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A Cultural Trade?
Canadian Magazine Illustrators at Home
and in the United States, 1880-1960

A Dissertation Presented

by

Shannon Jaleen Grove

to

The Graduate School

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Art History and Criticism

Stony Brook University

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Stony Brook University

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Abstract of the Dissertation

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This dissertation analyzes nationalisms in the work of Canadian magazine illustrators in Toronto and New York, 1880 to 1960. Using a continentalist approach—rather than the nationalist lens often employed by historians of Canadian art—I show the existence of an integrated, joint North American visual culture. Drawing from primary sources and biography, I document the social, political, corporate, and communication networks that illustrators traded in. I focus on two common visual tropes of the day—that of the pretty girl and that of wilderness imagery. Through visual and verbal rhetoric, and through institutional controls to exclude particular kinds of illustration from counting as culturally or artistically worthy, nationalist politicians, writers, and illustrators built a sense of difference between American and Canadian cultures by owning the wilderness imagery, while distancing themselves from the pretty girl imagery practiced by expatriates in New York and by some peers in Toronto. In reality, however, both wilderness and pretty girl illustration evolved from American print culture, and both continued to be practiced by Canadians and Americans together. I document and contextualize some subtle differences, but essentially this joint visual culture drew Canadian and American readerships closer, and did indeed “Americanize” Canadians just as nationalists feared. The Americanized depiction of women in particular spelled a loss of individuality and active citizenship for

Canadian women. But where nationalists believed that similarity of print consumption would lead to the political annexation of Canada by the United States, I find that the modicum of difference coupled with the patriotic visual culture centred on wilderness imagery, deployed by nationalists, staved off assimilation. Furthermore, I find that by maintaining similarity with Americans, the persistence of Canadian production and consumption of “American” illustration contributed to a break with British culture that facilitated Canada’s emerging nationhood. Similarity has also contributed to a friendliness with the United States that has ensured and continues to ensure that the U.S. does not perceive Canada as a threat—thus reducing likelihood of annexation by force or suasion, while affording Canadians economic benefits. I conclude, then, that “Americanized” Canadian illustration has not been a case of cultural weakness and betrayal, as nationalist policy has treated it. Rather, continentalist Canadian illustration has always been a legitimate expression of Canadian identity, and a key component in maintaining Canadian sovereignty.

This dissertation is gratefully dedicated to

Walt Reed

and

Roger Reed

for immense generosity, expertise, time, love, and support,
while facing great setbacks yourselves.
You exemplify the best values of the illustration community.



Frontispiece. S. Jaleen Grove, *Giantess*. Watercolour, 1997. Collection of the author.

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Preface

I began my career as an artist unable and unwilling to settle on just illustration, or graphic design, or gallery painting. My elders, despite their own hybrid practices, told me I would have to choose. But was it not all inter-related? I had already been exhibiting and illustrating for about seven years when I took an advanced placement at Emily Carr Institute in 1997, eager to acquire more sophisticated theory and language with which to refine my kaleidoscopic art practice. In my teens and twenties one thing that had survived experimentation was an urge to depict the female figure in landscape. But works like *Giantess* [frontispiece]—made in my first weeks at Emily Carr—met with disapproval. It was the era in which feminism censored female nudes, and painting Canada’s biggest art cliché, the landscape, was decidedly gauche. Furthermore, illustration was still unmentionable in fine art circles. I abandoned picturing women; picturing place and space went abstract and conceptual; and “picturing” in general became ironized. Although grateful for the improved range art school gave me, I became frustrated with the limitations of a self-delusional contemporary art world that refused to acknowledge that its prejudiced notions of value were indebted to a system of patronage merely masked as “non-commercial” (to me, as an illustrator, it seemed plainly obvious the art world was just another narrow-minded client). My final year project *Free From the Art World* (exhibited at Dynamo Gallery, Vancouver, 1999) deconstructed “value” by auctioning off the contents of the show (critical maps and globes of the art world in as many different so-called commercial and non-commercial approaches as I could muster) to whomever could bid the most worthy reason why they should have it. Following graduation I returned with relief to the honesty, integrity and direct social engagement of illustration and design, and stopped exhibiting. In retrospect, I ought to have kept on showing, because right about then other contemporary artists—young and having missed the worst years of illustrator-shunning—began using the very illustrative approaches I had been dissuaded from in school. Others also began critiquing art world institutions. Meanwhile, I pursued my MA, in which I studied the status and definition of illustration *vis a vis* fine art. It led directly to this dissertation—and back to my abandoned work in the studio. One of the questions I had hoped to answer at art school was *why* was I drawn to picturing women and landscapes? This dissertation has finally supplied the reason—and the theory and the language I had sought in 1997. Besides that, it has also provided answers to why picturing is so troubled and troubling, why so many Canadians have maintained hybrid illustration/art careers, and why the Canadian art world is still rather touchy about illustration. Like the naked *Giantess*, I feel invincible yet exposed, rampaging about in the annals of Canadian art history, vulnerable to stares and attacks as I rearrange the landscape. I am a firm believer in the value of practice-based research, and research-based practice. If I re-draw the parameters of art history, it is to widen the field of what is possible for artists in this country. It is as an illustrator, designer, and painter that I engaged with this dissertation, and that is how I wish to present it to the reader here: as an extension of my studio practice.

Acknowledgments

My dissertation is essentially reportage woven into a narrative and theory of cultural expression. Reportage and its resulting story are only as good as the sources. In my case, I met a great number of people far more informed than me, who generously opened their lifetimes' of knowledge along with their collections. For this reason I view this dissertation as a bit of a group project, and I would like to acknowledge each person and institution for their part. I would especially like to recognize the components my helpers supplied that had to get cut—approximately three chapters' worth—because these excisions are not really absent. They contextualize what appears here.

This dissertation includes a number of copyrighted images. Permission has been granted for their use by the following sources: The New York Society of Illustrators grants rights to use Arthur William Brown's fonds and their own archives. King Features Syndicate Inc. allows use of the Patterson Girl comic by Russell Patterson. Rogers Communication permits me to reproduce covers and illustrations from *Maclean's*, *Chatelaine*, and *Canadian Home Journal*. The Government of Ontario approves my use of Arthur Heming's painting *The Whiskey Smuggler*. Michael J. Smith kindly provides images of postcards, while Mike Gourley supplies a photo of Rex Woods' portrait of Rita Martin. Julie Clark permits reproduction of all Rex Woods materials, and JTI MacDonald sent a photo of the MacDonald Lassie. Orion Publishing grants me reproduction rights to Thoreau MacDonald's *A Canadian Child's ABC*, and Susan MacDonald approves use of other Thoreau MacDonald images. The John F. Clymer Museum allows reproduction of Clymer's paintings.

Most deserving of my gratitude is of course the Art Department of Stony Brook University and the State of New York, for supporting my education with scholarships and teaching stipends. As well, Donald Kuspit published my first article and challenged me to work outside my specialty. I regret that Joseph Monteyne left the department before my defense, but what I learned about print culture from him informs much of this dissertation. I appreciate Barbara Frank for filling in his spot on my committee at the last minute. April Masten of the History Department provided extensive, detailed feedback on the first half of the dissertation and was ready to serve on my committee too. Raiford Guins was a constant champion and mentor, putting in much extra effort to see that I had the best opportunities to grow professionally and as a scholar. External examiner Brian Rusted has been a valued contact since my M.A. studies, and his careful review of my dissertation added much. Michele H. Bogart, my supervisor, shared her own expertise on illustration and American art and applied her considerable pragmatism to focus my direction.

I am so very grateful to copy editor Emma Woodley, who formatted my footnotes and bibliography on time. Any errors that remain are undoubtedly due to my own shortcomings and amendments after she submitted her work.

Both my Canada Graduate Scholarship during my M.A. and my Doctoral Fellowship from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada allowed me to attend many conferences and to travel to distant archives, which became core to building my network of helpers. The Norman Rockwell Museum provided me with a Fellowship and access to their collection, as well as opportunities to meet collectors and other scholars. I am especially indebted to Joyce K. Schiller of the Rockwell Center for American Visual Studies there for mentorship. I was also honoured to be given a spot at the American

Antiquarian Society's annual CHAVIC summer seminar in 2012, lead by Georgia Barnhill and Joshua Brown.

The New York Society of Illustrators allowed me unfettered access to their entire library and archives; Anelle Miller and Eric Palmer especially accommodated me there. Marissa Hiller, who interned at the Society while I was present, became a valued colleague and to her I owe thanks for compiling the Society's membership list. Terry Brown tipped me off where to locate the "Brownie Box"—Arthur William Brown's fonds. It is impossible to overemphasize the importance of the S.I. holdings; I hope the few things from there that I bring to light will encourage others to consult those holdings too.

Like S.I., the Toronto Arts and Letters Club also holds valuable records on illustrators—archivists Scott James and Raymond Peringer were always ready with a smile to help me find obscure materials and pass on their memories of unrecorded details. Skye Lacerte and Doug B. Dowd at Washington University's Modern Graphic History Library were unstinting in their assistance as well. Philip Dombowsky, archivist at the National Gallery of Canada library, gave me early access to Robert Stacey's fonds, answered more than one odd inquiry, and filled in gaps in my knowledge of Carleton Studios, bookplates, and other esoterica. Charlie Hill, Curator of Canadian Art, made time to meet with me and talk on at least two occasions.

The Cahén Archives and the Visual Literacy Foundation of Canada, with the guidance of Michael Cahén and Jim Harrison, have been most attentive to mentoring me, supporting me, and giving me unprecedented opportunity to curate exhibitions and study the work of Oscar Cahén. In connection with that I owe David Burnett, Tom Smart, and Jeffrey Spalding thanks for encouraging me and sharing their research. It is with great regret that I had to sacrifice a full chapter here on Oscar Cahén due to restrictions on length, but I look forward to that content appearing in other forms soon. Michael Cahén, more than anyone else, has ensured that my transition from student to professional has been immediate and at a high standard.

The willingness of book dealers to share their considerable expertise and to allow me to photograph their wares has been an indispensable component of my project. Book dealers who especially helped me in Montreal are Jean Daoust and Guy de Grosbois, who gave me books as gifts and shared many insights on Québécois print culture; and Mathieu Bertrand, proprietor of the shop Bonheur d'occasion, who allowed me to photograph his Russell Patterson tearsheets. Don Stewart of McLeod's Books in Vancouver took time to show me a wealth of material on illustrator John Innes. David Sweet at Books and Company in Picton permitted me to study his volumes of *Picturesque Canada*. George Fly in Toronto allowed me to photograph his copy of a Rous and Mann book of Toronto scenes. Numerous unnamed dealers at ephemera shows and book sales also allowed me to photograph items.

Collectors are indispensable to understanding how magazines and illustrations are esteemed and consumed. Collectors and illustration dealers are also the unsung heroes of research for the perfectionist work they do in cataloguing obscure periodicals no one else cared about for decades, and for saving and conserving artworks, all at their own considerable expense. Their work fills voids left by formal archives and libraries. Here I would mention the published reference catalogues by Robert William Mellberg and by Norm Platnick on pretty girl illustrators; and by Michael J. Smith on Canadian postcards. Platnick, a scientist, also performed a content analysis on his collection at my request. I thank David Saunders for information on pulps and George Hagenauer for his unmatched

knowledge of mid-west illustration and pulp publishing; Fred Taraba, and Bud Moon for helpful conversations; and especially Richard Kelly for making his private collection available and for amassing full runs of periodicals that I was free to consult. Vancouver comix artist Colin Upton educated me on both comics history and culture, and on military history. John Adcock provided information on Newton McConnell, Richard D. Taylor, Arthur Heming, and *The Goblin* via his blogs, *Yesterday's Papers* and *Punch in Canada*. Lawyer, illustration collector, and writer David Apatoff has continuously provided humorously cheeky and stimulating argument, provocative blogging on *Illustration Art*, and illustrator monographs, and I am also indebted to him for free legal advice on copyright and U.S. taxes. Illustrator, collector and historian Leif Peng has been generous year after year in supplying scans, giving me vintage original illustration art, sharing oral histories, blogging at *Today's Inspiration*, inviting me to publish on *T.I.* too, loaning books, and even dropping off a load of dirt for my garden.

Illustrators and their families have been uniformly welcoming and generous with their stories and private records and collections. Illustrators Tom McNeely and Gerry Sevier provided valuable information when I did my M.A., and continue to answer my questions. I thank Frederick Dreany for insights into the lives of his parents Joe and Freda Dreany. Marg Stewart, Age Hill, and Amanda Hill gave insight on James Hill; and Callie Stacey informed me on C.W. Jefferys. Especially helpful was Julie Clark with background and files on Rex Woods. Clark drew from her mother's manuscripts and from interviews with her, and relayed my questions to her mother, sending me answers by email. Her mother, who passed recently, was Marian Archer (later Marian Hay), Woods' cousin and the daughter of Rex's "Aunt Nance". Julie Clark would like me to record here that it is due to her mother's unfailing diligence and determination that Julie is now custodian of a large collection of information relating to Woods, his life and work.

Many, many professional historians, archivists, curators, and professors spent time digging up material or talking with me—more than I can recount here. Among those who deserve special mention are Keith Walden, for allowing me to audit his Canadian Culture class at Trent University; and Kathryn Labelle, who let me sit in on a course on the Canadian West at the University of Saskatchewan, and who borrowed library books on my behalf. John Wadland gave me much guidance in Canadian Studies, and a lot of information on Ernest Thompson Seton. Librarians at both Queen's University and McMaster University bent the rules to give me free library cards. I cannot thank Randall Speller enough for generously giving me his master bibliography on Canadian illustration. Wayne Morgan put his hard-to-find articles on Palmer Cox into my hands, and invited me for lunch as well. John Gilinsky answered militaria questions. Gary Sim and Robert Amos each shared their files from 30 years of research on B.C. artists. Bill Jeffries of Simon Fraser University and Katherine Kalsbeek of The University of British Columbia's special collections gave me access to John Innes artwork and records. Brian Donnelly has been an ongoing partner in Canadian design history research. Joyce Zemans pointed me to important books and gave encouragement, as did Anna Hudson, Brian Foss, Kristina Huneault, John O'Brian, Christian Vachon, Katerina Atanassova, Cassandra Getty, and others. Dominic Hardy was more responsible than anyone else for motivating me to begin a Ph.D. He, Annie Gerin, and Lora Senechal Carney gave excellent feedback on my ideas about pretty girl illustration in Canada. Carney also deserves special recognition and gratitude for reviewing this entire

dissertation and offering crucial critical perspectives; she filled in Canadian content where my American committee members could not.

I would like to acknowledge the words of encouragement and caution my primary predecessor Robert Stacey gave me in our one brief meeting before he passed away. He warned me that by devoting myself to illustration history I was condemning myself to marginalization and obscurity—but he offered his support anyway. How I wish he could have lived to see the present day, where Illustration Studies is now a recognized field and illustration topics are beginning to be a regular feature at art history conferences. He helped make it so.

So many of my research contacts have become friends. To them I add my friends and fellow students who listened to my frustrations and provided shoulders to cry on. At Stony Brook, Andrew Wasserman was a stellar office-mate and a great conversationalist about our mutual interests in visual culture. Christine Scott backed me up on department issues. Danielle Lenhard was the perfect counselor. Laine Nooney provided accommodation on many occasions, as well as creative conversation and support, as did David Smucker and Jenny Goldstein. Christian Martius of York University, Toronto, gave absolutely critical research assistance.

I have been lucky to have a supportive family throughout my seemingly neverending years in school. Chester and Camilla Gryski not only introduced me to the Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, they generously allowed me free run of their considerable private library and illustration collection. Chester's knowledge of private press and book arts, and his willingness to purchase key reference works the moment they were published and loan them before even he had read them, has been like having an academic's fairy godfather. Elliott Hinton Willis was key in my getting to write a monograph on her grandfather, illustrator Walter Haskell Hinton, that supplied not only much of my understanding of American national identity, but the experience that earned me the opportunity to next work with the Oscar Cahén Archives. Doug Linton provided a home when I was in Victoria and assisted my acquiring a home in Hamilton—and ran down to the Victoria Public Library to photograph for me magazines that exist nowhere else. Susan and Eric Marles provided an all-inclusive retreat at their house in Saskatoon for five weeks so that I could rewrite the entire first half of my dissertation. Finally, George Grove sacrificed much, much more than either of us bargained for in order for me to realize my ambitions. Without his support I never would have even begun my M.A. degree, let alone the Ph.D.

Finally, I owe Walt Reed and Roger Reed of Illustration House, to whom this dissertation is dedicated, some special words of thanks. Walt accepted my application to intern at Illustration House, thus initiating me into the canon of American illustration history with all the kindness and unstinting sharing of information that he is legendary for. Roger Reed deserves more recognition and gratitude for his part in this dissertation than any other individual mentioned, not just for carrying on his father's legacy of being a chief custodian of illustration history, but for being my research assistant, peer reviewer, letter-of-introduction-writer, psychotherapist, best friend, cheerleader, and general partner in everything going forward as well.

Introduction

Canadian Illustration and Canadian Identity

In 1919, for the occasion of the inaugural issue of the new literary magazine *Canadian Bookman*, there appeared an essay intended to establish the magazine's role as cultural arbiter. In this essay, Stephen Leacock, the celebrated Canadian satirist, punned on the word "art" to conflate illustration with salesmanship:

"I don't care," Cicero said doggedly. "I don't want it and I won't have it and you can't make me take it." The agent turned over his papyrus till he came to the picture of a Greek chariot. . . "Look," he said sternly. In spite of himself Cicero's eyes kindled with interest. "Is that a chariot?" he murmured. "It is," said the agent. "It is done in parchment by our new graphite process. The illustrations of this work are alone worth the price. Would you like to see a picture of a trireme done in red ink?" Cicero looked and was lost. Ten minutes later the agent walked out of the office with a signature from Cicero promising to pay monthly instalments for seven years, while Cicero sat gazing fixedly at the picture of a trireme till one of his clerks touched him on the shoulder and recalled him to life.

Such is, and such has been since the days of the Roman, the art of the book agent. He worked it then, he works it still. Nor is there any doubt about it that the art by which he sells books is a sort of hypnotism.¹

Leacock hoped that the new magazine *Canadian Bookman* would become a protected non-commercial space "like an old-world garden, hidden in the heart of a metropolis," away from "the eager scramble of our commerce," as represented by the book agent in his parable.²

What Leacock did not mention because it was so implicitly understood—and what I will make explicit in this dissertation—is that nationalistic Canadians considered this eager scrambling after commerce, the metropolis, salesmanship, and cheap illustrated print to be "American" cultural traits, and "Americans" were stereotyped as aggressive, tasteless, and greedy.³ Therefore, illustration occupied an

¹ Stephen Leacock, "The Book Agent: Or, Why Do People Buy Books?" *Canadian Bookman* 1, no. 1 (January 1919): 17.

² *Ibid.*, 19.

³ The association of America with crass materialism was expressed as early as 1820 by the conservative French political philosopher Louis Gabriel Ambroise, Vicomte de Bonald. Jean-François Revel, *Anti-Americanism* (Jackson, TN: Encounter Books, 2003), 145. Perhaps the earliest prototype of the hustling American is Thomas Haliburton's title character in *The Clockmaker; Or the Sayings and Doings of Samuel Slick of Slickville* (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea and Blanchard, 1838). Critiquing the two-dimensional stereotype of an American is largely

uneasy position in Canada not just because it “hypnotized” consumers and abetted commerce, but because it carried a taint of the un-Canadian. Leacock’s essay captures the anxieties surrounding illustration among Canadian literati, anxieties that led to a precarious status indeed for illustration and illustrators.

But magazines, even more than books (excepting children’s), relied on illustration for their appeal. In fact, Leacock’s essay was followed on the very next page by a comprehensive survey of Canadian commercial illustrators.⁴ Master of irony that he was, Leacock—who was also the McGill University Chair of Political Economy—concluded by reminding men of letters that in the end the salesman’s “art” deserved credit for supporting writers’ livelihood and social standing.⁵ This contradiction underpins the variety of forms and receptions of Canadian illustration that will be discussed in this dissertation.

The relative paucity of research on illustration in Canadian art history, visual culture studies, and Canadian studies has deprived Canadians of a well-rounded understanding of what comprised Canadian visual and material culture. For the purposes of this study, visual culture is defined (and I oversimplify for clarity) as commercial and noncommercial material produced for consumption through the means of seeing images and sights, and of imaginative visualizing of verbal descriptions, by the “everyman” and “everywoman” assumed to exist by the makers and publishers. While the visual culture in total encompasses a vast array of gallery art, publications, folk art, ephemera, and spectacle, this dissertation focuses on the labour and works produced by Canadian illustrators, and considers what the “American” content in it contributed. A secondary task is to document and analyze the degradation in status of illustration *vis a vis* gallery art. Here, I analyze editorial illustration such as cover and fiction illustration, more than advertising illustration. This is because one of my key goals is to demonstrate how illustrators’ personal experiences and self-expression were integral to their work, and editorial illustration was more artist-directed than advertising art was (the advertising that I do discuss exploited, rather than suppressed, the illustrators’ signature styles *because* these illustrators’ works were so autographic). The illustrators’ personal emotional investment in their specialty subjects was, as we will see, what made their art seem authentic, believable, and “good” (morally and technically) to fans, thus endowing it with the very high potential to influence consumers that champions and critics of illustration alike celebrated or railed against.

out of scope here; references by nationalists to what is “American” throughout this dissertation will generally refer to this stereotype, with consciousness that what citizens of the United States may or may not be in reality is different. It is pertinent, however, that at least one study has argued that consumerism was intentionally formed as an expression of American national identity. Charles F. McGovern, *Sold American: Consumption and Citizenship, 1890–1945* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

⁴ St. George Burgoyne, “Some Canadian Illustrators: Article No. 1,” *Canadian Bookman* 1, no. 1 (January 1919): 21.

⁵ Leacock, “The Book Agent,” 19.

