reed, eds. *Irving Layton and Robert Creeley: The Complete*

- Correspondence, 1953-1978*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990.
- Ferguson, Rowena. *Editing the Small Magazine*. NY: Columbia University Press, 1976.
- Francis, Wynne. "A Dramatic Story Missed." *Canadian Poetry* 15, 1984.
- . "Literary Underground." *Canadian Literature* 34, 1967.
- Friedman, Susan Stanford. *Penelope's Web: Gender, Modernity, H.D.'s Fiction*.
Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Gambrell, Alice. *Women Intellectuals, Modernism, and Difference: Transatlantic
Culture, 1919-1945*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Gerson, Carole. "The Canon between the Wars: Field-notes of a Feminist Literary
Archaeologist." *Canadian Canons: Essays in Literary Value*. Ed. Robert Lecker.
Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991.
- Gilbert, Sandra and Susan Gubar. *No Man's Land: The Place of the Woman Writer in
the Twentieth Century, Vol. 1: The War of the Words*. New Haven: Yale
University Press, 1988.
- . *No Man's Land: The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century. Volume
3: Letters from the Front*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994.
- Gnarowski, Michael. "The Role of 'Little Magazines' in the Development of Poetry in
English in Montreal." *The Making of Modern Poetry in Canada: Essential
Articles on Contemporary Canadian Poetry in English*. Eds. Louis Dudek and
Michael Gnarowski. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1967.
- . *Contact, 1952-1954: Notes on the History and Background of the Periodical and an
Index*. Montreal: Delta Canada, 1966.

- . "The Improved Binoculars: History as the Long View." *The Improved Binoculars*. Erin, ON: The Porcupine's Quill, 1991.
- Godard, Barbara. "Becoming My Hero, Becoming Myself: Notes Towards a Feminist Theory of Reading." *Language in Her Eye: Views on Writing and Gender by Canadian Women Writing in English*. Eds. Libby Scheier, Sarah Sheard, Eleanor Wachtel. Toronto: Coach House Press, 1990.
- Gustafson, Ralph. *The Penguin Book of Canadian Verse*. Hammondsworth: Penguin, 1967.
- Irvine, Dean. "Little Histories: Modernist and Leftist Women Poets and Magazine Editors in Canada, 1926-56." Diss. McGill University, 2001.
- Kime Scott, Bonnie. ed. *The Gender of Modernism: A Critical Anthology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.
- Klinck, Carl F., General ed. *Literary History of Canada: Canadian Literature in English*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965.
- Layton, Irving. "Canadian Poetry: Modern." *Prism* 1:1 1955.
- . *Wild Gooseberries: The Selected Letters of Irving Layton*. Ed. Francis Mansbridge. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1989.
- . Letter to Louis Dudek. 25 Aug. 1954. Dudek Fonds, Library and Archives Canada.
- . Interview with Elspeth Cameron. 21 Feb. 1985. Elspeth Cameron Collection, University of Toronto.
- . Postcard to Elspeth Cameron. 21 Feb. 1985. Elspeth Cameron Collection, University of Toronto.

- , ed. *Rawprint: Concordian Poetry Workshop 1989 Collection*. Montreal: Concordia Poetry Workshop, 1989.
- . "Recalling the 50's." *CIV/n: A Literary Magazine of the 50's*. Ed. Aileen Collins. Montreal: Véhicule Press, 1983.
- , ed. *Shark Tank: York Poetry Workshop Anthology*. Toronto: York Poetry Workshop, 1977.
- Lecker, Robert, ed. *Canadian Canons: Essays in Literary Value*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991.
- Marek, Jayne E. *Women Editing Modernism: "Little" Magazines and Literary History*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1995.
- Macdonald, Marianne. Letter to *CIV/n*. 11 Sept. 1954. *CIV/n* correspondence.
- Metcalf, John. "Freedom from Culture." *Freedom from Culture: Selected Essays 1982-92*. Toronto: ECW, 1994.
- Meyer, Bruce and Brian O'Riordan. "Interview: Lorna Crozier." *Dream Elevators: Interviews with Canadian Poets*. Ed. Beverley Daurio. The Mercury Press, 2000.
- Miki, Roy. "The Future's Tense: Editing, Canadian Style." *Broken Entries: Race Subjectivity Writing*. Toronto: The Mercury Press, 1998.
- Millerand Typewriter and Office Appliances. Letter to Aileen Collins. 5 Aug. 1954. *CIV/n* correspondence.
- Moi, Toril. *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory*. Routledge: London and NY, 1985.
- Norris, Ken. *The Little Magazine in Canada 1925-80: Its Role in the Development of*

