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**Fluid Motion:
An Examination into the Function and Future of the
Canadian Literary Canon**

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by

**Mark McDonald Bachelor of Arts (English/Canadian Studies)
A thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
in Canadian Studies**

**Carleton University
OTTAWA, Ontario
September 2001
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**The undersigned recommend to the Faculty
of Graduate Studies and Research acceptance of the thesis**

**“Fluid Motion: An Examination into the Function and
Future of the Canadian Literary Canon”**

submitted by Mark McDonald, Hons.B.A.

**in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts**

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to establish an understanding of the purpose of the Canadian canon. Particular attention is given to the questions of the national canon's evolution and its purpose in a period of deteriorating national unity. How can the Canadian literary canon remain relevant as an instrument of unification when multiple cultural expressions are not effectively represented within its contents? This paper contends a central canon can remain relevant in contemporary Canada only through continuous re-assessment. By providing a fluid environment that respects and listens to individual artists' contributions the collective literature of the Canadian canon will maintain an authentic representation of its members. Through this thesis readers will gain better insight into the purpose of constructing a canon and the implications of using "classics" to promote the illusion of a shared tradition.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter One: “Forging Consensus: Understanding Canonical Structure”	10
Chapter Two: “Forging a Tradition: The Construction of the Canadian Canon”	38
Chapter Three: “Cultural Recognition versus Appropriation: The Fragmentation Of Canadian Literary Values”	79
Conclusion	105
Appendix A	110
Appendix B	113
Bibliography	118

Introduction

In 1948, F.R. Leavis produced *The Great Tradition*, a text that was influential in the redefinition of the British canon. Leavis stated that: "The great English novelists are Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James and Joseph Conrad."¹ The Canadian literary circle may well have experienced certain feelings of inferiority when they saw such easy definitions emitting from England and the United States, and the process of producing a canon in Canada has demonstrated a continuing lack of self-confidence. The conception of a canon introduces a powerful influence over literary tradition and esteemed value in the literary community, yet in Canada, where difference is celebrated, a conflict of values can easily arise. The implications of defining qualities and values shared amongst all Canadians raises some fundamental questions regarding who will decide which common traits will be valorized and how they will be framed. So what is the Canadian canon?

Establishing a comparison with other national canons is not constructive in the Canadian case because of our nation's particular interest in unity through diversity. Our literary history demonstrates constant debates between various voices and values competing for authority and representation. Accusations of conservatism, elitism and materialism have been fired at each individual involved in defining the canon. In the contemporary canonical debate, no one position is final and as of yet no one with F.R. Leavis's assurance has appeared on the Canadian critical scene.

¹ Robert Kroestch, "Contemporary Standards in the Canadian Novel," *Taking Stock*, ed. Charles Steele. (Toronto: ECW, 1982) 9.

The goal of this thesis is to examine the purpose and value of the Canadian canon. To do so, it will be necessary to consider its construction through a theoretical examination. Questions surrounding canon structure ask: Can the canon shift with social values to remain a valid representation of collective traditions? How do these shifts occur? The creation of a canon also provokes simple yet significant questions such as: who builds the canon?, who is privileged by the canon?, and who is ignored? This thesis will attempt to speak to such questions.

This thesis is centred upon English-Canadian literature. French language literature does play an essential role in building a uniquely Canadian canon, but its inclusion would broaden the paper's scope into an unmanageable size. As Louis Dudek notes: "There has always been a sense of distance and separation between English and French writing in Canada. This has resulted in the rise and development of two separate literatures having the common denominator of one national and social context."² The separation between languages presented in this paper is meant to respect differences; however, many of the issues investigated within the thesis are readily applicable to the French-Canadian literary canon. The publishing industry also has a serious role in perpetuating the production of the canon but its commercial intentions cannot be effectively examined here, nor can the numerous alternative canons that exist. These influences will have a definite presence in the thesis but it must be understood that their value cannot be adequately examined within the limits of the paper. This thesis proposes to examine the central canon of the nation

² Louis Dudek and Michael Gnarowski, ed. The Making of Modern Poetry in Canada (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1970) 247.

that has been constructed to promote and maintain the values and standards of the dominant culture. This is not to say the role of marginal canons will not be examined, but the extent of these alternatives cannot be considered with extreme detail.

The paper has been designed to build from a theoretical understanding of the canon to a pragmatic consideration of its current status. The first chapter will examine the structure and general theory of canons. Canons are hierarchical in nature and act to forge tradition among individuals. Mainly employed by nation-states, canons perpetuate shared values and maintain cohesion amongst citizens; more precisely a canon forges what Benedict Anderson terms an “imagined community.”³ The establishment of a national literature serves to lay down a cultural tradition upon which to build a shared history. The illusion of being an innate phenomenon is useful in masking the artificial construction of national communities; however, members of dominant social institutions, including academia and cultural production industries, build tradition through consensus. With the theoretical understanding of canons explained, the chapter will then demonstrate how educational systems have institutionalized dominant values through standardized literary interpretation as well as the universal syllabus.

Although canons appear to be rigid assertions of the classics, they are necessarily fluid in nature. Fluidity is essential to canons in order to survive societal value shifts. The concept of shifts in canonical value is a central component of this thesis. The Canadian canon’s consistent fluidity demonstrates the necessary act of re-defining itself to express

³ Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (1983; New York: Verso, 1991) 7.

the shifting nature of its collective literature. It is necessary to understand that the canon's main purpose is to define and perpetuate common values, and the methods a canon employs to achieve this goal are critical in understanding its reaction to social change.

The second chapter will present an overview of influences upon canon formation in Canada. The establishment of literary values in Canada follows a very distinctive path. Early Canadian literature did not have a rooted system of values from which to build a consensual tradition. Dominant values in early Canadian literature were imported from Eurocentric models. The European canon dictated the design of colonial writing and established the basis of esteemed value. Canadian values only gained sovereignty at the peak of nationalism, yet the influence of European models linger in the central canons' perception of what is classic Canadian literature. English department curricula in Canada remain largely dominated by British literature as regard for Canadian literature is still marginal in our own country. A bias for realist, conservative literature influenced our literary values and contributed to ongoing debates regarding the canon's content. Examples of canonical activity will be considered such as the controversial Calgary Conference on the Canadian Novel (1978) and the New Canadian Library reprint series. This chapter does not attempt to define the Canadian canon and its creators, rather it seeks to identify major sites and agents of influence that communicated the dominant vision of the canon. Ultimately, Chapter Two will illustrate a lack of consensus among critics, publishers, and academics regarding the contents of the Canadian canon.

No single event can be deemed as the determining moment in canonical value. It is the culmination of years devoted to studying and defining of Canadian literature that has

contributed to naming the tradition. The devotion of literary critics, academics, and readers to the continual re-definition and re-assessment of the boundaries of Canadian values also contributes to the canon's tradition. However, the early implementation of a narrow definition of literary values has made expanding our tradition difficult even within our contemporary environment of diversity. The final chapter questions the central canon's ability to survive in this multicultural environment where the influences of multiplicity and global pressures have become undeniable.

As national cultures fragment and commitment to tradition dissolves, it is interesting to consider the canon's response. The final chapter examines the central canon's accommodation of marginal communities in the hope to maintain the imagined national community; however, unity is becoming more visibly constructed. Cultural appropriation is responsible for sustaining tradition, but its superficial understanding of difference creates a tension within our national literature. Cultural responsibility to assure authentic representation is necessary and perpetuates a new system of cross-cultural reference. The central canon has arrived at a point where it must concede its central authority over value and listen to the values expressed in the multiple cultural canons that currently exist on the periphery.

This thesis relies on several sources to supply key arguments. Robert Lecker's text, *Making It Real: The Canonization of English-Canadian Literature*, is the only work completely devoted to examining the Canadian canon, and it offers a valuable starting

point for the various concepts associated with the Canadian literary canon.⁴ The author provides thorough insight into the questions surrounding canonicity. Divided into three sections, the text examines the theory, history and criticism of canons in Canada. Within these categories Lecker considers several influential factors upon the canon in Canada including the book publishing industry and its economy, the education system and identity politics. Through his argument Lecker challenges major assumptions regarding the construction and power involved in what he calls the literary “institution.” He insists that the canon is necessary for cultural formation in Canada. The canon represents evidence of tradition and familiarity amongst Canadians. To dismiss the canon removes the opportunity for shared myths and representation.

Frank Davey has issued a number of responses to the canonical work of Robert Lecker. In his “Critical Response” article, Davey recognizes the weaknesses which undermine Lecker’s argument. Davey questions several problems in Lecker’s work including “its self-characterization (does it inquire into value?) in its context, in its theorization of canonicity, and in the gap it opens between theories it cites and its own practice.”⁵ Davey’s major contribution is his insistence that Canada has a decentralized culture whereby a central canon is not plausible. Davey points to the need for research to encompass the interwoven influences on the canon such as economics, the educational system and political involvement. He asserts a pluralist approach to accommodate for

⁴ Robert Lecker, Making It Real: The Canonization of English-Canadian Literature (Concord: Anansi Press, 1995).

⁵ Frank Davey, “Critical Response I: Canadian Canons,” Critical Inquiry 16.3 (Spring 1990): 672.

multi-vocality; however, his concept of pluralism is not consistent with the nature of canonical structure. To harmonize Davey's concept of a liberal, decentralized canon means questioning the foundation of a united Canadian tradition.

The work of Charles Altieri provides a broader literary scope necessary for this thesis to gain outside perspectives. Altieri's arguments in *Canons and Consequences* emphasizes the requisite nature of the literary canon as a definitive body by which readers can interpret *through* the text and find relevant experiences to their own community. A canon must demonstrate flexibility. It must possess the ability to shift through time to remain relevant and Altieri places the duty of keeping the canon flexible upon the shoulders of critics who must reveal how the canon remains constant. As Altieri notes in his "Introduction", "Rather than develop abstract principles, canons rely on the root of ethics in cultural ethos, and they demonstrate the degree to which these cultural circles remain flexible and shareable."⁶ Altieri opposes the forces of historicist and deconstructive models. Subjectivity in literary theory, he believes, can weaken the foundation for securing a healthy understanding among individuals. Through the various essays, Altieri examines contemporary literary theories and their influences, both positive and negative, upon the canon.

The thesis's objective is to question the assumptions of the current literary canon in Canada. The canon provides a stable base for homogeneous experience, but the structure and influence of the canon requires further examination. What influence does the

⁶ Charles Altieri, *Canons and Consequences: Reflections on the Ethical Force of Imaginative Ideals* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern U.P., 1990) 17.

canon wield over our current Canadian society? To answer this question it will be necessary to identify the canon's development, a rather challenging task. By disposing of the abstract notion of the *canon* with definitive borders, the canon's structure and power can be better understood. This paper seeks to answer where and how privilege is granted through the canon. With these questions answered it is my hypothesis that a self-aware central canon is necessary to construct cohesiveness within a society. Although the canon is exclusionary, the destruction of this central institution could damage the shared experience among Canadians. I will explore the pluralist alternatives of a central canon, but the canon's centralizing power is undeniable.

In beginning this study, I believed that it was an obvious fact that there was a single, dominant canon of English-Canadian literature. Yet as my examination continued, it became clear that the existence of a monolithic canon is theoretically questionable in Canada. The increasing fragmentation due to global pressures has found a particular home in Canadian diversity. It seems Canadian values although highly Anglophone, Christian, heterosexual, and white, must accept the existence of a multi-vocal canon. This canon would be inclusive to not only ethnic, racial, and social minorities, but to regional voices as well. The question is whether this multi-vocal canon has yet come to dominance or whether Robert Lecker's mimetic and monolithic canon is still exercising the last vestiges of its waning authority.

The transition to such a liberal pluralist canon is difficult. The ability of a central institution such as a canon to properly represent all minority values would stretch tradition to its limits, but this exercise is necessary to ensure Canadian literary values truly represent

the Canadian people. The death of white, Anglophone dominance has been announced repeatedly through Canadian history, and no such declarations will be found here. Only critical attention upon the canon's reaction to increased liberalizing stress will be noted. The English-Canadian literary canon is a living creation with the ability to grow; however, it is necessary to scrutinize this growth to ensure the canon does not become a monster of superficial unity and blind cultural consumption.

Chapter 1

“Forging Consensus: Understanding Canonical Structure”

What *is* the canon of Canadian literature? The need for a definitive list, to have concrete examples of canonical works, is critical in the debate over relative canonical content; however, the simple provision of a detailed list fails to address the deeper issues of canonical values, its principles of inclusion and exclusion, and its enduring authority. One could define the Canadian canon by naming specific authors such as: Susanna Moodie, Stephen Leacock, F.P. Grove, F.R. Scott, Earle Birney, Hugh MacLennan, Robertson Davies, Margaret Laurence, and Margaret Atwood, yet these authors are not necessarily part of every individual's conception of the Canadian canon. The process of actually naming the canon is relative to the time period and society's current esteemed value system. The authors mentioned above generally share a consistent conservatism and conventionality in style, however, one could add authors such as Michael Ondaatje, Thomas King, and Joy Kogawa to the list to represent shifting ideals in writing. Although it is tempting to concretely define the Canadian literary canon, an exact definition is difficult to assume. An approximation is available in Appendix A that lists the results of a poll at the 1978 Calgary Conference on the Canadian Novel. Orchestrated by Jack McClelland, the disputed poll sought to establish the top one hundred essential novels in Canada. In the context of this examination, the poll is meant to provide a general idea of the most highly regarded novels in Canada from just over twenty years ago. (A discussion

of the significance of this poll is continued in Chapter Two.) However, the most effective strategy for gaining an informed idea of today's canonical content is to observe common values amongst readers, critics, and academics and from their conceptions recognize writing that shares such merits. Conducting such a thorough observation though would prove a difficult venture.

Canons name for us the "classics" of literature, but the theoretical process of canonizing a text remains a mystery to the general public even though they share in the process. It is necessary to investigate canonical structure by studying its influence on nation-states, the academic realm, the educational system, and the general public.

Entering the debate concerning canon value and structure requires one to realize the enormous amount of theoretical and practical space involved. The debate encompasses not only literary evaluation, but also larger political, social, and ethical spaces. Too often canonical argument has separated theory from its practical application. It must be understood that although canons possess an elusive tangibility, their practical existence is undeniable which requires that any examination of canonical structure include both its fundamental theoretical basis and its real-life application.

The aim of this chapter is to provide a theoretical understanding of canons and reveal their construction while demonstrating the reality of canonical influence. The complicated ethereal quality of the canon can be dismissed through a deconstruction of its theoretical structure thereby uncovering the canon's practical application in culture. The realistic application of canonical authority requires a hierarchical structure to develop a common value system of literary interpretation. The dominant authority of this system

thereby marginalizes voices who conflict with the established standards and excludes them from *the* list. This chapter's description of other national literary canons, such as those found in Britain and the United States, will clarify the process of selection and justification for exclusion at national levels. (The second chapter in this paper will provide a detailed account of canon formation in Canada.) Tracing the influence of the New Critical school and Modernist revision of canonical value continues an examination of value judgments. This study of the intelligentsia reveals the hierarchical structure of canons and the necessary ability of those canons to shift and accommodate contemporary interests. The intelligentsia's contributions to canonical structure led to the introduction of the generic university literary syllabus and the commodification of the canon, which provides insight into the institutionalization of literary value in the educational system. Once canonical values have penetrated the educational system, their influence over the general public is more explicit. Equipped with an understanding of the canon's dominant claim to literary evaluation, it is possible to realize its means of selection and its subtle movements of inclusion to maintain fluidity and the illusion of authentic representation and authority. Uncovering the theory and application of canonical authority is essential in understanding its function and its future in a Canadian context.

The process of demystifying the canon begins with defining the term. The fundamental principle of a literary canon is to imply value. Primarily the definition of "canon" described it only "as 'a rule, law or decree of the Church; esp. [sic] a rule laid

down by an ecclesiastical Council,”⁷ The original term “canon” was used strictly in reference to Christian authority. Canonicity would later come to imply sacred literature from the word of God and was illustrated as a chosen few books of the Old and New Testament. Since 1382, a second sense of the word has developed to mean “the collection of books of the Bible accepted by the Christian Church as genuine and inspired.”⁸ This dominant religious connotation has since been displaced with a more general sense of collected works of literature that represent a particular nationalism or define a cultural community. Although the relation to religion was diminished, the elite implications of value through inclusion continue to survive. By 1870, “canon” would become analogous to “any set of sacred books.”⁹ Overt Christian meaning was removed, but the implications of authority and high value remain central to the term.

The term “canon” also implies an elite group of judges who rule on inclusion. As canonical influence shifted from the sacred to the secular, orthodox systems of value that reflected the church were erected within the academic world. John Guillory’s definition characterizes the term’s insinuation of inclusion and acceptance:

The word “canon” displaces the expressly honorific term “classic” precisely in order to isolate “the classics” as the object of critique. The concept of the canon names the traditional curriculum of literary texts by analogy to that body of writing historically characterized by an inherent logic of closure - the scriptural canon.¹⁰

Roy Turner further clarifies the canonical framework in his assertion that individual works

⁷ Michael Payne, “Canon,” A Dictionary of Cultural and Critical Theory, 1997 ed. (Payne is quoting from the Oxford English Dictionary).

⁸ Payne, “Canon.”

⁹ Payne, “Canon.”

¹⁰ John Guillory, Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993) 6.

themselves are not the canon: “the canon is not the text but the understanding and interpretation of the text, which make it canonical, define its place in the life and sustenance of the culture.”¹¹ Turner’s definition demonstrates that a tangible list of specific authors does not necessarily define a canon. Values linking the individual texts into a collective body rather than the book itself, must be closely observed. Guillory explains that “the canon is never other than an imaginary list; it never appears as a complete and uncontested list in any particular time and place” (30). A canon is a list built upon consensus on values, interpretative methods, and understanding of the cultural grammar. A canon’s hierarchical construction facilitates such consensus through institutional controls. Those who construct canons seek to reinforce a meta-narrative amongst a cultural community by selecting literature that reflects the beliefs and values shared through the culture’s past and present.

Throughout the history of canons, lists have been disputed, revised, and disputed again because the massive responsibility of a canon to reflect dominant values through literary selection is a constantly evolving and progressive process. Although a canon appears as a static monolith of dominant values, in actuality, it is a rather fluid entity that must shift with societal trends to represent and affirm social structure. Yet this fluidity should not be mistaken for an ideology of liberal plurality; evaluative shifts are essentially conducted to preserve the dominant canonical authority.

The literary implementation of the term “canon” is consistent with the rise of New

¹¹ Roy Turner, “Friends and Enemies of the Canon,” Queen’s Quarterly 97:2 (Summer 1990): 338.

Criticism during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. New Critics, inspired by Matthew Arnold and F.R. Leavis, and lead by T.S. Eliot, instituted a school of thought that exclusively focused upon “the text itself.” By approaching a text through “objective,” “scientific,” and “disinterested” criticism (Arnold’s terminology),¹² critics sought to reflect the “aesthetico-humanist idealization of works of Literature.”¹³ The term “Literature” is therefore capitalized to indicate the crucial elevation of some texts over others as a strict system of evaluation was erected through close and disinterested textual analysis to promote a select few works as Literature, those which are part of the tradition or the canon. Raman Selden writes: “By its nature, the canon is exclusive and hierarchical, and would clearly be seen to be artificially constructed by choices and selections made by human agency (critics) were it not for its endemic tendency to naturalise itself as, precisely, *natural*: self-evidently, unarguably *given, there*, and not created by critical ‘discrimination,’ by taste, preference, partiality, etc” (author’s emphasis, 11). Canons are not natural phenomena; the laws of descriptive and normative claims regulate them. A canon establishes the dominant and standard framework of value by reflecting the consensus of the cultural community. However, these laws are affected

¹² Matthew Arnold’s Essays in Criticism (1865) would become synonymous with emphasizing that the critics’ principle perspective must be one of “disinterestedness.” The term is meant to instruct critics that they must maintain an objective view on life and remain faithful to pure values. In the “Introduction” to Culture and Anarchy, Stefan Collini states that Arnold was complaining that “Books and ideas were judged . . . by whether they were consistent with the true tenets of the Protestant religion, or supported a Whig or Tory view of the English constitution, or had an immediate bearing upon the great policy issues of the moment. It was precisely this habit of appealing to ‘ulterior, political, practical considerations about ideas’ that in his view narrowed and stultified the intellectual life of Victorian England.” Stefan Collini, Introduction, Culture and Anarchy, by Matthew Arnold, ed. Stefan Collini (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993) xvi.

¹³ Raman Selden and Peter Widdowson, A Reader’s Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory. 3rd ed. (Lexington: University of Kentucky, 1993) 11.

by the circular conditions the canon creates. Charles Altieri emphasizes it is necessary to critically recognize one's position within this circle: "We have ideas about canons because we learn to think about literature within cultural frameworks that are in part constituted by notions of the canonical" (26). Canonical values are deeply embedded within peoples' concept of value thereby gaining the illusion of innateness. A canon masks its own construction through this sense of natural selection, challenging the public to expose its elusive origins as outside the shared cultural tradition.

Prior to the twentieth century, canonical influence was limited due to deficiencies in mass education. The Catholic church, for example, was able to wield tremendous authority over the generally illiterate public regarding access and interpretation of the Bible. During the advancement of the printing press and distribution of literacy, this religious control shifted to a secular authority over the growing literate public. The intelligentsia would emerge from this secular elite as an influential body promoting selected texts in the education process. As will be discussed later in the chapter, access to the public realm through educational systems is an essential stream for exercising canonical authority. Canonical power was restricted as no explicit avenues existed for implicit cultural control over a generally illiterate public. With increases in educational efficiency during the onset of modernism during the early to mid-twentieth century, a major period of canonical revaluation arrived. During this revolution of literary tastes two major literary events occurred: the revision of the tradition of English poetry, and the establishment of the American literary canon. These events both demonstrate how a

canon must adapt to sufficiently represent the evolution of cultural communities.