Jeffrey D. Brison notes that scholars have greatly overestimated the difference between Canadians and Americans—in his words, the purported natures of the two nations have become “essentialized” and “simplified.”⁶ Because my aim is to find out and describe exactly *how* those essentializations and simplifications arose by documenting the visual and verbal rhetoric that attempted to draw an us-and-them line in the sand, my own discussions may initially seem reductive of the complexity of Canadian-American relations as well. But as the reader will eventually see, I provide evidence supporting Brison’s assessment that Canadians have always been a good deal more Americanized than cultural commentators of the past and histories of them have been willing to admit.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, illustrated mass magazines were the most accessible form of visual communication in North America. The production, exploitation, reception, and regulation of illustrated popular print affected how nationalism and the national identities of Canada and the United States came to be understood by those who lived there. In the rhetoric of nation-building, nineteenth century Canadians were faced with two competing political alliances: British imperialism, in which Canada would stay a colony governed from London; and American annexation, in which Canada would join the United States. In the 1890s a third option that had been brewing since Confederation in 1867 gained ascendancy, wherein Canada would become autonomous and would either resemble Great Britain (as many of the governing classes preferred) or the United States (as was already reflected in the social makeup). This dissertation examines how Canadian autonomy was negotiated in Canadian and American English language magazine illustration by Canadian illustrators between 1880 and 1960. It concentrates on how two popular tropes—that of wilderness adventure and that of pretty girls—signified in the rivalry of the opposing political sentiments known as “nationalism” and “continentalism.”

Fundamental to this discussion is that high-minded, patriotic British Canadians who feared how print might influence culture and citizenship received American publications with great distaste.⁷ Illustration was suspect to them because it enhanced the sensational appeal of the fiction that many puritanical Canadians regarded as sinful.⁸ Charles Mair, a poet and founding member of the imperialistic

⁶ Jeffrey D. Brison, *Rockefeller, Carnegie, and Canada: American Philanthropy and the Arts and Letters in Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 72.

⁷ Suzanne Bowness, “In Their Own Words: Prefaces and Other Sites of Editorial Interaction in Nineteenth-Century Canadian Magazines,” (PhD diss., University of Ottawa, 2012), 101–115.

⁸ Carole Gerson, *A Purer Taste: The Writing and Reading of Fiction in English in Nineteenth-Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989). When *Toronto Saturday Night* launched in 1887, editors assured readers that it should not be taken “in any sense as simply ‘a story paper,’ though novels, illustrated sketches and stories will form one of its many features.” Bowness, “In Their Own Words,” 114. Goldwin Smith once declared that novels were to women what saloons were to men. Malcolm Ross, “Goldwin Smith,” in *Our Living*

Canada First movement of 1868,⁹ blamed an alleged “American” moral decrepitude on “tales of villains elevated into heroes, *Peck's Bad Boy* [an illustrated popular fiction series] and the like sickly rubbish, [which] is full of aversion from honest work, [and] sees successful fraud on all hands rolling in ostentatious and pretentious wealth.”¹⁰ As the following chapters will show, Mair’s demonization of popular American print have been handed down to today.

The root difference between Canada and the United States fueling this xenophobia was, in simplified terms, that the British doctrine of peace, order, and good government with its emphasis on a class-based but integrated social system moving forward as a whole clashed with the American belief in life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, with its emphasis on equality and the individual’s sense of entitlement to American Dream prosperity. This contrast was the subject of a sarcastic two-panel cartoon that appeared in *Dominion Illustrated*: in the first panel, “Old World Despotism” is a street scene of calm and safety, with an English bobby overseeing rules of the road. In the second, “New World Liberty,” a selfish thrillseeker drives unchecked down the street, endangering women and children [Figure 1].

Tradition: Seven Canadians, ed. Claude Thomas Bissell (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1958), 32.

⁹ The Canada First movement was established in 1868 by Charles Mair, George Denison, Henry Morgan, William Foster, and Robert Grant Haliburton (the son of Thomas Chandler Haliburton, originator of the stereotypical American “Sam Slick” character). Canada First agitated for Anglo-Saxon unity and the dominance of the “northern race.” They soon evolved into a political party, called the Canadian National Association, standing for “British Connection, Consolidation of the Empire and in the meantime a voice in treaties affecting Canada.” G. M. Hougham, “Canada First: A Minor Party in Microcosm,” *Canadian Journal of Economic and Political Science* 19, no. 2 (May 1953): 175.

¹⁰ Charles Mair, quoted in J. L. Granatstein and Norman Hillmer, *For Better or for Worse: Canada and the United States to the 1990s* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1991), 14.



Figure 1. Anonymous [cartoon]. *Dominion Illustrated*, (February 1892), unpaginated back matter. Photograph by the author. Victoria University Library, Toronto.

In the British view, this dream of prosperity and the commercialization that accompanied it were despised. This included much illustration, which was art made for money, often for advertising purposes or to sell the periodicals blamed for American corruption.¹¹ Such anti-Americanism formed “one of the solid legs on which that elusive animal, the Canadian identity, stands,” in the words of historian W.M. Baker in 1970.¹²

Despite this clash of ideals, in both countries a large Anglo-Saxon middle class shared enough lifestyle, goals, tastes and spending power that American mass magazines were quite acceptable to Canadian readers and actual differences between New Englanders and Anglo-Canadians were in fact not so pronounced, as both early commentary and recent studies have shown.¹³ By the end of the nineteenth century, many Canadian observers were praising the better American periodicals.¹⁴ In 1887 Sara Jeannette Duncan complained that Canadians read more American material than British, and warned that the American “magazine phalanx” of the northern states would soon “dictate” Canadian literature.¹⁵ Sure enough,

¹¹ A number of American intellectuals shared this view of American visual culture, but aside from references below, I will not be examining them.

¹² W. M. Baker, “A Case of Anti-Americanism in English-Speaking Canada: The Election Campaign of 1911,” *Canadian Historical Review* 51, no. 4 (December 1970): 426.

¹³ E.g., Amicus, “Emigration,” *Anglo-American Magazine* 1, July 1852, 5; Edward Grabb and James Curtis, *Regions Apart: The Four Societies of Canada and the United States* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2005).

¹⁴ Bowness, “In Their Own Words,” 110–114.

¹⁵ Sara Jeannette Duncan, “American Influence on Canadian Thought,” *The Week*, January 7, 1887, 518.

illustrated American magazines after 1890 adopted advertising to fund enormous distribution at reduced cover prices, and their output—and availability and clout—multiplied. *The Canadian Druggist* proclaimed in 1893 that *Ladies Home Journal* was “an ideal woman’s magazine” and seemed “ridiculously cheap” at ten cents.¹⁶ In the 1920s Canadian publishers increased their warnings that their industry was in danger of being quashed by American print.¹⁷ In 1928 it was alleged that Americans controlled newsstands in Canada and prevented the Canadian titles from being promoted.¹⁸ By 1930 American periodicals outsold Canadian ones eight to one on Canadian newsstands.¹⁹

The rising consumption of American print was a matter of great concern to English-born illustrator Charles W. Jefferys (1869-1951), and his manner of addressing it provides an apt example of conservative cultural nationalism—and a problematic contradiction contained in it. In 1902 he launched his own satirical periodical in Toronto, titled *The Moon*, in order to give Canadians a dose of anti-Americanism (among other political aims).²⁰ A caricature captioned “A Quiet Evening in a Canadian Home” depicts a middle class family of ten with large portraits of the King and Queen on their wall [Figure 2].²¹ Hypocritically and passively, they read an assortment of American magazines, burlesqued as the *Saturday Evening Boast*, *Jollier’s*, *New York Sunday Hurred*, *Carper’s Bazaar*, *Sadie’s Home Journal* and *Duncey’s*. Among trivial headlines such as WHAT THE PRESIDENT EATS appear more serious messages: AMERICAN SUPREMACY UNQUESTIONED—AMERICAN COMMERCIAL INVASION DECLINE OF BRITISH TRADE—DISCONTENT IN CANADA ANNEXATION INEVITABLE.

¹⁶ *Canadian Druggist* 5, no. 12 (December 1893): 38.

¹⁷ “Why reverse a patriotic policy?” *Maclean’s*, June 1, 1920, 32; Flos Williams, “Plea for Canadian Periodicals,” *Canadian Bookman* 7, no. 4 (April 1925): 65; Charles William Stokes, “Our Americanized News-Stands: How Foreign Literature Is Strangling Canadian Production,” *Saturday Night*, February 27, 1926, 2; “Can Canadian Publications Survive?” *Saturday Night*, February 27, 1926, 1; “A Fast Disappearing Industry,” *Saturday Night*, March 13, 1926, 1.

¹⁸ “Americans Intimidate News Agents: Dealer Who Displayed Canadian Magazine Is Threatened,” *The Financial Post*, January 13, 1928, 1.

¹⁹ Theodore Peterson, *Magazines in the Twentieth Century* (Champaign, IL: Urbana University of Illinois Press, 1956), 112–113.

²⁰ Jefferys and partner Knox Magee said *The Moon’s* express purpose was to reduce Canadian dependence on illustrated humour magazines that were “so intensely ‘American’ that they are always objectionable.” C. W. Jefferys and Knox Magee, *The Moon*, May 28, 1902, 11.

²¹ C. W. Jefferys, “A Quiet Evening in a Canadian Home,” *The Moon*, June 25, 1902, 52, cartoon.



Figure 2. Charles W. Jefferys, "A Quiet Evening in a Canadian Home," *The Moon*, June 25, 1902, 52. W.D. Jordan Library Special Collections and Music Library, Queen's University.

Jefferys' point was that Canadian partaking of American media was allowing questionable American values and capital to encroach and possibly result in Uncle Sam's taking a docile Canada out of the British Empire to become another star on the American flag. A century of border skirmishes, political events, and economic developments legitimized his apprehensions of annexation.²² The contradiction is that Jefferys' pen-and-ink technique was mastered during his near decade of

²² Main events that convinced Canadians that the United States could invade were the treatment of Loyalists during the War of Independence, the War of 1812, Manifest Destiny, the Fenian raids of the 1860s, the near loss of British Columbia to the United States 1867-1873, the free trade proposal of 1892, the Alaska Boundary Dispute of 1902, and the Reciprocity proposal of 1911.

employment as a staff artist on the *New York Herald*,²³ and that the typical Toronto family he depicted was likely sitting on furnishings and wearing clothes with an American provenance. How can anti-American politicking be reconciled with the reality of integrated American-Canadian life on the North American continent? The coming chapters provide examples of how several other illustrators responded to the pressures of Canadianism and Americanism, what they traded in terms of acclaim and prosperity in the process.

The most vehement, like Jefferys, resented any reconciliation of Canadian society with American culture (mainly popular culture). Yet even loyal Canadians like J.E.H. MacDonald of the nationalist Group of Seven painters²⁴ couldn't help but like and integrate worthy American innovations too, such as the thought of Henry David Thoreau—was MacDonald less Canadian because of it?²⁵ The majority of illustrators were obligated—many happily, like Rex Woods, who will be discussed presently—to follow New York trends in mainstream illustration in order to satisfy average Canadians' taste. Did they weaken Canadian autonomy? Many, like Arthur William Brown, who is also examined, chose to pursue opportunity in the United States—how did their lives and art differ from the stay-at-homes, and how did they affect Canadian consumption and art?

This dissertation considers the problematic cultural citizenship of expatriates and their New York-following brethren at home, in relation to their more nationalistic peers in Canada. Rather than viewing the works of nationalists and the others (whom I will call continentalists) as opposites, I will instead think of them all as embodying varying degrees of both nationalist and continentalist thought, inhabiting malleable positions along a political spectrum between annexation at the far left and imperialism at the far right.²⁶

²³ Jefferys, quoted in Robert Stacey, *C. W. Jefferys* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1985), 15.

²⁴ Members of the Group of Seven were actively painting together by 1911, named themselves in 1920, and were enlarged as the 28-member Canadian Group of Painters in 1933. Members had different values and career trajectories, but the Group has in itself become a mythic entity popularly thought to represent cultural nationalism. Like my use of "American," in this dissertation when I discuss "the Group" it is to this rhetorical construction that I refer.

²⁵ J. E. H. MacDonald named his only son Thoreau after H. D. Thoreau. Other intellectual traditions that Canadian nationalists shared with Americans include theosophy and admiration of Scandinavian art.

²⁶ There is some correlation to actual Canadian political parties, which in extreme moments resulted in the Conservative Party (Tories) espousing imperialism, and the Liberal Party favouring continentalist policies denounced as annexationist by the Tories. The actual political affiliations of cultural leaders, however, do not necessarily correspond, regardless of their level of nationalist or continentalist rhetoric—in general, almost all Canadians who voiced an opinion were nationalist in the sense of wanting the best for an autonomous Canada. Actual annexationists such as Goldwin Smith were rare.

What became of expatriates' Canadian identity—and Canadians' knowledge of them? Canadians kept up with American and British illustration as late as 1924, when a Canadian National Exhibition display featured Americans Maxfield Parrish, Norman Rockwell, John Held Jr.; the English Sidney Sime; and Canada's expatriate Arthur William Brown.²⁷ But with mounting pressure to Canadianize, by the 1930s fervent nationalism discouraged recognition of the likes of Brown. For an exhibition of Canadian book illustration, organizer Howard Angus Kennedy, president of the Canadian Authors Association, decreed, "On this occasion I think we should confine our exhibit to artists *living in Canada*, or at any rate not living in the US – those who have crossed the line should not complain of this [emphasis in original]."²⁸ Frank M. Armington (1876-1941), a Canadian genre painter living in Paris and working in a conservative, slightly Impressionist manner, protested international Canadian art exhibits that he observed privileged the Group of Seven, and complained of similar discrimination from the National Gallery of Canada's director Eric Brown:

I resent Mr. [Eric] Brown's offensive attitude towards Mrs. Armington and myself that we are not Canadian artists. What one paints or etches has nothing to do with our being or not being Canadian artists, nor does it imply that one has to live in one's own country . . . We always exhibit as Canadians and as such abroad, we are doing just as much for our country as those living in Canada.²⁹

Such exclusions on the part of cultural mediators as Kennedy and Eric Brown encouraged the cultural orphaning of absent illustrators, in particular those in the United States; and with that, a significant portion of Canadian cultural work was rendered invisible and un-Canadian.

In 1951 a contra-American foundation was set into official Canadian cultural policy, with the landmark Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (known as the "Massey Commission"), a document that has formed the basis of federal arts and culture policy ever since. Chaired by Vincent Massey (1887-1967), it argued that American philanthropy had resulted in Canadian cultural dependency on the United States; and in the exodus of 2500 professionals and intellectuals per year; and in the importation of "tacit direction from New York" in the form of returning students taking up teaching positions.³⁰ The influx of

²⁷ "Collection of Art at 1924 Exhibition Is of High Order: Many Beautiful Paintings and Photographs Are on View," *Globe*, August 23, 1924, 13.

²⁸ Howard Angus Kennedy quoted in Randall Speller, "Fragments of an Exhibition: A Loan Exhibition of Drawings by Canadian Illustrators," *The Devil's Artisan: A Journal of the Printing Arts* 42 (Spring 1998): 9.

²⁹ Frank M. Armington to Prime Minister the Right Hon. R. B. Bennett, 14 January 1933, MG 26 K (RBB), vol. 457, reel M-1106, pp. 289052–6, R. B. Bennett fonds, Library and Archives Canada.

³⁰ Armington to Bennett, item 14, p. 14; item 17, p. 15.

periodicals and other media from the south was an “invasion” from an “alien source,”³¹ and had “caused an uncritical acceptance of ideas and assumptions which are alien to our tradition.”³² As Chapter 3 will touch upon, Massey was a confirmed cultural nationalist, having in 1948 written a “Canadian Credo” that encouraged young Canadian men to swear, “I believe in the Commonwealth of Nations . . . outside of which our national life would lose its independent being; I believe in our abiding friendship with our nearest neighbours; an honest friendship without either the subservience or the mimicry which must impair true partnership.”³³

The Commission was correct in identifying the problematic domination of American print media, which influential Toronto communications theorist Harold Innis empirically demonstrated in his 1952 essay *The Strategy of Culture*.³⁴ But declaring the United States an invading alien was incorrect given that American print, as Allan Smith and W.H. Kesterton have documented, had *always* been present in Canada—and Canada had always retained its sense of difference regardless, partly through the exhortations of the many who did not accept such print uncritically.³⁵ As one such critic, Innis fingered pictures as an especial culprit of cultural decline, complaining that authors were being asked to write for existing illustrations: “The story has been compelled to recognize the demands of the illustration and has become dominated by it,” he protested (apparently unaware that at the dawn of modern illustrated press in the 1830s and 1840s, it was *de rigeur* for the illustrations to be bought first and the writers commissioned after). The presence of American periodicals and advertising was a threat: “We are indeed fighting for our lives. The pernicious influence of American advertising reflected especially in the periodical press and the powerful persistent impact of commercialism have been evident in all the ramifications of Canadian life . . . our status on the North American continent is on the verge of disappearing,” he insisted.³⁶

Tory Canadian intellectuals in general and the authors of the Massey Commission in particular were especially exercised about American mass media’s advertising content, which they felt was making Canadians dangerously

³¹ Ibid., items 25–26, p. 18.

³² Ibid.

³³ Vincent Massey, *On Being Canadian* (Toronto: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1948), 184.

³⁴ Harold Innis, *The Strategy of Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1952), 2, 19–20.

³⁵ Allan Smith, “The Imported Image: American Publications and American Ideas in the Evolution of the English Canadian Mind, 1820–1900” (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 1972); Wilfred H. Kesterton, *A History of Journalism in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967).

³⁶ Harold Innis, *The Strategy of Culture*, 2, 19–20.

materialistic.³⁷ After World War II, the division between fine art, and commercial and applied art, deepened when in 1957 the General Manager of the Canadian National Exhibition ignored local artists and brought in a major show of Norman Rockwell's cover art for *The Saturday Evening Post*. The Ontario Society of Artists felt it necessary to abandon its custom of showing fine art at the C.N.E. as a result. Instead the O.S.A. substituted their own members' commercial work and that of C.W. Jefferys in order to prevent the public from confusing "contemporary painting" and "the commercial nature of [Rockwell's] work" (they also formally wrote of their displeasure to the C.N.E.).³⁸ This rare spot of attention to illustration only occurred under duress. For illustrators, perhaps the most important outcome of the Massey Commission was that all visual art production deemed "commercial" suffered neglect: art museums granted few exhibitions to Canadian graphic design or illustration, *Canadian Art* magazine after 1960 reduced its profiles of advertising art, and illustration and design were denied federal support from the Canada Council for the Arts, the body established in 1957 to enhance Canadian cultural development.³⁹ It is pertinent that the next sizable exhibition of Canadian illustration in Canada—a long 48 years after the 1931 one that had excluded those who "crossed the line" and 27 years after the begrudged Rockwell show—not only also omitted expatriates, but all the mainstream illustrators too, salvaging only those most aligned with cultural nationalism.⁴⁰

³⁷ Philip Massolin, *Canadian Intellectuals, the Tory Tradition and the Challenge of Modernity, 1939–1970* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 172–174. For an earlier diatribe against the "new, loud, and superficial ideas" of American commercialism, see Walter Eric Harris, *Stand to Your Work: A Summons to Canadians Everywhere* (Toronto: The Musson Book Company, 1927), 175–200. A later study determined that Canadian consumer habits and Canadian media content were in fact influenced by foreign advertisers but did not confirm that advertising adversely affected nationalism. Bertram Schoner and Richard Schwindt, "Advertising, Direct Foreign Investment, and Canadian National Identity," *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* 7, no. 1 (Spring 1980): 127.

³⁸ Ontario Society of Artists, Minute Books January 1953 - May 1959. Entry for Oct. 1, 1957. Archives of Ontario. Series F1140-3 MU 2256 (Box #B287368), File 12.

³⁹ There was also an unwritten policy that the National Gallery of Canada not acquire American art. For a discussion of the anti-American thrust of policy after the Commission, see L. B. Kuffert, *A Great Duty: Canadian Responses to Modern Life and Mass Culture in Canada, 1939–1967* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003), 186.

⁴⁰ *Art and Pictorial Press in Canada* was organized at the Art Gallery of Ontario, February 10–March 25, 1979, to supplement the larger exhibition loaned by the Victoria and Albert Museum titled *The Art Press: Two Centuries of Art Magazines*. Although the show was slanted towards art books, the exhibition catalogue includes essays on a wide range of periodicals. See Sybille Pantazzi, "Notes on Some Canadian Magazines and Their Illustrations, 1900–1940," in *The Art and Pictorial Press in Canada: Two Centuries of Art Magazines*, ed. Karen McKenzie and Mary F. Williamson (Toronto: Art Gallery of Toronto, 1979), 20.

The history of Canadian nationalist protectionism bears importantly on the consideration of illustration not just because it caused expatriates to be forgotten and homegrown American influence disowned, but because it caused self-consciously Canadianist illustration to develop (notably in the work of Thoreau MacDonald, Chapter 5). This in turn made non-descript mainstream Canadian illustration that did not wear a maple leaf on its sleeve to be by default further negatively associated with American illustration. Iconography carried the weight of the message in illustration, but how various kinds of illustration were treated—which is to say regulated—by curators, historians, critics, and artists, also legitimized and coded the messages conveyed by illustration. The obviously nationalistic was praised while everything else was simply not noticed, or sometimes cast in shades of treachery, as it was in Innis' treatise. How popular and institutional reception each affected the efficacy of illustration as a vehicle of national expression is a significant component of the case studies presented here.

Despite Canada's success at protecting its homegrown culture industries after the Massey Commission, the fear of American takeover has never left Canada. As recently as 2005 an article in the Canadian magazine *The Walrus* suggested a union between Canada and the Democrat "blue" States was possible, and reported on a still-palpable fear that continental unity is "a front for a twenty-first-century high-tech American colonialism designed to grab hold of Canada's rich resources and remake its citizenry in the American image."⁴¹ A closer look in this dissertation at the most "American" of historical Canadian illustration—pretty girls by Rex Woods—and the anxieties surrounding it demonstrates such fears are both warranted and overblown.

In assessing whether Jefferys', Massey's, and Innis' fears of Canada's cultural, economic, and physical annexation were valid or invalid, I will discuss whether the most "American" of illustration by Canadians between 1880 and 1960 actually deteriorated Canadians' sense of difference from Americans. In considering, I introduce a remarkable proposition voiced by Arthur Lower, prominent historian and theorist of Canadian national culture in the 1950s. Following the Massey Commission, Lower asserted that although Canada had succumbed to an undesirable economic subordination, culturally, Canada was only "superficially a copy of the northern United States." In fact, he said, "the more Canada has become 'Americanized,' the more her people have remained themselves."⁴² More recent commentators have also noted the tendency of convergence to spark divergence.⁴³ A prominent statistical study published in 2003 supported this theory, concluding that

⁴¹ Jeremy Rifkin, "Continentalism of a Different Stripe," *The Walrus*, March 2005, <http://walrusmagazine.com/articles/2005.03-politics-north-american-union/>.

⁴² Arthur Lower, *Canada: Nation and Neighbour* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1952), 41.