- Modernism and Post-Modernism in Canadian Poetry*. Toronto: ECW Press, 1984.
- Pacey, Desmond. "English-Canadian Poetry: 1944-1954." *The Making of Modern Poetry in Canada: Essential Articles on Contemporary Canadian Poetry in English*. Eds. Louis Dudek and Michael Gnarowski. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1967.
- Reed, Sabrina Lee. "The Place of American Poets in the Development of Irving Layton, Louis Dudek and Raymond Souster." Diss. University of Toronto, 1988.
- Relke, Diana A.M. *Literary Mothers and Daughters: A Review of Twentieth-Century Poetry by Canadian Women*. Ottawa: CRIAW/ICREF, 1987.
- Robinson, Lillian S. "Feminist Criticism: How Do We Know When We've Won?" *Feminist Issues in Literary Scholarship*. Ed. Shari Benstock. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987.
- Scheier, Libby. "Chopped Liver." *Language in Her Eye: Views on Writing and Gender by Canadian Women Writing in English*. Eds. Libby Scheier, Sarah Sheard, Eleanor Wachtel. Toronto: Coach House Press, 1990.
- Schweickart, Patrocínio P. "Reading Ourselves." *Speaking of Gender*. Ed. Elaine Showalter. Routledge: NY, 1989.
- Scobie, Stephen. "Leonard Cohen, Phyllis Webb, and the End(s) of Modernism." *Canadian Canons: Essays in Literary Value*. Ed. Robert Lecker. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991.
- Scott, F.R. and A.J.M. Smith, eds. *New Provinces: Poems of Several Authors*. Toronto:

Macmillan, 1936.

---. eds. *The Blasted Pine: An Anthology of Satire, Invective and Disrespectful Verse
Chiefly by Canadians*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1957.

Showalter, Elaine, ed. *Speaking of Gender*. Routledge: NY, 1989.

Skelton, Robin. Letter to Louis Dudek. 8 April 1969. Dudek Fonds, Library and
Archives Canada.

Smith, A.J.M. ed. *Masks of Poetry: Canadian Critics on Canadian Verse*. Toronto:
McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1962.

---. ed. *Modern Canadian Verse*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1967.

---. ed. *The Book of Canadian Poetry: A Critical and Historical Anthology*. Toronto:
Gage, 1943.

---. ed. *The Oxford Book of Canadian Poetry: in English and French*. Toronto: Oxford
University Press, 1960.

Souster, Raymond. Letter to Louis Dudek. Undated. Dudek Fonds, Library and Archives
Canada.

---. Letter to Louis Dudek. 12 Jan. 1954. Dudek Fonds, Library and Archives Canada.

---. Letter to Louis Dudek. 22 Feb. 1953. Dudek Fonds, Library and Archives Canada.

---. Letter to Louis Dudek. 21 Feb. 1954. Dudek Fonds, Library and Archives Canada.

---. Telegram to Louis Dudek. 17 Aug. 1954. Dudek Fonds, Library and Archives
Canada.

Stevens, Peter, ed. *The McGill Movement: AJM Smith, FR Scott, and Leo Kennedy*.
Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1969.

Story, Norah. *The Oxford Companion to Canadian History and Literature*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1967.

Stromberg-Stein, Susan. *Louis Dudek: A Biographical Introduction to his Poetry*. Ottawa: Golden Dog Press, 1983.

Sutherland, John, "Brief to the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences." *The Making of Modern Poetry in Canada: Essential Articles on Contemporary Canadian Poetry in English*. Eds. Louis Dudek and Michael Gnarowski. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1967.

Sward, Robert. "Interview: Leonard Cohen." *Dream Elevators: Interviews with Canadian Poets*. Ed. Beverley Daurio. The Mercury Press, 2000.

Thacker, Andrew. "Our War is with Words": Dora Marsden and The Egoist." *Difference in View: Women and Modernism*. Ed. Gabriele Griffin. London: Taylor and Francis, Ltd, 1994.

Toye, William, General ed. *Supplement to the Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature and History*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Tracey, Collett. "The Little Presses that Did: A History of First Statement Press, Contact Press and Delta Canada, and an Assessment of their Contribution to the Rise and Development of Modernist Poetry in Canada during the Middle Part of the Twentieth Century." Diss. Université de Montréal. 2001.

Trehearne, Brian. *Aestheticism and the Canadian Modernists: Aspects of a Poetic Influence*. Kingston, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989.

---. *The Montreal Forties: Modernist Poetry in Transition*. Toronto: University of

Toronto Press, 1999.

Tremblay, Tony. "git yr / eye off Canada / and onto internat criteria/: exploring the influence of Ezra Pound on the cultural production of Louis Dudek." *Essays on Canadian Writing*, Fall 2001.

Waddington, Miriam. *Apartment Seven: Essays Selected and New*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Walton, George. Letter to *CIV/n*. 19 Sept. 1954. *CIV/n* correspondence.

Weintraub, William. *City Unique: Montreal Days and Nights in the 1940s and 50s*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Inc, 1996.

Whiteman, Bruce. "Two Little Magazines." *Essays on Canadian Writing*, 30, Winter 1984.

Wilson, Milton Thomas. *Poets Between the Wars: E.J. Pratt, F.R. Scott, A.J.M. Smith, Dorothy Livesay, A.M. Klein*. Montreal: McClelland, 1967.

Wragg, Sue. "Lee Krasner: Mrs. Jackson Pollock." *Difference in View: Women and Modernism*. Ed. Gabriele Griffin. London: Taylor and Francis, Ltd, 1994.