The revaluation of English literature was in part inspired by T.S. Eliot's revised conception of tradition.¹⁴ The English canon was built upon distinguished poets who represented a profound gift with the high art of poetry. Yet as society and language progressed it became obvious that past representations of culture must be tempered to meet contemporary interests and needs. Eliot offered the major point that the perception of past literature is constantly undergoing change with the arrival of new texts. This idea is fundamental because it translates into the requirement that literature be subject to re-assessment to remain relevant to generational interests. It also admits that values are contingent and based in time. Eliot's initial revision instigated a fundamental movement for the canon in that it shifted values to represent contemporary interests; the canon demonstrated fluidity in order to remain authentic.

The call for re-assessment had an immediate impact upon the English canon as icons such as Milton and Shelley as well as other notable literary figures were identified as bearers of excessive rhetoric. Chris Baldick writes that during this period "admiration for Shelley and Milton was really a conventional respect for icons of poetic fame, and was not based on qualities of their verse" (106). Critics, such as F.R. Leavis, Cleanth Brooks, and T.S. Eliot drew new lines of descent from Donne to the modernist poets, and in doing so customized new lists of literary value. Several major poets' fame was tarnished while several other more obscure poets were highlighted in the new canon. The process of

¹⁴ Chris Baldick, Criticism and Literary Theory: 1890 to the Present (New York: Longman Group Ltd., 1996) 105.

revision was not an indiscriminate act of rejecting of the nineteenth-century legacy; rather it was a necessary critical reshaping of the past and its values to recognize contemporary needs (Baldick 107). The canon's authority was being further defined as its breadth grew incorporating the past while embracing the present to remain applicable. This critical ability to shift value through time gave the canon an essential fluidity, which upholds its dominant control over valuation.

As Eliot's contribution reveals, canons provide a firm link to the past. In *History and Value*, Frank Kermode ascribes the appeal of canons to their ability to sustain a connection to our history and its essential values. Documenting the history of a nation's literature by tracing origins and influences as well as its development within the state, makes it possible to reveal the birth of a tradition.¹⁵ Through its selected texts a canon provides tangible evidence of a nation's evolving values. By consulting and interpreting the wide range of texts accumulated within a national canon over time, one is able to identify how a nation has shaped itself. Therefore, a canon acts as a mediator for a transhistorical discourse between the past and present. It provides a sense of continuity over time by incorporating texts with specific qualities and characteristics, which define the qualities of the national tradition. To dismiss the relevance of a canon is to lose this inherited understanding of a nation's past. A canon's ability to display the evolution of a national tradition and link the past and present also characterizes the canon's major role of demonstrating fluidity over time.

Canons essentially have two functions. The first is a curatorial role whereby the

¹⁵ Frank Kermode, *History and Value* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988) 112.

canon is employed to “preserve rich and complex contrastive frameworks, which create . . . a cultural grammar for interpreting experience” (Altieri 33). Through a preservation of literary materials, canons perpetuate a coherent system of values. The very principles of preservation are fundamental to the character of the canon and relate to its secondary normative function. A canon is constructed of a list of books containing supposed values, standards, and rules of prescriptive language and behaviour for its audience. It should not be assumed canons promote simple dogmas, rather canons serve as dialectical resources that exemplify an interrelation between modes of thought. A canon provides examples of literary craftsmanship, yet it also affords difference of expression and experience. (The interpretation of these divergent experiences and authenticity of these representations is questionable though when performed through the dominant perspective alone and the relevance of this representation will be discussed later in the chapter.) This complex framework contributes standards as well as inspiration for modifying our ways of perceiving and writing our own experiences. Charles Altieri concludes: “in addition to preserving examples of craft, canons also establish exemplary attitudes often while training us to search for ways to connect the two” (33). Canons both define our traditions and motivate challenges to conventional understandings of the tradition.

The consequences of these functions serve to perpetuate the elite nature of canonical structure. Canons have the significant power to institutionalize ideals (Altieri 34). Altieri, like Eliot and Kermode, believes the canon’s curatorial role is essential for measuring current ideologies. The past provides a backdrop outside of contemporary political debate. Altieri states that “despite our very different contemporary commitments

we can share those ideals of interpretation that secure readings of the past sufficiently determinate in historical terms to distance the text from those political interests, and thus to make it available for a wide variety of significant challenges and applications to the present” (9). By establishing standards of value and ideal, a canon is able to provide a suitable context for personal development. It affords a sense of “what communities we wish to identify ourselves with and what selves to pursue” (3). Another cultural consequence Altieri observes is the canon’s ability to “challenge individuals and new movements in the arts to meet certain criteria of self-representation if they choose identities within certain communities” (3). Simply put canons establish measures for identity. The final consequence regards its capacity to focus “discussions about the ends of politics that are very difficult to develop if one’s major interest lies in demystifying prevailing beliefs and resisting all cultural positivities” (3). Canons act as a focal point; converging values into a central framework for determining context for arguments and questions surrounding culture.

The cornerstone of the canonical authority resides in its conservative selection of esteemed value. Through a conservation of past, established values and ideals can remain usable and modern (Kermode 116). The past does not become obsolete rather it maintains a strong functional role within contemporary life contributing to our understanding of the present and documenting our origins. Kermode writes: “If we want the monuments, the documents we value, we must preserve them in spite of their evil association, and find ways of showing that their value somehow persists in our changed world” (117). This link with history establishes a necessary continuity for Kermode

contributing to the modern sense of a shared meta-narrative among people. Continuity also dictates canonical fluidity through time to ensure survival. Although such histories and contexts may be arguably fictions, they still foster an “imagined community” in which individuals can share (Anderson 7). Benedict Anderson developed the term “imagined community” to describe the “‘anomaly’ of nationalism” (4). The concept of nationalism is a cultural artefact from the eighteenth-century’s age of Enlightenment and revolution that is persistently used to define people and their space. Yet the concept of nation is inherently imagined as a community “because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship” (7). Nationalism promotes sharing in a common tradition; however, if the concept of nation is imagined then its ideology of an uniform community and common experiences must necessarily be invented as well. Nationalism establishes boundaries for residents and essentially pressures conformity to the shared tradition, which has the potential to erase individual difference. The next chapter will examine the nation’s establishment of shared literary value. The Canadian canon was originally strongly rooted in conventional realism and the regional idyll, values that according to A.J.M. Smith were dominant in the early twentieth century.¹⁶ While tastes have shifted and values re-assessed to more effectively represent a growing variety of literary perspectives in Canada, a link to this legacy of tradition still lingers in current criticism. A comparison can be drawn between the establishment of these rigid values and the construction of the American literary canon as a key example of fabricating an imagined community by realizing shifting

¹⁶ A.J.M. Smith, “A Rejected Preface,” Canadian Literature 24 (Spring 1965): 1.

societal requirements through time.

Although the United States had produced strong national literary manifestos during the nineteenth century with strong contributions from Emerson and Whitman, the nation's literature was still burdened by its reputation as a minor branch of the British tradition. Literary value was heavily influenced by British tastes and the teaching of American literature was often relegated to small informal lessons. Baldick attributes the birth of the American national canon to America's participation in the Great War of 1917, and "the accompanying sense of larger national destiny after the self-destruction of Europe" (108). The United States was entering into a dominant role in global affairs, but this paramount role was not supported by any concrete sense of cultural tradition. It became essential for American critics to invent a cohesive meta-narrative to reinforce the manifest destiny of the nation. British conservatism and Eurocentric classicism was dismissed and replaced with an imperative democratic nationalism. This new ideology celebrated authors previously regarded as nonconformists to the centre of American values. The process of canonical selection displayed the canon's ability to appropriate from the margins into the centre to maintain representational relevance.

The patriotic-democratic literary wave brought the newly reclaimed American canon to the classroom during the late 1920s, but the institutionalization of the American canon meant narrowing the breadth of recognized American literature into a core syllabus. Critics' concern for "unified sensibility and concrete symbolism had, as in the English case of F.R. Leavis, the canonical effect of exalting but sharply restricting the select exemplars of 'tradition'" (Baldick 109). The American literary tradition had experienced an

enthusiastic explosion, but the list would require a refinement in order to effectively institutionalize and commodify the new product. As the American academic canon experienced amendments, the general public enjoyed the fruitful growth of the Western canon.

The reprinting of “classics” in cheap paperback series, such as J.M. Dent’s Everyman’s Library in England (initiated in 1906) grew in popularity. Publishing libraries expanded to encompass as many great Western works as possible from Homer to Freud. The titles were often unrelated except for their liberal claim to general Western culture. Written forms such as travel writing, history, biography, and essays were included under the generic name of literature. Cheap paperback reproductions of American classics, produced for example by the New American Library, were also issued to help the newly educated masses gain an appreciation for the literature of their nation and in doing so fortify a shared cultural tradition. The advent of an affordable canon created not only a dissemination of cultural grammar, but also initiated the commodification of a cultural tradition. Through the 1930s, the project of self-education through inexpensive paperbacks produced a commercial boom through the printing of numerous anthologies and guides to cultivating one’s literary taste. As the academic-modernist syllabus matured its influence soon passed into the public realm of mass reading. The commodification of canons raises an interesting suspicion regarding the literary quality of the reprinted texts. In the early post-war period the influence of the New Critical school became undeniable. Its reach into popular tastes forced a re-conceptualization of the term “Literature.” Academic syllabi needed to narrow their scope and forced the categorization of literature

to include only “great” novels, plays, and poems, while dismissing travel writing, biographies, et cetera. By narrowing the scope of what is a classic (a topic approached by Eliot in his lecture *What is a Classic?* [1945]), the subject of reprint series also shifted to include preeminent Western literature in translation so that every publicly educated man could reap the benefits of reading “great works.”

Through the 1960s, Penguin Books provided an extensive library of canonical English works. The work of Shakespeare and major poets were republished in separate libraries that provided readers with explanatory introductions, interpretive strategies, and footnotes by academics and other literary authorities. In 1957, McClelland and Stewart Publishing initiated the New Canadian Library, a reprint series that reintroduced literature under the label of “the best of Canadian writing.” This critical presence in popular publishing provides an interesting example of critical influence on the public mind. When academic interpretation is introduced to the public in the form of critical introductions and explanatory notes, the academic influence thereby stretches the reach of its institutional power into the public cultural sphere where its esteemed values could be consumed (read) by the public. Therefore, decisions on reprint series were not driven by blind market forces, rather publishers elicited the opinions of academics to compose their lists of classics. Critical influence now firmly occupied both space within the text and within the publishing industry.

F.R. Leavis’s *Great Tradition* provides the most succinct selection of literary masterpieces in his declaration that “the great English novelists are Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James, and Joseph Conrad” (Baldick 153). The brief nature of Leavis’s list

lends practical appeal to a student's finite time in the classroom. As students can only be exposed to a limited amount of classic literature during their education, it is imperative that the literature be of the highest quality. It would not take long before a generic university literary syllabus entered the majority of post-secondary institutions in Western society. Notions of quality and value had to be narrowly understood to succinctly compile a brief syllabus and left very little room for the inclusion of alternative and experimental writing. Dominant conceptions of good writing could dismiss the avant-garde in the name of practicality.

Canonical debate frequently involves conflict regarding the process of selection. When canonical selection was challenged in the 1970s as a homogeneous construction, the issue of inclusion and exclusion became a fundamental argument over value judgments. Canonical structure is fundamentally based on constructing commonality between individual texts. Recent theoretical practices have reversed this trend through an approach based on difference. This postmodern/post-structuralist thinking that values the particular over the universal has had a critical impact on canonical evaluation. Early canon conflicts argued over the ranking of individual authors; however, contemporary canonical controversy addresses the active discrimination against collective minorities who have been excluded by narrow definitions of literary value (Baldick 200).

With postmodernism's movement to debunk the concept of meta-narrative, the canon's unifying structure and values also faced reevaluation. During the late 1970s, deconstructionist movements gained intense popularity within academic literary theory.

Deconstruction spawned a critical response that disputed the canon's claim to represent a broad spectrum of literary interests. Minorities took exception with such claims and made accusations of elitism. Chris Baldick writes: "The problem most often identified as a matter for remedy was the relative invisibility of other kinds of writers and writings, especially in the educational syllabus" (200). Since the late 1970s, opposition has been raised against the historical dominance of white, upper-middle class, heterosexuals in academic literary canons. Canonical history provides evidence of a biased construction and a perpetuation of central homogenous values as well as a centre/margin paradigm through which conservative institutions can sustain their authority.

This centrality also works in a self-reflexive manner. Canons have the innate ability to remain the centre and dominant force in any opposition. Debates concerning the authority of canons must begin with the recognition of a hegemonic structure to oppose. As Robert Lecker observes, "if we want to deconstruct canons, we must first invent them and acknowledge their power."¹⁷ Hegemony centrality inevitably inspires opposition as exemplified by alternative canons appearing to challenge dominant ideologies. Kermode describes the purpose of this centrality saying: "Self-perpetuating institutions resist not only those they think of as incompetent for reasons of ignorance, but also the charismatic outsider" (Kermode 126). The outsider presents a certain threat to the interpretive community by asserting an alternative approach to textual analysis. Canons infringe upon the range of critical possibility and resist foreign content that may dilute the dominant

¹⁷ Robert Lecker, Making It Real: The Canonization of English-Canadian Literature (Concord: Anansi Press, 1995) 62.

value structure. In this sense, established canons are largely reactionary as it responds to threats against dominant knowledge and values inherited through education and experience within the centre. Shifts in value occur to resist independent deviations. Canons initiate change only when dissent grows large enough to provide the canon with evidence of societal shifts. Central canon can then observe change and appropriate significant values into its value system to meet contemporary needs. At this point a canon's apparently rigid structure becomes unquestionably fluid. Therefore, it is necessary to maintain a centre/margin paradigm; a relationship threatened by postmodernism. The central Canadian canon is especially under scrutiny due to the national emphasis on diversity, and debates identifying our national canon's growing internal multiplicity. As multiculturalism becomes the norm in Canadian society, traditional conservative values will inevitably be replaced by new liberal standards of value. The consequences of these threats to the central authority will be examined in the final chapter.

Another consequence of a canon's central influence is its power to become the model of authority for idealizations (Altieri 34). The criteria for evaluation are ultimately decided by the canon's value system. Thereby judges or critics of value emerge from the study of the canon itself. This influence over institutional members provides for the perpetuation of canonical values and establishes conventional ways of thought. The audience is familiar with the canon and consequently the critic's ideals and attitudes are also familiar. Canonical authority is only possible through the submission of society to the judgments of an ideal society (Altieri 39). The ideals of the canon are explicit while the

authority remains implicit. Ideals do not necessarily dictate our actions; instead ideals afford us directions for reflection. The power to dictate societal reflection though is latent in a canon's hierarchical structure.

The foundation of a canon rests upon the input of both the general public and the cultural institutions (most often universities). The contributions of input between these groups though can seem disproportionate. Canons are built upon the consensus of a small elite group of intellectuals and the general public. However, the power between these groups is significantly unbalanced as the intellectual minority wields a tremendous influence over the selection and interpretation of a canon. A canon is arguably constructed by a select elite and supported by the general public. Lecker describes the close relationship between producers and product saying: "The power of the canon and the power of its members are inseparable: the institution is the canon; its members are the texts" (*Making* 27). Lecker closely aligns the authority of a small conservative elite with the conservative values embodied by the Canadian canon (*Making* 27). The assertion of hegemonic control over the canonical values is upheld by the educational system. It is the educational system that informs us how to read, what to read, and what is valuable. Education informs individuals how to share common values and overcomes the belief that we all approach texts differently. Specifically, a canon communicates that there are multiple systems at work that can satisfy our priorities while maintaining a sense of consistency within the collective culture. Establishing a sense of cohesiveness amongst us, a canon constructs a common network towards an informed and shared interpretation of

its literature. The general public's role in the process of canon creation lies outside the closed relationship between the canon and its members.

The public is informed by the dominant educational system and its promoted values. The public's influence therefore lies in its resistance to static values. Public demands for fluidity steer canonical values and force the canon to initiate change. In the past, the need to define a Canadian tradition led to a great surge in canonical categorization. As the nation demanded the establishment of a tradition in the mid-twentieth century to calm its identity crisis and define itself apart from Britain and the United States, the academic world and the publishing industry responded by naming and disseminating a hurried canon. The public's demand has again shifted to require the national literature be representative of all Canadians. Such need will require the canon to reevaluate itself and its criteria for inclusivity. Therefore, the public does have tremendous power in shaping the canon, but as Altieri warned earlier our perceptions and needs are also shaped by the canon. It is the canon's ability to instill and mold our interpretive values through education that creates this circularity.

A major factor in canonical selection is the text's response to dominant interpretation. The power of the canon extends well beyond controlling access to recognition; it also controls the method of interpretation. The dominance of critical evaluation is an essential control in asserting literary value. Canonical structure dictates that a system of shared values is necessary for a common understanding. The development of what Stanley Fish termed an "interpretive community" is essential to

ensure mass cultural participation.¹⁸ The interpretive community shares a core of particular values that distinguish the group and provide an elite status. The establishment of interpretive communities generates insider/outsider territories. Those inside the community enjoy the privilege of sharing dominant interpretative strategies, while those outside the community are relegated to marginality. However, this marginal position acts as a site for originality. Ideas and values developed in the margins act a source for inspiration and change to the dominant community.

The prime concern in discussing canonical structure involves the establishment of its authority. As mentioned earlier, this authority lies in consensus between the educational institution and public will. Modes of interpretation are most often taught in the classroom and therefore it is necessary to investigate the canon's role within the educational institution. The work of John Guillory shifts the foundation of canon debate away from a content-based argument to the issue of institutional instruction.¹⁹ In his book *Cultural Capital*, Guillory writes: "evaluative judgments are the necessary but not sufficient conditions for the process of canon formation, and that it is only by understanding the social function and institutional protocols of the schools that we will understand how works are preserved, reproduced, and disseminated over successive generations and centuries" (vii). Although the canon does perform the decisive act of inclusion and exclusion, it is the educational regard for texts that affects the canon's

¹⁸ Stanley Fish, Is There a Text in This Class?: The Authority of Interpretive Communities (Cambridge: Harvard U.P., 1980) 11.

¹⁹ John Guillory, Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993)

essential content. Critics of the canon often cite content as the decisive factor for gaining inclusion, but Guillory argues that it is the cultural capital rather than ideological content of the literary work that excludes minority literature. Guillory believes that the university curriculum “form[s] and disseminat[es]” a text’s ideological notions through “the context of their institutional presentation” (ix). The previous discussion of university syllabi and interpretive communities’ dominant control of interpretation should be noted here. The theoretical content and value of texts is minor, according to Guillory, and the practical reality of education is key. Ideological content is not innate within a text, it arrives only through institutional interpretation.

Canonizing a text has serious implications for the shaping of critical and interpretive readings of the work. Kermode outlines four related effects beginning with the fact that the text is immediately locked in time.²⁰ The language and period in which the text was written are frozen. Secondly, and paradoxically, the piece is set free of time meaning that it gains a transhistorical appeal to the audience. Thirdly, the individual identity of the text is consumed into a mass collective of literature, becoming part of the whole. As the collection of literature develops this individual text is subjected to new criticism based on approaching the canon. The individual text’s meaning grows and shifts with time as it is related to multiple approaches (Kermode 115). The inclusion of a text into the canon has significant effects on the meaning and values that can be evoked from the writing. In a very basic sense, the text’s independent existence is stolen and instilled with a responsibility to a particular tradition.

²⁰ Kermode, History and Value, 115.

Kermode's observations are visible in the establishment of the Canadian canon. Writing was imbued with national responsibilities to properly represent the landscape and society regardless of the actual quality of the literature. Texts such as Sinclair Ross's *As for Me and My House* (1941), Frederick Phillip Grove's *Over Prairie Trails* (1923), and Hugh MacLennan's *Two Solitudes* (1945) are noted by critic Desmond Pacey in his book *Creative Writing in Canada* (1952), but his praise for the now celebrated icons of Canadian literature is strained at best. Pacey calls Ross's subsequent novels "disappointments" and says "Grove, for all his limitations, is the most powerful novelist Canada has yet produced. There are depths of philosophical and psychological insight in his work which make him the only Canadian novelist worthy to share the company of such men as Hardy, Balzac and Tolstoi. He is not their equal but, like Leacock, he might sit at the same table without embarrassment".²¹

The definition of canonical and non-canonical works brings forth another ideological debate. By defining a work as non-canonical the author is implicitly relegated to a minority position and supports the authority and authenticity of canonical works as reflecting the majority's values. This minority position is often equated with the marginalized social identity categories of race, gender, and class thereby marginalizing the author's experience. While it is the responsibility of canonical texts to reinforce the ideological values of the dominant power, marginalized works counter by offering a system of non-canonical support promoting "transgressive, subversive, antihegemonic"

²¹ Desmond Pacey, Creative Writing in Canada (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1961) 209.

values (Guillory 20). Not gaining the recognition of the established literary institution diminishes the contributions of a work and implicitly refers to the marginalized author's experience as merely representational, not part of the dominant experience. Guillory confirms that "the author returns in the critique of the canon, not as a genius, but as the representation of a social identity." (10). But it must be reiterated that the canon requires a dichotomous environment in which a centre and margin interact in an symbiotic arrangement of resistance and appropriation. Although the centre diminishes the minority's position, the centre depends on the marginal for originality and avenues for continued fluidity.