⁴³ This is discussed by Allan Smith, "Doing the Continental: Conceptualizations of the Canadian-American Relationship in the Long Twentieth Century," *Canadian American Public Policy*, no. 44 (December 2000): 38–39.

despite sharing culture, goods, technology, and capital, Canadians have not adopted American values.⁴⁴

For Lower, Canadians were inherently and safely different: where a large chunk of American society had (he thought) devolved into a “hedonistic paganism” of “go-gettism,” Canadians were more dutiful, emotionally restrained, “placid and stodgy.”⁴⁵ Importantly, Lower felt the difference was most self-evident in magazine illustration:

In Canadian periodicals, an American advertisement can be told at a glance from a Canadian. The American “ad” is full of exuberance; gorgeously painted semi-naked women against some terrifically luxurious backdrop, closely associating the pleasures of love with the pleasures of soft-drinks. No Canadian advertiser could or would rise to such “heights.” The Canadian soberly announces his wares and puts in a cut of a grinning automaton, badly drawn.⁴⁶

But even Lower was ambivalent in this theory—only five years later he too was warning of American takeover, complaining about a display of Norman Rockwell illustrations at the 1957 Canadian National Exhibition and about a “vulgar” Canadian magazine spread showing an American-style close-up of a kissing couple.⁴⁷

Lower was right in that the work of Thoreau MacDonald, the quintessential Canadian School illustrator, was deliberately low-key, even placid and stodgy, in some people’s estimation.⁴⁸ But there were other Canadians, like Rex Woods, who rose to the “heights” of the American advertising illustrator with women who were certainly not badly drawn automatons. Nevertheless, perhaps Lower was on to something: as we will see, Rex Woods turned the American Girl into the mature, dependable, nation-building Canadian Woman, who rarely grinned.

Where illustration belonged to both economic and cultural spheres, and where Canadian economic independence was always entangled with American corporations,⁴⁹ was it ever possible for Canadian illustration to *not* be subordinated

⁴⁴ Michael Adams, *Fire and Ice: The United States, Canada and the Myth of Converging Values* (Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2003).

⁴⁵ Arthur Lower, *Canada: Nation and Neighbour*, 78–80.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 81.

⁴⁷ Arthur Lower, *Canadians in the Making: A Social History of Canada* (Toronto: Longmans, Green, 1958), 436, 439, 441. See also Kuffert, *A Great Duty*, 197.

⁴⁸ This was the opinion of a Canadian art curator at a regional museum to whom I spoke in 2012.

⁴⁹ Before World War One, Canada had encouraged numerous American branch plants to open, and Canadians have always depended on the presence of American business for employment. Michael Bliss “Canadianizing American Business,” in *Close the 49th Parallel etc.: The Americanization of Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), 26–42.

to the American—if not by the 1950s, then eventually? Regarding the Massey Commission’s and Innis’ charges of cultural imperialism and Lower’s retracted but possibly correct defense of unassailable unique identity, what was “American” and what was “Canadian” in magazine illustration is the primary consideration of *A Cultural Trade*. This dissertation argues that through images of wilderness and pretty girl, Canadian illustrators traded in symbols and narratives that either hastened convergence or nurtured divergence with American culture, depending on political climate, client, audience, and illustrators’ own lives and political views; and that convergence and divergence operated dialectically to ensure national equilibrium as Canada explored and defined the terms of its autonomy from colonial rule.

Organization of the dissertation

This work joins other studies in cultural iconography⁵⁰ that examine nationalism through formal and iconographic analysis of verbal and visual texts. It shows how the tropes of Canadian identity and American identity in illustration formed and figured in the collective imagining of the identities of Canada and of the United States,⁵¹ by nurturing middleclass Anglophone Canadians’ similarities to and differences from Americans. In order to do so, this dissertation will concentrate on two tropes of illustration: imagery of wilderness, and imagery of glamorous women, called “pretty-girl” illustration in the business. The chapters below profile several Canadian practitioners of both, active in Canada and/or the United States; and track over an eighty-year period how the images of wilderness and pretty-girl shift or stay stable, how they coalesce meanings through the daily experiences of their makers and consumers. In each we see how symbols were formed and stories were told, and how each of these manifestations were transacted with, in strategic negotiations of nationalism that I conceive of as *trade*.

Chapter 1 expands upon the premises outlined above, and reviews relevant literature. It introduces and explains the methodology of continentalist thought, the role of expatriate young men in national development, the concept of trade in the collective imagining of nationalism, and the dialectics of wilderness and pretty-girl illustration.

⁵⁰Such as, Larry J. Reynolds and Gordon Hutner, *National Imaginaries, American Identities: The Cultural Work of American Iconography* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).

⁵¹ I refer here to the discourse often termed the “national imaginary,” and I adopt Anderson’s sense of imagined communities to conceive of nationhood as a set of practices that anchor an experience of nationhood that is understood as real by those communities. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006 [1983]); Michael Walsh, “National Cinema, National Imaginary,” *Film History* 8, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 7.

Chapter 2 turns to the careers of Arthur William Brown and Russell Patterson, 1900-1940, who must be treated together because of the closeness of their association through friendship, through membership at the New York Society of Illustrators, and through their specialization in pretty-girl illustration. Brown and Patterson represent the most continentalist-minded of Canadians. Although no comment by them survive on nationalism of either Canada or the US, or annexation, their choices indicate they felt little remorse about leaving Canada and embracing the most commercial branches of illustration. This chapter documents what Canadian culture and art critics most feared about American popular culture by examining how Brown and Patterson used (and how their models used) the pretty-girl genre to boost their own reputations and sell goods through sex appeal. Canadian commentary on glamour and the American pretty-girl from satire to women's magazine columns demonstrates that while nationalists protested against her, she still represented a role model for Canadians. Brown and Patterson therefore represent Canadians' ambitions to transcend colonial parochialism and poverty, and embrace liberal individualism.

Chapter 3 examines the career of Arthur Heming 1890-1940. An example of an avowed nationalist, he did much to form Canada's stereotypical identity as a wilderness of sublime snow-scapes filled with heroic animals and colourful peoples. But he was in practice a continentalist, peddling his work to a popular American audience and adopting American ways of promoting himself. A close examination of the competitive market in New York will show the lure and the pitfalls of the American publishing environment, which together influenced Heming's specialization in wilderness topics, and the construction of Canadianness through American eyes that he adopted and developed as if completely Canadian in origin. Several examples of Canadian nationalist rhetoric leading up to and surrounding the Group of Seven, often imperialist in tone, demonstrate the climate Heming had to answer to in Canada—and provide an explanation why Heming eventually fell out of favour with the rise of the nationalistic Group.

Chapter 4 returns to the pretty-girl in the work of Rex Woods 1930-1950, examining how this British-Canadian illustrator unhesitatingly embraced American illustration yet chose to remain in Toronto. Woods' work occupies a centrist position, adapting the American pretty-girl to a nationalistic Canadian Woman. Though following American illustration, Woods inserted a more "Canadian" outlook. In Woods we find a kind of Canadian appropriation of the most American of cultural expression and we get no sense that he felt his Canadian (or British) identity was being compromised. Rather, mastering such a widely understood and acceptable visual language empowered Woods—and the Canadian magazines his work adorned, because they could more successfully compete against American ones on newsstands. Nevertheless, following Canadian reception of glamour in years after Woods stopped illustrating cover girls shows his glamorization of women did contribute to Canadian women's slide towards more American standards, and a loss of what women's role in nation-building could be in favour of what she looked like only.

Chapter 5 compares the careers of Thoreau MacDonald and John Clymer 1925-1960, two illustrators who continued the wilderness tradition in ways diametrically opposed. As the son of Group of Seven member J.E.H. MacDonald, Thoreau created a body of illustration that best exemplified nationalist ideals, appearing very restrained and non-commercial. It is argued here that he gave canonical Canadian art a brand identity that hearkened back to the wilderness adventure, in rarified, solemn renderings of animals and landscapes that allowed his work to be accepted as “art.” Clymer, on the other hand, wished to expand beyond the narrow “Canadian art” parameters and pursued illustration of rural and wilderness scenes for the *Saturday Evening Post* in a popular manner in keeping with the American genre painting tradition practiced by other *Post* illustrators. Despite a strong component of Canadian scenes in his oeuvre, Clymer was forgotten in Canada, a phenomenon I discuss in relation to how carefully MacDonald’s renown was preserved. MacDonald represents a strong nationalist position, and Clymer a strong continentalist one.

The foregoing cases demonstrate that national identity for Canadians was not a monolithic concept, but was varied and even optional. The conclusion returns to evaluate the debate over whether Americanized culture leads to annexation or to autonomy. This dissertation ends with some brief observations on illustration, national identity, and autonomy after 1960 and implications for the future.

Limits of this study

In Canada, which was from the beginning a patchwork of language groups and regions, any discussion of national identity is always fraught with questions of “Whose nation?” and “Whose identity?” Here, my discussion is mainly limited to the most powerful segment of the population: white, middle-class, Toronto Anglophones. This group dominated the production of the visual and verbal texts described here, and so not surprisingly, those texts reflected their lives and their concerns. That these texts were touted as “national” and everybody else was expected to accept them as their own is a major problem. However, the contribution of this study is to understand the extent and power of that class, race, and regional bias, while discussion of how it had an impact on other groups is out of scope here. Francophone magazines and the issue of Quebec national identity in particular is conspicuously absent (save for a brief nod in the final chapter), since it comprises a specialized area and much work is already underway on Quebec print culture by others better positioned for it.⁵² I hope that my work here will facilitate the much-

⁵² For instance, a scholarly survey of the history of Quebecois book illustration has just appeared: Stephanie Danaux, *L’iconographie d’une littérature. Évolution et singularités du livre illustré francophone au Québec, 1840–1940*, (Québec: Presses de l’Université Laval, 2013). There is also the research group Caricature et satire graphique à Montréal (CASGRAM) under the leadership of Dominic Hardy at l’Université de Québec à Montréal. Speller notes that illustration history has historically been better pursued in Quebec than in Anglophone Canada. Randall Speller, “Hidden Collections: The Invisible World of English

needed critiques of Anglophone print hegemony by showing just how intensely powerful that hegemony was.

It is worth asking as well, “Where are all the famous women illustrators?” As early as the mid-nineteenth century, hundreds of girls and women were trained as illustrators in New York City, attracted there even from distant Montreal.⁵³ But the number of female illustrators trained does not translate into a proportion of success stories commensurate with that of males. Michele H. Bogart has discussed the marginalization of women illustrators circa 1900 as a result of male practitioners and educators wishing to dissociate illustration from “women’s work.”⁵⁴ As my 2011 article “A Castle of One’s Own: Interactivity in *Chatelaine Magazine*, 1928-1935” documents, due to systemic and overt sexism, Canadian women in the 1930s were rarely awarded the more prestigious and better paying fiction and serious-subject illustration.⁵⁵ Some did complete magazine cover illustrations, but no one woman seems ever to have made more than perhaps four altogether (Elsie Deane designed about that many for *Chatelaine*). The daughter of Marie Cecilia Guard, who in the early 1930s did some pretty-girl heads for the cover of *Chatelaine* and painted some sophisticated nudes in her personal work, avers that her mother’s career faltered in part because her choice of subject matter was marginalized in Canadian art by the late 1930s.⁵⁶ Women illustrators on the whole found the only areas where they could dominate were in children’s stories and fashion illustration, where they often excelled (these include Elsie Deane, Mabel Leith, Stella Grier, Georgette Berckmans, Jean Wylie, Emily Hand, Lisl Hummel, Lydia Fraser, Kay Bell, Laura Gibson, Eileen Wedd, Estelle Kerr, Alice Bradshaw, Eugenie Groh, and Georgine Strathy). Special mention should also be made of Nancy Caudle, who became art director of *Canadian Home Journal*. Although Mabel McDermott and Aileen Richardson excelled at boy-girl pictures (and McDermott did a couple pretty girl heads for *Chatelaine* covers), it appears that no Canadian woman specialized in either wilderness or pretty girl genres. For this reason, it was not possible to include any women illustrators in this study.

This study terminates at about 1960. This date is also approximately when the cultural landscape changed in both the North American illustration industry and in Canadian cultural policy. Scholars in book history and Canadian literature have

Canadian Book Illustration and Design,” in *Essays in the History of Art Librarianship in Canada*, ARLIS/NA Canada (National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives, 2006), n.p.

⁵³ April F. Masten, *Art Work: Women, Artists and Democracy in Mid-Nineteenth Century New York* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 2.

⁵⁴ Michele Helene Bogart, *Artists, Advertising, and the Borders of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 30–31.

⁵⁵ Jaleen Grove, “A Castle of One’s Own: Interactivity in *Chatelaine Magazine*, 1928–1935,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 45, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 166–187.

⁵⁶ Peri McQuay, quoted in Brian Hunt, “Passion That Survived the Silence,” *National Post*, November 8, 1999, D6; Peri McQuay, email message to author, March 7, 2010.

also identified 1960 as a transitional moment in terms of writing, taste, and production.⁵⁷ Mass magazines had been folding in the wake of television, as advertisers saw their money was better spent on the new medium. In Canada, *Canadian Home Journal* merged with *Chatelaine* in 1959, *Mayfair* ended in 1961, *Canadian Homes and Gardens* in 1962, and *Liberty* (Canadian version) in 1964. As well, by 1958 virtually all visual content except fiction had switched to photography rather than illustration, and fiction had been cut to half of what it had been 20 years before. Also, artistic taste was increasing for modern art, and conceptual rather than narrative approaches in illustration, a move mirrored in Canada with a similar development in literature.⁵⁸

As well, in Canada, the foundation of the Canada Council for the Arts in 1957 practically wrote in stone the division of commercial and non-commercial art in the visual arts; from a policy point of view, abandoning the former to the market forces alone, no longer in conversation with fine art. Then in 1958 the Conservative Party's new Broadcasting Act decentralized the culture industries in TV and radio, and in 1959 proposed the infamous "Canadian Content" rules (instituted in 1961), which effectively moved Canadian cultural production to a more commercial framework even as it forced more Canadian-made production. As well, Allan Smith argues that after 1960, Canada began to seek a new level of cultural independence as American political activity in Cuba, Vietnam, and in its own South departed from Canadian ideals.⁵⁹

Meanwhile, the Society of Illustrators published results of a major survey of professional practices, warning that an era was ending.⁶⁰ The Society also became acutely aware of how outdated it had become, and a shakeup in its administration led to the Society making a hasty transition to a new role not so much as a social club facilitating old-boy networks but more as an industry arbiter and advocate, through the institution of its annual competition in 1959. A distinct break was felt between traditional, older illustrators whose pride was based upon skill, and a new generation who excelled at ideas and stylistic innovation. In Canada, this transition had already begun with Oscar Cahén and other avant garde illustrators in the late 1940s. Their contribution, and that of the generation they mentored and who won awards at the Society of Illustrators in the 1960s, deserves a separate study. Here, I focus on how nationalist discourse of the 1890s set expectations for much of the twentieth century; these progressive illustrators mark a break from and response to that discourse.

⁵⁷ Speller, "Hidden Collections."

⁵⁸ "New Heyday for Highbrows: 'Little' Magazines Stage a Comeback," *Maclean's*, August 15, 1959, 1.

⁵⁹ Smith, "Doing the Continental."

⁶⁰ Robert L. Chambers, "Year End Report: Professional Practices Committee", June 1959, Society of Illustrators, New York, collection of Illustration House, New York, broadside.

Chapter 1

The Trading Post at the Border: A Continentalist Approach to Canadian Cultural Iconography

This study uses continentalism as a tool of analysis. In doing so, it departs from customary Canadian cultural and art historical discourse that equates Canadian identity with the fairly narrow conception of Canadian nationalism commonly associated with the gallery-art landscape tradition. Continentalism had been at the forefront of Canadian intellectual life when cross border trade swelled 1920-1930 and when the country attempted to renew imperial ties in the early 1930s, and when the Second World War made closer military alliance with the United States necessary.¹ Then, with the rise of cultural nationalism following the Massey Commission and new communications criticism by Harold Innis and Marshall McLuhan, continentalism began to fall from favour.

In 1966 Frank Underhill mourned that continentalism had become a “four-letter word.” He warned that an important intellectual tradition was going by the wayside,² and suggested that perhaps Canada’s cultural self-knowledge had been compromised as a result.³ In the years after Underhill wrote, continentalist perspectives have been included in Canadian history, Canadian studies, Communication, and Canadian literature; but the field of art has been slow to relinquish its patriotic paradigm despite criticisms.⁴ Post-structural, post-colonial, and cultural studies discourses have criticized nationalist constructs, but the factor of continentalism is still under-represented. Continentalism is important to bring back because classic cultural nationalism is still a prominent element in cultural discourse. For example, Sherrill Grace’s 2009 book on how Canadian art models Canadian identity was directly inspired by Vincent Massey’s vehement nationalist sentiments dating from before the Second World War.⁵ Gail Edwards’ and Judith

¹American investment in Canada grew to outnumber any other foreign investment by 1926. The Carnegie Series on the Relations of Canada and the United States ran from 1935–1945. Thinkers such as James Shotwell and J. W. Dafoe argued for the “friendliness” of the two nations. William Lyon Mackenzie King developed a close relationship with Franklin Roosevelt.

² A review of continentalist literature is Smith, “Doing the Continental.”

³ Frank Underhill, foreword to *Nationalism in Canada*, ed. Peter Russell (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1966), xiv.

⁴ For instance, the major exhibition, *The Group of Seven: Art For a Nation*, curated by Charles Hill at the National Gallery of Canada in 1995, was roundly attacked for downplaying and even subverting the Group of Seven’s mythologized role as nation-builders. See Ann Davis, “Much Ado about Something: A Brief Study of the History of Canadian Art Exhibition,” in *Nation, Ideas, Identities: Essays in Honour of Ramsay Cook*, ed. Michael D. Behiels and Marcel Martel (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2000), 97–112.

⁵ Sherrill Grace, *On the Art of Being Canadian* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009), 4.

Saltman's comprehensive study of Canadian children's book illustration contains a rigorous critique of cultural nationalism, but omits any discussion of homegrown continentalism except a description of the concessions Canadian creators have been demanded to make by American publishers.⁶

A continentalist lens appropriately brings the history of illustration into alignment with the history of Canadian literature. T. D. MacLulich has proposed that Canada's national literature developed along democratic lines from continentalist, popular writing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries;⁷ and Nick Mount has argued that Canadian writers' success in New York legitimized Canadian literature at home, leading to a "self aware, self sustaining, and eventually self defining domestic literature."⁸ Examining cross-border linkages may tell us whether expatriate illustration had a similar impact by enabling Canadian art and illustration to realize its own goals—and to even stimulate nationalism at home.

Positive continentalist points of view have been mostly absent in cultural discourse, and almost verboten in the history of visual art, where I found only three exhibitions that compared Canadian and American art (one of these was an American production unseen in Canada).⁹ In fact, American art was suppressed in

⁶ Gail Edwards and Judith Saltman, *Picturing Canada: A History of Canadian Children's Illustrated Books and Publishing* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 211–213.

⁷ T. D. MacLulich, *Between Europe and America: The Canadian Tradition in Fiction* (Toronto: ECW Press, 1988), 11.

⁸ Nick Mount, *When Canadian Literature Moved to New York* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 16–17.

⁹ Ann Davis, *A Distant Harmony: Comparisons in the Painting of Canada and the United States* (Winnipeg Art Gallery, October 8 – November 28, 1982; Art Gallery of Hamilton, February 17–March 27, 1983); Katherine Lochridge, *7/8: A Comparative Exhibition of the Canadian Group of Seven and the American Painters, The Eight* (Heckscher Museum, Huntington, NY, June 20–Aug. 1, 1982); Christine Boyanoski, *Permeable Border: Art of Canada and the United States, 1920-1940* (Art Gallery of Ontario, October 1989 – January 1990). Davis found that while Canadians and Americans explored similar attitudes to factual and conceptual matter, works of the artists she studies showed that Canadian and American differences were in fact quite pronounced—a thesis I do not find supported in my work on illustrators. More in line with my findings is Boyanoski's authoritative study (which was instigated by the Canadian Association of American Studies rather than by an art world source), which finds that although Canada marginalized American art, a handful of exhibitions 1927-1939 brought abstract painting and new awareness of the artist's role in society to Canada. Overall, Boyanoski gently leans toward demonstrating how Canadians departed from American precedent, while showing how influential those precedents were; she declines to pass any judgment on the merits of continentalism while remarking that it would be "naïve" to conclude that closeness with the U.S. was always positive. Lochridge's *7/8* show correlations between the two groups of painters in their respective searches to define nationalism in North America, separate from European standards, and in their shared training as illustrators, which gave them an affinity for sketching from life. It also noted that one member of *The Eight*, Ernest Lawson (1873–1939), was a Canadian; and another, Maurice Prendergast (1859–1924), came from Newfoundland.

Canada, where the Canadian National Exhibition favoured British art;¹⁰ Canadian collectors eschewed American art;¹¹ the National Gallery declined to collect or exhibit it, and an American artist who won an art prize was nearly denied it because of her citizenship.¹² So thoroughly has continentalism been excluded from art circles, the word continentalism was unknown to me before I began this research, despite my having spent over twenty years working as an artist and art historian. Even in literary criticism, where the continentalist angle was not abandoned, Mount notes that, “To admit that Canadian literature grew up thinking continentally would be to admit that Canada has derived an essential part of its identity from its continental heritage, and that ‘s not an admission Canadian critics have always wanted to make.” This same admission in Canadian art institutions would have undermined everything that Anne Whitelaw argues Canadian art museums were historically supposed to provide—the construction of a fully autonomous and culturally unified Canadian identity.¹³

As can be seen from these points, Canadian identity—as a hegemonic and monolithic entity—has been an exercise in visual and verbal rhetoric as much as it has been an empirical demonstration of what is uniquely Canadian. Although I am concerned with rhetoric more than what may or may not be “real”, much of my work gathers evidence of continentalist political thought and lifestyles; evidence that sometimes supports but more often amends nationalist rhetoric or even subverts it. My purpose is to come closer to understanding Canadian identity as promoted by magazine illustration, as opposed to Canadian identity as it was prescribed by the art elites of the period 1880-1960, in an effort to widen the conception of what it is to be “Canadian.” In doing so, I address what Maria Tippett identified as a lacuna in Canadian cultural history (still in part existing today), where “the new, the avant-garde, and the experimental;” the “‘high,’ ‘modern,’ ‘elitist,’ and ‘specialized,’” has dominated at the expense of the “‘low,’ ‘traditional,’ ‘mass,’ and ‘popular.’”¹⁴

Continentalist thought offers a useful context for the history of illustration, which was part of a transnational print culture. A recent sociological study supports continentalism, finding that Canadian Anglophone culture was and is properly part of a shared North American culture, with Toronto part of a regional culture

¹⁰ Boyanoski, *Permeable Border*, 18.