As the value of marginal experiences rises in the aftermath of a deconstructed imagined community, canonical notions of inclusion are being forced to change. The liberal pluralist approach to inclusion, though, poses the impossible task of overcoming the reality of broad individual experiences within social groups. How can a central canon maintain cohesion with so many shared experiences emerging and the dominant values losing majority status? The diversity within the categories of race, gender, and class adds to the inconceivable task of gaining authentic representation.

This representation is difficult to express in an institutional manner. In order to represent a marginal voice, critics and readers are challenged with choosing works that offer a firm range of experience. Anthologies are often a popular tool utilized as textbooks in education for demonstrating the marginal experience. The anthology allows an academic to research the "other" through its provision of multiple versions. However, the construction of anthologies is often committed by the majority, therefore interpretation

of the outsider is flawed. The compilation brings forth a consensus of the community's values or an alternative canon that supports the dominant values of the marginal social group. Lecker explains: "while anthologies are often built on the idea of transmitting consensus, their success is often measured, paradoxically, by their ability to challenge the conservatism implicit in consensus".²² This consensus is built through the selections of editors who are removed from the community. Anthologies such as *Other Solitudes: Canadian Multicultural Fictions* (1990) reveal a collection of minority writing for the consumption of the majority. The editors make selections based on readerly needs yet such a canon designed exclusively by critics can affect representational accuracy.

Another form of anthologizing literature is through the formation of university syllabi. The process of creating a reading list for students is one of inclusion. A professor does not form a syllabus through a process of elimination, but through a process of selection. Choosing to include a text acts as a means of canonizing it. The canon is therefore visible in the educational system as multiple syllabi support similar values in reading within individual pedagogic institutions (Guillory 31). Even as the syllabus is revised over time through progressive dissections of its assumptions by faculty and new graduate students, the process of canon creation is perpetuated. Revision does not remove canonical authority, it simply demonstrates its fluidity. The process of modernizing curriculum encounters conflict and:

the reactionary defense of the traditional "canon" thus betrays itself as ignorant of the cultural history [or context] sedimented in the very syllabus it desires to fix.

²² Robert Lecker, English-Canadian Literary Anthologies: An Enumerative Bibliography (Toeswater, ON: Reference Press, 1997) viii.

On the other hand, it should no longer be necessary to present certain other works, “non-canonical” works, as intrinsically opposed to a hegemonic principle of canonicity, as this is likewise to forget the history sedimented in any syllabus of study. (51)

The syllabus is a visible record of esteemed values. It should be noted though that ignoring the original reasons for including selected texts during revision and criticizing an aging syllabus has the potential to lose key connections to fundamental knowledge and ideals. The revision of canonical lists must be critically performed to maintain a link to the past and its relevant information.

To maintain the stability and unity of canonical values, the university can establish a system of reading “out of context” (Guillory 43). Guillory asserts that by removing historical context, the diversity of the present society can be deracinated into a single national culture. He further states:

It is just by suppressing culture in the ethnographic sense - or reserving that sense of culture for non-“Western” artifacts - that the traditional curriculum can appropriate the “great works” of Western civilization for the purpose of constituting an imaginary cultural unity. . . The deracination of the text tradition thus forces us to define the intertextual relation, say, between Aquinas and Aristotle as evidence of the continuity of Western culture, but it allows us to set aside that fact that Aristotle and Aquinas have almost nothing in common *culturally*. (author’s emphasis 42)

Guillory’s comments enter into the essential discussion of cultural appropriation in order to sustain unity. By establishing a system of reading out of context, the individual’s concept of culture is distorted to believe it is inclusive of all Western values. By promoting a superficial understanding of Western values it becomes easier to appropriate those marginal voices threatening from outside the tradition.

The fluid nature of canonical structure through reactionary mechanisms such as appropriation will ensure the adaptability of canons and their survival through global fragmentation; nonetheless, the endurance of central canons is obviously threatened. As literary theory deconstructs universal truths, it embraces a decentralized ideology. This movement suggests the future of canons must be based on a foundation of the individual, rather than democratic tastes. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. believes it should not be an issue of canonical and non-canonical division, rather “Literary works configure into a tradition . . . because writers read other writers and ground their representations of experience in models of language provided largely by other writers to whom they feel akin.”²³ Gates emphasizes the canon’s ability to share knowledge and experiences rather than stratify communities as a power structure. Kermode also promotes a movement away from the closed canon and prompts us to ask ourselves, “By what means do we attribute value to works of art, and how do our valuations affect our ways of attending to them?” (xiii).

The structure of canons possesses several levels of participation. Their content and value is formalized by institutional control. By asserting standard forms of interpretation and understanding of texts, academics can shape how the general public reads and appreciates certain writing above others. However, the public is empowered as the canon is a living organism that must adapt to its environment. Its fluid nature and reactionary senses require the canon to accommodate societal shifts in value. The canon must ultimately serve the public’s needs. It remains questionable though whether the

²³ Henry Louis Gates Jr, Forward, A Voice from the South (New York: Oxford U.P., 1988) xviii.

public's demands are ever fully independent of canonical influence.

The Canadian canon is a demonstration of the evolution of public demands. Colonial Canada originally imported the values of its mother country's canon. The European canon was useful to settlers in its comforting and familiar connection to the past; however, European standards dominated the literary realm and placed the native canon in a marginal and diminutive position. Canadians were strongly linked to their past but this hindered the development of independent literary value. As new interpretive communities were formed to understand the Canadian literary landscape, the public's need for a central Canadian canon would strengthen. The link to European experiences diminished as domestic nationalism grew causing canonical shifts to meld Old World values with native experiences. The post-colonial demand for a central canon is an important development in Canadian canonical fluidity and will be explored further in the subsequent chapters.

Chapter 2

“Forging a Tradition: The Construction of the Canadian Canon”

To effectively criticize the Canadian canon, it is necessary to investigate its literary history. The construction of the canon gained momentum over a short time compared to European or even the United States' literary institutions. Beginning with a colonial birth, Canadian literary consciousness evolved slowly for several decades before experiencing a tremendous awakening during the peak of Canada's nationalist spirit of the 1960s. The establishment of a mature Canadian literary presence follows a critical path that was produced through several venues including university curriculum, literary conferences, government support, and publishing production. During this period Canada's literary institution developed in a number of ways. Not only was more literature being published, it was a case of the entire Canadian literary industry being aroused. Canadian authors were writing with an industry that could support them. As more Canadian authors emerged, the need to publish this new work became undeniable. Canadian literature would gain independence from British and American studies of English in university education in the mid-twentieth century. This autonomy bred increased proficiency in literary criticism; Canadian literature was granted value and attention from critics. Such exposure lends itself to a functional economy of literature as the general public and school curriculums demanded increased production of these valued Canadian texts for consumption. Checklists of Canadian authors were assembled and Canadian literature

libraries series were published from which academics could construct their syllabi and the general public could grow more informed about their literary tradition. Although this is an overly simplified breakdown of its evolution, all of these elements are significant in their contributions to the English-Canadian canon. However, throughout the entire evolution of the Canadian canon, debate regarding Canadian values is evident which impedes any essential consensus on literary value.

Significant canon construction and controversy in Canada can be defined by major events in literary history which occurred over approximately thirty years. Among these events were the first literary conference in 1955, the creation of the New Canadian Library in 1957, the publication of the *Literary History of Canada* in 1965, and the 1978 Calgary Conference on the Canadian Novel. These events mark critical periods in the development of Canadian literature as a recognized entity. Through this period Canadian literature experienced the benefits and rigors of self-discovery, and demonstrated a fluid quality.

This chapter is devoted to tracing the investigation of literary values in Canada and the naming of what would be Canada's classic texts. Limitations of space dictate that this examination of the development of the Canadian canon cannot be a comprehensive history, rather it is meant to provide specific instances of canonical formation. The canon was created during a peak period of nationalist sentiment and, according to Robert Lecker, came to value a combination of nationalism and mimetic biases, the resulting view idealizes a fixed notion of Canada through a formalist and realist prejudice.²⁴ Lecker

²⁴ Robert Lecker advances this argument that the English-Canadian canon was forged in a conservative cast which privileged and valued the properties of "representational realism," or more specifically mimesis. He states "My observations on the canonization of Canadian literature between 1965 and 1978 are meant to suggest that the value of the classics that were created during this period was a

contends the values of the Canadian canon are still readily identifiable prompting

a preoccupation with history and historical placement; an interest in topicality, mimesis, verisimilitude, and documentary presentation; a bias in favour of the native over the cosmopolitan; a pressure toward formalism; a concern with traditional over innovative forms . . . an expression of national self-consciousness; a valorization of the cautious, democratic, moral imagination before the liberal, inventive one; a hegemonic identification with texts that are ordered, orderable, safe . . . (*Making* 26)

However, it is the purpose of this chapter to demonstrate that these values have been questioned throughout the history of the canon thereby challenging the validity of Lecker's mimetic canon in today's literary world.

As late as the 1920s, the literary scene in Canada represented a marginal existence. Although there was obviously Canadian literature from poets and authors such as Susanna Moodie, Thomas Chandler Haliburton, Charles G.D. Roberts, Archibald Lampman, Bliss Carman, and Stephen Leacock, many works were glossed over by academics and critics alike. As the young Canadian literary landscape began to develop it was maturing in the presence of influential canons already established in Britain and the United States. Therefore, the literature produced in these nations garnered a majority of critical attention and Canadian literature was relegated to a minor position. Canadian literature was often merged into grander centres of colonial and American writers. In fact, Canadian literature

function of their ability to represent nationalist currency through a displaced formal equivalent: mimesis" (*Making* 37). He continues by saying "few will admit that this desire to reflect upon the country led to the valorization of the type of literature best suited to this kind of reflection: realistic fiction" (38). His concept suggests that the canon is necessarily limited by the boundaries of mimetic realism. According to Lecker, such a mimetically-based canon was inspired and entrenched by the thematic style of writing during the 1960s and 1970s. See Lecker's *Making it Real: The Canonization of English-Canadian Literature*.

was often taught in schools as a literature strongly intertwined with American literature.²⁵ This condescending view was reflected in the educational system's lack of regard towards its own nation's literature. Records show that in 1925 Canadian literature was first accepted into the English department of the University of Western Ontario, but understanding of the new subject was weak at best (King 8). Courses lacked the necessary critical resources to make any study of Canadian literature viable. Published writing was expensive and scarce, and critical analysis of the work was all but non-existent. By 1934, Western combined Canadian and American literatures into a joint study (King 9). Although the concept had merit in considering the mingling of influences between nations, quite often Canadian authors were secondary and lost amongst the American icons such as Hawthorne and Whitman. Canadian literature would not gain a strong independence in university curriculums until 1970 (King 10).

Canadian literature required educated criticism as modern poetry established an early maturity. During the 1920s, poetry enjoyed the privilege of defining the majority of the Canadian canon. The values of this early canon rested on idyllic themes and classic pastoral style. In an article for *Canadian Literature*, A.J.M. Smith described “the bulk of Canadian verse [as] romantic in conception and conventional in form. Its two great themes are Nature and Love . . .” (quoted in Dudek 38). As space is limited in this paper, it is sufficient to say that modern poetry quietly existed in Canada for some time before gaining critical attention during the 1920s. Louis Dudek and Michael Gnarowski write:

²⁵ Sarah King, “The Failure of Canadian Literature: A Call for Revisioning the University English Curriculum,” *Open Letter* 9:1 (Fall 1994): 8-10.

It is often assumed that the modern idiom in Canadian poetry sprang full-blown from the editorial brow of A.J.M. Smith and F.R. Scott, both guiding spirits behind *The McGill Fortnightly Review* (1925-1927). This assumption places the beginning of the modern tradition in the middle of the 1920s, and serves to support the view that literary developments in Canada at that point were a generation behind those of literary centres of the world. The truth, however, is that a sense of strong modernist individualism is apparent in the work of some Canadian poets before that time.²⁶

Poetry in Canada did demonstrate a marked ability to produce modernist writing, but experimentation with form was divided between the traditional and avant-garde schools.

(Although experimental writing survived quietly in Canadian literature, its existence speaks to the role of marginal writing and its resistance to central forms. Canadian literature continues to maintain these implicit marginal voices to sustain shifts in canonical values.) The traditional school defined the canon's conventional values and influenced fiction a few decades later as it established itself as the more popular genre and overtook poetry's dominant prestige. The later marginalization of poetry, plays, and belle lettres speaks to a major shift in literary value during the 1950s.²⁷

Critical awareness experienced a progressive movement from lofty nationalist sentiment and tradition to self-reflexive criticism based in individualism. Representing the nationalist bias was Canada's most formidable literary critic of the early twentieth century Lorne Pierce (1890-1961). According to Desmond Pacey, Pierce was an essential player in establishing a foundation for the study of Canadian literature (20). His connection to

²⁶ Louis Dudek and Michael Gnarowski, "The Precursors," *The Making of Modern Poetry in Canada*, ed. Louis Dudek and Michael Gnarowski (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1967) 3.

²⁷ In I.S. MacLaren's "Defusing the Canon" the lineage of this marginalization is defined by the early preference given to "belle lettres" or literature over less fictional works (i.e. travel literature, exploration stories, sketches, sermons or kitchen stories.) Eventually fiction in the form of the novel would surpass poetry as the benchmark of Canadian literary success.

Ryerson Press (formerly the Methodist Book and Publishing House) suggests an interesting link between church and literary value. The Methodist Book and Publishing House was founded by Egerton Ryerson in 1829. Ryerson established that the original purpose of the press was:

to serve the Church, [but that] did not preclude him or his successors from extending the usefulness of the House into the broad fields of education, general literature and public affairs. Because this was the first, and for a number of years the only place in Canada where books could be either printed or published it was not only natural but inevitable that the House should have interested itself in making known the best that was being thought and written by pioneer Canadians.²⁸

This connection of Church and publishing house would no doubt restrain its printing privileges to more orthodox authors. The press was instrumental in publishing early Canadian authors such as Catherine Parr Traill, Charles G. D. Roberts, Ernest Thompson Seton, and Frederick Philip Grove. During the nearly forty years Pierce acted as editor of Ryerson Press, working rigorously to publish almost every Canadian writer of significance (20). Pierce acted not only as a publisher and editor, but bibliographer, lecturer, and energetic publicist as well. His devotion to promoting Canadian talent inspired several anthologies and literary series. In 1923, Pierce launched the “Makers of Canadian Literature” series to give readers detailed background on individual authors. The series originally promised thirty-one volumes but the elaborate undertaking only lasted half a dozen volumes before ending.²⁹

The passion of Pierce’s devout nationalism is apparent in his history of Ryerson

²⁸ C.H. Dickinson, Foreword, The House of Ryerson 1829-1954 (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1954) v.

²⁹ Desmond Pacey, “The Writer and his Public,” Literary History of Canada, ed. Carl Klinck et al. (Toronto: U. of T. Press, 1965) 485.

Press when he declares Canada's eventual emergence from literary marginality. He writes:

As the years pass we shall become a completely independent publishing house, developing our own line, in our own time, and in our own way. . . Once we, in common with all Canadian publishing concerns, cringed and fawned before British or American lords of the Press; once we bore the colonial stigma with complacency - but not again. . . Never again can a foreign publisher tyrannize over our policy. Never again will any publisher anywhere tell us what we must or must not do, and when we must or must not do it. We have grown up.³⁰

Pacey describes how Pierce committed himself to the development of a national sense of identity and to the maintenance of literary values which can be best summed up in the phrase "romantic idealism" (20). Critical assessment was based on a system of values entrenched in nationhood. Yet evaluation based on the author's ability to successfully represent the hegemonic theme of the Canadian landscape confused quality with conformity. A.J.M. Smith elaborates: "If you write, apparently, of the far north and the wild west and the picturesque east, seasoning well with allusions to the Canada goose, fir trees, maple leaves, snowshoes, northern lights, etc., the public grasp the fact that you are a Canadian poet, whose works are to be bought from the same patriotic motive that prompts the purchaser of Eddy's matches. . ."³¹ In this period of critical immaturity, Smith obviously lamented the simplistic link between nationalism and symbolism.

A critical movement emerged in response to this romantic idealism headed by A.J.M. Smith, F.R. Scott, and A.M. Klein. The movement dominated the Canadian literary scene through the thirties, forties and fifties by tempering Pierce's rhetorical practice with the application of shifting values that reflected a modern, industrial society.

³⁰ Lorne Pierce, The House of Ryerson 1829-1954 (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1954) 50-51.

³¹ A.J.M. Smith, "Wanted: Canadian Criticism," The Making of Modern Poetry in Canada, ed. Louis Dudek and Michael Gnarowski (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1967) 32.

Smith's new movement removes previous boundaries limiting subject and style. In 1928,

Smith wrote:

First and foremost, as a sort of preliminary spade-work, the Canadian writer must put up a fight for freedom in the choice and treatment of his subject. Nowhere is puritanism more disastrously prohibitive than among us . . . Of realism, we are afraid - apparently because there is an impression that it wishes to discredit the picture of our great Dominion as a country where all the women are chaste and the men too pure to touch them if they weren't. Irony is not understood. Cynicism is felt to be disrespectful, unmanly. The idea that any subject whatever is susceptible of artistic treatment, and that praise or blame is to be conferred after a consideration, not of its moral, but of its aesthetic harmony is a proposition that will take years to knock into the heads of our people. But the work must be done. The critic-militant is required for this; not a very engaging fellow, perhaps, but a hard worker, a crusader, and useful withal. (Smith "Wanted" 33)

Smith's concept of a new critical movement charged that works were judged according to universal standards. His ideas attempted to relieve Canada of its colonial and marginal preconceptions and introduce the public to an open artistic forum that effectively employed realism, irony, and cynicism in its writing. As critical abilities developed in the Canadian literary world, protection under national borders would no longer subsidized a writer's quality.

The need to promote an awareness of Canadian literature became very clear to the budding young academics attempting to explore this ignored field. It was becoming increasingly necessary to investigate the distinctiveness of Canadian literature. One enterprising student was Carl Klinck whose early interests in the absence of any authority on Canadian literature translated into his later creation of the most celebrated and comprehensive contribution to Canada's literary history in his series *Literary History of Canada* (1965). This series would become the seminal text contributing to canon

formation during a heightened period of nationalism and cultural awareness.

Klinck began his expedition into the unordered wilderness of Canadian literature with his M.A. thesis in 1929.³² Studying at Columbia University in New York under the supervision of Pelham Edgar, a University of Toronto professor, Klinck studied Canada's early poets such as Pierce, Pratt and Roberts.³³ The young student was often questioned about the purpose of his pursuits in such an obscure field as Canadian poetry but Klinck persisted, he was convinced that Canada had a literature worthy of study. Unlike his contemporaries, all of his scholarship was devoted to the study of Canadian literature albeit within the comparative context of English and American literature (Djwa xiii). Klinck would eventually continue this inclination to study Canadian literature within a relative framework once he was employed by the University of Western Ontario from 1947-73 with his courses on Canadian/American literatures. Klinck, along with other pioneers of Canadian literature, recognized the need to appreciate and celebrate the values inherent in our nation's early literature. It would be Klinck's innovative spirit that would expand beyond his studies to encompass educating others about the strength buried in Canadian literature. However, the Canadian public would need to know the history before they could understand any of the distinct qualities of their national literature.

Basically what Klinck recognized was Canada's need for a canon; a standard set of writings which exemplified Canada's particular contribution to the literary world as a

³² Sandra Djwa, Introduction, Giving Canada a Literary History, by Carl Klinck ed. Sandra Djwa. (Ottawa: Carleton U.P., 1991) ii.

³³ The fact that Carl Klinck performed his post-graduate studies in the United States is indicative of the serious lack of developed graduate programs in Canadian universities at the time.

whole. By establishing a canon a country is able to assert its identity. A national canon has powerful implications for “a country without a national literature is not a country at all” (Lecker *Making* 4). A canon becomes the vital cultural site for a nation to project its nationalist ideologies.³⁴ The nationalistic motivation of a canon is to form a solid base of shared values and ideas that the body of selected literature represents. In doing so, the nation’s stability is fortified through the birth of a visible tradition. One can point to the canon for evidence of shared and common tradition represented within a nation. Once Klinck and his compatriots began defining Canadian literature for the canon in *Literary History*, it was considered also to be a movement towards defining Canada itself because it represented a thorough account of the views, beliefs, and opinions of Canada’s artists and critics.

Along with Klinck's interests, the Canadian literary scene expanded at an accelerated pace during the 1940s and 1950s. Lorne Pierce writes that after the war the promise of a new world inspired the Canadian imagination: “It was said that this was Canada’s century, and most people believed it. Where we once apologized for our writers and artists, and looked to London or New York for leadership, we now became increasingly self-conscious, and independent, and proud of being ourselves” (45). During this period attention to the field emerged from government sources. Canadian literature was aided by new government initiatives such as the Humanities Research Council established in 1944 that provided funding for scholarship in the field of Canadian

³⁴ Robert Lecker, Introduction, Canadian Canons: Essays in Literary Values (Toronto: U of T Press, 1991) 9.

literature. There was also the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences better known as the Massey Commission (1951) that emphasized development of the Canadian artist and national tradition. Its mandate stated:

[I]t is desirable that the Canadian people should know as much as possible about their country, its history and traditions; and about their national life and common achievements; that it is in the national interest to give encouragement to institutions which express national feeling, promote common understanding and add to the variety and richness of Canadian life, rural as well as urban.³⁵

Massey recognized the growing trend in unified national ideas as his report comments on “the innumerable institutions, movements and individuals interested in the arts, letters and sciences throughout our country [that] are now forming the national tradition of the future” (4). The Massey Report recognized the emerging desire of Canadians to define their own traditions. The report attempted to accurately capture the values of a “cross-section” of Canadians, yet this sample was most likely composed of predominantly white Anglo-Saxon Christians. The commission traveled to 16 cities in the country; however, the majority of visits were to Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, and Ottawa (Massey 423-433). As well, visits consisted largely of high culture locales; namely museums, universities and broadcasting stations. The elite nature of these visits suggests that a valid cross-section of the minority in Canada was not consulted by the commission. Although the unified identity which Massey documented in Canada would diversify over time, the traditions his “cross-section” defined laid the foundation for largely homogenous canonical values.

³⁵ Government of Canada, Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences 1949-1951 (Ottawa, 1951) 4.

A plethora of short anthologies also materialized during this early literary boom by single authors looking to examine Canada's earlier writers. Texts such as A.J.M. Smith's *Book of Canadian Poetry* (1943), Carl Klinck and Reginald Watters's joint venture *Canadian Anthology* (1955), Reginald Watters's *A Checklist of Canadian Literature and Background Materials 1628-1960* (1959), and Inglis Freeman Bell and Reginald Watters's *On Canadian Literature 1806-1960* (1966) provide an excellent index for Canadian literature in their descriptions of Canada's growing body of writing, but very little critical analysis is present. Regardless of the lack of critical analysis, anthologies like Watters's *Checklist* contribute an essential list of published works in Canada. The mere publication of these texts suggests that they qualify as worthy to the Canadian public. As Watters's notes in his "Preface," Part I of "the *Checklist* is simply an inventory of what Canadians are known to have published . . . Separation of the bad from the excellent, the trivial from the important, can come only from those who carefully examine and appraise the books listed here."³⁶ The original edition of the *Checklist* included approximately 12,000 books divided into two parts. The first names texts within the categories of: poetry, poetry and prose, fiction, and drama. The second section is selectively compiled background information "which seem likely to be of value to anyone studying the literature or culture of Canada" (Watters ix). Included in this section are texts categorized under: biography, essays and speeches, local history and description, religion and morality, social history, scholarship, and travel and description. Watters also acknowledges the difficult task of

³⁶ Reginald Watters, *A Checklist of Canadian Literature and Background Materials 1628-1960*, 2nd ed. 1959; (Toronto: U. of T. Press, 1972) ix.

deciding which authors deserve recognition in the Canadian checklist. To do so, it became necessary to establish Canadian criteria. For the *Checklist*, the definition of Canadian was “left very broad” (Watters x). In the end, the common criterion requires the author to reside in Canada for some period of time. The canon was becoming self-aware and the literary process of comprehensively naming texts, as Watters did with his *Checklist*, broke new ground in developing an understanding of the breadth of Canadian writing. The task of identifying the texts’ cohesive values would follow as critical responses to the literature grew.

In 1959, the first periodical devoted to the review of Canadian literature entered the circle. *Canadian Literature* boosted the opportunity for academics and the public to throw “light on a field that has never been illuminated systematically by any previous periodical. . .”³⁷ In his first editorial, George Woodcock pronounced that the magazine’s manifesto would be to publish “good writing, writing that says something fresh and valuable on literature in Canada . . . no matter where it originates” (4). Woodcock’s vague conception of what constitutes “Canadian” again speaks to the lack of solid critical criteria and an opening for inclusivity and canonical fluidity as the term was stretched to include various individuals. The anthologies and periodicals mentioned above would all offer brief and specific criticism based on undefined theoretical frameworks; however, none were as exhaustive as Klinck’s. Each of them fall short of defining a Canadian canon, while Klinck’s *Literary History* offers a larger scale examination of Canada’s entire literary history.

³⁷ George Woodcock, “Editorial,” *Canadian Literature* 1 (Summer 1959): 3.

In 1956, Klinck proposed the concept of a literary history text to the University of Toronto Press. The idea was received with some skepticism over its huge implications and groundwork, but it was eventually accepted. The grand anthology would seek to illustrate Canadian literature and its meaning rather than simply deliver a systematic recording of its history. Critics from across Canada, such as Fred Cogswell, Desmond Pacey and Munro Beattie, would be asked to contribute on their topics of expertise. By employing academic perspectives, Klinck performed a pioneering feat that would give Canadian literature the legitimizing analysis it lacked. Klinck's text is something of a "Royal Commission on Canadian Literature" in its approach, making it more authoritative and therefore more canonical because the series commissioned several of Canada's leading critics and their views of what is essentially Canadian.

Before the project was set to begin, George Brown of the U of T Press gave the would-be editor Klinck two pieces of advice, both of which he politely refused. Klinck said of the advice, "I wasn't going to rewrite if necessary, nor was I going to carry things on with a firm hand."³⁸ The consequences of such an impartial approach on the part of Klinck are critical. Klinck's relaxed attitude allowed the text to be shaped by multiple critical voices. By refusing to rewrite or firmly control the articles of his contributors, Klinck was compiling a canon based on partial diversity. However, it must be recognized the majority of the articles were written by professors and elite members of the literary community. Although controlled and defined by hegemonic, colonially educated scholars,

³⁸ Carl Klinck, Giving Canada a Literary History, ed. Sandra Djwa (Ottawa: Carleton U.P. 1991) 104.

the canonical text, like the Massey Commission, could boast something of an apparent diversity. The text Klinck produced is perhaps more Canadian because of this multiplicity and impartiality, but it remains implicitly dominated by conservative forces. Klinck's series produced a comprehensive overview of the shared values and tradition in Canadian literature. As T.D. MacLulich remarks, "Publication of the *Literary History*, then, gave a definitive imprimatur of respectability to the academic study of Canadian writing."³⁹.

Klinck divided the study into four distinct periods. The first entitled "New Found Lands" examines the earliest literature written in Canada by explorers and initial settlers. The second part, "The Transplanting of Traditions," investigates the adaptation of European values into a New Canadian setting. It is the third period that advances the understanding of Canadian literature in "The Emergence of a Tradition." This period is defined by Confederation until post-World War I works and investigates how universal genres like historical romance and animal stories became distinctly Canadian. Nature stories by Catherine Parr Traill and Susanna Moodie express the difficulties of living in the backwoods of a developing nation, while Charles Roberts's innovative imagination approaches an understanding of the cruel realities of animal instinct. The first three volumes trace the evolution of Canadian writing from colonial origins to discovering a distinctly Canadian voice.

The final period, "The Realization of a Tradition," examines Canada between 1920 and 1960 as authors escaped high colonialism and became wholly self-aware of the nation

³⁹ T.D. MacLulich, "What Was Canadian Literature? Taking Stock of the CanLit Industry," *Essays on Canadian Writing* 30 (Winter 1984-85): 14.

surrounding them. It is during this period that realism became a notable literary genre in Canada. Realism seeks to represent a subject without external interference or imposition of the author. The nature of settings and characters remain true to life. Realism had tremendous effects on the literary scene in Canada. Its prevalence aided in the development of what would be termed a distinctly Canadian critical perspective. The earlier influence of Smith's strong imperatives had lost weight among critics and scholars through the late fifties and a new hybrid of criticism emerged. The school of mythopoetic and thematic criticism became an influential critical style defined by its heavy concern with realism. It combined the nationalist tendencies of Pierce with the universal, Eurocentric, and archetypal qualities pronounced by Smith to investigate the significance of Canadian realism. A full discussion on the impact of thematics will continue later in the chapter.

The *Literary History of Canada* represents a substantial move forward in forging the Canadian canon. In a review of the *Literary History of Canada*, Malcolm Ross acknowledges the work's role as a "trustworthy guide to a literature of some importance still relatively unknown in Europe."⁴⁰ Ross's review goes on to comment:

the book as it stands has the advantage of being dispassionate. It is happily free of any tract of self-congratulation - or of self-depreciation. The authors are not afraid of making judgements. As Professor Northrop Frye says in the admirable concluding chapter, there are no Canadians among 'the world's major writers.' Nevertheless, in terms of the severest standards, Professor Klinck and his colleagues are clearly right in assuming that a literature of some substance has developed in Canada from the mid-nineteenth century onwards . . . [and] a real maturity can now be claimed for Canadian writing. (12)

The canonical project Klinck supervised sought to answer Northrop Frye's famous riddle

⁴⁰ Malcolm Ross, Rev. of *Literary History of Canada*, ed. Carl Klinck, *English Studies: A Journal of English Letters*, 48:1 (1967): 13.

of “Where is Here?” The massive text Klinck and his compatriots produced acted as a road map to define place. Stability is affirmed through a canon’s emphasis upon order and tradition in a nation. By establishing a rooted sense of place and affirming identity, the canon’s stability is soothing and calms any panic rising from Canada’s infamous ambiguity towards a fixed sense of national identity. The conclusion to *Literary History* provides a concrete reply to this spacial identity crisis as Frye writes:

English Canada was first part of the wilderness, then part of North America and the British Empire, then part of the world. But it has gone through these revolutions too quickly for a tradition of writing to be founded on any one of them . . . It seems the Canadian sensibility has been profoundly disturbed, not so much by our famous problem of identity . . . as by a series of paradoxes in what confronts identity. It is less perplexed by the question who am I? than by some such riddle as Where is Here?⁴¹

The transient nature of English-Canada shifting between national loyalties took a rigorous toll on the stability of its identity. Frye stresses the critical issue for Canadians to resolve for themselves is definition of place. Only once the individual has some degree of awareness as to where they stand can they begin the process of understanding themselves and how they fit into this location. Frye states: “There is far too much Canadian writing for this book not to become, in places, something of a catalogue; but the outlines of the structure are clear” (822). Rather than a dogmatic and prescriptive manifesto of Canadian literature, *Literary History of Canada* provides readers with a descriptive map to the national literature. Establishing this literary history thereby defines the landscape. Boundaries and shared qualities become more obvious once the place itself is realized.

⁴¹ Northrop Frye, Conclusion, *Literary History of Canada*, ed. Carl Klinck et al. (Toronto: U. of T. Press, 1965) 826.

The work of Northrop Frye later inspired a movement to uncover a distinctly Canadian critical discourse. The introduction of archetypal and thematic criticism in Canada supported an new objective to empirically identify patterns in texts and hypothesize their contribution to the production of meaning. Works such as D.G. Jones's *Butterfly on Rock* (1970), Margaret Atwood's *Survival* (1972), Laurence Ricou's *Vertical Man/Horizontal World* (1973), and John Moss's *Patterns of Isolation in English Canadian Fiction* (1974) all concentrate upon naming themes, patterns, and symbols within texts and categorizing them as specifically Canadian. The criticism stresses an intense connection to place in response to Frye's riddle "Where is Here?" The popularity of thematic criticism in Canada rose to support the realist genre. Thematic critics explored the significance of themes and symbolism in the fiction and their relation to real life. Critics such as Margaret Atwood valued the mimetic function that reflected society in Canada and addressed the reader with recognizable concerns. Atwood comments in her thematic guide, *Survival*, that "only when literature names situations we can recognize will writer and reader connect in an area we call real life: it's our situation that's being talked about".⁴² Yet, thematic criticism would later be challenged for its lack of critically evaluative methodology when the canon's content became the centre of dispute during the 1970s.

The compulsion to relate meaning to nationhood limits the scope of criticism. Critics concerned themselves with investigating authority, voice, place and social position,

⁴² Margaret Atwood, *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature* (Toronto: Anansi, 1972) 241.

but ironically the majority's bias belonged to the homogenous hegemony of centrist Anglophones. In attempting to form a distinctly Canadian tradition to respond to the canon, thematic critics essentially constructed a rigidly narrow system of values for evaluation. They effectively normalized knowledge to the degree that mimetic representations of the Canadian landscape were measured according to the biased authority of the school.⁴³ They then intensified exclusion by entrenching it into the literary academy. Thematic criticism sought to explore Canadian realist texts and adopt their imagery and symbolism into the Canadian imagination; however, the emphasis upon mimetic values also restricted the scope of Canadian canonical values. Frank Davey contends that representative realism and thematic criticism are centrally focused. While Robert Lecker maintains thematic critics such as Moss, Atwood, and Frye are the founders of a canon based on "representational realism," Davey adds that thematic critics write out of nationalist ideologies "of a central Canadian position in which the English-language literatures of Ontario and Quebec become mainstream Canadian literature while those of other parts of Canada become regional" (Davey "Critical" 677). A formal resistance to thematic criticism emerges through the late seventies to voice these concerns; most notably Frank Davey's anti-thematic article, "Surviving the Paraphrase," which he delivered at the first gathering of the Association of Canadian and Quebec Literatures at York University in 1974. However, the temptation of familiarity possible through

⁴³ Barry Cameron, "Theory and Criticism: Trends in Canadian Literature," Literary History of Canada, ed. W.H. New, 2nd ed., vol. 4 (Toronto: U. of T. Press, 1990) 120.

representational realism had managed to forge a strong influence on the Canadian canon.

Another significant product during this canonization period is development of the New Canadian Library in 1957. The New Canadian Library, a reprint series published by McClelland and Stewart Inc. ("The Canadian Publishers"), asserts itself as the primary printer of Canadian literature and boasts its publication of "the best of Canadian writing." The series is marketed as printing the canon of Canadian literature and as being the leader in the Canadian literary scene. However, in her extensive work on the NCL Janet Friskney concludes that "Any notion of the NCL of this period [1958-1978] as synonymous with the Canadian literary canon . . . must be rejected." Friskney continues by asserting: "Titles deemed significant by literary scholars of the day were routinely denied a place in the series because their publishers were unwilling to grant permission for their reprinting. Moreover, only a portion of what was included in NCL could make any claim for canonical status."⁴⁴ When one considers the history of the NCL, it becomes clear that the *canon* the NCL publishes is distinct from Klinck's contribution in that it has been shaped by cultural as well as economic factors.

In early December 1952, Malcolm Ross wrote publisher Jack McClelland to ask "Do you have any plans for college or school texts? What about a series of low-priced paper-cover Canadian classics? Would do wonders for the teaching of Canadian literature."⁴⁵ Ross was frustrated by the lack of affordable and available Canadian

⁴⁴ Janet B. Friskney, "On a Mission for Culture: The New Canadian Library and its Milieu, 1953-1978," diss., (Ottawa: Carleton U, 1999) 5.

⁴⁵ James King, Jack, a Life with Writers: The Story of Jack McClelland (Toronto: Knopf (continued...))

literature for his classes. Hardcover editions were too expensive for students and paperbacks were not readily available. The proposal put forth to McClelland offered the potential for mutual benefit; facilitating accessibility to Canadian literature in the classroom as well as giving the publisher an innovative series. Described as a young maverick in the Canadian publishing industry, Jack McClelland was perhaps the most appropriate individual to undertake such a risky investment. McClelland represented a new perspective on Canadian publishing as he broke out of the colonial mold and was willing to advance new Canadian writing. However, McClelland would be wary about immediately jumping on the idea. Earlier, John Gray at MacMillan Publishing had turned Ross' idea down saying his firm would "lose their shirts" if they attempted such a proposal (King 96). Although the NCL would become a major success for the publisher, McClelland recognized the economic reality of the series was very demanding in acquiring rights to published material. It would be two years after Ross' initial inquiry before Jack McClelland would agree to the venture stating after a "long struggle with costs, we are finally able to turn on the green light . . . sink or swim" (King 96).

By 1957, Malcolm Ross was working along side Jack McClelland to produce the series' first four titles: F.P. Grove's *Over Prairie Trails*, Morley Callaghan's *Such Is My Beloved*, Stephen Leacock's *Literary Lapses* and Sinclair Ross' *As for Me and My House*.⁴⁶ In an interview with Judith Breen and Lynn Atkinson in 1974, Malcolm Ross

(...continued)
Canada, 1999) 96.

⁴⁶ Appendix B provides a complete listing of titles published by the NCL between 1957-1985.

asserted his original desire “to get these books moving so that people could use them.”⁴⁷

His goal to provide texts for educational purpose worked symbiotically with McClelland’s opportunity to expand the Canadian literature market. The series began what was to be the first commercial operation of promoting Canada’s literary canon.

In Lecker’s “The New Canadian Library: A Classic Deal,” (*Making* 154-72) a tone of suspicion impedes an objective investigation into the purpose of the NCL. Lecker’s argument pushes the idea that Ross and McClelland colluded to forcibly produce and sell Canadian “classics.” He asserts that the inaugural titles chosen for reprint were the most financially available for the young company. All of them were previously out of print for almost twenty years, such as Sinclair Ross’s novel. Ross’ text had been largely ignored by critics and the failed novel was therefore a cheap reprint (*Making* 176-7). Such a scenario leads to Lecker’s accusation that cost was dictating the publisher’s choice in taste. The NCL set out to sell these inexpensive titles as essential texts for understanding the Canadian tradition, and never attempted to define what tradition these titles shared.

Lecker does pose fundamental questions about the selection process asking:

Why were students and teachers given these particular texts? . . . What values informed the pedagogical canon at its inception? What was the controlling vision behind the selection process that would determine so much of what would come to be received in Canadian classrooms as the canonical norm? What kind of standards accounted for the choice of scholars who were asked to contribute introductions to NCL volumes? (*Making* 155)

The New Canadian Library did and continues to have an immense impact on the education of students and the reading public which make Lecker’s questions prudent. However, his

⁴⁷ Laura Groening. “Malcolm Ross and the New Canadian Library: Making it Real or Making a Difference?” *Studies in Canadian Literature* 25.1 (Spring 2000): 96.

answers contribute to suspicion of intent rather than a celebration of this pioneering event in Canadian literature. Lecker contends the responsibility of defining value of these texts was left to the decision of cultural institutions after they had bought the collection, yet this conspiracy theory disregards Malcolm Ross' scholarly input as general editor.

Ideally, Ross desired a diverse series that provided Canadian students as well as the general public with evidence of regional and ethnic diversity. The texts Ross tended to advance in the inaugural years of the series support a variety of cultural portraits of the Canadian landscape. Novels by F.P. Grove, Gabrielle Roy, Hugh MacLennan, Ringuet, and Ralph Connor are examples of literature that captures the social reality of Canada through strong literary narratives. Essentially Ross became situated as a mediator between commercial and cultural attitudes toward value due to the library's dual purpose to educate and develop the Canadian literary scene. In his introductions to five NCL publications, Ross emphasizes both the literary strengths present as well as the authors' ability to contend with cultural issues. For Grove's *Over Prairie Trails* (1957), Ross stressed "Here is lore for the naturalist and the historian - but shaped and held in the hand of the artist" (x). With education always in mind, Ross was attempting to convey the richness of Canadian literature to an audience that had little knowledge of its own treasures. Although Canadian diversity has grown immensely since 1957, the selection of texts for the New Canadian Library was based largely on the work's ability to display the depth and variety in Canadian culture.

Lecker's argument attempts to obscure early intentions by emphasizing the economic benefits later gained by McClelland and Stewart. Laura Groening criticizes

Lecker's hindsight saying "Jack McClelland's risky financial venture on behalf of the national culture is thus being reread as an act of monetary opportunism" (99). She adds that "Lecker equates the NCL with Jack McClelland, publisher, not with Malcolm Ross, general editor" (101). Ultimately Lecker believes the canon was sold to universities who would then teach these titles as the canon and produce a greater market of students to buy from McClelland and Stewart. While it is hard to dispute the inception of a series with enormous sales potential as an obvious marketing ploy, the reality of this conspiracy is that the NCL's sales were tremendously disappointing in the first three years. McClelland calculated that 5,000 copies of each title had to be sold in order to produce a profit. However, in the first year only 300 copies of each title were ordered, 1,200 in the second, and 1,800 in the third. McClelland complained about the strain the series placed on his firm, yet he refused to abandon it. McClelland realized the NCL's potential due to its national focus. Between 1960-1969, McClelland and Stewart rode the momentum of nationalism arising from the upcoming centennial. They quickly expanded the library over the decade from its original eleven titles to sixty-eight. The explosion in additional titles was risky for the publisher but the company profited as the Centennial period supported a growing interest and demand for Canadian writing. McClelland's astute business sense reaped the benefits of Ross' original vision. The canonical potential of the New Canadian Library would explode with controversy at the Calgary Conference on the Canadian Novel in 1978.

This was certainly not the first conference debating the state of Canadian literature, but it was among the most recognized for its canonization proceedings. Conferences have

acted as major sites for discussion regarding the advancement of Canadian literature. In 1946, Frank Scott, editor of *Northern Review*, attempted an investigation into the fetal stage of Canadian literature. Inspired by an Artist's Conference held at Queen's University in 1941, Scott believed that writing in Canada had reached a maturity that deserved and required formal examination. His idea would not be realized for nine years due to a lack of financial support and critical interest. However, in 1955, support was found, and on July 28th, 1955 the first Canadian Writer's Conference was held at Queen's University. The gathering was designed around logistical problems facing writers and was divided into three categories: "The Writer, His Media and the Public." The main interest of the conference was writing in Canada and its dissemination. Scott notes in his "Introduction" to the published proceedings titled *Writing in Canada* that criticism of Canadian literature scarcely exists at all; that few universities and schools give Canadian literature courses, and if they do are hard pressed to find copies of the books the students should read.⁴⁸ Consequently, the conference's major conclusions emphasized the need for comprehensive education. Participants recognized the need for Canadian literature within the education system in order to build a strong continuing tradition. The conference did not achieve any significant consensus on Canadian literary values, rather its focus upon encouraging the production and distribution of national literature was a movement towards establishing a critical awareness. Though the focus was on publishing issues rather than defining any sense of Canadian-ness, it established a venue for critical awareness. Other notable

⁴⁸ F.R. Scott, Introduction, Writing in Canada: Proceedings of the Canadian Writer's Conference Queen's University 1955, ed. George Whalley (Toronto: Macmillan Publishing, 1956) 4.

conferences were held at U.B.C. in 1956, at Fredericton in 1970, at Calgary in 1973 and Regina in 1979.⁴⁹ Yet of all these meetings, the Calgary conference continues to receive the majority of criticism for its overt actions in canonization.⁵⁰

The conference was attended by various teachers and critics in the Canadian literary scene. The event can be described as something of a bee's nest; a hive of activity packed with a great amount of sting. T.D. MacLulich described the event as something of a "coming-of-age party" for Canadian fiction (18). These descriptions reflect the mixed attitude of participants who resisted or agreed with the conference's ultimate goal of defining exactly what is valuable in Canadian literature. Unarguably, this was a canon-building event.