¹¹ James Mavor, “The Art of the United States,” *Canadian Forum* (February 1921): 144-145.

¹² Paul Duval, “Canadian Galleries Snub U.S. Artists,” 1956, unidentified newspaper clipping, collection of the Cahén Archives, Toronto.

¹³ Anne Whitelaw, “‘Whiffs of Balsam, Pine, and Spruce’: Art Museums and the Production of a Canadian Aesthetic,” in *Capital Culture: A Reader on Modernist Legacies, State Institutions, and the Value(s) of Art*, ed. Jody Berland and Shelley Hornstein (Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press, 2000), 122-137.

¹⁴ Maria Tippett, “The Writing of English-Canadian Cultural History, 1970-1985,” *Canadian Historical Review* 67, no. 4 (1986): 556.

encompassing New England and the north mid-west.¹⁵ Continentalism also suggests that Canadian absorption of American-origin ideas, practices, and values was good for Canadian enterprise—and on the political side, that identification with American custom was a suitable and logical way for Canada to break away from colonial thinking and British domination.¹⁶ Maria Tippett and Jeffrey D. Brison have shown that continental and trans-Atlantic linkages helped Canadian arts excel before federal funding was established.¹⁷

In keeping with customary terminology, the more imperialist and autonomous-Canada thrusts will be referred to as nationalist, and the friendly-to-America thrust will be referred to as continentalist.¹⁸ But historically, continentalism was not de facto anti-nationalist; nor was it annexationist, as politically motivated nationalists attempted to paint it.¹⁹ Rather, the main theme in continentalism before 1950 was that American prosperity and power, suitably monitored and regulated in Canada, could be harnessed by Canadians to actually protect and enhance Canadian objectives, without which Canada would fail to prosper economically and mature culturally. Thus, in spite of all the rhetoric to the contrary, continentalism was an alternative form of nationalism.²⁰ Even in its disapproval, the Massey Commission acknowledged that American philanthropic gifts “have helped Canadians to live their own life and to develop a better Canadianism.”²¹ In short, continentalism supports my assertion that rather than being diametrically opposed to Canadian national interests, a North American visual culture shared with Americans was a significant, valuable, and necessary part of Canada’s creation of a national identity and autonomy.

¹⁵ Grabb and Curtis, *Regions Apart*.

¹⁶ Malcolm Ross, “Goldwyn Smith,” 31.

¹⁷ Maria Tippett, *Making Culture: English-Canadian Institutions and the Arts before the Massey Commission* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990); Brison, *Rockefeller, Carnegie, and Canada*.

¹⁸ The terms are used in this way under the headings “Continentalism” and “Nationalism” in *The Canadian Encyclopedia: The Canadian Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Continentalism,” last modified December 16, 2013, <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/continentalism>; *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Nationalism,” last modified December 16, 2013, <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/en/article/nationalism/>.

¹⁹ John Wesley Dafoe, *Canada: An American Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1935), 73.

²⁰ Allan Smith, “Doing the Continental,” 6–9.

²¹ Canada, “The Forces of Geography,” in *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, 1949–1951* (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1951), 13.

Expatriate continentalism

Continentalist impulses, ones not incompatible with nationalist rhetoric, sometimes informed expatriates' motives, as magazine articles of the 1890s reveal. In 1899, the patriotic *Canadian Magazine* argued that young Canadian men "in whom lies the hope of Canada's future greatness" must be patriotic citizens with social consciences, and must look out for what was best for Canada instead of pursuing the "almighty dollar." What was best for Canada, the author elaborated, was to "regenerate" Great Britain and foster the "Anglo-Saxon unity" by bringing Britain and the United States back into harmony. Accordingly, the role of young men was "to reorganize and purify the body politic of the south. If we are to build up on the northern half of this continent a new Britain, with the maple leaf flag proudly floating above it, we must breed and bring forth citizens whose excellence cannot be measured in dollars."²²

Reforming the United States was a lofty ideal, still being propounded by English statesman W.A. Chapple in 1913, and alluded to by the Group of Seven's Lawren Harris in 1920, in a rhetoric of racial superiority tied to northernness.²³ But how was the young Canadian male to reform the materialistic American if the Canadian himself had little money and no business sense of his own with which to bargain and direct the course of admittedly capitalistic national development? He could best do it by venturing into the United States himself.

As Nick Mount documents, thousands of young Canadian writers and writer-illustrators sought personal development and prosperity in the United States between 1880 and 1915.²⁴ Nationalistic commentators—many of them publishers

²² Norman Patterson, "The Canadian People: A Criticism of Some of Their Social Peculiarities," *The Canadian Magazine* 13 no.2 (June, 1899), 138.

²³ Chapple's words were, "[Canada] will develop her schools and colleges and extend their influence downwards [south] . . . she will pride herself in culture and the fine arts There is one danger ahead. The States will spread over Canada. They may Americanize her. . . . The hope is Canada will prove resistant to this spirit, and that Americans invading gradually will catch her spirit as they have so far done. I hope and believe that Anglo-Saxon reunion is the destiny of the English-speaking race . . ." Lawren Harris' words were, "It seems that the top of the continent is a source of spiritual flow that will ever shed clarity into the growing race of America, and we Canadians, being closest to this source seem destined to produce an art somewhat different from our southern fellows, an art more spacious, of a greater living quiet, perhaps of a certain conviction of eternal values. We were not placed between the southern teeming of men and the ample, replenishing North for nothing." A more complete discussion of the racialism of the north and Canadian nationalism appears in McKay, *Picturing the Land*, 157-160; 197-199. The concept of bringing the Anglo-Saxon "race" together had been a tenet of American continentalism as well. W. A. Chapple, "Some Canadian Traits," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science: Canadian National Problems* 15, no. 134 (January 1913): 187; Lawren Harris, "Revelation of Art in Canada," *The Canadian Theosophist* 7, no. 5 (July 1926): 85-88. C. W. Jefferys also thought of elite Canadian artists as racially endowed with an affinity for the North: quoted in Charles C. Hill, *The Group of Seven: Art for a Nation* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Ottawa, 1995), 47-48.

²⁴ Mount, *When Canadian Literature Moved to New York*.

who wished to compete against American magazines—blamed the exodus on the unwillingness of Canadians to purchase Canadian magazines and to support Canadian talent: "If Canadians demanded Canadian literature they would get it. But they buy United States books, United States magazines, United States periodicals," complained *The Canadian Magazine*; proclaiming that Canadians "owe a duty" to put Canadian literature first.²⁵ But the statement reveals two crucial truths: most English Canadians preferred American print, suggesting American culture was compatible with Anglo-Canadian social make-up.²⁶ Furthermore, when American print contained so much content by Canadians, it was not clear how reading it could be entirely un-Canadian. Second, if Canadian publishing was to compete successfully against American, Canadians had to learn American-style business. The expatriates, whether patriotic or ambivalent, had to pursue a continental career path in order to survive and serve Canadian interests. They were already cultural continentalists.

For expatriates, a double standard was set when iconic author Charles G.D. Roberts was celebrated in Canada for the imagined Canadian essence of his work (which he took care to have published in Canadian magazines as well as American ones) despite his remaining in the United States.²⁷ The landscape painter J. W. Morrice, who lived in Paris but wintered in Montreal and kept exhibiting in Canada, may have also made young men optimistic that they too could keep up their Canadian profile while living abroad. An article in *Maclean's* on Canadians in New York, surmounted by a picture of Arthur William Brown in natty attire with two samples of his illustration, described how Canadians maintained patriotic clubs and activities there.²⁸ Perhaps if one became famous enough with Canadian-identified subjects (nature, hunting, winter) then disloyalty in terms of residence would be overlooked. Roberts' prominent example could not have but encouraged Arthur Heming, who illustrated some of Roberts' stories, to attempt the same feat of maintaining a positive Canadian reputation while residing in New York. He did, and returned home to nationalist acclaim.

But over time, as we will see, permanent expatriate illustrators like Brown became less welcome back home regardless of their success. Even the celebrated Palmer Cox, whose cute cartoons of elfin "Brownies" were ubiquitous between about 1880 and 1910 and who had in 1903 returned to his hometown of Granby, Quebec following thirty years in the U.S., was dismissed in a Canadian survey of illustration art. Writing in 1919, the author said the Brownies were "an American product," while embracing the derivative work of Cox's follower Dudley Ward as Canadian,

²⁵ "Editorial Comment," *Canadian Magazine*, November 1898, 80–81. See also Robert Barr, "Literature in Canada," *Canadian Magazine*, November 1899, 3.

²⁶ This dilemma has haunted Canadian cultural policy ever since, especially in film and television. See Ryan Edwardson, *Canadian Content: Culture and the Quest for Nationhood* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).

²⁷ Nick Mount, *When Canadian Literature Moved to New York*.

²⁸ Beatrice Redpath, "Canadians in New York," *Maclean's* 30, May 1917, 31–33, 93–94.

even though Ward was English and had been in Canada only nine years (seven less than Cox since his 1903 return).²⁹ Cox was subsequently largely omitted from Canadian art and literary records too.³⁰

What made Cox—and by extension, other commercial artists and illustrators—such an embarrassment to Canadian culture? Perhaps it was precisely *because* Cox was so successful in the “American” way: he, a Canadian, had been the first to license illustrated intellectual property for use in advertising, branding, and merchandising; and for transmedia uses in theatre and film. He made himself and those who used his Brownie characters millionaires—and pioneered the model of global popular culture dissemination later adopted by the Walt Disney corporation and other entertainment media moguls.³¹

There was a substantial Canadian receptivity to American-style commerce and capitalism, particularly among the class that self-identified as “manufacturers:” men from working class backgrounds (like Cox) who had improved themselves and, in some cases, become prosperous. For them, ambition was a welcome expression of Canadian spirit, as necessary a part of nationalism to them as shrinking from materialism was for the class that formed their social and political opponents, the “professional class” of politicians and intellectuals.³² Only months after the commentator quoted above asked young men not to focus on the almighty dollar, Canada’s leading political economist and historian of Canadian banking, Adam Shortt, expressed the native pro-capitalist attitude in an article entitled “In Defence of Millionaires,” seemingly derived from Andrew Carnegie’s “The Gospel of Wealth” of 1889.³³ Shortt argued that, given that men are not born equal in talent and luck, the rise of a millionaire was an “inevitable” product of “natural selection” and social “process” through competition in business.³⁴ The millionaire was for him a “necessity” since large capital was now essential for development:

²⁹ St. George Burgoyne, “Some Canadian Illustrators: Article II,” *Canadian Bookman* 1, no. 4 (April 1919): 27.

³⁰ For more on Cox’s lack of appearance in Canadian memory, see Wayne Morgan and Sharilyn Ingram, “If Palmer Cox Wuz t’See Yer, He’d Git Yer Copyrighted in a Minute: The Origins of Licensing,” (paper presented at the 14th *Conference on Historical Analysis and Research in Marketing*, University of Leicester, June 2009), 50–60; Wayne Morgan, “Now, Brownies Seldom Idle Stand: Palmer Cox, the Brownies and Curiosity,” *The Ephemera Journal* 7 (1994): 1–13; Nick Mount, *When Canadian Literature Moved to New York*, 149, 152.

³¹ Morgan and Ingram, “If Palmer Cox Wuz t’See Yer.”

³² The rivalry of these two classes is described by Michael Bliss, “‘Dyspepsia of the Mind’: The Canadian Businessman and His Enemies, 1880–1914,” in *Canadian Business History: Selected Studies, 1497–1971*, ed. David S. Macmillan (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972), 175–191.

³³ Andrew Carnegie, *The Gospel of Wealth, and Other Timely Essays* (New York: The Century Co., 1900).

³⁴ Adam Shortt, “In Defence of Millionaires,” *Canadian Magazine*, October 1899, 493–498.

the whole growth of economic organization, the subsequent development of the millionaire, and the final effort to avoid the ruinous waste of independent competition, are simply stages in the economic triumph of man over nature. This victory secures the supply of an increasing number of wants with a decreasing proportion of human effort . . . the development of [the millionaire's] enterprises lay[s] in the direction of the public interest. Thus has the rise of millionaires and the rise in the standard of living for the average citizen gone hand in hand.³⁵

Shortt argued that the disparity between capitalist and worker was exaggerated, that the millionaire's interest in money was "creative, and is akin to that of the scientific enthusiast, the statesman or the artist. Each must have their means of expression, but their interest centres, not in the means, but in the ideal to be realized."³⁶

A point of Shortt's argument was that the same people who decried the unfairness of millionaires' wealth were loud in their appreciation when capitalists opened some new enterprise in their town, bringing jobs and infrastructure.³⁷ At the time Shortt was writing, Canada was in fact benefitting from the investment of millionaires from the United States, who were opening up branch plants in response to Prime Minister John A. MacDonald's "National Plan." This tariff, birthed from a wave of imperialist rhetoric and feeling following a proposed free trade agreement, prevented American-made goods from entering Canada, and encouraged Americans to make their goods locally with Canadian resources and labour instead, thus buoying up the Canadian economy. Although nationalists demonized American capital, Canadians were in fact dependent upon it—but they glossed over this when the National Plan succeeded in getting American money while keeping American federal control and Americanism at bay, in accordance with imperial mandate.³⁸

Although the manufacturing class was anti-American (to protect their Canadian monopoly), adoption of American methods—when it led to Canadian development—was an apt fulfillment of Shortt's dictum that ends justified means. But here lay a slippery slope toward American-style business. Shortt had lauded, in his words, the "freedom to seek self-realization regardless of social status, which is one of the chief characteristics of America."³⁹ Critical-minded professionals and intellectuals in Canada conflated being American with being pecuniary; this rhetoric

³⁵ Shortt, "Millionaires," 496.

³⁶ Shortt, "Millionaires," 497.

³⁷ Shortt, "Millionaires," 498.

³⁸ As described by Chapple, "Some Canadian Traits."

³⁹ Shortt, "Millionaires," 494.

attacked manufacturers' ambitious adoption of American means by making them appear un-Canadian. The not unreasonable fear was that individualistic, commercial values would surely trump nationalist ideals in times of trouble or doubt.

In mentioning this conflict, my purpose is not to debate the veracity of either Shortt's theories or those of his opponents. I only wish to document the existence of an influential pro-commercial line of thought among certain nationalists—the ones who accepted American means to achieve Canadian ends. In it, we see Shortt's belief in the goodness of American individualism. We also see that industry and commerce are a "triumph of man over nature," putting him at odds with the nationalist symbol of the wilderness.

It is my contention that the emigration of illustrators to the United States was not cultural treachery and betrayal of Canadian values, but rather an expression of this second set of Canadian values that prized the entrepreneurial spirit of young men to go forth and seek fortunes on behalf of Canada. Juniors were expected to return home and invest their newfound experience and wealth in Canada, as this editorial comment in *The Canadian Magazine* indicated:

It strikes one occasionally that it is good for Canadian writers to go abroad to earn their living. The benefit of travel, the experience of one civilization brought to bear in the judging of another, the greater incentive to make a success in life—all these combine to develop the young Canadian, increase his earnestness and develop his power.⁴⁰

Unfortunately, the danger was that the young man would find life in the U.S. so good that he never returned, or if he did, due to the prevailing anti-commercial and anti-American attitude, he would—in the words of semi-expatriate writer Arthur Stringer—"Home as a stranger return . . . [and] know, in his broken heart, that his home is not his home."⁴¹ As we shall see, Arthur William Brown and Russell Patterson are two examples of Canadians who did not return home, neither physically nor spiritually by nationalists' standards, having become stars of the kind of sex-appeal illustration most loathed in Canada. Yet, while they cannot figure as Canadian nationalist ideals, expatriates like them did in fact represent one sort of average Canadian aspiration—a continentalist one.

⁴⁰ "Books and Authors," *Canadian Magazine*, January 1900, 297.

⁴¹ Arthur Stringer, "The Sons Beyond the Border," *Canadian Magazine*, December 1899, 128–129. Stringer was a friend of both Arthur Heming and Arthur William Brown, contributing an article on Heming cited elsewhere in this dissertation, and traveling with Brown to Europe in 1911. "Life and Letters," *Globe*, March 18, 1911, 18. Expatriates in New York frequently helped one another survive.

A cultural trade

Some Canadian illustration studied here, like that of Arthur Heming, was self-consciously “Canadian” in content, while other illustration, like that of Arthur William Brown and Russell Patterson, clearly followed “American” trends. A continentalist approach allows us to see that production and consumption of illustration was not so much a case of loyalty when it was nationalist and betrayal when it was continentalist (as imperialists and nationalist hard-liners like Jefferys characterized it), but a reflection of Canadians’ daily negotiation of economic survival, cultural self-expression, and political autonomy. Taken as a whole, the continental visual culture (specifically for my purposes, the nationally mass-circulating illustrated magazines that were consumed by Canadians and Americans alike, with reference to fashion, film and photojournalism as well as....) balanced national and continental strains, allowing “Canadian” and “American” strains to act dialectically together, resulting in an equilibrium that discouraged both pro-British anti-Americanism and annexationist sentiment from getting too popular and upsetting national stability.

Canadian identity for the producers and consumers studied here, I contend, *was a process rather than an entity*—the process of negotiating equilibrium and trying to forge a unique identity out of the British and the American.⁴² I choose the concept of process and negotiation with reference to an established conceptual paradigm in which the Canada-U.S. border is not a line separating two distinct entities, but as Canada-U.S. relations expert Allan Smith says, “a site of interaction and exchange within a zone of linkages and associations.”⁴³ Further, in keeping with the traditional view of Canada as the link between Great Britain and the United States,⁴⁴ I conceive of Canada as a *middle-ground territory* between dutiful imperialist British obligations on one hand and opportunistic annexationist American impulses on the other.

If the middle-ground territory between Great Britain and the United States is Canada, then the mental “site of interaction and exchange” is in the minds of illustrators, clients, and readers. This territory may be metaphorically likened to a trading post at the US-Canada border, where nationalist and continentalist ideas freely compete and mingle. In magazine production, messages deployed by Canadian and American illustrators, consumers, and publishers turn up at the mental trading

⁴² Because this dissertation focuses on Anglophone sentiments regarding the amount of American identity in Canada, I overlook the Quebecois identity, but add here that this was a further complication in Canadian unity; and yet, in that Quebec was also anti-American, anti-Americanism helped internal cohesion between French and English.

⁴³ Allan Smith, “Doing the Continental,” 22.

⁴⁴ Great Britain looked to Canada to be its diplomatic handmaiden with the United States throughout the period under study. Most commentators viewed Canada as very much a hybrid state, which accounts for a lot of the turmoil over how much Canada leaned to one side or the other.

post, where nationhood and identity are defined for the consumer through transactions made in the “currency” of symbols and narratives drawn by illustrators (and described by writers).⁴⁵ The resulting personally and collectively imagined definitions are in turn projected (by those among illustrators, consumers, and publishers who stood to gain from doing so) onto the ideological and material middle-ground territory of Canada.⁴⁶

The case studies that comprise the bulk of this dissertation show that Canadian illustrators and consumers used illustration to negotiate a variety of positions along the political spectrum, from annexation with the United States on the left and imperial obedience to Great Britain on the right, with frequent compromising of these positions. My title, *A Cultural Trade*, acknowledges this process in which Canadians often *traded off* their nationalist inclinations for economic and artistic development. It also refers to the *give-and-take* of mediation between colonial legacy and continental circumstances. Trade speaks to cultural and commercial *exchanges* between Toronto and New York City, the two cities being the capitals of English language print production in their countries. Trade is intended in the sense of *business* too: print production and manufacture were one unified, interconnected network, in that the market for American periodicals addressed all of Canada and the United States. Canada had a small print market of its own, and while Canadian magazines did not cross the border in significant numbers, the illustrators did.

A tongue in cheek but not entirely incorrect assessment is that the trade, as in *swap*, mostly involved Canadian talent going to New York, and American periodicals coming back, although a significant number of Canadians also returned, bringing new ideas and skills with them. Therefore, trade also refers to the *cross-pollination* of ideas and culture between Canadians and Americans in New York. Finally, the phrase “a cultural trade” challenges views that still linger in some art and culture circles that the trade—the *avocation*—of illustration was a mind-numbing “mass culture industry” of robot-like workers who produced “kitsch” that was excluded from the status of high culture.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ My understanding of how individuals, institutions, and artifacts commingle is informed by Bruno Latour’s Actor-Network Theory and “thing theory,” where it is not so much people or objects that have agency or have meanings but the relationships made between them that determine meanings and actions. Bruno Latour, “The Powers of Association,” in *Power Action and Belief: A New Sociology of Knowledge?* ed. John Law (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), 264–283; Bruno Latour, “On Recalling ANT,” in *Actor Network Theory and After* ed. John Law and John Hassard (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 15–25.

⁴⁶ My metaphor of a conciliatory trading post, besides being very Canadian, also owes a debt to Benedict Anderson, who first described the collective imaginary and print nationalism in *Imagined Communities*.

⁴⁷ Theodor Adorno, *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture*, ed. J. M. Bernstein (New York: Routledge, 1991); Clement Greenberg, “Avant-Garde and Kitsch,” in *Art and Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961 [1939]), 19.

Negotiating divergence and convergence: the themes of wilderness and pretty-girl

Having laid out my conceptual framework, I want to briefly survey the symbols and narratives that acted as currency in the trading post transactions of negotiated national identity. This dissertation focuses on two ubiquitous and long-lived genres in illustration. The first is wilderness adventure imagery, which informed Canadian landscape painting and pastoral subjects, Western/cowboy art, wildlife painting, history illustration, and children's books. The second is glamorous woman imagery, informally called "pretty girl illustration" in the industry, a genre that affected the portrayal of the nude in art, and evolved into advertising art, pin-ups, pornography, and the cover girls that still crowd magazine covers today.

My research has led me to the conclusion that wilderness and the glamorous female body are opposite sides of the same coin. As we will see, among Canadian nationalists a binary developed in which wilderness and pretty-girl took on an exaggerated sense of difference, where the former signified as nature/ rural/ traditional/ noncommercial/ healthful/ spiritual/ masculinized/ restrained and Canadian; and the latter signified as cultured/ urban/ industrial/ progressive/ sickly/ profane/ feminized/ hustling and American. The wilderness images may be seen as nationalist, and the pretty-girls as continentalist—often, the two symbols arise in Canadian discourse and literature: Group of Seven landscape painter Lawren Harris demanded that the masses should be rescued from an "inexhaustible" supply of "pin-up girls, Coca-Cola virgins, [and] boogie-woogie."⁴⁸ Arthur Lower envisioned Canada as a good but *retardataire* society emerging puritanically out of a "grim" nature, compared to the American cities of sin, whose "gay and careless" denizens made Canada's "earnest and efficient" people seem as "unsophisticated . . . as a village belle."⁴⁹ (The belle, or "Miss Canada"—counterpoint to the Yankee femme fatale—was often prey for American corporate or political rape, in other writers' and artists' cautionary tales.)⁵⁰

This morally-charged binary permitted Canadian nationalism to retain its dominant position in Canadian art discourse, where pure, formalist landscape promoted by the Group of Seven and their allies was by this schema implicitly

⁴⁸ Lawren Harris, quoted in Kuffert, *A Great Duty*, 162.