Canadian literature had gained maturity, and according to organizers, this maturity demanded that consideration of the literature evolve as well. The objective of the conference was therefore to set standards and establish criteria upon which to critically analyze Canadian literature. The Conference programme read:

The Conference on the Canadian Novel will provide a forum for discussions which have four main objectives: to provide a norm which can serve as a curriculum reference for teachers of Canadian literature at all levels; to suggest to publishers selection criteria and titles for future Canadian fiction series; to establish standards for future scholarly editions of Canadian novels; and to provide a guide for Canadians who are interested in the masterworks of their national literature. The final result will be the identification of those novels which have established

⁴⁹ Hallvard Dalhie, Introduction, Taking Stock, ed. Charles Steele (Toronto: ECW, 1982) 1.

⁵⁰ See Linda Lamont-Stewart's "The Calgary Conference Revisited," T.D. MacLulich's "What Was Canadian Literature? Taking Stock of the Canlit Industry," Robert Lecker's "The Canonization of Canadian Literature: An Inquiry into Value" for more information on the debate surrounding the consequences of the Calgary Conference.

themselves as Canadian classics.⁵¹

The division of these objectives demonstrates an awareness that to establish a Canadian canon it is necessary to establish and reinforce a standard in every aspect of disseminating literature, that is education, publishing, and criticism. To achieve these goals, organizers divided the conference into five separate issues for discussion. The first four topics considered the state of Canadian literature through theoretical and thematic examinations. But it would be the fifth and final segment concerning a poll that would garner the most attention and controversy for its explicit attempt to define the canon.

Before the conference even met the canonization process began. Ballots were distributed among the participants who were asked to list their preferences for the top one hundred most important Canadian works of fiction as well as choices for the ten best Canadian novels and ten works of Canadian literature of any genre which they considered most indispensable to the study and appreciation of our national literary heritage (Steele 159). The ballot of two hundred choices was developed by Ross and fellow academic contributors. Suspicion arose, though, as the distribution of ballots was organized by Jack McClelland and fellow publishing representative Anna Porter. The top one hundred list was compiled and the results announced at the end of the conference. McClelland's agenda seemed simple: to create a greater need/demand for a greater amount of books. This market strategy would squeeze competition in the publishing industry to match

⁵¹ Charles Steele, Taking Stock: The Calgary Conference on the Canadian Novel (Toronto: ECW, 1982) 22.

McClelland and Stewart's library, yet in doing so, it promoted an edict of quantity over quality.

Margaret Laurence later expressed distaste for what she felt had been "a tawdry experience" (King 320). Laurence, like many other participants, felt McClelland and Stewart had taken over the conference. "Although she realized that Jack was publicizing the New Canadian Library and trying to commemorate Malcolm Ross' achievement just as he was about to retire from his post," writes James King, "she thought the entire process demeaning and cheap" (320). McClelland was insulted by the accusations that he had spoiled the conference and asserted that the ballot had been conceived in an honest manner. In a letter to Laurence, he wrote:

1. I have absolutely no regret or remorse about anything I did to create or push this conference.
2. If the conference appeared to be pushing M&S authors and M&S books, it is mainly because the conference was about Canadian literature and the Canadian novel, and M&S authors just happen to form a very substantial part of what is Canlit.
3. If pushing the list lends support to my detractors and lends credence to the suspicions raised by a lot of small people, I can't for the life of me think of why that should trouble me. Margaret, I am not running a popularity contest and never have tried to do so except with the people we publish. To hell with these people who resent M&S. (King 321)

McClelland refused to accept that novels should not be classified or compared in a manner such as the conference had done. He also claimed that accusations that the list was a McClelland and Stewart promotion were a joke (King 321). However, it is difficult to refute the benefits the publishers gained as the top one hundred list contained 69% NCL titles. The coincidence of this result is debatable, yet it is clear that the publisher was

intruding into the academic sphere and participants were aware of the dangers of economics mingling with discussions on critical literary values. Malcolm Ross lamented the consequences and told McClelland the fracas was “the most painful experience of my entire career” (King 322). Aside from the immediate controversy regarding McClelland’s participation, conference attendants also debated the consequences of formally developing a canonical list.

Participants like Hallvard Dahlie supported Ross’ poll. He appreciated the purpose of the survey as it attempted to officially categorize the canon. It would name names thereby institutionalizing specific texts. Many academics who had a sense of what novels were most important would have their suspicions confirmed with the poll results. Dahlie expresses this notion more clearly in his introduction to *Taking Stock*, saying “it was necessary to articulate and celebrate the stature that the Canadian novel had by virtue of its own intrinsic qualities already achieved, but which, for various reasons, had not been sufficiently recognized and proclaimed” (3). By surveying academics, Ross’ poll tackled the issue of defining the canon much like Klinck’s *Literary History*. But such a bold categorization did not go unchallenged.

Some participants such as Robert Kroetsch, Laurie Ricou, and Ronald Sutherland resisted the final product. Reasons for disputing this form of canonization ranged with the greatest concern being the fear of creating a “hit parade” of Canadian novels. Participants believed that by asserting this list as *the* list, the canon would become static. Others saw a plain economic agenda behind the survey. It seemed as though the poll was simply a popularity contest or market-research. Ronald Sutherland was quoted as complaining that

the survey was “an unfortunate and misguided gimmick” (Steele 150). Sutherland lamented that such tactics cannot serve to aid Canadian writing in any way. T.D. MacLulich commented on the proceeding saying “what is advertised as a love match may in fact only be a marriage of convenience, or even a kind of business arrangement” (Steele 13). Legitimate canon creation is a difficult process to perform free of economic influence, and the opinions expressed after the Calgary Conference make this clear. During the entire process, participants experience a tremendous amount of pressure on their decisions. Participants began to wonder what it was they had constructed, was it an immovable monster or an expression of an organic creation? Would this canon be the concrete gospel of Canadian literature or would it remain fluid to expanding social values?

It is also necessary to note that the other segments of the conference are equally important in understanding the evolution of academics’ ability to critically respond to the canon’s content. Robert Kroetsch opened the conference by revealing “[his] reluctance - and of [his] need -to locate and discriminate the canon of Canadian fiction” (Steele 9). The argument Kroetsch advances acknowledges the difficulties of constructing a broadly critical perspective when addressing the canon. Historical background must mingle with contemporary values in literary criticism, ensuring that one is never privileged. In the proceedings, Kroetsch proposes a conceptual canon by listing categories he believes must be included: novels of historical value; sub-literary texts; regional novels and novels which make us feel at home by naming and domesticating (16-17). What these various categories convey is a transition between novels rooted in the tradition expressed during the Massey and Klinck period, and novels emerging out of the new approaches to

literature. The fiction Klinck investigated emphasized tradition through realism; thematics supported this tradition by advancing representational realism. Kroetsch's canon promotes the inclusion of alternative and self-reflexive forms of expression. His categories accentuate difference to broaden the canon's boundaries. Most notably embraced in Kroetsch's canon is postmodernist fiction; fiction which acts within a self-reflexive framework making writing its primary subject. Linda Lamont-Stewart comments that "according to Kroetsch the future of Canadian fiction lies with texts which break out of the conventions of realism into self-reflexive linguistic experimentation."⁵² A self-conscious, representational canon is possible in Kroetsch's approach to inclusion. He resists the urge to revolt completely against the conventions of his predecessors by recognizing realism's contextual position in the canon. Realism breeds a comfort of tradition, but Kroetsch opens the canon to experimental shifts in fiction to ensure the canon is a living creation fostered by innovations in literature. His words represent an essential resistance against traditional forms of criticism that perpetuate a homogenous stasis. Similar attitudes became more widely expressed during the Calgary conference.

Kroetsch's own fiction follows an experiment in resisting the majority through its use of magic realism. Found predominantly in Eastern Canadian art and in Western literature where legend and oral history form the basis of storytelling, the genre of magic realism works from the principle of reassessing history.⁵³ It combines mimetic

⁵² Linda Lamont-Stewart, "The Calgary Conference Revisited," Open Letter 9:1 (Fall 1994): 86.

⁵³ See Magic Realism and Canadian Literature. Proceedings from Conference on Magic Realist Writing in Canada, University of Waterloo and Wilfred Laurier University, 1985 (Waterloo: University of Waterloo Press, 1986).

representations of history with an imaginative use of legend, myth, and folklore; subverting the boundaries of reality with the possible. Magic realism has established itself as a formidable reaction to the central domination of realism because it incorporates both dominant and marginal values; it advances a hybrid of familiar and original ideas. By subverting dominant concepts of realism, magic realism provides the inclusion of new material without a jarring outright dismissal of established values. The hybrid nature of magic realism signifies an evolution in canonical standards growing out of traditional values.

At the conference, Eli Mandel also contributed to Kroetsch's proposed canon through his re-evaluation of regionalism's place in Canadian literature. During his session entitled "The Regional Novel: Borderline Art," Mandel rejects previous notions of the regional novel. In a realist perspective, region is defined by geographic boundaries. Realism fails to address spacial identities. In a reflexive literary climate of Canada, these boundaries are challenged for their imposition of limitations. Mandel argues "regionalism is defined under cultural terms" (quoted in Lamont 86). Lamont points out that "once again, the critical trajectory is in the direction of the postmodern: the representative regional novel is not the documentary, realistic text but the experimental text which explores the boundaries of literary form and language" (86). An obvious shift is occurring here in literary criticism as critics, like Kroetsch and Mandel, recognize the importance of adopting new methodologies to maintain a relevant canon. To deny the value of literary movements such as postmodernism is to stall the canon and preserve an anachronism.

But the inclusion of postmodern fiction has been rejected by critics such as T.D. MacLulich who argue it advocates the arrogance of the canon. He complains that the specialization of genres alienates the general public and favours the academic; "Consigning literature to the academy will encourage the production of contemporary forms of the art-novel - what is known variously as postmodern or experimental writing, metanarrative or surfiction. Such fictions please the jaded tastes of professional teachers of literatures; they also attract a certain kind of graduate student . . ." (24). Postmodernism is believed to be the tool of elitist professionals. The literary concept is the product of scholars dedicated to understanding and deconstructing literature, it is not a reflection of the general public's beliefs. MacLulich rationalizes his rejection as he contends that "postmodernist fiction is accessible only to those professionals who devised it; these developments [avant-garde and postmodernism] add up to a significant shift in the functioning of the entire literary institution in Canada, a shift whose end result amounts to nothing less than an academic takeover" (22). The general public is excluded from the process of defining literature even though MacLulich argues that literature is created for their enjoyment. An elite minority is responsible for issuing edicts of value in literature, a situation MacLulich deplores. His solution advocates an emphasis on realism in the canon; he notes that "it remains true that writing based on the conventions of realism is accessible to a large potential readership, including many who are untrained in formal literary analysis" (24). Realism does not resist readers, rather it is extremely accessible. Such accessibility removes elitist agendas from canon formation, but it re-asserts conservatism and anti-experimentalism. The issue of content ends in a stand-off between camps where

accusations of elitism and conservatism are fired from each camp concerning what the Canadian canon should be. Cultural professionals define the canon, but public readership must remain a constant concern in their minds.

MacLulich's argument also fails to consider the reasons for the avant-garde's isolation from the general public. The issue of education returns to the centre of this argument. It must be understood that a traditional system of reading is reinforced within the conventional curriculum. Students are taught to read and interpret value using orthodox tools established in traditional schools of thought. The concepts abhorred by MacLulich are systems of thought developed beyond the traditional which are used to challenge conventional systems of thinking and value. Realism is accessible because it is familiar. Postmodernism is only foreign because it is isolated within higher institutions. Therefore, postmodernism will remain an elitist tool until current systems of thinking shift to modernize public education.

MacLulich's support for realism has a second motive. He believes that the rise in popularity for postmodern and experimental fiction is an indication of the assimilation of Canadian literature into an international arena. He states:

When there is an emphasis on technical innovation in fiction - concurrent denigration of the straightforward mimetic possibilities of fiction - then fiction may lose its capacity to mirror the particularities of culture and personality. Writers may lose their desire to examine specific social conditions and particular backgrounds - whether ethnic, religious, or regional. . . . In other words, Canadian literature as an identifiably separate body of writing will come to an end. (25-26)

MacLulich's traditional position is regressive. With such a limited nationalist bias, it seeks to reverse the inclusive direction the canon must necessarily achieve. MacLulich laments:

“I fear that Canadian literature is moving inexorably towards an international style, in which characteristics arising from the idiosyncrasies of our history will become vanishingly small” (27). Clinging to such cultural criteria defines strict boundaries for fiction as it must adhere to a hegemonic definition of Canadian. It is evident in contemporary literary conventions that past guidelines and definitions for writing are losing critical influence as they are identified as evidence of power imbalances.

During the late 1970s, the empirical practice of thematics was countered by growing interest in existential or subjective phenomenology. In this new approach, meaning was linked to language. These new individually-based critics argued that language precedes geography and experience, in the sense that such concepts are only cognitively available to people when constructed in language (Cameron 121). This methodology stressed the individual or subjective perception of the object-text. Value was essentially produced in relation to the particular individual. This critical movement away from centres of production demonstrated a shift whereby phenomenological criticism displaced that which traditional values systematic criticism attempted to fortify. The attitude towards nationhood had undergone serious reappraisals in that nationhood, previously identified with a strong structure of central values and meaning, was shifting towards multiple concepts of value. A transition becomes apparent from simple thematic criticism to outright rejections of formal critical frameworks. The establishment of academic journals, such as *Essays on Canadian Writing* (1974) and *Studies in Canadian Literature* (1976), demonstrate an investment by academics into more outlets for the expansion of critical expression. The University of Ottawa’s annual literary conference

also demonstrates a major shift away from culturally specific categories of literary evaluation.

In the proceedings of the University of Ottawa's conference, entitled *Future Indicative* (1987), a strong movement to discuss literature on general theoretical terms is evident. The practice of criticism in Canada has undertaken a serious commitment to using various approaches in literary theory in order to interpret texts in various perspectives. Just as the content of the canon is necessarily becoming inclusive, so to is the act of reacting to the canon through criticism. Linda Hutcheon stated:

At this conference, for the first time in Canada, I have felt that I have not had to stand up and apologize for giving a theory paper. . . . Theory was once what we called aesthetics, or poetics – in other words, the study of the assumptions, literary and critical, beneath our practice in literature departments. Now, even if we agree with this, the political reality of the introduction of theory into a lot of our Canadian English departments I think necessitates an alteration of Culler's position."⁵⁴

An evolution in critical abilities is required to maintain a check on the canon and ensure it remains representative. A shift in critical practice in literary institutions denotes a parallel between the canon's content and its critical response. John Moss asserts a particular dual nature between Canadian literature and criticism:

Canadian literature has changed, because the assumptions underlying our experience of it have been called into question; Canadian criticism has been sanctioned as an intellectual activity; and the two have been expressed as complementary endeavours of the human imagination. Suddenly it seems appropriate, even essential, to think of Derrida and Bowering, Bakhtin and Kroetsch, as interpenetrating figures in a common ground. This is a good thing.
(3)

⁵⁴ Linda Hutcheon, "History and/as Intertexts," Future Indicative: Literary Theory and Canadian Literature (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1987) 243.

Although universal literary theory is becoming more widely employed, critics can tailor their discussions with distinctive relationships to Canadian content. Emphasis upon devout nationalism has been softened with the understanding that evaluation through dominant cultural standards may invoke an environment of discrimination.

Robert Wright's recent publication, *Hip and Trivial*, offers an examination of young Canadians's reading habits in a visually-dominated media.⁵⁵ The conclusions Wright delivers provide insight into the authority of the contemporary canon as he contrasts the nationalist fervor that excited the rise of the "CanLit" industry during the Centennial with the current debunking project of postmodernism and post-structuralism to dismiss the nation-state as a legitimate site of unification. Through this comparison Wright cites the growing frustration of Canadian critics regarding the stagnant course of the canon. An example of this disappointment is visible in a Philip Marchand article for *Saturday Night*, in which he makes the terse comment that "No-one who has read them [canonical texts] at all widely can read, say, Laurence or Atwood or Davies, and not recognize that they are, when all is said, minor writers."⁵⁶ Marchand's complaint was motivated by his feeling that "the Canadian literary establishment that had coalesced in the 1970s and entrenched itself in the 1980s had, by the 1990s simply ossified" (Wright 31). Andrew Pyper, an emerging Canadian novelist, expresses similar sentiments saying "younger readers are feeling increasingly alienated from mainstream CanLit."⁵⁷ The

⁵⁵ Robert Wright, *Hip and Trivial: Youth Culture, Book Publishing, and the Greying of Canadian Nationalism* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press, 2001).

⁵⁶ Philip Marchand, "What I Really Think About Margaret Laurence, Michael Ondaatje, Margaret Atwood, Timothy Findley, and the Rest of the CanLit Crowd," *Saturday Night* 112:8 (Oct. 1997).

⁵⁷ Wright, 32. (Quoting Andrew Pyper, personal correspondence, [Dec. 1999]).

situation these critics outline denotes a literary institution with a generational bias which only values Canadian literature that speaks to the dominant demographic (i.e. those 45 years old or older).⁵⁸ This criticism is necessary as its attack on the canon's stasis provides new motivation to advance new writers and new voices into the literary circle for evaluation. Through such criticism, the canon is forced to re-assess itself and include new representations of the culture.

Controversy over content and structure implies that the canon is experiencing a period of transition where a shift is necessary, a movement which challenges the canon's illusion of stability. The social context has obviously shifted since the 1960s and the time has come for the canon to begin the process of including the difference which has worked against it in the past. Authors like Rohinton Mistry, Lee Maracle, and Tomson Highway have all emerged as popular authors who are not critically institutionalized in the canon. In the last ten years, another rapid production of anthologies has exploded onto the literary scene in Canada reflective of the explosion during the 1940s and 1950s; however, these anthologies, such as *Other Solitudes* (1991) and *An Anthology of Native Canadian Literature in English* (1998), gather together writing outside the traditional canon. Smaro Kamboureli's *Making a Difference* (1996) was compiled in response to the canon.

Kamboureli explains:

My selection of contributors was intended to reflect, in part, a counterreading of

⁵⁸ Wright's advancement of this generational bias is backed by publishing statistics and historical evidence that suggests the baby boomer generation instigated and supported the rapid rise of the Canadian literary industry at the Centennial. This heavy influence of baby boomers remains prevalent in today's industry due to their relative power over a less politically motivated and downwardly mobile youth culture. Wright's theory offers a complimentary argument to the ideas of hegemony advanced in this paper.

what we have come to call mainstream and minority literatures in Canada. Multicultural literature is not minority writing, for it does not raise issues that are of minor interest to Canadians. Nor is it, by any standard, of lesser quality than the established literary tradition. Its thematic concerns are of such diverse range that they show the binary structure of 'centre' and 'margins,' which has for so long informed discussions of Canadian literature, to be a paradigm of the history of political and cultural affairs in Canada.⁵⁹

Authors writing about post-colonial immigrant experiences, Native life and postmodern challenges to historical accuracy have previously been labeled as "other" but their popularity suggests a movement may be afoot. Canadian canonical values are ready to be redefined through the inclusion of these authors from the margin into the centre, but this inclusion must be carefully monitored to avoid the issues of appropriation discussed in the next chapter.

The canon is recognizing a shift in social context and recognizing its responsibility to shift along with it to maintain the myth of stability. The structure of the canon relies on anti-canonical responses to maintain this illusion of strength. New schools of writing, such as the Kootenay School of Writing, act to undermine the canon and its values, yet the writing also perpetuates the canon's power as the dominant voice of evaluation. With the growing movement of acceptance, it is also clear another counter-literary culture will follow to begin the process of delegitimizing the canon and its central values where newly included authors left off. What should become clear is the cycle the canon inspires, through opposition to the centre new ideas are formed which, if popular enough to prosper in an economic market, will be accepted into the centre.

⁵⁹ Smaro Kamboureli, "Introduction," Making a Difference: Canadian Multicultural Literature, ed. Smaro Kamboureli (Toronto: Oxford U.P., 1996) 3.

As discussed in Chapter One, the canon is necessarily a fluid entity. Both Charles Altieri and Frank Kermode provide evidence that the canon must shift through history to provide the public with an accurate reflection of their current society. The canon must act as a transhistorical mediator, meaning it has a responsibility to communicate the past to readers while also representing contemporary movement. Chapter Two has illustrated that the Canadian canon has been in constant flux and that no concrete consensus on canonical definition has yet been achieved. The work of Reginald Watters and Carl Klinck, for example, managed to compile Canadian works into comprehensive groups, but no final interpretation of the canonical value of these works has been absolutely accepted by every member of the literary circle. Therefore, the Canadian canon has never achieved a solid definition of tradition as that of the English or American canons. As will be explored in the following chapter, this transitory state is advantageous though as it provides space for movement to contend with the postmodern challenges that currently face Canada. Canadian values continue to broaden over time to a point where a narrow conception of the canon cannot adequately represent its people. As the Canadian canon lacks any concrete consensus regarding its definition more room is available for the accommodation of divergent values.

A canon provides a possible site to define literary tradition as well as the nation's identity. It is clear Canadian literature has established itself outside of colonial influences and recognized the value of its own literary history. What may appear as instability in the Canadian canon's values is actually reflective of the canon's constant critical reassessment over time. Past assertions of a central tradition are now refuted by growing support for

multiplicity challenging the canon's cohesion. But by expanding its sense of tradition to include a multiplicity of voices, the canon can remain a useful tool for promoting stability and a cohesive sense of the Canadian identity. When Northrop Frye summarized Canada's unique search for unity, he concluded in *Literary History* that if we had to characterize a distinctive emphasis in that tradition, we might call it a quest for "the peaceable kingdom" (848). Our strongest literary tradition is perhaps the constant quest for a peaceful community.

Chapter 3

“Cultural Recognition versus Appropriation: The Fragmentation of Canadian Literary Values”

Canonical debate in Canada has been a rather quiet affair. In Robert Lecker's examination of the English-Canadian canon, he identifies a lack of intense critical discourse regarding the accuracy and validity of a central literary canon:

By the late 1980s I was beginning to feel that the institution and its members were suffering from complacency. Hierarchies had been established. There were no heated debates and there was little in the way of contestation. . . I was struck by how many critical projects . . . were devoted to wrapping things up, as if the whole young enterprise of studying Canadian literature was already close to ending. (3-4)

Lecker claims the main purpose of his work is to stir up the dust. To provoke Canadian critics, Lecker has rationalized the need for a single canon, committing heresy in a climate of diversity and plurality; however, his argument poses some necessary questions. The existence of multiple canons in Canada seems to be a logical possibility. The nation is defined by its plurality of communities, which causes an increased sense of decentralization for Canadians. Ethnic and racial communities as well as groups identified by their gender, sexual orientation, and regional location all contribute distinctive elements to the cultural mosaic. Canada is assembled with many parts. The ability of a single canon to survive in Canada's multicultural environment therefore appears dubious, but it is essential to recall that centrality is necessary for the establishment of united literary standards and a cohesive national literature; the canon acts as a unifying canvas upon

which the Canadian cultural mosaic can be painted. The very nature of canonical structure presupposes a centralized system whereby values and ideals are consolidated under consensus by the dominant social power. To dismantle this central feature would be to destroy the fundamental purpose of a canon. A canon's ability to foster an imagined community is beneficial to the nation-state project of fortifying shared ideologies as a national canon defines a nation's literary value and tradition. Canadian history, though, has demonstrated that such a narrow meta-narrative of value can conflict with the reality of a greater diversity within the nation. As multiple perspectives of value emerge, mimetic tendencies in literature and thematic biases in criticism demonstrate an inadequacy in traditional canonical representations of what is Canadian.

With the nation-state falling under heavy scrutiny in recent times, the development of deconstructionist theories and globalization have revealed the artificial construction of national identities and indirectly challenged the integrity of canonical authority. This initial rejection of the nation as a site of unification has effected systems of commonality established to maintain coherence and power stratification; the institutional security of the canon is also threatened. Individuals' identities are strongly influenced by nation-states' imposition of spatial and cultural bias; yet as postmodern and post-colonial theories dismiss central institutions and state interference, the realization of personal identities apart from socio-political borders becomes possible. As communities struggle to discover commonalities among themselves and divorce the nation-state, the canon's ability to fortify tradition through its central position is becoming increasingly strained.

The existence of a central canon is a sign of agreement about a national identity;

“A country without a national literature is not a country at all” (Lecker *Making* 4).

Therefore, a canon becomes the vital cultural site for a nation to project its nationalist ideologies (Lecker *Essays* 9). The purpose of this chapter is to explore the contemporary pressures upon the central Canadian canon and its ability to effectively represent the nation’s shifting values. Although the Canadian canon demonstrates fluidity, the greatest threat facing canonical authority is increased fragmentation and movements toward the deconstruction of artificial social unity. The canon’s principle concern is to sustain unity and promote shared ideologies; nonetheless it may be necessary to concede centrality and theorize the possibility of multiple canons where diverse interests can be supported. The central canon maintains a distinct separation between centre and margin; however, as the minority in Canada grows, the power structure is challenged. A postmodern deconstruction would dismantle this paradigm, nevertheless, marginalized voices require this central platform to resist uniformity and promote originality and creativity. For the Canadian canon to include and accommodate as many voices as possible remains limited by the canon’s definition of esteemed value. The method of inclusion into the canon is also suspect regarding authenticity. Does the act of appropriation from the margin into the centre alter the text’s original meaning? This chapter poses the question: how will the canon respond to such open diversity in our Canadian environment?

The concept of nation is derived from the belief that people can be associated through shared history or ethnicity. In Canada, the presence of civic nationalism contributes to the country’s cohesion. Our sense of nationhood and diversity has been

entrenched into law through such policies as bilingualism and multiculturalism. In 1971, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau introduced the federal policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework. “Although there are two official languages,” he remarked “there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other.”⁶⁰ Through government policy, national unity was reinforced. Quoting Trudeau, Yasmeen Abu-Laban comments “multiculturalism within a bilingual framework was the basis for national unity, as ‘national unity, if it is to mean anything in the deeply personal sense, must be founded on confidence in one’s own individual identity.’”⁶¹ By combining the socially cohesive elements (ie: history) with the political organization of the state, the nation-state was inevitably born. The nation-state ultimately builds an “imagined community” with shared meta-narratives designed to hold the people together. With such a specifically representative role, the nation-state erased any sense of internationalism. The purpose of state organization was to fortify central control and formalize any interaction and integration between other states thereby isolating any cultural evolution. Loyalty to the nation-state was established as an essential requirement of citizenry to reinforce the legitimacy of these constructed nations imposing hegemonic control over its territorial inhabitants. A canon represents one centralizing system employed to instill such loyalty.

The early Canadian canon reflects loyalty to reinforce Canadian values in its efforts to establish a literary tradition based on conservative and formalist values. The national identity in Canada began with the ideal of a white, British, Christian Anglo-Saxon male.

⁶⁰ Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 12 Oct. 1971, 8545.

⁶¹ Yasmeen Abu-Laban, “For Export: Multiculturalism in an Era of Globalization,” *Profiles of Canada*, 2nd ed. Ed. Kenneth Pryke and Walter Soderlund (Toronto: Irwin Publishing, 1998) 89.

The narrow cross-section represented in the Massey Commission limited opportunities for identities outside the white, Anglo-Saxon standards. In Lecker's inquiry into value, he asserts Canadian literature possesses a conservative and cautious character. Nevertheless, over time a movement to accommodate "other" voices has evolved in Canada. Canonical values have shifted over time in order to reflect societal priorities' shift over time. A society cannot maintain static values over time, nor can a canon. Canadian society has obviously shifted to involve many more perspectives than the traditional two solitudes; however, the lack of a continuous core of values has driven many critics such as Frank Davey and Tracey Ware to exclaim that a central canon does not and cannot exist in Canada. This absence of rigid values, though, is merely indicative of the fluid nature of the canon to adapt to contemporary needs. A portion of the past is maintained for present day society to sustain continuity. In terms of literary value, this remnant may be the preference towards conventional styles of writing, such as realism, focusing upon more introspective subjects.

Confusion becomes especially prominent in critical circles with the breakdown of nation-states' authority over identity. The isolationist program of the nation-state becomes a key site of dispute as globalization, postmodernism, and post-colonialism undermine the boundaries and sovereignty of these nation-states that have come to represent cultural protectors. The question arises as to whether a central canon can maintain cohesion in such a state of multiplicity and fragmentation. The nation-state has been forced to respond to these threats by incorporating multiple narratives into the central ideology. Identities falling outside this ideology are consumed into the meta-

narrative through forcible integration into the Canadian fabric to reinforce the illusion of an imagined community.

The Confederation poets of the late 19th century sought to record the Canadian landscape through approaches adapted from British models. Through the 20th century Canadian literature gained a sovereign attitude and reflected this independence from its Mother country in texts such as Hugh MacLennan's *Barometer Rising* (1940). As Canadian society shifts so do the values expressed in the art. In 1978, the Calgary Conference on the Novel demonstrated that Canadian values had broadened to a point beyond singularity. The narrow canon had shifted and critics such as Malcolm Ross had difficulty asserting categorical values upon the canon. The confusion and elusive answers were indicative of a multiplicity of values that had arrived. No single voice could properly contain, nor claim representational authority over Canadian literature. However, the adoption of a multiculturalism policy instilled the sense of a new tradition and restored order to the dominant authority.

The adoption of policies such as bilingualism and multiculturalism function as superficial celebrations of exposed diversity. The hegemonic powers retain central control by constructing the accepted limits of difference. Ultimately these policies seek to eliminate any separation from a single nation by continuing the process of appropriation. Although the notion of the white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant is visibly challenged, the hegemonic traditions they represent maintain their old authority. By ignoring the reality of fragmentation, though, the nation-state fosters tremendous tension, as suppressed differences become assertive. The centralizing tendency of a canon furthers this tension in

a Canadian context.

By appropriating existing distinctive elements of the state's residents, the nation-state is able to surmount resistance and envelop "others" into the nation under the guise of forging unity and equality amongst all people. For Canada this means appropriating cultural traits from specific ethnic territories, altering and interpreting their meaning and finally re-inserting these Anglicized traits into the national fabric. The process of appropriation and tokenism suggest that only a superficial understanding of the culture is possible thereby undermining the authenticity of any cultural traits appropriated into the national identity. A fair division of power is avoided as equality and unity remain safely distributed by the dominant culture. Appropriation also filches from another culture's sense of security and comfort in a stable tradition. Renee Hulan and Linda Warley suggest that recent pervasiveness of Native appropriation demonstrates a nationalist movement to gain stability through Native tradition. They state: "The popularity of 'the Native' in the mainstream has become part of the search for a purer, authentic alternative to delegitimized, spiritually, and intellectually exhausted western culture."⁶² As disunity further fragments Canadians' notion of identity and value, it is likely that this process of cultural appropriation will increase to fill the void left by the delegitimized nation-state.

The appropriation of multicultural literature in the academic sphere raises difficult questions. The dissemination of minority literature in the academic institution can place teachers in a double bind. Controversy erupts both when an educator attempts to teach

⁶² Renee Hulan and Linda Warley, "Cultural Literacy, First Nations, and the Future of Canadian Literary Studies," Journal of Canadian Studies 34:3 (Fall 1999): 61.

“another’s” material as well as if they try to avoid teaching it. Many educators have begun teaching literature by writers outside the hegemony, but it is important this inclusion is not simply an artificial response to growing diversity. Kamboureli warns “Representing Canada’s multiculturalism with a spattering of only one or two authors, making such writers visible only by viewing them as representative of their cultural groups, does virtually nothing to dispel the ‘marginality’ attributed to those authors” (3). It is essential that educators educate themselves before lessons to guarantee a reasonably informed understanding of the writing, otherwise the danger of appropriating and misinterpreting the difference that the literature offers is possible. Hulan and Warley write that “before teachers and students join that circle. . . they need to have knowledge of the particular historical and cultural contexts represented. For teachers, this is the ‘challenge inherent in any process of cross-cultural translation: to make the “other” comprehensible without erasing its difference”” (quoting Thomas Couser 69). A solution to one-dimensional minority education can be achieved by the promotion of cultural literacy which leads to the recognition and decolonization of institutional space (69). Decolonization is attained by encouraging new perspectives and multiple approaches to studies. As the inclusion of ideas and values increases, the canon must relax its institutional authority and respect difference in interpretive methods and literary values. A re-evaluation must occur whereby the canon must open new space for more voices and widen the interpretive community’s scope while avoiding the imposition of dominant ideologies upon non-hegemonic communities. The concept of cultural literacy will be discussed later in the chapter in regards to cultural listening.

Canons provide a solid base upon which to establish and perpetuate shared values and ideas through their representation in a body of selected literature. By organizing a list of representative works, stability is fortified through the birth of a visible tradition but changes to this tradition can be damaging to the canon's central function. Lecker's view stresses the idea that the national stability a canon seeks to reinforce can only be achieved through a defined set of standards. A canon assumes these standards as a "set of critical assumptions" (*Essays* 7). To lose such stability acts as a destructive force against the foundations of critical thought. With the failure of a single canon comes a collapse of critical tradition. Such a failure prompts a "delegitimization crisis which 'asserts as its central critical category not commonality but difference'" (quoting Annette Kolodny *Essays* 7). The collapse of singular ideology and theory leaves literary criticism without central ideals or "fantasies of orthodoxy" to evaluate texts and their significance in the literary realm. Without the comfort of shared tradition, the crisis creates notions of defamiliarization and diversity; resistance to centrality and shared assumptions are exposed. The resulting critical category of difference does provide opportunities for new expression, but gains this space at the expense of national cohesion. While Lecker argues the fall is damaging, other critics point out that fighting this inclination towards difference is to deny true Canadian creativity.

Counter arguments to Lecker can be drawn from a number of sources including the Applebaum-Hebert Federal Cultural Policy Review (1986).⁶³ Like its predecessor, the

⁶³ Government of Canada, "Cultural Policies and Public Will," Applebaum-Hebert Federal Cultural Policy Review. (Ottawa, 1986).

Massey Commission, the report was issued to advise the federal government about cultural policy direction; however, Applebaum-Hebert support a concept of appreciative diversity in the Canadian arts. The report emphasizes that cultural institutions must recognize difference and avoid constructing a homogenous system of appreciation. Applebaum-Hebert attempted to describe the current stream of social values; while the Massey Commission had stressed unity through homogeneity, the Applebaum-Hebert report emphasized Canada's new recognition of difference. In this growing postmodern/post-colonial period, creative activity thrived in Canada's climate of the particular, where diversity was respected and utilized as a tool of expression. The report goes on to examine how cultural policy can promote this heterogeneity with a critical message asserting "open diversity" as fundamental for authentic Canadian creativity (8). To promote full participation, Applebaum suggests all discriminant barriers of singularity must be eliminated thereby making for an open environment (8-9). Tracy Ware and Frank Davey apply this notion of open diversity to the argument over canon structure.

Tracy Ware supports the notion of multiple canons. He states that the canon's fluid nature denies it the opportunity to become stagnant with a single definition. Ware expands on the relevance of such flexibility saying, "Canada has all of the uncertainty but none of the dogmatic resistance necessary for a 'delegitimizing crisis.'"⁶⁴ Ware contends that the Canadian literary climate's inferiority complex creates an inability to assert any singular canon and compromises with multiple canons of literary authority. The canons

⁶⁴ Tracy Ware, "A Little Self-Consciousness is a Dangerous Thing: A Response to Robert Lecker," English Studies in Canada 17.4 (1991): 487.

avoid any strict assertion of what must be Canadian and according to Ware “there is no monolith here.” (487).

Frank Davey develops Ware’s argument through the assertion that Canada possesses a decentralized literary environment. Davey refutes Lecker’s commitment to a central canon. He contends a central canon is unnatural in the Canadian literary environment. Instead, Davey believes “Canada has a network of competing canons rather than a single canon.”⁶⁵ Davey’s sentiments point to the post-national orientation of Canadian literature. Overall Canadian authors seem to avoid purely nationalistic topics in favour of narratives with universal appeal or specifically local tales. A central canon’s value is diminished in such a situation because it cannot properly recognize diversity as it tries to constantly affirm homogenous tradition. Davey continues by saying, “the current decentralized structure of the Canadian literature and literary studies discourages the kind of hegemonic power Lecker attempts, in different ways, to theorize” (Literary 72). Davey explains multiplicity as the product of a decentralized literary industry and multiple influences,

It seems to me that canon-formation in Canadian literature will be inadequately investigated if the only “institutions” examined are “Canadian literature” and “Canadian academic critics.” Such examination would overlook numerous interwoven institutions that influence canonicity, including academic and textbook publishers, various levels of government and their purchasing and subsidy programs and agencies, the partly integrated North American marketplace, universities, various provincial secondary educational systems, and the bookselling industry. (“Critical” 678)

The realization of a central canon surrounded by these vast influences seems dubious as

⁶⁵ Frank Davey, Canadian Literary Power (Edmonton: NeWest Publishers Ltd., 1994) 69.

each institution promotes its own agenda. However, it must be recognized each of these institutions are representations of elite minorities in Canada.

The socio-economic reality of the Canadian book industry is that it is managed by a small monopoly of publishing houses such as HarperCollins Canada, Random House of Canada, and Stoddart. The mergers between the retail superstore chains Indigo and Chapters also means a concentration of economic interest. In a statement to business analysts, Gerry Schwartz, the CEO of Onex and husband of Indigo chair Heather Reisman, said that the Canadian Bureau of Competition Policy would not have to be concerned about market monopoly with the merger as the combined chain would control only 30% of the retail book market. Scott Anderson of *Quill and Quire* contests Schwartz's numbers and "estimates that the combination of Canada's largest retailers would create a giant with at least 50% of the English-language Canadian retail trade book market."⁶⁶ Although small presses and independent bookstores have experienced increased business within the past few months, they remain truly at the mercy of the larger corporate direction.

The recent death of Canada's largest retail book distribution centre, Pegasus Wholesalers, indicates that the structure of the Canadian literary industry is a difficult one from which to profit or to control. In November 2000, Pegasus released its second quarter results that charted a loss of 1.8 million dollars. The previous quarter had seen a 1.6 million dollar loss.⁶⁷ Ed McMahon, a partner with Internet consulting firm

⁶⁶ Scott Anderson, "It's a Chain-Eat-Chain World," *Quill and Quire* Jan. 2001: 4.

⁶⁷ Devin Crawley, "They Shoot Horses Don't They?" *Quill and Quire* Jan. 2001: 5.

marchFIRST, believes Pegasus needed more time to establish itself and co-ordinate its operations. In an interview with Devin Crawley of the *Quill and Quire*, McMahon expressed that “It’s a hugely difficult problem to manage [distribution] in this country” (5). The largest problem Pegasus encountered was reliable distribution. Many independent bookstores experienced inventory problems as their orders were late in arriving, larger chain operations were advised to deal directly with larger publishers to ensure delivery dates. The failure of Pegasus to supply demands created a two-tiered system where dominant retail chains were given favourable priority over smaller businesses. The collapse of Pegasus Wholesalers and the merger between Chapters and Indigo bookstores do not necessarily suggest the emergence of a decentralized Canadian literary industry, rather the fact that it is a small industry where niche markets can survive through independent publishing and sales, but remain dominated by concentrated centres of corporate control. The marginal status of Canadian content presents another critical issue to the industry.

In a recent review of the publishing industry, Statistics Canada found that between 1994-95 and 1996-97 the percentage of profitable publishers dropped from 71.9 to 50.5%.⁶⁸ The reasons for this fall are not completely clear due to the incomplete nature of the data gathered by the government, but what is significant about these numbers is they provide evidence that the publishing industry is a very demanding environment that forces Canadian publishers to ensure maximum profitability from all their products. Lesser-

⁶⁸ Government of Canada, The Challenge of Change: A Consideration of the Canadian Book Industry (Ottawa, 2000) 14.

known Canadian-authored titles are therefore often marginalized in favour of popular foreign titles. In 1998-99, 201 publishers participating in the Book Publishing Industry Development Program managed to produce 5,417 new titles of which 4,278 were Canadian-authored titles or 78% (Government *Challenge* 16). However, when the number of reprinted titles produced that year is added, Canadian-authored titles represent only 43% of titles published. Through 1992-99, a 17% rise in Canadian-authored titles appears; yet a significant number of these titles are French language publications that tend to be more secure investments than English language titles because of the French market niche. Sales of Canadian titles only serve to reflect this marginal status in the industry composing about 20% of all sales in Canada. Michael Wernick from Canadian Heritage remarks:

[I]f you look at it as a diversity of content initiative, we could say it has been quite successful, the diversity of titles has been successful. . . Where it's been less successful is if you measure against an objective of the industrial structure of the industry. The industrial structure of the industry is more or less what it was ten years ago. There hasn't been a lot of consolidation. (Government *Challenge* 17)

The state of the publishing industry represents serious challenges to Canadian literature in its effort to disseminate itself and gain greater acclaim on an international level. Until such challenges are overcome, the canon will remain largely marginal. Although financial support for broader content is evident and more voices are being heard by Canadian consumers, Canadian literature's marginal status still limits the publishing industry. As long as foreign content continues to dominate the market, the production of Canadian literature will remain a financial risk. Ultimately it is a question of public demand acting as a regulatory body for canonical value. As public tastes in Canada shift and the popularity

of marginal voices rises, the publishing industry must respond to maintain profitability causing the diversity of the Canadian canon to consequently grow.

Pluralistic approaches, such as Davey and Ware's, foster an essential climate for diversity, but they ignore the dominant authority of a canon and its adaptability. The purpose of the canon is to encourage tradition and stability through a recognition of shifting contexts to maintain its power. A canon cannot remain static nor locked in a historical period without it becoming obsolete to its consumers. The British canon, for example, demonstrates this shift as it obviously includes Shakespeare, but English canonization does not end abruptly at the 17th century. A contemporary Canadian example is present in Robert Kroetsch's suggestion for an alternative, self-reflexive canon whereby a transition from realism to experimental literature provides writing with more opportunities for representational expression. Inclusion is a slow but necessary process for canon stability. This means a canon must remain open to some developments and experimentation to remain relevant. Over time a canon acts to selectively include that which it might have earlier denied. Debate surrounds not just how the Canadian canon should be structured, but obviously what content it should include as well. Conflict within the Canadian canon has emerged due to the dominant resistance to the avant-garde.