⁴⁹ Arthur Lower, *Canada: Nation and Neighbour*, 81.

⁵⁰ See, for instance, political cartoons discussed in Chapter 4, in which "Miss Canada" is pursued by Uncle Sam or Brother Jonathan; Canada's "ravishment at the hands of the Yankee succubus" in the words of Farley Mowat, "Letter to my Son," in *The New Romans: Candid Canadian Opinions of the United States*, ed. Al Purdy (Edmonton: M. G. Hurtig, 1968); Canada as sexual bottom in Margaret Atwood, "The Only Position They've Ever Adopted Toward Us, Country to Country, Has Been the Missionary Position . . ." in *If You Love This Country: Facts and Feelings on Free Trade*, ed. Laurier LaPierre, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987), 20.

elevated over the “American” narrative tradition associated with advertising.⁵¹ But the binary of Canadian wilderness and American girl, the coming chapters will show, was never so clear-cut in actuality. In practice Canadians partook extensively of both wilderness and pretty-girl material, with no inflexible associations of loyalty and treachery such as nationalist polemics suggest. In addition, as will be discussed, the elevated Canadian nationalist illustration contained a significant American provenance.

As a study in cultural iconography, the formal and iconographic analyses of illustration made here are influenced by semiotic theory such as Charles Sanders Peirce’s definitions of signs and semiosis; by literary criticism such as J. Hillis Miller’s *Illustration* and analyses such as *How Picture Books Work*; and by cultural theory such as WJT Mitchell’s concept of imagetext, in which words and images operate together to make more meanings than word alone or image alone.⁵²

Identity is not magically constructed by the mere sighting of visual and verbal messages—the potency of these messages arises when they are neurologically and socially experienced, identified with, and given context through imaginative use.⁵³ Importantly, the meaning-making experiences of illustration, of personal identity, and of national identity have an ethical component: the magazines and imagery favoured by the consumer or illustrator represented not merely sources of amusement or information or means of income, but conscious choices that reflected each individual’s beliefs, preferred communities, and search for well-being.⁵⁴ How

⁵¹ See Allan Harrison, “Advertising Art in Canada,” *Canadian Art* 2, no. 3 (February–March 1945): 108, for comments conflating the American narrative tradition and advertising.

⁵² James Jakób Liszka, *A General Introduction to the Semeiotic of Charles Sanders Peirce* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996); J. Hillis Miller, *Illustration* (London: Reaktion Books, 1992); W. J. T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

⁵³ My consideration of the experience of illustration is derived from Bruno Latour’s definition of “things” and Actor-Network Theory, which allot to objects an agency. I also refer to cognitive science of mirror neurons, which finds that an individual’s empathy and identification with others is stimulated by the witnessing of action, including still images portraying action.

⁵⁴ Richard Shusterman has theorized the experiential, aesthetic pursuit of goodness with what he dubs *somaesthetics*, a philosophy of embodiment of practice recently being applied in the field of design studies to explain tacit knowledge, skilled craftsmanship, and user-focused design, as well as consumers’ self-improvement. Richard Shusterman, *Pragmatist Aesthetics: Living Beauty, Rethinking Art* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000). See also Richard Shusterman “Somaesthetics: A Disciplinary Proposal,” *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 57, no. 3 (Summer 1999): 299–313; Richard Shusterman “Dewey’s Art as Experience: The Psychological Background,” *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 44, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 26–43. Daniel Barber has proposed the applicability of somaesthetics to art practice, because “painting and drawing are forms of thinking and awareness that are deeply rooted in the body,” eluding logocentric explanation. Daniel Barber, “Somaesthetic Awareness and Artistic Practice: A Review Essay,” *International Journal of Education and the Arts* 9, review 1

national identities were negotiated and accepted through trades by given individuals depended upon the moral and technical “goodness” of the illustration. Accordingly, the present study pays attention to the links among illustrators’ values, their daily life, and technical processes, and to how these influenced their specialization in wilderness or pretty-girl. It also examines how consumers integrated these genres in their lives (or rejected them), and parsed them in reciprocal nonverbal ways, to develop what philosopher of aesthetics Richard Shusterman calls “knowledge, self-knowledge, right action, and its quest for the good life.”⁵⁵

Precisely because much creation and consumption of illustration is nonverbal and has a “hypnotic” power, as my opening quote from Leacock suggests, it has an affective aspect that lays it open to exploitation. Those who had a vested interest in national cohesion as a motivator for mass behaviour—governments who relied on mass voter turnout; churches, intellectuals, and early social workers who located social security in mass agreement; and corporations who profited from mass consumption, including magazine publishers themselves and their advertisers—did not hesitate to use illustration to influence as many people as possible, not always for the better. Feminist studies in particular have criticized illustration for perpetuating oppressive norms for women.⁵⁶ Toronto-based Marshall McLuhan’s 1951 *The Mechanical Bride* explored the sublimation of the public and intellectual life to the logic of capitalism through a machine-like compartmentalization of daily practice and thought via a mythology of advertising tropes, including spin-offs of the pretty-girl to be discussed here.

As warranted and necessary as the criticism of media is, however, the popular enjoyment of illustration in all its racist, corny, hegemonic, sexist or kitschy glory did and does persist (as McLuhan recognized). Perhaps it has a more positive social role that has been vastly underestimated. As we will see, nationalism and continentalism could each be cast as force or counterforce upon social behaviour: in Canada nationalist values were frequently proposed from on high by government and art elites, but continentalist values were regularly practiced at ground level. Conversely,

(September 2008): 3, 11. Somaesthetic theory builds upon my 2006 master of arts thesis, which found that illustrators’ creative process is frequently characterized as “conjuring,” a nonverbal act verging on a spiritual experience for some. Jaleen Grove, “But Is It Art? The Construction and Valuation of Illustration by Victoria’s Island Illustrators Society,” (master’s thesis, Ryerson University, 2006).

⁵⁵ Shusterman, *Pragmatist Aesthetics*, 267

⁵⁶ Helen Damon-Moore, *Magazines for the Millions: Gender and Commerce in the Ladies’ Home Journal and the Saturday Evening Post, 1880–1910* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994); Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001 [1963]); Ellen Gruber Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor: Magazines and the Gendering of Consumer Culture, 1880s to 1910s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Carolyn L. Kitch, *The Girl on the Magazine Cover: The Origins of Visual Stereotypes in American Mass Media* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Heather Rymell, “Images of Women in the Magazines of the ‘30s and ‘40s,” *Canadian Woman Studies* 3 (1981): 96–99.

if continentalist mass commercial influence became too extreme, nationalism provided an effective brake.

Sources

Because my intention is to describe and document how embedded and invested illustrators and their publics were in the specialized micro-visual cultures of pretty girl and wilderness imagery, I sought out as many primary sources as I could find. Like a social history, this dissertation stays close to the day-to-day life and labour of makers, distributors, and consumers of magazines. Primary sources include, wherever possible, illustrators' own words, found in personal papers, autobiographies, newspaper and magazine article quotes, transcribed interviews, film footage, and books, stories or articles that illustrators authored themselves.

Consumers include both the illustrators' clientele of editors and art directors, and magazine readers. Their views are mainly derived from editorial columns, editorial choices, letters to editors, and surveys conducted by the magazines. Especially useful are the fan letters to Arthur William Brown, 300 of which survive. For the late 1940s and 1950s, extensive demographic research on American magazine readership was also consulted. Primary sources also of course include the magazines featuring the illustrations, consulted in individual issues (not library volumes) wherever possible.

Because this dissertation is concerned with the way illustration was intended and received at the time it was issued, I consulted as many period sources as possible on its manufacture, criticism, and promotion. Old annuals produced by the Art Directors Clubs of New York and of Toronto were also used, along with all the archives of the New York Society of Illustrators, and trade magazines such as *Printers Ink* and *American Artist*. I also collected how-to technical manuals, which contain not just descriptions of materials and print processes, but also commentary on the state of the field, etiquette advice, and polemic pieces on the status and importance of illustration. Consideration of original works of art was undertaken where possible, including comparison to printed versions, which sometimes yielded evidence of publishers changing the illustrator's original message. The derivation of iconography is traced and the formal handling of colour, composition, and media are considered for how they semiotically inform the depicted subjects. Formal analysis is also extended to magazine design and print technology, since illustration's end form was not the painting or drawing, but the printed page.

There are many challenges to be overcome in finding primary sources for illustration. Very few museums cared to collect original works, very few archives hold tearsheet collections, and very few libraries and archives have full runs of mass magazines. Notable institutions are the New York Society of Illustrators, the Library of the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen in New York, the Norman Rockwell Museum, and the New Britain Museum. The most difficult magazines to find are the ones that were considered "trashy" and had low circulation, such as *The Goblin* and *College Humor*; or that were so middling that they were not collected by subcultures or by libraries either, such as *Redbook*. I occasionally had to resort to buying individual issues online, or to traveling great distances to find a complete run.

Particularly disturbing is that over the seven years it took to complete my research and writing—which coincided with a major recession—the availability of original magazines became greatly and permanently compromised: the New York Public Library, the easiest place to find *Maclean's* and *Chatelaine* in mint condition, removed them to remote storage, necessitating highly inconvenient pre-ordering. In Canada, the National Library and Archives cancelled inter-library loans, and as of about 2013 has apparently begun discarding original copies of magazines: in 2014 I was told that an issue of *Canadian Home Journal* that I had photographed onsite in 2008 did not exist in their holdings; colleague Dr. Sarah Stanners has reported to me that she was unofficially told by LAC staff that *Chatelaine* had been deaccessioned; she had hoped to show it in a National Gallery exhibition vitrine. Meanwhile, the National Gallery of Canada laid off its librarians and now closes its library for the month of August.

I relied heavily on private collections, particularly that of Illustration House in New York City (now transferred to the Modern Graphic History Library at Washington University, St. Louis); of Richard Kelly in Virginia; and of illustrators' estates such as those held by relatives of Rex Woods and Oscar Cahén. Networking was essential for finding yet more sources in the hands of illustrators, collectors and dealers, and for accessing oral histories held by elders such as Walt Reed and Murray Tinkelman. Working so closely with illustrators, their families, and their fans entailed some trade-offs of my own. Networking means forming bonds of friendship and trust—which can lead to the risk of bias on my part, and an inability to publish objective critical analysis. On the other hand, what was gained was access to highly private texts, opinions, and inside politics. Given that my goal was to document and contextualize, more than it was to perform highly intricate theoretical analyses, I felt that the benefits of sensitively salvaging and preserving the facts, figures, and material traces held in private hands far outweighed preserving my ability to pass critical judgment at the cost of access to collections. Furthermore, closeness to my research subjects and sources allowed me to get into the world of the illustrators and their audiences, in order to derive insights from within the networks I wished to describe.

The visibility and invisibility of illustration

Illustration, visible everywhere, has been not so visible in art historical records, as I have noted. Nor has it been visible in Canadian library science, archiving, and book history, due to a systemic failure to record illustrators and designers in catalogues.⁵⁷ As Johanna Drucker has noted, the marginalization of graphic design and illustration has allowed the definition of “art” to make an erroneous and exclusionary claim to the definition of modernism and to elide the relationship “fine” art has always had with mass and popular art. A Cultural Trade responds to Drucker’s call for

⁵⁷ Speller, “Hidden Collections.”

scholarship that challenges these vanities and that is wary of histories of form, celebrity, and innovation.⁵⁸

International criticism of illustration dates from the mid-nineteenth century. In the 1860s, American elites protested against “chromo civilization,”⁵⁹ while American economist and sociologist Thorstein Veblen criticized “conspicuous consumption” in 1899.⁶⁰ In France, writer Stéphane Mallarmé was instrumental in leading a revolt against popular illustration in mass publications in order to privilege the writer’s monopoly on meaning-making and to foster an elite connoisseurship of book arts.⁶¹ Fundamental to nineteenth century arguments against illustration was that pictures weakened the reader’s imagination and usurped the author’s own word-pictures.⁶²

In the twentieth century, artists and thinkers associated with German Expressionism debated the ills of consumer society and the role of commercial art and illustration.⁶³ Art theorists influenced by Alois Riegl’s method of “disintegrative formalism” dispensed with the academic privileging of Renaissance spatial illusion—an illusion depended upon by many illustrators - and this too contributed to the devaluing of illustration in the art historical record.⁶⁴ Formalism and critiques of consumption widened the rift between art in service to society and art for art’s sake. Brian Kane (historian of Canadian-born comics artist Hal Foster) has traced the prejudice against illustration (thought effeminate) to misogyny.⁶⁵ In 1946, a Museum of Modern Art exhibition differentiated between popular illustration and the book

⁵⁸ Johanna Drucker, “Who’s Afraid of Visual Culture?” *Art Journal* 58, no. 4 (Winter 1999): 36–57.

⁵⁹ Peter C. Marzio, *The Democratic Art: Pictures for a Nineteenth Century America* (London: Scolar Press, 1980).

⁶⁰ Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: Macmillan, 1899), 64–70.

⁶¹ Anna Sigrídur Arnar, *The Book As Instrument: Stéphane Mallarmé, the Artist’s Book, and the Transformation of Print Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

⁶² Charles T. Congdon, “Over-Illustration,” *The North American Review* 139, no. 336 (November 1884): 487; Landon McVicar, “Howard Pyle’s Quality As an Illustrator,” *Current Literature* 22, no. 1 (July 1897): 42.

⁶³ Sherwin Simmons, “Kitsch Oder Kunst? Kokoschka’s *Der Sturm* and Commerce in Art,” *The Print Collector’s Newsletter* 23, no. 5 (November–December 1992): 161–167.

⁶⁴ Christopher S. Wood, “Art History’s Normative Renaissance,” in *The Italian Renaissance in the Twentieth Century: Acts of an International Conference, Florence, Villa I Tatti, June 9–11, 1999*, ed. Allen J. Grieco, Fiorelli Gioffredi Superbi, and Michael Rocke (Florence: Olschki, 2002), 65–92.

⁶⁵ Brian Kane, “Blog 10: The Origins of Prejudice towards Illustration, Debunking Fredric Wertham, and Will Eisner’s Artistic DNA Revealed,” *Graphic Textbooks* (blog) October 4, 2012, <http://graphictextbooks.blogspot.ca/2012/10/blog-10-origins-of-prejudice-towards.html>.

arts and artists' books that they showcased; the catalogue essayist said haughtily that in popular illustration "The question of aesthetic seriousness would arise . . . cheapness and easiness seem to be the passwords."⁶⁶ In Canada, illustration obviously would have suffered in status even without homegrown anti-American fervour, but the denigration of commercialism that drove the prejudice against illustration as art in France, England, and the United States was intensified and validated all the more by the Canadian nationalist rejection of commercial illustration on the basis of anti-Americanism.

Despite the disapproval of cultural leaders, Canadian production and consumption of American and American-like Canadian mass magazines continued unabated—and illustration in magazines was very central to Canadians' daily routines, unlike the landscape paintings said by nationalists to be expressive of "the Canadian spirit."⁶⁷ C.W. Jefferys even made a prescient comment in 1942 to the effect that perhaps future scholars would find advertising art was more representative of his era than gallery art.⁶⁸

Magazines remained important in Canadian visual culture throughout the period I studied. They kept their importance despite competition from illustrated newspapers and then the explosion of film and illustrated gift books circa 1900, because of their cheapness, availability, colour printing, and ease of mailing. Unlike movies, they could be consulted over and over; unlike books, they could be cut up and used for assorted purposes; and unlike newspapers, as a forum they could create communities among readers scattered around the continent.⁶⁹ The visual communication of magazine illustration provided readers with glimpses of far-away places, the latest fashions, new products for sale, satirical renditions of politicians, ennobled portraits of leaders and celebrities, instruction on how to build contraptions for the home, reportage from wars and other newsworthy events, comics, imaginative visualizations of fiction, and popular art frequently used to decorate homes and craft projects. Illustrated periodicals continued to play a primary role in business and domestic life until television finally began to overshadow magazines in the 1950s. As examples in this dissertation will show, illustrations were used to persuade Canadians to resist Americanization—while plenty of other illustrations by Canadians presented a glamorous picture of American values and lifestyles to Canadians and Americans alike.

Despite its importance in reflecting and influencing society, and its ubiquity in middleclass households, magazine illustration in Canada has not been studied

⁶⁶ Monroe Wheeler, *Modern Painters and Sculptors as Illustrators* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1946), 20.

⁶⁷ J. E. H. MacDonald, *New Statesman* (1919). Quoted in Frederick Broughton Housser, *A Canadian Art Movement: The Story of the Group of Seven* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1926), 143.

⁶⁸ Jefferys quoted in William G. Colgate, *C. W. Jefferys* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1944), 28.

⁶⁹ I discuss a Canadian magazine in these ways in "A Castle of One's Own."

much.⁷⁰ For a comprehensive discussion and bibliography of the preservation of Canadian book illustration history, Randall Speller's synopsis, "Hidden Collections: Essays In The History Of Art Librarianship In Canada" is unmatched, but unfortunately, few researchers have delved into periodical illustration. Nor has a Canadian equivalent of *The Illustrator in America*, the chief reference work in the United States, or *The Dictionary of British Book Illustrators, 1915–1985*, ever appeared.⁷¹

Before 1960, the Toronto Art Directors Club and the Canadian Society of Graphic Arts supported illustration in Canada with annual shows; illustration was also featured at the Canadian National Exhibition (often under the auspices of the Canadian Society of Graphic Arts). Illustration was covered in the occasional column on commercial and editorial illustration in art, trade, and popular magazines before 1960. It is striking, however, that few, if any, articles on Canadian illustration appear to have been published in the 1930s—perhaps this may be attributed to the mounting suspicion of advertising and mass media coupled with tentative forays into social realism and formalism among artists of the 1930s, documented by Anna Hudson.⁷² Illustration articles after 1940 focus on avant-garde practitioners such as Oscar Cahén and on the types of illustration more allied with the newly emerging field of graphic design than with fiction, decoration, and cartoon.⁷³ By the 1950s, as

⁷⁰ Likely the perception that much illustration was not expressive of "real" Canadian culture because it was so "American" and commercial diminished interest. With reference to Pierre Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital, illustration was just not a prestigious subject for scholarship for art historians. Archivists and librarians have done the bulk of research instead.

⁷¹ Walt Reed, *The Illustrator in America, 1900–1960* (New York: Reinhold, 1966); Walt Reed and Roger T. Reed, *The Illustrator in America, 1880–1980: A Century of Illustration* (New York: Madison Square Press, 1984); Walt Reed, *The Illustrator in America: 1860–2000* (New York: The Society of Illustrators, 2001); Alan Horne, *The Dictionary of British Book Illustrators, 1915–1985* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994).

⁷² Anna Hudson, "Time and Image: Picturing Consciousness in Modern Canadian Painting," in *A Vital Force: The Canadian Group of Painters*, ed. Alicia Anna Boutilier (Kingston, ON: Agnes Etherington Art Centre and The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, 2013), 55–68.

⁷³ E.g., R. Holmes, "Canadian Illustrators and Designers," *The Printer and Publisher* 4, no. 7 (July 1895): 11; R. Holmes, "An Artistic Canadian Production," *The Printer and Publisher* 4, no. 12 (December 1895): 6; H. S. Somerville, "Illustrator of Drummond's Habitant Books," *Canadian Bookman* 1, no. 6 (June 1909): 84–86; Arthur Lismer, "Graphic Art," *The Yearbook of Canadian Art 1913*, compiled by The Arts and Letters Club of Toronto (London, Toronto: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1913), 239–240; St. George Burgoyne, "Some Canadian Illustrators: Article No. 1," 21–25; St. George Burgoyne, "Some Canadian Illustrators: Article II," 27–30; Canadian National Exhibition, *Catalogue of Etchings, Wood Block Prints, Lithographs, Decorations and Illustrations*, under the auspices of the Society of Graphic Arts and the Society of Canadian Painter-Etchers (Toronto: C.N.E., 1920); Norah Thomson, "Illustrated Books That Interpret the Canadian Spirit," *Publishers' Weekly*, June 23, 1928, 2516; Harrison, "Advertising Art in Canada," 106–110; Art Directors Club of Toronto (1949–1964), *Annual of Advertising and Editorial Art — 1st (1949) – 1964* (Toronto: The Club, 1949–1964); Donald W. Buchanan,

Speller, Fetherling and Stacey have noted, and Robertson Davies portrayed in a novel, illustration was becoming unfashionable and was soon considered beneath aesthetic notice by those who were not illustrators or bibliophiles themselves.⁷⁴ It is not surprising then that in 1966, Art Gallery of Toronto librarian Sybille Pantazzi remarked, "It is astonishing . . . that, so far, the contribution of Canadian artists to book illustration and design from the 1890's to the 1940's has been overlooked."⁷⁵

Things did not rapidly improve, despite Pantazzi's subsequent vital work on the illustration of the Group of Seven, and despite Robert Stacey's work on his grandfather Charles W. Jefferys, although a 1979 exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario resulted in a catalogue with useful, albeit incomplete, surveys of Canadian illustration.⁷⁶ Robert Stacey eventually contributed a brief survey of Canadian illustration history for *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, and completed thorough studies of the design work of J.E.H. MacDonald, Tom Thomson, and the Canadian-run Carlton Studios in London;⁷⁷ his work has been subsequently taken on by archivist Philip Dombowsky.⁷⁸ Most work on historical illustration in Canada has been comprised of studies on the Group of Seven, Angela Davis' book on Canadian printing firms

"An Illustrator Speaks His Mind: An Interview with Oscar Cahén," *Canadian Art* 8, no. 1 (Autumn 1950): 2–8; Dick Hersey, "New Talent in Illustration," *Canadian Art* 8, no. 2 (December 1950): 55–60; Mary Chell, "The Author Illustrates," *Canadian Author and Bookman* 28, no. 2 (Summer 1952): 28, 30; Carl Dair, "New Patterns in Canadian Advertising," *Canadian Art* 9, no. 4 (Summer 1952): 152–157, 173; Paul Arthur, "Canada: Advertising and Editorial Art," *Graphis* 10, no. 52 (1954): 100–113, 158; *Graphic 58: Being the 25th Anniversary Exhibition of the Canadian Society of Graphic Art*, ed. Canadian Society of Graphic Art and the Art Gallery of Toronto (Toronto: The Gallery, 1958), exhibition catalogue; Paul Duval, "Word and Picture: The Story of Illustration in Canada" *Provincial's Paper* 26, no. 2 (1961). I am indebted to Randall Speller for finding many of these titles.

⁷⁴ Speller, "Hidden Collections;" Stacey, cited in Speller, "Hidden Collections;" Douglas Fetherling, "The Fine Art of Design: Commercial Work from the Group of Seven," *Applied Arts Quarterly* (Fall 1988): 56–62; Robertson Davies, *What's Bred in the Bone* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1985). This assessment is agreed upon by all illustrators and illustration historians in the United States, Canada and United Kingdom to whom I have spoken.

⁷⁵ Sybille Pantazzi, "Book Illustration and Design by Canadian Artists 1890–1940, with a List of Books Illustrated by Members of the Group of Seven," *National Gallery of Canada Bulletin* 74, no. 1 (1966).

⁷⁶ McKenzie and Williamson, *The Art and Pictorial Press in Canada*.

⁷⁷ Robert Stacey, *The Canadian Poster Book: 100 Years of the Poster in Canada* (Toronto: Methuen, 1979); Robert Stacey, *J. E. H. MacDonald, Designer: An Anthology of Graphic Design, Illustration and Lettering* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1996); Robert Stacey, "Tom Thomson As Applied Artist," in *Tom Thomson*, ed. Dennis Reid (Douglas and McIntyre, 2002), 46–63.

⁷⁸ Philip Dombowsky, *J. E. H. MacDonald: Graphic Designer* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2012); *Canadian Bookplates from the National Gallery of Canada*, ed. Philip Dombowsky (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2013), exhibition catalogue.

notwithstanding,⁷⁹ Monographs on continentalist or expatriate illustrators have been noticeably absent in Canada even though famous expatriates continue to be celebrated in the United States.⁸⁰

An important precedent for this dissertation was the 1986 exhibition and catalogue produced by Calgary's Glenbow Museum from a substantial collection of mainly American illustration the museum acquired in stages from 1956 to 1979.⁸¹ The catalogue was written for a general audience and the American author, Judy Larson, did not speak to Canadian concerns; however, Christopher Jackson, who also worked on the show, was first to note Canadian illustrators with successful careers in the USA.⁸²

Further contributions to knowledge on Canadian illustration other than the Group of Seven includes work by Randall Speller on Canadian design and illustration,⁸³ by Wayne Morgan on Palmer Cox,⁸⁴ by Erin Wall and Arlene Gehmacher on Rex Woods,⁸⁵ and by Gail Edwards and Judith Saltman on Canadian

⁷⁹ Fetherling, "The Fine Art of Design;" Peter Lockyer, "The 'Art' in Selling the First Canned Goods," *County and Quinte Living*, Autumn 2009, 58; Rosalyn Porter, "A. J. Casson's Graphic Arts: Inexpensive Images by a Canadian Master," *Antiques and Art* 5, no. 2 (November/December 1978): 37–40; Sybille Pantazzi, "Group of Seven: Early Magazine Drawings," *Canadian Collector: A Journal of Antique and Fine Arts* 4, no. 2 (February 1969): 22; Megan Bice, "Design and Commercial Work," in *Light and Shadow: The Work of Franklin Carmichael* (Kleinburg: McMichael Canadian Art Collection, 1990), 97–104; Angela Davis, *Art and Work: A Social History of Labour in the Canadian Graphic Arts Industry to the 1940s* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995).

⁸⁰ Recent publications on Canadian expatriates include David Apatoff, Manuel Auad and Walt Reed, ed., *Robert Fawcett: The Illustrator's Illustrator* (San Francisco: Auad Publishing, 2010); "Arthur William Brown," "Robert Fawcett," and "Norman Mills Price" in Fred Taraba, *Masters of American Illustration: 41 Illustrators and How They Worked* (St. Louis: The Illustrated Press, 2011); Shane Glines and Alex Chun, ed., *Tophats and Flappers: The Art of Russell Patterson* (Seattle: Fantagraphics, 2006).

⁸¹ Judy L. Larson, *American Illustration 1890–1925: Romance, Adventure and Suspense* (Calgary: Glenbow Museum, 1986). Unfortunately, perhaps symptomatic of a lack of Canadian regard for illustration art, the Glenbow has since deaccessioned most of its unique collection, which as of 2013 is being held pending location of a suitable home for it. It is hoped that this dissertation will contribute to the preservation of and future work on the Glenbow collection.

⁸² Christopher Jackson, "Canadians in American Illustration," *Glenbow* 6, no. 2 (March–April 1986): 4.

⁸³ Randall D. Speller, "A Checklist of the Illustrations of Lucille Oille," *The Devil's Artisan: A Journal of the Printing Arts* 32 (1993): 3–25; Speller, "Fragments of an Exhibition," 6–25.

⁸⁴ Morgan and Ingram, "If Palmer Cox Wuz t'See Yer;" Morgan, "Now Brownies Seldom Idle Stand."

⁸⁵ Erin Wall, "Rex Woods: The Life and Work of One of Canada's Most Talented Illustrators," (unpublished research paper, McMaster University, 2011).

children's books.⁸⁶ The research group Caricature et satire graphique à Montréal (CASGRAM) under the leadership of Dominic Hardy at l'Université de Québec à Montréal is pursuing the history of caricature, comics and illustration in Quebec. In a landmark move, Museum London in London, Ontario organized the first major retrospective of Arthur Heming in 2012, and accompanied it with a book of essays.⁸⁷ Regional studies have also been done by Brian Rusted on the visual culture of the Calgary Stampede and Western art,⁸⁸ and Katherine Bosnitch has contributed work on Montreal fashion illustrators.⁸⁹ Breaking the pattern set in other works that typically gave little attention to painters' illustration, Iris Nowell's generous description of Toronto's Painters Eleven and their commercial work helps make visible the importance of illustration to fine art careers.⁹⁰ Meanwhile, Leif Peng, Jason Vanderhill, and John Adcock have blogged substantially on aspects of Canadian illustration.⁹¹ Studies in Canadian graphic design and craft history have supplied important parallels.⁹²

In that it treats Canadian illustrators in the United States as well, and considers their role in forming American national identity too, this dissertation also refers to the modest but growing body of illustration studies in American art. Michele Bogart's *Artists, Advertising, and the Borders of Art* is particularly foundational to understanding the cultural role and status of illustration in America.⁹³ Alexander Nemerov pioneered a form of analysis that might be termed a

⁸⁶ Edwards and Saltman, *Picturing Canada*.

⁸⁷ Cassandra Getty ed., *Arthur Heming: Chronicler of the North* (London, ON: Museum London, 2012). Arlene Gehmacher, Curator of Canadian Art at the Royal Ontario Museum, is cataloguing Rex Woods' fonds and planning a retrospective.

⁸⁸ Brian Rusted, "A Wonderful Picture': Western Art and the Calgary Stampede," in *Icon, Brand, Myth: The Calgary Stampede*, ed. Max Foran (Edmonton: Athabasca University Press, 2008), 271.

⁸⁹ Katherine Bosnitch, "A Little on the Wild Side: Eaton's Prestige Fashion Advertising Published in the *Montreal Gazette*, 1952–1972," in *Fashion: A Canadian Perspective*, ed. Alexandra Palmer (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 339.

⁹⁰ Iris Nowell, *Painters Eleven: The Wild Ones of Canadian Art* (Douglas and McIntyre, 2010).

⁹¹ Leif Peng, *Today's Inspiration* (blog), www.todaysinspiration.blogspot.com; Jason Vanderhill, *Illustrated Vancouver* (blog), <http://illustratedvancouver.ca>; John Adcock, *Yesterday's Papers* (blog), <http://john-adcock.blogspot.ca>; John Adcock, *Punch in Canada* (blog), <http://punchincanada.blogspot.ca>.

⁹² Jennifer E. Salahub, "2007—A Tipping Point in Canadian Craft History?" *Saskatchewan Craft Council: Excellence in Craft*, April 26, 2008, <http://www.saskcraftcouncil.org/celebrating/articles/2007/tipping-point.php>; Brian Donnelly, "Mass Modernism: Graphic Design in Central Canada 1955–1965, and the Changing Definition of Modernism," (master's thesis, Carleton University, 1997).

⁹³ Bogart, *Artists, Advertising, and the Borders of Art*.

poetics of illustration that has tinted my own analyses.⁹⁴ Jennifer Greenhill has completed significant work on trans-Atlantic print culture between the United States and England.⁹⁵

Popular books written for collectors and fans have supplied factual matter and insight into reception of illustration,⁹⁶ without offering critical analysis or theory. One aim of this dissertation is to facilitate conversation between appreciators and academics in order to build a more comprehensive view of what illustration does and how it makes meaning. Because American historians look at Canadian art perhaps even less than Canadian historians look at American art, *A Cultural Trade* introduces a Canadian component of North American art for Americans as well. To this end, it begins the necessary preliminary tabulation of who, what, where, why, and how. Overall, however, by proposing a continentalist approach, I hope to contribute not just more data to the growing archive of knowledge on Canadian illustration, but to conceptualize a framework for understanding how the history fits together and signifies in Canadian culture, laying a groundwork for contextualizing future research on illustration within art history, visual culture, Canadian studies, and American studies.

⁹⁴ Alexander Nemerov, *Frederic Remington and Turn-of-the-Century America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995); "The Boy in Bed: The Scene of Reading in N. C. Wyeth's Wreck of the 'Covenant,'" *Art Bulletin* 88, no. 1 (March 2006): 7-27.

⁹⁵ Jennifer Greenhill, "Illustration and Affect," (paper presented at the College Art Association, New York, February 14, 2013).

⁹⁶ E.g., Taraba, *41 Illustrators*; Auad, *Robert Fawcett*; Michael J. Smith, *The Canadian Patriotic Postcard Checklist, 1898-1928: Thirty Years of Glory* (Mississauga, ON: Michael J. Smith, 2003); Robert William Mellberg, *A Grandfather's Dream of Fair Women* (Rocky Mount, MI: Instant Publisher, 2010); Glines and Chun, *Tophats and Flappers*; Norman I. Platnick, *The Lady Seldom Smiles: A Collector's Guide to Neysa McMein* (Bay Shore, NY: Enchantment Ink, 2013).

Chapter 2

The Glamour Girl Racket: Arthur William Brown, Russell Patterson, and the Pretty-Girl Tradition

In the late nineteenth century, the United States found the majority of its population was no longer situated on farms and in small towns, but in large cities with well-developed industrial and managerial business sectors. Canada was rapidly following suit as American corporations opened up branch plants all over the provinces.¹ English Canadian artists had already selected landscape as their ideal nationalist expression of place and essence,² but as I will show in this chapter, for many Canadians, North America's promising future lay in sophistication, not rustification. The modern American city was an exciting site of opportunity for the self-made man or woman to raise him- or herself up from backwoods [or urban] roots.

As discussed previously, nationalist Canadians identified American print, which was flooded with imagery of pretty girls in various states of sex appeal, as "studiedly pornographic . . . a standing source of corruption. . . a perpetual paean of things "American" . . . An orgy of sex problems and countless pictures of foolish, unbridled youth. . ."³ Yet material success and urban sophistication were embodied in the image of a cultured, glamorous woman often marketed as "The American Girl." This pretty girl even in her most provocative guises must be considered a continental phenomenon, as desirable and undesirable in Canada as in the United States (Canadian cultural nationalists strategically failed to acknowledge the many Americans who also condemned lurid media).⁴ After achieving renown in the work of American pen-and-ink illustrator Charles Dana Gibson (1867-1944), she became a fad among the public and illustrators, including two Canadians who ventured to New York (they met and associated there): Arthur William Brown (1881-1966) and Russell Patterson (1893-1977).

¹ This was the result of protective tariffs instituted by John A. MacDonald, known as the "National Policy."

² The importance of landscape to Canadian identity forms the main body of national art in Canada and is treated in many sources elsewhere. Here, I am thinking particularly of the work of the Toronto Art Students' League, whose members articulated nationalism in landscape specifically to form a national art. C. W. Jefferys, quoted in Robert Stacey, *C. W. Jefferys*, 12; Marilyn McKay, *Picturing the Land: Narrating Territories in Canadian Landscape Art, 1500-1950* (Montreal: McGill Queen's University Press, 2011).

³ Lewis Wharton, "The Conquest of Canada," *Canadian Bookman* 9, no. 2 (February 1927): 55.

⁴ The freedom of the press guaranteed by the Constitution in the United States accounts for the more lax standards of lecherous print media, but the Comstock laws comprised a fetter on that freedom. Within the trade, the use of sex in advertising was debated by Francis Williams Brown. See Francis Williams Brown, "The Cult of Dirt," *Printers' Ink* 178, no. 5 (February 4, 1937): 16. American critics of popular media include Sinclair Lewis, Dwight MacDonald, Lewis Mumford, and Daniel Boorstin, just to name a few.

“Pretty girl” illustration of idealized women became (and remained) one of the most prevalent categories of illustration in the United States and Canada, and one of the genres most frequently derided by Canadian cultural nationalists. Chapter 4 explores the reception of the pretty girl in Canada. Here, I will consider nationalists’ charge that American popular print was “invading” Canada, threatening Canadian mores and culture with its salaciousness.⁵ I will show how strong the American magazine illustration industry was, what was attractive yet dangerous in the pretty girl construct, and how Canadians contributed to her manufacture. Discussion of the pretty girl’s rapid spread substantiates claims that American print was a threat, which in turn contextualizes later chapters that explore how and why nationalists turned to wilderness imagery and landscape painting, and rejected popular illustration.

I will discuss in turn the continentalist outlook that informed Arthur William Brown’s and Russell Patterson’s move into American media; the environment in New York City that rationalized their exploitation of the female form; the visual rhetoric that made their work so persuasive and therefore “invasive;” and the cultural tradeoff they made as expatriate Canadians. Brown and Patterson were not only attracted to New York but remained there because they fell into a powerful network that afforded them what seemed a virtuous circle (to critics it was a vicious one), in which their enjoyment of the lavish lifestyle of glamorous models, cocktails, and jazz surrounding the production of illustration, strengthened the quality and lucrateness of their output. This in turn reinforced that lifestyle and validated their illustration of it, motivating them to pursue new heights of virtuosity, prestige, and influence, while making that lifestyle the envy of the masses who saw it illustrated daily. Brown and Patterson succeeded at popularizing an increasingly sexualized pretty girl, even though in her more salacious forms she was an affront to public mores and, in Canada, a threat to nationalism as well.

A continentalist perspective on expatriate motives

What advantages, besides wealth, drew practitioners to the United States? Arthur Stringer’s poem “The Sons Beyond the Border” (quoted in Chapter 1) hinted that part of the draw might have been to find an easier life, or perhaps to satisfy “the touch of unrest that troubled our wilding youth.” But the nobler reason, he intimated, was that:

Where smoke lies black on their cities and the dust eats deep in their hearts,
Where they who are feverish-hearted make clamour in feverish marts,
We solace their nights with legends, with song we lighten their days . . .⁶

⁵ Editors of Canadian magazines that had to compete with American titles made these claims. Suzanne Bowness, “In Their Own Words.”

⁶ Stringer, “The Sons Beyond the Border,” 129.

In the vein of nationalistic hubris espoused by Chapple and others (Chapter 1), Stringer suggested Canadians would provide the leavening fine arts to remind feverish-hearted Americans of better things. This was little more than poetic idealism; many Canadians espoused a more prosaic wish to simply make their mark professionally and financially.

Looking back in 1950 at the emigration of so much Canadian talent, feminist historian Catherine Cleverdon's reflections agree:

Pioneering young Canadians must have found that the inertia of their entrenched elders had drained Canadian life of color, zest, adventure, and the stimulation which comes from free-ranging experimentation in ideas, in material enterprises, and in the arts. It must have been because they could not feel in Canada the sense of sharing in something more than the defense of things as they are that they left their country seeking 'lots more of something else'.⁷

This practical outlook had also been noted by expatriate writer Charles G.D. Roberts: "Being Canadians, we may be considered to have a preference, other things being equal, for Canadian themes; but being artists, it may be expected of us not to narrow our art by too rigid a localism in a choice of subject," he warned.⁸ Concerning Arthur William Brown specifically, it was reported that he had a "great desire . . . to go to a large city where there would be scope to realize his ambitions."⁹

Rather than being cultural traitors, Canadian creators Arthur William Brown and Russell Patterson can be considered as paragons of individualism, curiosity, commercial ambition and a love of mass culture shared by other Anglo-Canadians, even though these qualities were disavowed as "nationalist" traits in Canada. Likely, both men absorbed the ethos of individualism, entrepreneurship and the mission to succeed in part because of personal desires to recoup family honour for their businessmen fathers, who had both suffered setbacks. Patterson's father was a lawyer and hotel owner;¹⁰ Brown's grandfather, Sir Adam Brown, had served as Member of Parliament; and his uncle, Sir George McLaren Brown, was an executive with the Canadian Pacific Railway.¹¹ But Brown's father, William Evatt Brown, failed

⁷ Catherine Cleverdon, *Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 278.

⁸ Charles G. D. Roberts, "The Savour of the Soil," *Dominion Illustrated* 1, no. 4 (May 1892): 252.

⁹ Redpath, "Canadians in New York," 31–33, 93–94.

¹⁰ Armando Mendez, "Nymph Errant: The Life and Legacy of Russell Patterson," in *Tophats and Flappers: The Art of Russell Patterson*, ed. Shane Glines and Alex Chun (Seattle: Fantagraphics, 2006), 17.

¹¹ Sir Adam Brown was Conservative Member of Parliament for Hamilton, 1887–1891. Sir George McLaren Brown became European Manager of Canadian Pacific, directing trans-

at a business and incurred debts, and Brown had to work for a living as a teen at a Hamilton newspaper and on boats. Patterson's father's hotel burned down, causing his son to have to drop out of his studies at McGill University to work for Montreal newspapers.¹²

Adam Shortt's comparison of business to art (Chapter 1) is relevant here, in which he argued that how capital is raised and production conducted is less significant than the end goal of collective community wellbeing.¹³ For the artist as businessman, there was no dishonour in pursuing opportunity in the United States, nor in using one's trade to gain financial security. Rather, to have talent and squander it on second-rate Canadian training and ventures would have been foolish, even shameful, given the family pride to be restored. Brown kept up his Canadian profile his whole life, but if patriotic guilt for being materialistic and staying in New York ever bothered his conscience, he never left a record of it. As far as can be determined, Patterson did not cultivate Canadian contacts, and does not seem ever to have looked back after moving (his alleged return from Chicago to seek military service in the Canadian Air Force during World War I was likely fabricated).¹⁴

Brown's and Patterson's gravitation to city themes (with which the heterosocial pretty girl was most associated), and the ready consumption of the pretty girl in Canada, would suggest that urban life was a cultural theme just as

Atlantic shipping. "Early Days of Famous Illustrator Recalled," *The Hamilton Spectator*, March 19, 1936, 18.

¹² Arthur William Brown, "Fifty Years with Artists, Models and Authors," (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), chap. 1, p. 3, Arthur William Brown fonds, collection of the Society of Illustrators, New York, typescript; Mendez, "Nymph Errant," 17.

¹³ Adam Shortt, "Millionaires," 493–498. Shortt's exact words were, "interest centres, not in the means, but in the ideal to be realized."

¹⁴ Census records show Patterson's father was from Newfoundland; his son had grown up in Montreal. John Bell reports that Patterson went directly from working at *La Patrie*, where his last comic strip ran August 8, 1914 (the week Canada entered the war), to the air force but did not qualify to enlist and so went on to Chicago. Canada did not, however, yet have an air force and one was formally named only in 1918. Patterson's biographers, using Patterson's own assertions, state that he was fired from *La Patrie* and then went to Chicago a few months later, returning to join the air force before 1917 but securing a position in graphic arts work instead. Patterson claimed he learned to fly, but School of the Art Institute of Chicago records indicate he sporadically took classes 1916–1919, and his military records are difficult to trace, if they exist. Why Patterson would not have served in the U.S. army given his Omaha birthplace is a mystery. I suspect Patterson made up the Canadian service story as a ruse to hide a regretted decision not to serve at all. John Bell and Michel Viau, "Precursors, 1849–1928," *Beyond the Funnies: The History of Comics in English Canada and Quebec*, Library and Archives Canada, accessed April 10, 2013, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/comics/027002-8100-e.html>; Patterson in Mendez, "Nymph Errant," 17; *An Exhibition of the Works of Russell Patterson: Delaware Art Museum, June 24–July 24, 1977*, ed. Rowland Elzea. (Delaware: Delaware Art Museum, 1977), 4, exhibition catalogue.

appropriate and “native” to Canada as the more homosocial wilderness themes (ideas expanded upon in Chapter 4). Just as Arthur Heming (1870-1940) embodied and espoused the positive moral aspects of his Canadian wilderness subject matter (Chapter 3), so did Brown and Patterson experience and tout city culture. They represent different social groups and ideologies. That Arthur William Brown and Arthur Heming were opposites through and through is suggested by the fact that although they were from the same city (Hamilton, Ontario) and they both attended the same class at the Art Students League of New York,¹⁵ neither ever made mention of the other. Where Heming said he had been intrigued by the outdoors from childhood,¹⁶ Brown showed an affinity for social commentary subjects, contributing a Gibson-like cartoon to the Toronto-based satirical weekly *The Moon* in 1902.¹⁷ Brown, who claimed he couldn’t draw trees,¹⁸ attested:

I have been more interested in human nature and people than I have in the great, so called, beauty of Nature. I don’t get the thrill out of mountain falls, deserts, that I do out of life. I can sit at a sidewalk café in any foreign country, or the verandah of a small hotel here and watch life pass. If you’re going to draw human beings you’ve got to know how they live, and understand what goes on in their minds.¹⁹

Meanwhile, Patterson began as an architecture student at McGill University. He decided, however, to become an illustrator after seeing an advertising image of a slick gentleman painted by the consummate men’s fashion illustrator, J.C. Leyendecker.²⁰ In his apprenticeship days in Montreal at the French-language newspaper *La Patrie*, Patterson illustrated social events. He also had his own comic strip titled *Pierrot et Pierrette* (1913-1914), which featured naughty children in the

¹⁵ Official records of the Art Students League of New York. The class was taught by Walter Appleton Clark in March, 1903.

¹⁶ Arthur Heming, *The Drama of the Forests: Romance and Adventure*, (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page, 1921), ix.