Canons are necessarily fluid to sustain relevance, but this fluidity pertains to the contingency of values and evaluation of literary quality. As Barbara Herrnstein Smith notes "the value . . . of an evaluation, like that of anything else . . . , is *itself* contingent, and thus a matter not of its abstract 'truth-value' but of how well it performs various

desired/able functions for the various people who may at any time be concretely involved with it.”⁶⁹ Canonical values shift to remain relevant and authoritative. Davey and Ware’s arguments fail to acknowledge the canon’s consistent influence regarding societal values, evaluation, and interpretation. The pluralist argument must also accept the reality that not all citizens identify themselves as Canadian. Hulan and Warley’s discussion of First Peoples’ resistance to dominant values realizes “the fact that many writers may not define themselves as Canadian is a significant complicating factor that undermines a pluralist formulation of the nationalist canon” (73). Discussions of liberal pluralism do not necessarily reflect the optimum path for every individual toward broad literary value.

Another possible pluralist argument could propose a more practical notion that there is not one canon but a series of canons working against a dominant canon. This approach would suggest that alternative canons emerge in resistance to and are defined against the central canon.⁷⁰ Alternative canons are built out of non-conformity to produce such “other” canons as feminist or post-colonial literature. (Even the Canadian canon works against other central canons such as the British and American canons to define itself as distinct in the global perspective.) A particular anti-canonical movement is visible in the Kootenay School of Writing. The mission of the Kootenay School of Writing is subversion of central ideas.⁷¹ The KSW places itself outside any straightforward definition of genre. Its entire purpose is to resist any central, unifying definitions or classification a

⁶⁹ Barbara Herrnstein Smith, “Contingencies of Value,” *Critical Inquiry* 10 (1983): 22.

⁷⁰ This argument is based on the earlier ideas discussed in Chapter 1 regarding the canon’s centrality and its ability to inspire originality from margins. (See p. 22.)

⁷¹ See www.ksw.net.

canon attempts to impose upon it. This resistance is an opposition to the elitist notion of power to define others. The school is designed to accommodate all writers from various backgrounds of culture and interests. No central theme exists through the school, rather it exists to facilitate writing of multiple voices. Therefore writers in the KSW undermine any idea of cultural gatekeeping. The school does not refuse writers of minor pursuits.

Nonetheless, these marginal or alternative canons require a central canon to work against in their efforts to delegitimize and destabilize. Any anti-canonical activity simply serves to reinforce and perpetuate the fact there is a centre. An elite literary canonical centre competing with sub-canons challenges the marginalized canons to deny its authority in that the alternative canon must still work against *the* form. Therefore inclusion into the canon most often means conformity to the cultural institution's definition of values and tradition. Token inclusions tend to be rare as Appendix A illustrates. A majority of the texts in 1978 represented white mainstream authors in a period shortly after Canada adopted a policy of multiculturalism. What should become clear is that although Canada may have multiple canons, the central canon is the dominant structure that dictates how sub-canons are formed.

The discussion of multiple canons and approaches to literature must include attention to post-colonial theory. Post-colonial theory is relevant in the Canadian context because it draws attention to literature that struggles with the colonial experience and expresses the tensions that accompany the conflict of the "other" with the imperial centre. Himani Bannerji describes the situation stating:

The problem is that no matter who we are - black or white - our liberal acculturation and single-issued oriented politics, our hegemonic "subsumption" into a racist common sense, combined with capital's crisis, continually draw us in the belly of the beast. This can only be prevented by creating counter-hegemonic interpretive and organizational frameworks that reach down into real histories and relations of our social life, rather than extending tendrils of upward mobility on the concrete walls of the state. Our politics must sidestep the paradigm of "unity" based on "fragmentation or integration" and instead engage in struggles based on the genuine contradictions of our society.⁷²

Bannerji's conclusion asserts the need for the marginal voice to speak and challenge the majority's complacency. Post-colonial theory emphasizes an alternative form of methodology of interpretation. Through "another's" perception of reading, imperial methods are shown to be outdated and mired in a single, unified meaning that privileges the majority. Canadian literature has a history of establishing a post-colonial response to the imperial centre yet this response continues to marginalize communities in Canada. Natives, women, gay/lesbian, ethnic minorities, and new Canadians remain marginal in this post-colonial environment. This consistent marginality speaks to the dominant system of values which must be challenged before inclusion is granted. Broadening the canon requires substantial time and patience.

Tamara Palmer Seiler states that the continuing efforts to establish a national literature are suggestive of further attempts to decolonize Canadian space. She says: "[I]nterestingly, and perhaps not surprisingly, this idea that Canadian literature could express a single national character . . . is clearly in important ways related to the idea of multiplicity that has replaced it. Stated simply, the concern with the problematics of

⁷² Himani Bannerji, "On the Dark Side of the Nation: Politics of Multiculturalism and the State of Canada," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 34:3 (Fall 1996): 125.

discovering, creating and championing an authentic national literature can be seen as a post-colonial attempt at decolonization.”⁷³ Through the assertion of a national voice to decolonize Canada, the majority is able to sustain a centre/margin environment where minorities must still decolonize themselves. Seiler comments that “Post-colonial analysts are right when they tell us that an assertive national literature is an important site for the settler colony’s efforts at decolonization, which are centred primarily in adapting the imported language to local experience” (153). With this assertion of a national cultural vision comes the necessary movement of “abrogation.”⁷⁴ Bill Ashcroft defines this movement as the refusal of normative categories from the imperial culture and the denial of tradition and standards of the colonizer. Without these inherited traditions, the colony must appropriate from the local experience to establish a domestic cultural community. Seiler identifies the Native community as most victimized by this process with the appropriation of their symbols, language and images to rename Canada (153). Such a seizure of cultural capital leads to serious misunderstandings of a community and its eventual tokenism by the dominant culture. But appropriation is apparent throughout the ethnic hierarchy as the Canadian majority adopts and adapts superficial characteristics from the margin to maintain an illusion of shared community and acceptance.

Minority literature in Canada has paralleled developments of the dominant Canadian canon yet has remained largely ignored until the past twenty years. With the

⁷³ Tamara Palmer Seiler, “Multi-Vocality and National Literature: Towards a Post-Colonial and Multicultural Aesthetic,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 31:3 (Fall 1996): 151.

⁷⁴ Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (New York: Routledge, 1989) 38.

broadening of the canon, it is no longer possible to avoid the diverse values present in literature. “An instructive example is the history of critical response in English-speaking Canada to the literary texts produced by those outside the privileged centre of the ‘two founding peoples.’” Seiler writes, “Most of this work was virtually absent from the literary canon of English-speaking Canada until the 1970s, and has only been embraced by major cultural arbiters in the last decade or so” (156). Some exceptions exist as some émigré literature was published in Watson Kirkconnell’s *Canadian Overtones* (1935), as well as the *University of Toronto Quarterly*’s “New Canadian Letters” (1937-64). Although published, these works lacked the critical appraisal necessary for canonical consideration. Recognition of the multi-vocality in Canadian literature has been slow to say the least. Seiler points out two examples of marginalized literature that indicate a transition towards recognition. Vera Lysenko’s *Yellow Boots* (1954) was re-issued by NeWest Press in 1992. The re-release of the text suggest an acceptance of intercultural literature. This story of a daughter of Ukranian immigrants in early 20th century Manitoba blends folk tales with the classic Western genre of bildungsroman thereby pioneering representation of the marginal experience. Also Joseph Skvorecky’s *The Engineer of Human Souls* (1984) won the Governor General’s Award for best novel in English the year it was released. Skvorecky’s writing represents a mingling of cultural experiences as he “juxtaposes and blends the starkly contrasting landscapes and mindscapes of his communist-occupied homeland [formerly Czechoslovakia] after the Second World War and 1980s Toronto” (Seiler 157). The accommodation of these texts indicates an opening of canonical evaluation.

Second and third generation Canadian writers tend to act as mediators between their cultural community and the Canadian majority. “Despite the uniqueness of each artist’s vision, second generation fiction often share certain post-colonial features” (Seiler 157). The writing acts as a set of confessionals attempting to break cultural silence, disrupt dominant complacency, and illustrate diverse cultural qualities. Many of the narratives mediate between two cultures through coming-of-age stories such as Lysenko’s *Yellow Boots*, Mordecai Richler’s *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* (1959), and John Marlyn’s *Under the Ribs of Death* (1957). Codes of behaviour from the margin tend to be co-ordinated and clarified with the centre through these tales. The stories also share a sense of duality, “Story after story and novel after novel, as well as numerous poems and plays, articulate a profound sense of dislocation through a series of interlocking binary patterns - typically, the dichotomies of old world/new world, success/failure, remembering/forgetting and revelation/concealment” (158). This duality is an essential tool for decolonization as it provides the text a detached relationship with either community and from this marginal space, the text can critique both cultures (158). The stories blend traditions to create a newly defined space outside the limitations of existing cultures which grants readers and writers an individual freedom from the imagined communities.

The confessional stream also breaks through silences and exposes barriers imposed upon minorities such as those exemplified in Joy Kogawa’s *Obasan* (1981). “This literature has been the source and the product of social and cultural transformation. As such, it coincides with an evolving post-colonial struggle against a constrictive,

hierarchical construction of ethnicity, including the notion of a unitary Canadian literature” (Seiler 159). By continually hybridizing traditions, individual communities are able to form their own position within Canada outside the dominant’s imposition of identity categories. It facilitates the empowering process of self-naming and self-defining. Seiler’s argument insists that literary values evolve from the practice of cultural listening.

Cultural listening reverses conventional perceptions of power relations. Through its subversion of authority the listener commands authority but only through a concession to hear another. The authoritative power is subverted as it becomes the centre’s responsibility to listen to the minority. In Ajay Heble’s article “Sounds of Change,” the act of cultural listening is both physical and theoretical. He says:

the kind of listening he [Glenn Gould] calls for involves a salutary process of dehierarchization; it means actively listening to all voices competing for attention without necessarily giving precedence to any one voice. In many ways, this is a particularly useful strategy for thinking about ways to recognize and revalue underrepresented voices and perspectives, to pay attention to those voices that have traditionally been marginalized or neglected.⁷⁵

It is necessary to sustain a centre to margin relationship to maintain dissonance and resistance to hierarchies. Heble observes dissonant texts such as Kogawa’s *Obasan* as well as Thomas King’s *Green Grass, Running Water*, and Allan Levine’s *The Blood Libel* are “heard for the ways they initiate challenges to the very idea of a unified national identity, these dissonant histories teach us that cultural listening will be a key not only to advancing the struggle for a more inclusive repertoire of valued knowledge but also to intervening in the very processes that shape our understanding of history, identity, and

⁷⁵ Ajay Heble, “Sounds of Change: Dissonance, History, and Cultural Listening,” Essays in Canadian Writing 71 (Fall 2000): 29.

nation” (33). Cultural listening avoids the undesirable act of inclusion. The act of listening demonstrates a responsible commitment to respect and accept that which surrounds us. The dangers of cultural appropriation threatens the success of effective plurality. Listening and interpretive skills of Canadian criticism must adopt the principles of cultural listening to ensure that the canon sustains a fluid sense of value.

In his consideration of the implications of a national canon, Robert Lecker hypothesizes the reality of a central Canadian canon. His argument plays both sides of the issue; citing debates against a central canon as well as suggesting arguments that it must exist to be opposed, yet the general lack of intense Canadian critical debate would indicate there is no hegemonic authority to fight. Lecker concludes, “The absence of a true Canadian canon reflects our inability to identify what it is that makes us Canadian” (*Making* 68). However, Lecker’s position falls into the deep cliché of the classic Canadian identity crisis. It is necessary to understand that Canadian values have always maintained a complex relationship of centre to margin. A central Canadian canon that promotes nationalist values does exist. Confusion only arises when multiple marginal canons are mistakenly considered as competing with this national canon. Canadian society possesses an implicit hegemonic power, which supports Anglo-centric, homogenous and conservative values. Fragmented multicultural beliefs are explicitly demonstrated in society, yet possess no authoritative control. Concern for the lack of a central canon ignores the potential of embracing these marginal alternatives. In an environment of increasing fragmentation through globalization nation-states are losing their artificial

cohesive appeal. Cultural communities are transcending the constructed borders of the constrictive nation-state. It is becoming more apparent that societal interests can be fostered in this niche realm beyond confining socio-political boundaries.

Lecker correctly believes in a central Canadian canon, but his understanding of canonical structure is weak. His assertion of a mimetic orthodoxy proves he has not accepted the fluid nature of all canons. The Canadian literary canon has experienced several shifts in esteemed value. In the past, Canadian literature has valued colonial representations, thematic emphasis as well as regional and homogeneous perspectives. There is a single central fluid Canadian canon; the question is whether this central canon can withstand the pressures of fragmentation. A canon is structured to facilitate cultural cohesion; however, with the breakdown of the illusion of homogeneity in Canada, can a single canon survive?

For years major countries such as France, Great Britain, and the United States have been applying post-structuralist theory to deconstruct canons in what John Guillory calls a "legitimation crisis."⁷⁶ Cultural and literary studies have converged on the canonical debate to seriously examine the validity of shared values and tradition within cultural communities. The attack questions the very fundamental ideologies within communities causing a sense of crisis due to the consequent weakening of cohesion. The absence of such a visible debate in Canada is curious and Lecker hypothesizes that

⁷⁶ John Guillory, "Canonical and Non-Canonical: A Critique of the Current Debate," *ELH* 54 (1987): 483.

Canadian critics are in denial of the centrality of the Canadian canon. Debate over related issues such as the maturity of Canadian criticism and the state of Canadian drama though, reflect indirect arguments over the dominance of the literary canon and its strong traditional values.

The central Canadian canon will continue to face increasing internal and external pressures driving it towards further diversification and fragmentation. The reactionary nature of the canon dictates that it must remain fluid and continually shift to represent societal values and thus far, the canon has demonstrated its innate ability to adapt through appropriation and accommodation. The death of the Canadian canon seems imminent, if not forgone, but Lecker points out the repetitious nature of such critical prophecies as he states:

Renee Hulan argues that “the epistemological shift in critical theory and the emergence of new voices in literature announce the future demise of narrowly focused national approaches.” But what does it mean to announce the imminent demise of “national approaches” in 2000 after Frank Davey announced them in *Post-National Arguments* in 1993, or various critics theorized their death in *Future Indicative* in 1987, or after editors of *Studies in Canadian Literature* called for an end to them in their “Minus Canadian” issue in 1974, or after A.J.M. Smith made his case for cosmopolitan values instead of national ones in his introduction to the *Book of Canadian Poetry* in 1943?⁷⁷

The collapse of the central Canadian tradition is a consistent part of our identity. It would seem more appropriate to announce another shift in Canadian values, rather than predict the end of our national literature. A central canon does not have to assert a single notion of Canadian-ness. As discussed earlier regarding the work of Charles Altieri in “Chapter One”, the canon is a suggestive guide that affords the opportunity to challenge our

⁷⁷ Robert Lecker, “Where is Here Now?” *Essays in Canadian Writing* 71 (Fall 2000): 7.

concept of value and identity. It can revise the criteria of what is Canadian and redirect the answer to “Where is Here?”

The central canon’s authority is under tremendous scrutiny in today’s critical climate where unity and tradition are questioned. To maintain relevance the canon must follow its fluid nature and shift to accommodate societal needs. This shift must include a modification of its role from national representative to mediator. A transition to cultural mediator shifts canonical focus from asserting the tradition of a nation to emphasizing the canon as a site of cultural interaction. This interaction removes the pressure to maintain a stable authoritative and united tradition. As a mediator, the canon provides an inviting space for various representations of culture to speak for themselves.

Conclusion

During research for this thesis I have been surprised how many individuals asked me exactly what the canon means and what authors am I studying. One professor even replied to my work by exclaiming, “We have a canon?” The general curiosity and confusion about the English-Canadian literary canon indicates that we do not have an entrenched, dogmatic monolithic canon before us; however, a central canon does exist in Canada. Paul Hjartarson supports this existence as he remarks: “The question is not whether a canon exists and, if not, whether we should formulate one. The canon does exist; we have already formulated it. We formulate it everyday. The canonical texts we teach, we write about, we cite. The classic texts, in short, are these we value.”⁷⁸ The purpose of this paper is to eliminate the enigmatic sense of the Canadian canon and demonstrate its mediative attitude regarding growth and shifting values. Although conservative values remain resident, the canon remains open to diversity. The advancement of literary criticism in Canada criticism has instigated an effective scrutiny of esteemed values and reinforces an optimism that the canon is a living organism dedicated to authentic representation.

In the introduction, I posed three essential questions that arise in discussions regarding canon creation: “Who builds the canon?”, “Who is privileged by the canon?”,

⁷⁸ Paul Hjartarson, “The Literary Canon and its Discontent,” Literatures in Canada Littératures au Canada (Montreal: Association for Canadian Studies, 1988) 67.

and “Who is ignored?” The answers to these questions are clearly present within the body of this thesis. A society’s dominant discourse constructs notions of esteemed value based upon a consensus on values and ideologies. These values are perpetuated and privileged by institutions that share these values, such as universities. The general public gains from the canon’s interpretive strategies and knowledge, but more importantly they gain a visible list that defines their values, history, and tradition.

It is obvious that those who are ignored are those who fall outside the dominant class. However, the contributions of this marginalized group cannot be overlooked as an influence upon the central canon. Canons are highly influential upon public systems of knowledge and value, yet canons are also affected themselves by public discourse. A deconstruction of canon structure reveals that canons are exposed to numerous conditions that determine value. The flow of power therefore is not specifically majority to minority, nor centre/margin. As Karen Lawrence theorizes “a deconstructive approach to the canon would recognize that the centre and the periphery collapse back into each other.”⁷⁹ Both sides survive by feeding off one another in a cycle of resistance and accommodation. Such a cycle serves to perpetuate a canon’s fluid structure through appropriation. The canon’s authority has been challenged but appropriation of marginal experiences into the collective has been rejected by contemporary critics as inauthentic and misrepresentative. The Canadian literary canon is experiencing a necessary shift in its traditional structure

⁷⁹ Karen Lawrence, “Introduction: The Cultural Politics of Canons,” Decolonizing Tradition: New Views of Twentieth-Century “British” Literary Canons, ed. Karen Lawrence (Chicago: University of Illinois, 1992) 8.

realizing the value of experiences that lie within its margins.

My original assertion that a canon is fundamental to construct cohesiveness within a society remains central. Cohesion is possible without absolute conformity to dominant ideology. Although the canon's fundamental purpose to fortify shared traditions may seem antiquated, the canon is relevant even today in our fragmenting society. This relevance can be sustained by re-examining the basis of consensus on value because sites such as nation-states no longer possess sufficient claim as the dominant authority. The enforcement of a shared ideology based on nationalism is limited to the political/social boundaries established to guard the safety of the nation-state's identity. With the removal of such barriers between communities in an era of globalization and deconstructing major meta-narratives, the canon must look elsewhere for a cohesive purpose. It is not necessarily a pawn to the nation-state project, rather it is an institution for the public that has been claimed by dominant influences to promote a specific system of value.

With the collapse of central systems of value and the opening for the particular, the canon can remain relevant by reinforcing a multi-vocal conception of value. The canon must shift its purpose from cultural representative to mediator by opening its natural design as a forum for all Canadians to listen to multiple voices. By embracing a pluralist perspective, the canon can remain a central institution while supporting multiplicity. Multiple competing canons cannot disseminate such liberal values as the decentralized structure creates an environment that favours niche interests. Individuals are more likely to fragment into segmented communities to explore their ideologies in a homogeneous climate. The establishment of such homogeneity further separates communities and forces

strict social identities to conform to each particular community. Are you a lesbian? Or are you a Chinese-lesbian? The division of individuals' identities is exponential. A centralized multi-vocal forum with diversity as its principle value would accommodate all voices and base tradition only upon the concept of shared diverse experience of individuals rather than establish a decentralized system of multiple canons that segregate difference. The desire is to form a central canon that integrates difference and truly celebrates authentic exploration of diverse experiences. To obtain this plateau the Canadian canon must work to improve systems of cultural listening and respect. It is not simply a matter of accommodating "others," rather it is necessary to appreciate and value the knowledge provided by a variety of writing.

A canon's ability to provide a necessary link to the past speaks to its requisite nature in society. By valorizing specific texts, a nation's history can be documented through a canon revealing the foundation of values and the progression towards a sense of tradition. As Frank Kermode noted: a canon acts as a mediator for transhistorical discussion between the past and the present. Progression becomes difficult to measure without any points of reference. In this vein, the Canadian canon continues to demonstrate an evolution of literary value from its early colonial struggles with European value to current struggles with diversity. Interpretive communities, in the form of established academia and criticism, have grown in Canada and gained confidence to assert themselves apart from the central European canon.

This distinction from European standards is attributable to the fundamental Canadian tradition of difference. Canada has always been composed of different races,

ethnicities, and spaces; however, regard for this diversity in the past has been guarded and suppressed. In today's celebration of the individual, new canonical structure is necessary. Robert Kroetsch defines a possible direction for canonical structure in Canada with his vision of an inclusionary canon defined by its self-reflexive attitude and representational objective. The result is a canon that breaks out of literary conventions and celebrates differences in expression. Kroetsch's canon provides for not only literary experimentation, but racial, ethnic, and spacial diversity as well. The struggle to effectively represent all Canadians is a matter of recognizing the value of all voices of expression.

A clear shift in Canadian values is evident when considering the difference between the early Massey commission and the Applebaum-Hebert commission nearly thirty years later. The cross-section of Canadians has grown substantially and the change in population has altered priorities to ensuring proper representation of this expanding and evolving tradition. In the conclusion to *Hip and Trivial*, Robert Wright's text, he observes that "young writers, publishers and readers now appear to have achieved the kind of critical mass not only to voice their objections to the hegemony of the traditional canon but, in fact, to nudge the mainstream in new directions" (218). A significant period of canonical evolution is upon us and it is the responsibility of the canon to display this shift. Canada has always prided itself as a place that fosters diversity as its unifying principle. By establishing a multi-vocal central Canadian canon of literature, this diversity can be properly represented and reinforced into the minds and hearts of all who enjoy the benefits of sharing our imagination.

Appendix A

The list provided is the result of the ballot poll conducted by Malcolm Ross at the Calgary Conference on the Canadian Novel (1978). List A indicates the top one hundred Canadian works of fiction, List B indicates the ten most important novels, and List C indicates the rankings for the ten most important works in Canadian literature.

The lists are taken from Charles Steele's *Taking Stock: The Calgary Conference on the Canadian Novel* (150-54).

List A

Roy	<i>The Tin Flute</i>	Carrier	<i>La Guerre, Yes Sir!</i>
Richler	<i>The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz</i>	Atwood	<i>Surfacing</i>
Ross	<i>As for Me and My House</i>	Callaghan	<i>Such Is My Beloved</i>
Davies	<i>Fifth Business</i>	Grove	<i>Settlers of the Marsh</i>
Leacock	<i>Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town</i>	Laurence	<i>A Jest of God</i>
Buckler	<i>The Mountain and the Valley</i>	Wiseman	<i>The Sacrifice</i>
Mitchell	<i>Who Has Seen the Wind</i>	Duncan	<i>The Imperialist</i>
MacLennan	<i>The Watch That ends the Night</i>	Hebert	<i>Kamouraska</i>
MacLennan	<i>Two Solitudes</i>	Wilson	<i>Swamp Angel</i>
Laurence	<i>The Diviners</i>	Klein	<i>The Second Scroll</i>
Lowry	<i>Under the Volcano</i>	Grove	<i>Fruits of the Earth</i>
Haliburton	<i>The Clockmaker</i>	Callaghan	<i>The Loved and the Lost</i>
Watson	<i>The Double Hook</i>	Cohen	<i>Beautiful Losers</i>
Richler	<i>St. Urbain's Horseman</i>	Grove	<i>The Master of the Mill</i>
Ringuelet	<i>Thirty Acres</i>	Davies	<i>The Manticore</i>
Hemon	<i>Maria Chapdelaine</i>	MacLennan	<i>Each Man's Son</i>
MacLennan	<i>Barometer Rising</i>	Richardson	<i>Wacousta</i>
Munro	<i>Lives of Girls and Women</i>	Wiebe	<i>The Temptations of Big Bear</i>
		Laurence	<i>The Fire-Dwellers</i>
		Davies	<i>World of Wonders</i>
		Kroetsch	<i>The Studhorse Man</i>
		Montgomery	<i>Anne of Green Gables</i>
		Blais	<i>Mad Shadows</i>
		Ostenso	<i>Wild Geese</i>

Roy	<i>Where Nests the Water Hen</i>	Callaghan	<i>More Joy in Heaven</i>
Roy	<i>The Cashier</i>	Wright	<i>The Weekend Man</i>
Kirby	<i>The Golden Dog</i>	O'Hagan	<i>Tay John</i>
Blais	<i>A Season in the Life of Emmanuel</i>	Marlyn	<i>Under the Ribs of Death</i>
Atwood	<i>The Edible Woman</i>	Atwood	<i>Lady Oracle</i>
Callaghan	<i>They Shall Inherit the Earth</i>	Carrier	<i>Floralie, Where Are You?</i>
Moore	<i>The Luck of Ginger Coffey</i>	Lowry	<i>Hear Us O Lord From Heaven Thy Dwelling Place</i>
Brooke	<i>The History of Emily Montague</i>	Roy	<i>The Road Past Altamont</i>
Davies	<i>Leaven of Malice</i>	Lemelin	<i>The Plouffe Family</i>
Lemelin	<i>The Town Below</i>	Laurence	<i>This Side of Jordan</i>
Aquin	<i>Prochain episode</i>	Callaghan	<i>Close to the Sun Again</i>
Connor	<i>The Man From Glengarry</i>	Carrier	<i>Is It the Sun, Philibert?</i>
Moore	<i>Judith Hearne</i>	Parker	<i>The Seats of the Mighty</i>
Roy	<i>Street of Riches</i>	Knister	<i>White Narcissus</i>
Birney	<i>Turvey: A Military Picaresque</i>	Roberts	<i>The Heart of the Ancient Wood</i>
Grove	<i>A Search for America: The Odyssey of an Immigrant</i>	De Gaspe	<i>Canadians of Old</i>
de la Roche	<i>Jalna</i>	Wiebe	<i>The Blue Mountains of China</i>
Theriault	<i>Agaguk</i>	Langevin	<i>Dust Over the City</i>
Grove	<i>In Search of Myself</i>	Raddall	<i>His Majesty's Yankees</i>
Richler	<i>Son of a Smaller Hero</i>	Wilson	<i>The Innocent Traveller</i>
Davies	<i>A Mixture of Frailties</i>	Godbout	<i>The Knife on the Table</i>
MacLennan	<i>Return of the Sphinx</i>	Hood	<i>White Figure, White Ground</i>
Engel	<i>Bear</i>	Kroetsch	<i>The Words of My Roaring</i>
Stead	<i>Grain</i>	MacDougall	<i>Execution</i>
De Mille	<i>A Strange Manuscript Found in a Copper Cylinder</i>	Connor	<i>Glengarry School Days</i>
Godfrey	<i>The New Ancestors</i>	Richler	<i>The Incomparable Atuk</i>
Raddall	<i>The Nymph and the Lamp</i>		
Cohen	<i>The Favourite Game</i>		
Roy	<i>The Hidden Mountain</i>		
Wiebe	<i>Peace Shall Destroy Many</i>		
Kriesel	<i>The Rich Man</i>		

List B

Laurence	<i>The Stone Angel</i>
Davies	<i>Fifth Business</i>
Ross	<i>As for Me and My House</i>
Buckler	<i>The Mountain and the Valley</i>
Roy	<i>The Tin Flute</i>
Richler	<i>The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz</i>
Watson	<i>The Double Hook</i>
MacLennan	<i>The Watch That Ends the Night</i>
Mitchell	<i>Who Has Seen the Wind</i>
Laurence	<i>The Diviners</i>

List C

Klinck	<i>Literary History of Canada: Canadian Literature in English</i>
Frye	<i>The Bush Garden: Essays on the Canadian Imagination</i>
Pratt	<i>Collected Poems</i>
Leacock	<i>Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town</i>
Jones	<i>Butterfly on Rock: A Study of Themes and Images in Canadian Literature</i>
Moodie	<i>Roughing It in the Bush; or, Forest Life in Canada</i>
Atwood	<i>Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature</i>
Laurence	<i>The Stone Angel</i>
Ross	<i>As for Me and My House</i>
Birney	<i>Collected Poems</i>

Appendix B

Below is a listing of McClelland and Stewart Publishing's New Canadian Library Series titles since its inception in 1957 to 1985. The list is taken from *A Bibliography of McClelland and Stewart Imprints, 1909-1985: A Publisher's Legacy*. (1994)

1. Grove, F.P. 1879-1948. *Over Prairie Trails*. 1957.
2. Callaghan, Morley. 1903- . *Such is My Beloved*. 1957.
3. Leacock, Stephen. 1869-1944. *Literary Lapses*. 1957.
4. Ross, Sinclair. 1908- . *As for Me and My House*. 1957.
5. Roy Gabrielle. 1909- . *The Tin Flute*. 1958, 1980.
6. Haliburton, Thomas Chandler. 1796-1865. *The Clockmaker*. 1958.
7. Roberts, Charles G.D. 1860-1943. *The Last Barrier and Other Stories*. 1958.
8. MacLennan, Hugh. 1907- . *Barometer Rising*. 1958.
9. Raddall, Thomas H. 1903- . *At the Tide's Turn and Other Stories*. 1959.
10. Leacock, Stephen. *Arcadian Adventures with the Idle Rich*. 1959.
11. Drummond, William Henry. 1854-1907. *Habitant Poems*. 1959.
12. Ringuet. *Thirty Acres*. 1960.
13. Graham, Gwethalyn. 1913-1965. *Earth and High Heaven*. 1960.
14. Connor, Ralph. 1860-1937. *The Man From Glengarry*. 1960.
15. Leacock, Stephen. *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town*. 1960.
16. McCulloch, Thomas. 1776-1843. *The Stepsure Letter*. 1960.
17. Callaghan, Morley. *More Joy in Heaven*. 1960.
18. Ostenso, Martha. 1900- . *Wild Geese*. 1961.
19. Grove, F.P. *The Master of the Mill*. 1961.
20. Duncan, Sarah Jeanette. 1861-1922. *The Imperialist*. 1961.
21. De la Roche, Mazo. 1885-1961. *Delight*. 1961.
22. Klein, A.M. *The Second Scroll*. 1961.
23. Buckler, Ernest. 1908- . *The Mountain and the Valley*. 1961.
24. Kreisel, Henry. 1922- . *The Rich Man*. 1961.
25. Roy, Gabrielle. *Where Nest the Water Hen*. 1961.
26. Lemelin, Roger. 1919- . *The Town Below*. 1961.
27. Brooke, Frances. 1724-1789. *The History of Emily Montague*. 1961.
28. Leacock, Stephen. *My Discovery of England*. 1961.
29. Wilson, Ethel. 1888-1980. *Swamp Angel*. 1962.
30. MacLennan, Hugh. *Each Man's Son*. 1962.
31. Moodie, Susanna. 1803-1885. *Roughing it in the Bush*. 1962.
32. Knister, Raymond. 1899-1932. *White Narcissus*. 1962.
33. Callaghan, Morley. *They Shall Inherit the Earth*. 1962.
34. Birney, Earle. 1904- . *Turvey: A Military Picaresque*. 1963.

35. Leacock, Stephen. *Nonsense Novels*. 1963.
36. Stead, Robert. 1909-1959. *Grain*. 1963.
37. Bodsworth, Fred. 1918- . *Last of Curlews*. 1963.
38. Raddall, Thomas. *The Nymph and the Lamp*. 1963.
39. Moore, Brain. 1921- . *Judith Hearne*. 1964.
40. Roy, Gabrielle. *The Cashier*. 1963.
41. Marlyn, John. *Under the Ribs of Death*. 1964.
42. Grainger, Martin Allerdale. 1874-1941. *Woodsmen of the West*. 1964.
43. Leacock, Stephen. *Moonbeans from the Larger Lunacy*. 1964.
44. Hiebert, Paul. 1892- . *Sarah Binks*. 1964.
45. Richler, Mordecai. 1931-2001. *Son of a Smaller Hero*. 1966.
46. Jameson, Anna. 1794-1860. *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada: Selections*. 1965.
47. Meade, Edward. 1912- . *Remember Me*. 1965.
48. Leacock, Stephen. *Frenzied Fiction*. 1965.
49. Grove, F.P. *Fruits of the Earth*. 1965.
50. Grove, F.P. *Settlers of the Marsh*. 1966.
51. Traill, Catherine Parr. 1802-1899. *The Backwoods of Canada*. 1966.
52. McCourt, Edward. 1907-1972. *Music at the Close*. 1966.
53. Leacock, Stephen. *My Remarkable Uncle*. 1965.
54. Watson, Shelia. 1909- . *The Double Hook*. 1966.
55. Dunlop, William. 1792-1848. *Tiger Dunlop's Upper Canada*. 1967.
56. Roy Gabrielle. *Street of Riches*. 1967.
57. Leacock, Stephen. *Short Circuits*. 1967.
58. Richardson, John. 1796-1852. *Wacousta*. 1967.
59. Laurence, Margaret. 1926-1987. *The Stone Angel*. 1968.
60. Leacock, Stephen. *Further Foolishness: Sketches and Satires on the Folly of the Day*. 1968.
61. Davies, Robertson. 1913-1997. *Marchbanks' Almanack*. 1968.
62. Ross, Sinclair. *The Lamp at Noon and Other Stories*. 1968.
63. Roberts, Theodore G. 1877-1953. *The Harbor Master*. 1968.
64. Traill, Catherine Parr. *The Canadian Settler's Guide*. 1969.
65. Kirby, William. *The Golden Dog: A Romance of Old Quebec*. 1969.
66. Richler, Mordecai. *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*. 1969.
67. Leacock, Stephen. *Behind the Beyond and Other Contributions to Knowledge*. 1969.
68. De Mille, James. 1833-1880. *A Strange Manuscript Found in a Copper Cylinder*. 1969.
69. Leacock, Stephen. *Last Leaves*. 1970.
70. Laurence, Margaret. *The Tomorrow-Tamer: Short Stories*. 1970.
71. Woodcock, George. 1912- . *Odysseus Ever Returning: essays on Canadian Writers and Writings*. 1970.
72. Grey, Francis W. 1860-1939. *The Cure of St. Philippe*. 1970.
73. Cohen, Leonard. *The Favourite Game*. 1970.
74. Leacock, Stephen. *Winnowed Wisdom*. 1971.
75. Parker, Gilbert. 1862-1932. *The Seats of the Mighty: Being the Memoirs of a Captain Robert Moray. . .* 1971.
76. Grove, F.P. *A Search for America*. 1971.

77. Kreisel, Henry. *The Betrayal*. 1971.
78. Blais, Marie-Claire. *Mad Shadows*. 1971.
79. Richler, Mordecai. *The Incomparable Atuk*. 1971.
80. Moore, Brian. *The Luck of Ginger Coffey*. 1972.
81. Sutherland, John. 1919-1956. *John Sutherland: Essays, Controversies and Poems*. Miriam Waddington, ed. 1972.
82. Wiebe, Rudy. 1934- . *Peace Shall Destroy Many*. 1972.
83. Davies, Robertson. *A Voice from the Attic*. 1972.
84. Aquin, Hubert. 1929-1977. *Prochain Episode*. 1972.
85. Raddall, Thomas. *Roger Sudden*. 1972.
86. Evans, Hubert. 1892- . *Mist on the River*. 1973.
87. Laurence, Margaret. *The Fire-Dwellers*. 1973.
88. Le Pan, Douglas. 1914- . *The Deserter*. 1973.
89. Leprohon, Rosanna E. 1829-1879. *Antoinette De Mirecourt; or, Secret Marrying and Secret Sorrowing*. 1973.
90. Leclerc, Felix. 1914-1988. *Allegro*. 1974.
91. Gallant, Mavis. 1922- . *The End of the World and Other Stories*. 1974.
92. Scott, Duncan Campbell. 1862-1947. *In the Village of Viger and Other Stories*. 1974.
93. Atwood, Margaret. 1939- . *The Edible Woman*. 1973.
94. Grove, F.P. *In Search of Myself*. 1974.
95. Leacock, Stephen. *Feast of Stephen*. 1974.
96. Laurence, Margaret. *A Bird in the House*. 1974.
97. McCourt, Edward. *The Wooden Sword*. 1975.
98. Raddall, Thomas. *Pride's Fancy*. 1974.
99. Buckler, Ernest. *Ox Bells and Fireflies*. 1974.
100. Ludwig, Jack. 1922- . *Above Ground*. 1974.
101. Lowell, Robert. 1816-1891. *New Priest in Conception Bay*. 1974.
102. Niven, Frank. 1878-1944. *The Flying Years*. 1974.
103. Dewdney, Selwyn. 1909-1979. *Wind without Rain*. 1974.
104. Blais, Marie-Claire. *Tete Blanche*. 1974.
105. O'Hagan, Howard. 1902-1982. *Tay John*. 1974.
106. Aubert de Gaspé, Philippe. 1786-1871. *Canadians of Old*. 1974.
107. MacMechan, Archibald. 1862-1933. *Headwaters of Canadian Literature*. 1974.
108. Wiebe, Rudy. *The Blue Mountains of China*. 1975.
109. Roy, Gabrielle. *The Hidden Mountain*. 1974.
110. Roberts, Charles G.D. *The Heart of the Ancient Wood*. 1974.
111. Laurence, Margaret. *A Jest of God*. 1974.
112. Lewis, Wyndham, 1881-1957. *Self Condemned*. 1974.
113. Langevin, Andre. 1927- . *Dust over the City*. 1974.
114. Grove, F.P. *Our Daily Bread*. 1975.
115. Woodcock, George. *The Canadian Novel in the Twentieth Century*. 1975.
116. Salverson, Laura G. 1890-1970. *The Viking Heart*. 1975.
117. Birney, Earle. *Down the Long Table*. 1975.
118. Connor, Ralph. *Glengarry School Days*. 1975.

119. Lemelin, Roger. *The Plouffe Family*. 1975.
120. Roy, Gabrielle. *Windflower*. 1975.
121. Cohen, Matt. 1942-. *The Disinherited*. 1976.
122. Wiebe, Rudy. *The Temptations of Big Bear*. 1976.
123. Fraser, Sylvia. *Pandora*. 1976.
124. Janes, Percy. *House of Hate*. 1976.
125. Blondal, Patricia. 1927-1959. *A Candle to Light the Sun*. 1976.
126. Laurence, Margaret. *This Side of Jordan*. 1976.
127. Roberts, Theodore G. *The Red Feathers*. 1976.
128. Moore, Brian. *I Am Mary Dunne*. 1976.
129. Roy, Gabrielle. *The Road Past Altamont*. 1976.
130. Godbout, Jacques. 1933-. *Knife on the Table*. 1976.
131. Thomas, Clara. 1919-. *The Manawaka World of Margaret Laurence*. 1976.
132. Grove, F.P. *Consider Her Ways*. 1977.
133. Raddall, Thomas. *His Majesty's Yankees*. 1977.
134. Gerin-Lajoie, Antoine, 1824-1882. *Jean Rivard*. 1977.
135. Galt, John. 1779-1839. *Bogle Corbet*. Elizabeth Waterston, ed. 1977.
136. Richler, Mordecai. *A Choice of Enemies*. 1977.
137. Brown, E.K. 1905-1951. *Responses and Evaluations: Essays on Canada*. David Staines, ed. 1977.
138. Macphail, Andrew. 1864-. *The Master's Wife*. 1977.
139. Buckler, Ernest. *The Cruellest Month*. 1977.
140. Bodsworth, Fred. *The Atonement of Ashley Morden*. 1977.
141. Seton, Ernest T. 1860-1946. *Wild Animals I Have Known*. 1977.
142. Harlow, Robert. 1923-. *Scann*. 1977.
143. Smith, A.J.M. 1902-1980. *On Poetry and Poets*. 1977.
144. Wiseman, Adele. 1928-. *Crackpot*. 1978.
145. Ross, Sinclair. *Sawbones Memorial*. 1978.
146. Laurence, Margaret. *The Diviners*. 1978.
147. Creighton, Luella. 1901-. *High Bright Buggy Wheels*. 1978.
148. Bacque, James. 1929-. *Big Lonely*. 1978.
149. Cohen, Matt. *Wooden Hunter*. 1978.
150. Child, Philip. 1898-1978. *God's Sparrows*. 1978.
151. Guevremont, Germaine. 1893-1968. *The Outlander*. 1978.
152. Richler, Mordecai. *The Great Comic Book Heroes and Other Essays*. Robert Fulford, ed. 1978.
153. Cohen, Leonard. *Beautiful Losers*. 1981.
154. Moore, Brian. *The Emperor of Ice-Cream*. 1981.
155. Roy, Gabrielle. *Garden in the Wind [and] Enchanted Summer*. 1981.
156. Wiebe, Rudy. *The Scorched-Wood People*. 1981.
157. MacLeod, Alistair. *The Lost Salt Gift of Blood*. 1982.
158. Smith, Roy. *Lord Nelson Tavern*. 1981.
159. Faessler, Shirley. *Everything in the Window*. 1982.
160. Hood, Hugh. 1928-. *The Camera Always Lies*. 1982.
161. Joudry, Patricia. 1921-. *The Selena Tree*. 1982.
162. Russell, Franklin. 1922-. *Watchers at the Pond*. 1982.

163. Thomas, Audrey. 1935- . *Two in the Bush and Other Stories*. 1981.
164. Woods, Grahame. 1934- . *Bloody Harvest*. 1982.
165. Kattan, Naim. 1928- . *The Neighbor and Other Stories*. 1982.
166. Blais, Marie-Claire. *The Manuscripts of Pauline Archange*. 1982.
167. McFee, Oonah. *Sandbars*. 1982.
168. Metcalf, John. 1938- . *Selected Stories*. 1982.
169. Wiebe, Rudy. *The Angel of the Tar Sands and Other Stories*. 1982.
170. Wilson, Ethel. *The Innocent Traveller*. 1982.
171. Cohen, Matt. *The Sweet Second Summer of Kitty Malone*. 1982.
172. Engel, Marian. *Bear*. 1982.
173. Houston, James. 1921- . *Spirit Wrestler*. 1982.
174. Richards, David Adams. 1950- . *The Coming of Winter*. 1982.
175. Gibson, Graeme. 1934- . *Five Legs/Communion*. 1982.
176. Leacock, Stephen. *Laugh with Leacock*. 1982.
177. Bereford-Howe, Constance. 1922- . *The Book of Eve*. 1984.
178. Bruce, Charles. 1906-1971. *The Channel Shore*. 1984.
179. Clarke, Austin. 1934- . *Amongst Thistles and Thorns*. 1984.
180. Cohen, Matt. *Flowers of Darkness*. 1984.
181. Godfrey, Dave. 1938- . *The New Ancestors*. 1984.
182. Van Herk, Aritha. 1954- . *Judith*. 1984.
183. Blais, Marie-Claire. *St. Lawrence Blues*. 1985.
184. Richards, David Adams. *Blood Ties*. 1985.
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