¹⁷ Arthur William Brown, “A Necessary Preliminary to the Opening of the Social Season,” *The Moon*, October 4, 1902, 280–281, cartoon. Pertinent in this cartoon of a young social page journalist being interviewed by a society lady is that the journalist qualifies to write for her based on his training at the “Roosevelt correspondence school of social press agents,” thus assigning publicity-writing to an American provenance.

¹⁸ Brown, “Fifty Years,” chap. 7, p. 4.

¹⁹ Brown, “Fifty Years,” chap. 4, p. 2.

²⁰ Patterson, quoted in Mendez, “Nymph Errant,” 17.

mold of the American strip *The Katzenjammer Kids*.²¹ In following the Katzenjammer format, Patterson indicated an international sensitivity that paid no heed to Canadian or Quebecois identity—a disregard further signaled by his subsequent move to Chicago, and then a year spent in France 1919-1920, where extant works show he began exploring Impressionist landscape painting with a slightly post-Impressionist palette. Back in Chicago he began working in department store advertising before developing the fast-life “humorous illustrations” that would make him famous. This style—spare, geometric, rapid; influenced by French fashion illustration and futurism—was intended to imbue the figure (primarily the female figure) with zeitgeist of modernism. Said Patterson in the correspondence lessons he offered at that time:

This is a new age in which we live, an age of restless activity—a vibrant, throbbing age, an age of snap, pep, vim—an age of new thought, of new dress, of new standards, of new codes, and side by side with this new order of things, has grown a new expression of the artistic . . . This NEW ART is the last word in Humorous Illustration . . . allowing a certain freedom of line that gives snap, vivacity and sprightliness to the figures—crisply depicting the spirit of the times.²²

Brown and Patterson eventually made their ways to New York City (Brown in 1901; Patterson in 1925), where they met and began a lifelong association with one another through the auspices of the New York Society of Illustrators and other clubs. Like dozens of other Canadians, they stayed in the U.S. and became “feverish-hearted in blackened cities.” The sense of importance and fulfillment Brown and Patterson garnered there came not just from the financial reward, but from the “something else,” something provided by the social setting and lifestyle they illustrated and lived, as I will show.

The pretty girl genre

The elevation of idealized women as national symbols predated Brown and Patterson, and had three primary precedents: first, there was the use of female classical allegories such as Columbia and Miss Canada to personify the United States and Canada respectively. Second, the valuation of women as the cornerstone of civilization in their roles as mothers and home economists, insofar as *oikos* (home economy) was seen as a microcosm and indicator of national economy (a concept first manifested in Plato and taken up by American and British “maternal feminist”

²¹ Russell Patterson, “Pierrot et Pierrette,” *La Patrie*, Saturdays, June 28, 1913–August 8, 1914, comic strip; Rudolph Dirks, *The Katzenjammer Kids* (Hearst, 1897–1912).

²² Russell Patterson, “The New Art of a New Age,” in *The Russell Patterson Course: The Last Word in Humorous Illustration*, ca. 1925, collection of Illustration House, New York, promotional pamphlet.

suffragists);²³ identifying women as the shoppers for their households and targeting them in advertising was a logical extension. Third, the burgeoning entertainment industry's exploitation of unclothed girls led to a boom in New York of musical comedy, chorus lines, and burlesque. Florenz Ziegfeld was the most famous producer of these "leg shows," and was quick to feature "the American Girl" as a showgirl.²⁴ Making the youthful, fertile woman central in public space (on billboards, on magazine covers, on stage and screen) just as she was also becoming more visible in the factory, office, and theatre, reflected a change from Victorian emphasis on women's "place" in the home to the "New Woman" seeking opportunity outside the home. Significantly, the prominence of showgirls and actresses as women of means and influence drew thousands of girls and young women to New York in hopes of modeling their way to riches. Brown's memoirs show that modeling for illustrators was one of the entry routes.

By 1900, the picturing of young women had become synonymous with the advertising that accompanied economic growth. In cartoons, Charles Dana Gibson's "Gibson Girl" became a fashionable role model and in 1903, *Colliers* publicly announced on their cover, in eye-catching green ink, that as of Oct. 23, 1902 they had agreed to pay Gibson an unprecedented sum of \$100,000 for 100 "double page cartoons" (mainly of courtship and girls) over the next four years.²⁵ The young Arthur William Brown registered his attention to this event with a parody cartoon of the *Collier's* cover, in which he rendered Gibson's name as "Chawles Diana Get-Some."²⁶ After illustrating character types for about ten years, Brown pursued illustration of young women and fashionable people in 1916 specifically because this subject matter paid best and garnered him personal attention.²⁷

Meanwhile, Russell Patterson, who left Montreal for Chicago as early as perhaps 1914, illustrated the vampy costumes, poses, and naughty behavior of modern young women and men. After shifting to New York, he joined Brown and other pretty girl illustrators such as Howard Chandler Christy, James Montgomery

²³ Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak for Her*, vol.1, *A Critical Study of Early Feminist Rhetoric* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989); Adrian Bingham, *Gender, Modernity, and the Popular Press in Inter-War Britain* (Wotton-under-Edge: Clarendon Press, 2004).

²⁴ Ann Marie McEntee, "Feathers, Finials, and Frou-Frou: Florenz Ziegfeld's Exoticized Follies Girls," in *Art Glitter and Glitz: Mainstream Playwrights and Popular Theatre in 1920s America*, ed. Arthur Gewirtz and James J. Kolb (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), 177-187.

²⁵ *Collier's Weekly*, February 7, 1903, 1. Gibson also agreed to work exclusively for *Collier's*, except for *Life*, which was his mainstay and which he eventually bought. \$100,000 in 1904 was equivalent to \$58,800,000 in terms of economic power in 2011, *Measuring Worth*, accessed October 13, 2012, <http://www.measuringworth.com/uscompare/>.

²⁶ Unidentified cartoon in Brown's scrapbook, Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators.

²⁷ "Wonderful Half-Century of Drawing," *The Hamilton Spectator*, November 24, 1962, 30; Brown, "Fifty Years," chap. 8, p. 4.

Flagg, and McClelland Barclay in judging beauty pageants.²⁸ The marketability of feminine charms led to publishers and advertisers commissioning more and more lascivious portrayals of glamorous models. By the mid-1930s, Patterson was contributing near-pornographic covers to the risqué magazine *Ballyhoo*.

The lifestyle and outlook of pretty girl illustrators

In New York, Brown and Patterson encountered a close-knit community and lifestyle that legitimized their exploitation of women's sex appeal in print media. This point is important because as I argue throughout this dissertation, for the illustrators I discuss, illustration was a personal expression springing from everyday lived circumstances.

Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has used the word *habitus* to describe the social and cultural environment that surrounds a profession and determines the identity, thought, and values held by its professionals, which in turn informs their creative output.²⁹ In New York, Arthur William Brown and Russell Patterson entered into an established habitus of illustrators making their reputations by inventing ideal "types" of women. This habitus was part of a closely integrated network that Brown frankly referred to as the "glamour girl racket."³⁰ Although he did not specifically define the phrase himself—it was apparently self-evident to him—we may say that the racket was the collusion of not just illustrators, but their models, clubs, clients, publishing institutions, entertainment industries; and consumers who actively helped shape the media through fan letters, fashion, and buying habits. Together they used the visage and figure of young, sexually attractive women to stand symbolically for the United States' collective "American Dream" ideal of prosperity.

Three institutions in particular made it possible for Brown and Patterson to network and associate themselves with beautiful women, and ensured that the image of the pretty girl would continue to dominate advertising and entertainment. They were the New York Society of Illustrators (S.I.), the Dutch Treat Club (D.T.C.), and the Artists and Writers Golf Association.

In collaboration with enterprising female models, Brown and Patterson consciously engineered their careers through S.I., the illustrators' trade organization. They did this by making S.I., with its popular annual show featuring nude models,

²⁸ Russell Patterson, "Russell Patterson," *In Memoriam*, National Cartoonists Society, accessed October 31, 2008, <http://www.reuben.org/ncs/members/memorium/>; Armando Mendez, "Nymph Errant," 8, 16–17.

²⁹ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, ed. Randal Johnson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

³⁰ Arthur William Brown, "I Think with My Eyes," unpublished manuscript from speech delivered to advertising salesmen, Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators. According to a November 10, 1937 letter from *Post* Department of Sales promotion manager T. E. McLaughlin to Brown, the lecture was to occur November 17, 1937.

the hub in the network of the glamour girl racket.³¹ The D.T.C., a men-only lunch club for elite men in advertising from composers to copywriters, expected each member to cultivate a self-image as a playboy with “a stable full of top-flight model-mistresses,” and held a yearly stag party complete with pornographic yearbook.³² The Golf Association revolved around a winter vacation to Palm Beach by members of D.T.C. and SI. They frequently brought an aspiring model or actress, in order to garner photo opportunities in the media for them all.³³ There was considerable overlap, then, in the membership of these clubs, and Brown and Patterson appear to have been involved at the administrative level in all three. Although women were not allowed to attend D.T.C. events, they were quite active behind the scenes at S.I., where they helped by producing costumes, music and sets for the shows, and by doing administrative and hostess tasks.³⁴ That Brown’s and Patterson’s friends were often other illustrators, publishers, or authors whose work they illustrated, and that activities included their wives (who were often also arts professionals and who modeled for their husbands),³⁵ indicates just how much professional associations were indistinct from illustrators’ private lives.

Space prevents a discussion of all the clubs; and as S.I. is the most pertinent, I will add detail concerning its history.³⁶ The Society of Illustrators was begun in 1901 to advocate for members and to provide a social club for them and their clients. In 1915 Charles Dana Gibson and other illustrators who relied on women for their subject matter realized that they could raise funds for S.I. and promote their careers

³¹ S.I. was less advantageous for women illustrators. Four of the most prestigious women illustrators had been admitted as Associate Members in 1903 and 1904 (Florence Scovel Shinn, Jessie Wilcox Smith, Elizabeth Shippen Greene, Violet Oakley), but then there were no more until after 1921 when the full membership was finally opened up to women. Even then, it was a long time before women members held administrative positions at the Society (notably, Gyo Fujikawa broke both race and gender barriers there in the 1950s). The female members were, in shows, quite invisible: there are few records of them contributing to the shows, unlike models and wives. My thanks to Marissa Hiller for confirming the identity of the first four women members.

³² Munro Leaf, “How to Raise a Dutch Treater,” *Dutch Treat Yearbook* (New York: Dutch Treat Club, 1950), n.p.

³³ Arthur William Brown, quoted in “Letters and Pictures,” unidentified magazine clipping, Brown fondly, Society of Illustrators; “With 50 Men Escorts, Model Off to Florida,” *Globe and Mail*, February 10, 1939, 15. The latter is an Associated Press story.

³⁴ These activities are occasionally documented in the Society’s bulletins and credited in show programmes. Grace Brown sometimes loaned her fashion designer’s skills. Phil Dormont, “Himself Surprised...” *Society of Illustrators Bulletin*, November 1951, n.p.

³⁵ Blickenstaff, “Who’s Brownie?” *Society of Illustrators Bulletin*, April 1964, 4–7.

³⁶ The homosocial network and heterosexual atmosphere is described by James Montgomery Flagg, a member of all three. In James Montgomery Flagg, *Roses and Buckshot: An Autobiography by James Montgomery Flagg* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1946).

by playing up their supposedly salacious relationship with models for the public.³⁷ They sold the rights to their annual show (originally a private self-produced amusement, a “smoker,” for the annual club party) to the theatrical company Shubert’s under the name *Artists and Models*, who produced it as a risqué Broadway-type song and dance show for many years. Its royalties financed the clubhouse (it is still operated by S.I.).³⁸ Meanwhile, S.I. continued to give private annual shows (now more elaborate black tie events) for select guests—the most powerful directors, advertising executives, and other men who controlled mass media enterprise. These were the ultimate beauty spectacles, starring models in g-strings and the illustrators themselves as actors.³⁹ Working with illustrators and participating in their annual show was an important step on the ladder for aspiring women. Models were volunteers, although they were paid honoraria on at least one occasion.⁴⁰ The skits and musical comedy were composed in-house, using sets made by the illustrators and their wives [Figure 3]. At S.I., Brown and Patterson and their wives became frequent collaborators in producing them.⁴¹

³⁷ “Amateurs in Vaudeville: Magazine Illustrators and Their Models Burlesque Their Own Art, Themselves and the Magazines,” *New York Herald*, February 27, 1915, n.p.

³⁸ Brown, “Fifty Years,” chap. 16, p. 2.

³⁹ Stripteasers wore pasties and rarely stripped to their g-strings, while girls in the Society of Illustrators shows went naked except for the mandatory g-string. For details on striptease in the 1930s, see Ann Corio and Joseph DiMona, *This Was Burlesque* (New York: Madison Square Press, 1968).

⁴⁰ E. M. to Walter Thornton Inc., May 24, 1934, box General Correspondence, 1933–1934, collection of the Society of Illustrators, New York.

⁴¹ Casts and crews were mentioned on posters and in S. I.’s newsletters.



Figure 3. Anonymous photographer. Arthur William Brown and unidentified model performing in a Society of Illustrators show. Unknown date. Arthur William Brown fonds, New York Society of Illustrators.

Brown's and Patterson's eyes for glamour and the authority they garnered as beauty experts was greatly helped by their class background (as had been the case for Charles Dana Gibson also). A survey of American illustrators of 1916 stated that illustrators "who really count"—the author singled out Brown—shared the "elusive quality called breeding."⁴² "Breeding," or what Pierre Bourdieu would call social and cultural capital,⁴³ helped Brown and Patterson associate with movie stars, appear at the glitzy Stork Club, and to be featured alongside famous actors and businessmen in the "Men of Distinction" advertising campaign run by Lord Calvert Whiskey.⁴⁴

⁴² William Trowbridge Larned, "Some American Illustrators of To-Day," *The Bookman: A Review of Books and Life* 44, no. 4 (December 1916): 356. It is worth mentioning that B. Cory Kilvert, another prominent contemporaneous illustrator hailing from Hamilton, was son of the mayor.

⁴³ Bourdieu, *Field of Cultural Production*.

⁴⁴ The Calvert's campaign was widely known. Marshall McLuhan analyzed it in *The Mechanical Bride: Folklore of Industrial Man* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1951), 56. A number of tear sheets that feature Patterson in the Calvert's campaign are held in the collection of Illustration House, New York.

Brown was endlessly interviewed for articles on beauty.⁴⁵ A noted dandy, Russell Patterson authored a men's style column in *College Humor*.⁴⁶ Each of their three clubs (S.I., D.T.C., and the Golf Association) aspired to high society. Photos from their notoriously naughty annual get-togethers show everyone in black tie, and events were widely reported as celebrity red-carpet occasions. During the Depression, illustrators offered their services at charity fund-raisers, and individual artists featured frequently in society columns.

It is my contention that the habitus of illustrators normalized the inclusion of sexual expression in polite society. The annual shows asserted the illustrators' claim as the experts on imagery of desirable women, the staple of the advertising, fashion, and entertainment industries. The shows must be viewed in the context of the encroachment of photography, which by the 1920s was displacing illustration in advertising and cover art. By emphasizing their customary right as artists to look at nudes and to draw from the nude and have it signify "art," illustrators maintained an edge over photographers, who could not portray the nude as easily without being accused of pornography. Being obliged by their academic training to aesthetically study the nude, illustrators demonstrated a more thorough intimacy with and knowledge of women's bodies (and therefore also their presumed psychology, a key component of successful marketing strategies). Being able to get models to work in the show "proved" their special knowledge of and access to models. Such expertise rationalized illustrators' exorbitant fees and rhetorically claimed the work of depicting women and glamour as their exclusive societally-condoned prerogative, keeping illustrators employed.

The network that S.I. and the other clubs comprised created demand for and rationalization of the spectacularized female body, and made the illustrators' work seem not merely acceptable but a positive tradition. Passing the torch to younger illustrators in 1937, Brown assured (mainly) young men they would succeed if, like him, they specialized in glamour, judged beauty pageants, and were seen in fashionable places with important people and models.⁴⁷

Modeling and women's self-fashioning

Key to the effectiveness of the network that kept the pretty girl in place and made her popular was the collusion of models and female consumers. The pretty girl genre's artificial femininity eventually raised the ire of feminists like Betty Friedan, for whom glamour only served male privilege and prevented the valuation of women's intellectual and other attributes.⁴⁸ The construction of pretty-girl beauty

⁴⁵ E.g., Helen Welshimer, "A Famous Artist Tells What a Woman Needs to be Loved," marked "Pittsburgh Press," 1928, collection of the Society of Illustrators, New York.

⁴⁶ Russell Patterson, "For Men Only," regular column in *College Humor*.

⁴⁷ Brown, 'Publicity Pays,' in "Fifty Years," chap. 18, pp. 1-3.

⁴⁸ Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*.

standards was indeed an unequal trade-off, where women collaborated with more powerful men to get some freedom, and it is possible to argue that had the world offered equal opportunities in all spheres, women might have attained those goals in other ways; however, the pursuit of this line of thought is outside the scope here.

My findings instead suggest that in the beginning, women had helped create the mystique of the pretty girl because doing so signaled women's emancipation from even more restrictive nineteenth century customs and from poverty. This shift was understood by young moderns to be progressive and positive.⁴⁹ As women moved more into the public sphere, their minority presence in politics and workplaces only exacerbated their need to show perfection of dress, form, and manner, to deflect criticism aimed at their social transgression. Nowhere was this pressure to demonstrate aesthetic propriety more apparent than for suffragists, who were routinely caricatured as mannish by male illustrators. If women were to convince men to allow them into masculine careers and into government, they had to prove their superior fitness. For models and other women, glamour—the cultivation of beauty—was a rhetorical strategy in visual self-presentation for ambitious women who wished to demonstrate their fitness for nontraditional roles as much as traditional ones. For instance, Amelia Earhart's "masculine" career as a pilot was made easier by her glamour girl status.⁵⁰

Illustrators relied upon models not just for figure work and facial beauty but for style as well. As consummate pretty-girl illustrator Jon Whitcomb was to later say, fashion is what to wear, but style is how an individual wears it,⁵¹ and by creatively determining their own style, models had some control.

In a 1927 newspaper article, Brown tapped into the assertiveness of the new Woman and positioned her attitude and style as the quintessence of the American Girl:

Blonde hair and blue eyes. The modern girl is the best type of American girl. There is nothing the matter with her. Grandmother might guffaw at her flask, cigarette and shorn locks, but she is all there. She is the product of a brighter age—the better, happier, more charming and freer American girl . . . we never had anything like her before. She will always be in style.⁵²

His accompanying sketch of this ideal shows a woman, Diane Ellis of Hollywood,

⁴⁹ Brown, "Cult of Dirt."

⁵⁰ *Amelia Earhart: Image and Icon*, ed. Kristen Lubben (New York: International Center of Photography/Steidl, 2007), exhibition catalogue.

⁵¹ Jon Whitcomb, "Lesson 4: Fashion," *How I Make a Picture* (Westport CT: Institute of Commercial Art, 1949), 2.

⁵² "He Knows 'Em; Says They'll Always Flap," *Los Angeles Examiner*, ca. 1927, collection of the Society of Illustrators, New York.

with bobbed hair and wearing a flapper dress with low décolleté and bare arms, leaning back casually with an elbow over the back of her chair, ignoring “proper” deportment. To further signal her sexual emancipation, she sits with legs crossed rather than with knees pressed demurely together [Figure 4]. Of course, the American Girl was blonde, perpetuating racial normativity and indicating an underlying conservatism in the trope. Diane Ellis and later models did not just model for Brown, they modeled an ideal to follow for every woman with a few cents to spare who wished to be “an American.”



Figure 4. Unidentified newspaper. Arthur William Brown, *A Type of the Modern American Girl*, 1927. Arthur William Brown fonds, New York Society of Illustrators.

Because the American Girl was not a natural phenomenon, but a constructed one, therein lay opportunity for ambitious women with a modicum of good looks to learn glamour, and opportunity for others to profit from their tutelage. Modeling was taking off—and professionalizing. Fashion models had the right to demand higher wages for or refuse to pose for “objectionables”—lingerie, swimsuits, patent

medicines, soaps.⁵³ Models took their work seriously, and had their own professional organization, the Art Workers Club For Women, devoted to “better cooperation” between artists and models.⁵⁴ Brown told all hopefuls to go through the agencies, where it took two years to teach them “how to hold their hands, how to walk, how not to stand, how to smile—and when.”⁵⁵ From Brown’s correspondence, we can see that women regularly contacted him wanting modeling work. A typical letter read:

My dear Mr. Brown:

My "surpressed desire" always has been to pose, such as the girl in your pictures in the *Saturday Evening Post*,--pure ego, or vanity, or something like that,--but aren't we all? . . . I am just beginning to appreciate how silly and school-girlish this sounds,--but I would love to do some work of this kind

Respectfully yours, Golde Steinberg, New York City, Dec. 18, 1925.⁵⁶

Perhaps the possibly Jewish Miss Steinberg longed to claim a more “American” identity for herself that would have been proven by her acceptability as a model.

Behind the glamorization of the middle-class New Woman and the attractiveness of fashion modeling, was a darker picture. New York was home to thousands of young working class women, notoriously underpaid. Cultivation of beauty and entrance into the glamour business was a viable way out of poverty for the models, dancers, actresses, showgirls, and hostesses—the women whom Russell Patterson frequently drew alongside slumming society belles. Social workers documented that “treating”—trading sexual favours for suppers, gifts, and outings—was rampant.⁵⁷ Actress Louise Brooks described the arrangement at the Ziegfeld Follies, writing that: “There was a hand-picked group of beautiful girls who were invited to parties given for great men in finance and government At these parties we were not required like common whores to go to bed with any man who

⁵³ Brown, “Fifty Years,” chap. 5, p. 4; Katherine Brush, “Illustrated by Arthur William Brown,” *The Saturday Evening Post*, March 21, 1936, 94.

⁵⁴ “Art Workers Club to Gain by Party,” *New York Times*, March 22, 1936, N4.

⁵⁵ B. F. Wilson, “The Show-Offs,” *Collier’s*, July 13, 1935, 9.

⁵⁶ Steinburg to Brown, December 18, 1925, Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators.

⁵⁷ Sharon R. Ullman, *Sex Seen: The Emergence of Modern Sexuality in America* (Los Angeles: University of California Press), 109; Randy McBee, *Dance Hall Days: Intimacy and Leisure Among Working-Class Immigrants in the United States* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 106–107; Elizabeth Alice Clement, *Love for Sale: Courting, Treating, and Prostitution in New York City, 1900–1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 72.

asked us, but if we did the profits were great. Money, jewels, mink coats, a film job – name it.”⁵⁸

Being willing to disrobe for an illustrator or S.I. show was an advantage too. Getting chosen by a top illustrator as a cover girl or beauty contestant (in the professional division of Miss America the girls had to be nominated by a sponsor, who was often an illustrator)⁵⁹ could give marketable individuality to those who were otherwise just anonymous, interchangeable units in a chorus line.⁶⁰ For instance, when newspapers pictured an S.I. show model, Catherine Clarke, and reported that she would perform an interpretive dance titled “Shubert—Past, Present and Future”—Shubert’s producers would have been sure to take note.⁶¹ Knowing he deserved some credit for their success, Brown proudly and frequently publicized how many of his former models had gone on to film, the best known being Joan Blondell and Norma Shearer.⁶² Anita Colby, a top model and later beauty expert, attested that getting to model for Brown was a sign of having “arrived.”⁶³ Brown also enumerated how many of his models made advantageous marriages if they didn’t go to Hollywood.⁶⁴ Unmentioned were those who became mistresses, the history of whom is still locked away in furtive oral histories.⁶⁵ Thus the “gold-digger” stereotype—a sexually available working girl living on the avails of wealthy men and hoping to marry one—became a common figure in Russell Patterson’s humorous illustrations.⁶⁶

⁵⁸ Joshua Zeitz, *Flapper: A Madcap Story of Sex, Style, Celebrity, and the Women Who Made America Modern* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2007), 251.

⁵⁹ “Artists Pick 20 Manikins: Choose Models from Hotel Parade for Weekly Style Shows,” *New York Times*, January 21, 1933, 10.

⁶⁰ For a discussion of the relationship of chorines’ anonymity to their pay, see Angela J. Latham, *Posing A Threat: Flappers, Chorus Girls, and Other Brazen Performers of the American 1920s* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 2000), 111–114. Probably the popularity of chorus lines contributed much to the standardization of figures, since the pleasing effect of the line is lessened by unevenness.

⁶¹ “Illustrators Hold Party Tonight,” *New York Times*, April 12, 1930, 19.

⁶² Danton Walker, “Broadway,” n.d., unidentified clipping in Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators; Blickenstaff, “Who’s Brownie?”

⁶³ Anita Colby, “Pretty Girls Like Picture to ‘Brownie,’” *New York Journal American*, June 7, 1958, n.p., collection of Illustration House, New York. This column ran in papers nationwide.

⁶⁴ Danton Walker, “Broadway,” Browns fonds.

⁶⁵ The prevalence of mistresses among models deserves a separate study. Suffice to say here that any illustrator or illustration collector over 60 can recite stories. I personally heard ones from Roger Reed concerning Dean Cornwell and Arthur William Brown.

⁶⁶ Many are reprinted in Mendez, “Nymph Errant.”

The Patterson Girl as commercial role model

The perception of empowerment that the pretty girl represented made her irresistible to many; this attraction catalyzed the “invasion” of print matter not just in Canada but in any community where sex appeal was formerly taboo. Shrewd glamour girls provided a tantalizing image for women who longed for fame, fortune, influence, or a ticket out of small towns. Glamour *seemed* attainable with little effort: merely the purchase of cosmetics and an affectation of body language. Where a Gibson Girl always appeared innocently oblivious to her own God-given beauty and its effects, Patterson’s Girls were self-conscious and scheming, with vamps applying lipstick and sultry flappers broadcasting sexual availability with hand on jutting hip.⁶⁷

Two versions of the Patterson Girl appeared: the “naughty” one in the men’s humour magazines was a mute scantily-clad sex object, while the “nice” Patterson Girl of the Sunday comics who was aimed at girls, as we can surmise from the bridal themes, was a talkative, charismatic, adventurous heroine. Both got ahead by sexy derring-do draped in luxurious costumes—and undraped.

One especially strong example of a Patterson Girl shows how the glamour girl racket trickled down from illustrators’ and models’ public personas to American women’s lives. In the *New York Journal* and other newspapers nation-wide, in the spring of 1929, Patterson illustrated a series of full colour, full page comics of the story of Runaway Ruth, The Patterson Girl. Ruth is a finishing-school drop-out who has decamped to New York to seek her own way in life. She is following in the footsteps of “Boyfriend,” whom she soon bumps into on 5th Avenue—with another woman. The storyline follows Ruth as she makes her way up the glamour ladder until she nets her man.

Ruth has clothes “and knows how to wear them” as Brown would have put it, but little money. Early in the plot, at a fashionable restaurant her stylish appearance catches the eye of a famous illustrator, who invites her to pose in “objectionables” (lingerie) (Saturday, April 6, 1929). The artist resembles Patterson himself. Ruth’s scantily clad likeness soon appears in a shop window advertising showcard—and is spotted by a horrified Boyfriend. The artist asks Ruth to visit a party at his Greenwich Village studio, and Boyfriend rushes to rescue her from the scandal (which, rather self-defensively on Patterson’s part, turns out to be a false alarm—it’s just an afternoon tea party with many ladies present). Next, Boyfriend sees her when she takes a fashion runway job, which leads to a position as hostess in a swanky nightclub, which in turn allows her to become a personal assistant to a society lady, who takes her to Deauville, the most prestigious resort in the French Riviera (where Boyfriend has also gone). The spread for June 1 features Ruth in

⁶⁷ Brown utilized the same pose in what one critical reader called “a la washerwoman,” indicating how transgressive such body language was to the old-fashioned. Margaret A. Kohn of Pasadena, CA, to Brown, November 14, 1933, Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators.

beach garments that show off her legs [Figure 5]. Ruth pretends to drown so that Boyfriend comes to her rescue, precipitating their reunion.



Figure 5. *Runaway Ruth*. Russell Patterson, June 1, 1929. Collection of Mathieu Bertrand. Reproduced with permission of King Features Syndicate. © 1929 Distributed By King Features Syndicate, Inc.

The verso page provides evidence of the deep enmeshment of illustration with commerce and culture and media, with ramifications for intensive influence on the reader. There, the *New York Journal* habitually ran a sensational tabloid-esque story at the top, followed by a society and fashion column by Jean Nash, also called Madame Dubonnet, an “authority on what women should wear.” On the day of the Patterson comic in Figure 5, the lead story was “Glorifying the ‘Normal’ American Legs.”⁶⁸ The subtitle read, “Neither a Greyhound Nor a Grand Piano Is This New Type of Beauty, ‘Certified’ by Broadway’s Greatest Girl Expert.” A large photo of a chorine, Barbara Newberry, is inscribed by Florenz Ziegfeld, who writes that he has selected her from “half a million or more” girls as “having the most beautiful, normal, and attractive limbs, typical of the American Girl.”

The article explains that Victorian beauties had fat legs, and even applied “symmetricals”—pads on the calves to give them an even plumper look—but now, “perfect, normal American legs” were the new ideal, not too skinny and not too fat. Author Mary Dougherty rebukes the lingering association of legs with immorality, and justifies the visibility of legs by describing them as the bread and butter of the entertainment industry, more important than faces and talent. Everybody enjoys watching pretty girls dance, and women appreciate and buy the new shorter skirts to show off legs, thus keeping department stores in business. “We all seek beauty,” she says, and “we have come to a stage of our social development where we are willing to admit it.” Thus, spectacularization of women’s bodies is framed as a more “truthful,” natural expression of the good and the healthful, than Victorian tastes were. She continues:

The truth of the matter is that it is the best bred and the best trained girls who have the most attractive legs. Exercise, diet and good schooling are reflected in graceful lines . . . [which] cannot help being beneficial to the body and the mind of the individual who experiences such a training.

I am for beauty, whether it is of limb, or eye, or teeth, or soul.
I can see nothing but the advancement of civilization in the highest type of beauty, whether it be feminine or masculine or whether it be in the human body or in any form of expression of human soul!

The tone here is the urge towards improvement of society, self-knowledge, and pleasure via the body. Where the argument for self-improvement bogs down, though, is in the commodification and standardization of the individual’s search for personal enlightenment through beauty, entangled as it is with social normativity. Dougherty cannot separate beauty from its exploitation on stage and in shops, nor from an average that by definition excludes “greyhound” and “piano” legs, even though for many people these are just as natural. Also troubling is her equation of this new standard of “average” beauty with good breeding and training, which

⁶⁸ Mary T. Dougherty, “Glorifying the ‘Normal’ American Legs,” *New York Journal*, June 1, 1929.

privileges class, and defines the ultimate American girl being as blonde as Brown's model.

Runaway Ruth entirely reinforces this new set of restrictions. As a strawberry blonde finishing school drop-out she obviously has the "right" breeding and training, and Patterson gives her the requisite shapely "average" legs. She works in both the entertainment and the fashion industries to get ahead. And an illustrator gives her that first break. Her own best self-advocate, she maintains her class position by exploiting her body, but sees her destiny to be not ongoing independence but marriage to the most eligible bachelor.

Turning to Jean Nash's column at page bottom, we find her writing about the town Le Touquet, France, very close to Deauville. She reports on British aristocrats vacationing there, and their costumes, noting that it is improper to wear fancy shoes with sports outfits. She herself wears a pale green and beige Chanel suit, exquisitely described in detail (Chanel had a shop in nearby Deauville). Nash's column was not printed in colour—but Patterson's artwork was.

Given that Jean Nash always appeared on the verso of Patterson in this paper, it would have been natural for the young girl reader to study his illustrations minutely for how they lived up to Nash's admonitions. Sure enough, fabulous ensembles are carefully limned, in Patterson's loose clearline style derived from Parisian fashion plates. Ruth stands in a classic model's pose, hand on contrapposto hip. Significantly, Boyfriend and the rival woman are looking at her (as the reader is) presumably because they recognize her, but perhaps also evaluating her figure, her legs, and her clothes, as they had done throughout the story when they met on Fifth Avenue, saw her in the lingerie ad, watched her modeling in the fashion show, and saw her as a nightclub hostess. The cumulative message to girls was that getting ahead required an ideal figure, spectacularization, and conspicuous consumption of designer couture—with which Russell Patterson helped at every step as picker of beauty, definer of fashion, author of narrative. The editorial and art content of the newspaper reinforced these values, blending news and entertainment.

Repeated exposure to Runaway Ruth-type debutantes eroded the upper-class stigma against glamour, actresses, and modeling. During the Depression, Patterson, Brown and other illustrators—very wealthy themselves—attended high society charity events and donated their services to fundraising by selling portraits done on the spot of debutantes and others. Glamour transcended its sordid past and became both haute couture and girl-next-door, accessible—and therefore required—of all women. When this happened, debutantes became models too and the class biases of "well-bred" illustrators were reasserted. In Brown's words:

Models used to be poorly clothed chorus girls who were paid a dollar an hour for posing. The growth of advertising photography brought a different class of girls into the business, and since the depression many society girls have turned to modeling, thus introducing breeding and a better clothes sense into the profession. A good many fine models today are college girls. A model does not get the job on her face and figure alone, but also on her ability to help the artist by trying for graceful poses and to cooperate with

him in expressing what he desires to put into the illustration. Thus an intelligent college girl will be used often because the artist is assured of obtaining results.⁶⁹

Modeling and illustration became less likely avenues for working class girls to climb out of poverty.

In 1938, the movie *Artists and Models* represented the telos of the glamour girl racket, in which an advertising executive, an ambitious working girl who has come far up the ranks as a fashion model, a debutante who likes the idea of playing at glamour, and a wealthy bachelor get embroiled in a comedy of errors in which model and debutante change places (thus validating the previously disreputable professions of modeling and advertising), eventually all ending up happily married and prosperous, living the American Dream.⁷⁰ Several S.I. members (including Brown and Patterson) make a guest appearance in the movie, drawing supermodel Sandra Storme (who had been discovered by Brown)⁷¹ from life; they also posed for publicity shots and helped promote the film. Illustrators' centrality to the economy and to social prestige was thus upheld. Patterson also made puppets of saucy women (diminutively named Personettes) that appeared in a cameo scene, flirting with a puppet of *Esquire* magazine's dirty old man mascot named Esky (the ladies are prostitutes, dressed in street clothes and apparently on a street, it is hinted).⁷²

Patriotic Glamour: Arthur William Brown's Claudia

Patterson used simplified line drawings to create impressions into which readers could project fantasy. By contrast, Brown used representations with which readers could identify. In 1917, he said he wished "Just to be a great illustrator. I want to make my people live. To be as real as possible."⁷³ As illustration art expert Fred Taraba has noted, Brown eschewed depicting dramatic action, and instead let subtle

⁶⁹ Ann Sundstein, "Arthur William Brown Describes Procedure of Illustrating Story," *Cornell Daily Sun*, October 21–22, 1934, n.p. See letter from her to Brown, October 22, 1934, Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators. See also Katherine Brush, "Illustrated by Arthur William Brown."

⁷⁰ *Artists and Models*, directed by Raoul Walsh (Hollywood: Paramount Studios, 1937). It is possible the Society of Illustrators was paid for use of this name, which they had previously sold to the theatrical company Shuberts.

⁷¹ "See Illustrator in Another Role," *The Hamilton Spectator*, August 31, 1937, 31.

⁷² Patterson had been involved from the beginning with *Esquire*, whose editors had hoped Patterson would provide their first centerfold pin-ups. Patterson was too expensive then, so George Petty got the job, followed by Alberto Vargas. Hugh Merrill, *Esquire: The Early Years at Esquire* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1995), 42.

⁷³ Robert Partridge, "Successful Young Canadian and His Climb to Recognition," *Toronto Sunday World*, September 30, 1917, 1, morning edition.

body language and facial expressions convey the interior drama of the characters.⁷⁴ This “realness” enabled readers to sympathize with characters, making the reader quite susceptible to following them as role models.

Brown’s realism was greatly enhanced by his use of staged photographs using friends, neighbours, and himself as models for the secondary characters. Photography before 1910, when he began, was not dependable, being difficult in the days before film was very sensitive and before bright studio lighting was readily available. Photography was also frowned upon by those who felt it amounted to a cheapening of illustrators’ hard-earned skill.⁷⁵ But where others used photography in secret, Brown was open about it, pointing out that it helped capture nuances of gesture and facial expression and life-like details and shadows, and provided a means of assembling compositions from separately-recorded parts by means of darkroom enlargement and pantagraph.⁷⁶ His methods soon became accepted practice for mainstream illustrators. It is rather paradoxical that a process so artificial and a product so idealized could have signified realness, but Brown’s fans were insistent on that point. One said: “I like [your drawings] because they are so very human, they are not merely pictures, they radiate life, each character as you draw him becomes real, with a personality all his own.”⁷⁷ Another wrote, “You have made almost a living personality of ‘Mr. Tutt’. . . the people you put on paper are real people.”⁷⁸ A third claimed, “There’s something different about your characters—they look so very real-life-ish—so like the conception I have drawn in my mind of the heroine, hero, etc.”⁷⁹

Many of fans’ letters make references to Brown’s clarity and detail of delineation. To our eyes today, so used to high definition likeness and method acting, it is difficult to see what made Brown’s work special. With its seeming lack of “style,” Brown’s work seems though to have succeeded with the public of his day, raised on vaudeville, melodrama, and cartoons, line engravings, and paintings. Few autographic idiosyncrasies, no painterliness, no caricature intruded between the viewer’s observation of humans in life and the pictured people on the page. This made his drawings powerful carriers of social messages, which for Brown consisted mainly of how to look good—a message reinforced by editorial and advertising

⁷⁴ Taraba, *41 Illustrators*, 100. Taraba is expanding upon an observation made by Rowland Elzea in Rowland Elzea and Iris Snyder, *American Illustration: The Collection of the Delaware Museum* (Wilmington: Delaware Art Museum, 1991), 208.

⁷⁵ Brown, “Fifty Years,” chap. 2, p. 5.

⁷⁶ Brown, “Fifty Years,” chap. 5, p. 1.

⁷⁷ Jim Runyon, Peoria, IL, to Brown, April 20, 1920, Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators.

⁷⁸ Glen H. Grange, Wellington, New Zealand, to Brown, June 29, 1929, Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators.

⁷⁹ Dee Smith, Ramseur, North Carolina, to Brown, April 4, 1936, Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators.

content that conflated health with beauty, making beauty not just an aesthetic value but a moral one too.⁸⁰ Brown observed that a picture of fashionable people made readers pause and begin reading the text—a phenomenon independently corroborated by *Chatelaine* magazine editor Hope Byrne Sanders.⁸¹ Brown's public demanded strict adherence to beauty standards, berating him if he misjudged.⁸² Men—who wrote about half of Brown's 300 surviving fan letters—also found glamour desirable.⁸³

During the Second World War, Arthur William Brown brought the seemingly contradictory roles of proper housewife and glamour girl together to forge an updated American Girl icon in the figure of Claudia, the protagonist of long running serial stories in *Redbook* magazine that was made into two motion pictures.⁸⁴ A portion of *Redbook's* 1,300,000 copies was sold in Canada on newsstands at 30 cents apiece.⁸⁵ Claudia, an aspiring actress who gives up her career to be a housewife, uses her acting ability to enact the part of stoic housewife in spite of her suppressed inclination to rebel against “stagnation,” her nervous breakdown, the threat of infidelity, and her husband's post-traumatic stress following military service. She does all this while wearing fabulous clothes and affecting runway poses in Brown's illustrations [Figure 6].

⁸⁰ The link between morality and cleanliness is discussed by Mariana Valverde, *The Age Of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885–1925* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).

⁸¹ Brown, “Fifty Years,” chap. 8, p. 4; Hope Byrne Sanders, “This Month with Our Advertisers,” *Chatelaine*, January 1932, 42.

⁸² See Edna S. Brown of Magnolia, MA to Brown, n.d., Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators. The enclosed offending illustration from *The Saturday Evening Post* is dated 1935.

⁸³ John White Johnston, Rochester, NY, to Brown, January 17, 1935, Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators.

⁸⁴ The first Claudia story was Rose Franken, “Secret Alliance,” *Redbook* 72, November, 1938, 24. *Claudia*, directed by Edmund Goulding (Los Angeles: Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 1943); *Claudia and David*, directed by Walter Lang (Los Angeles: Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 25 February 1946).

⁸⁵ Canadian price and total paid subscription is printed on the cover, e.g., *Redbook*, August 1941.



Figure 6. Arthur William Brown, illustration of Claudia [from microfilm]. Rose Franken, "Secret Alliance," *Redbook*, Vol. 72 #1 (November, 1938), 25. New York Public Library. By permission of Hearst Corporation.

The Claudia in the written text is a good deal more bumbling than the suave Claudia whom Brown depicts, making his illustrations carry much of the propagandistic message of glamorous dutiful housewife that made Claudia such a popular hit. *Redbook* was entirely complicit in the exploitation of Claudia's glamour and in her move to the big screen, announcing that the clothes were provided by leading designers and that they kept a stylist on staff for Brown and other illustrators to consult with. They also ran articles on the career development of the stories' author, on Brown, on the models who posed for Claudia (some also were *Redbook's* cover

girls), and on the development of the films.⁸⁶ Readers appreciated the “realness” of Brown’s illustrations and Franken’s writing and identified with Claudia, looking to her for guidance in their own lives.⁸⁷

Given this level of involvement, readers were likely vulnerable to the messages of glamour consumption embedded in the illustrations, the text and the advertisements surrounding it, such as one toothpaste ad stating “Smile, *Plain Girl*, Smile. . . you can steal your own Show—if your Smile is Right!”⁸⁸

In accordance with what Fredric Jameson has called “the logic of late capitalism” where change generates profit,⁸⁹ the present and the future always looked better than the past: the catch to being stylish was that one always had to buy into shifts in fashion. Leading rather than merely keeping up with the times, Brown spoke positively about the present while denigrating the past that he himself had helped create:

When I was beginning, women were sheltered, corseted, not much on books, and nobody cared what they thought about. Then there was the F. Scott Fitzgerald period – horrible figures with low waistlines, skirts at the knee, and no depth of character. Emancipation seemed to stop with the highball. Today, there is quite an improvement. This generation of women is larger, broader, has bigger hands and feet and a fine, free figure. It has smartness as well as brains, knows something about clothes and how to wear them. The modern girl, although perhaps too copyistic in dress, knows what she’s doing and why.⁹⁰

Such patter channeled emancipation, freedom of choice and self-expression into consumption. It embarrassed the out-of-fashion, flattered the up-to-date, and instructed women how to shop for self-worth. Predicting what the American Girl would wear after the war, Brown in 1943 correctly guessed that they “will blossom out more feminine than ever—their femininity will be exaggerated because of their present starvation of feminine fripperies.” His accompanying sketch featured a

⁸⁶ E.g., “News About *Redbook*,” *Redbook*, March 1939, 4; William Brown Meloney, “Dream Jobs: Ladies and Gentlemen, Rose Franken!” *Redbook*, October 1945, 28; “News About *Redbook*,” *Redbook*, August 1941, 4; “On the Set With ‘Claudia,’” *Redbook*, August 1946, 10.

⁸⁷ F. R. Warren, letter to the editor, *Redbook*, July 1940, 6; F. G. C., letter to the editor, *Redbook*, May 1945, 31.

⁸⁸ “Smile, *Plain Girl*, Smile,” *Redbook*, March 1942, 1, advertisement.

⁸⁹ Fredric Jameson, “Postmodernism, Or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism,” *New Left Review* 146 (July–August 1984): 53–92.

⁹⁰ Jean Lightfoot, “A ‘Brownie’ Goes to Hollywood,” *St Louis Post-Dispatch*, 1943, n.p., Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators.

dress with prominent ruffles, low décolleté, flamboyant hat, bows on shoes, and jewelry.⁹¹

Judging Miss America

Perhaps the most exploitive instance of pretty-girl as model national icon was the Miss America beauty pageant, which started as a publicity stunt by tourism-dependent Atlantic City in 1921. With Miss America the most publicized of glamour events, illustrators' judgments of contestants determined beauty standards everywhere. Although those standards were criticized early on in the United States⁹² and several contestants resigned from the 1925 competition over its commercialism,⁹³ little changed—in part because so many women were willing to compete, due to the prestige and livelihood promised (but not always fulfilled).

Hypocritically, Arthur William Brown and Russell Patterson expressed concern over the increasingly exploitive glamour girl racket but did little to stem its tide. Patterson, in his column on style, pensively reflected that beauty pageants were “strange,” dislocating girls from their families and hometowns, sometimes forever.⁹⁴ In 1936 he spoke out publicly, saying “too many beauty contests are rackets . . . The whole thing is pretty cruel;” then went on to describe three occasions when he had been threatened by pageant organizers and their henchmen to pick certain girls. Attacking the idea that a pageant could actually represent the most beautiful girl in the country when so many beauties did not “choose to exhibit themselves for publicity,”⁹⁵ Patterson also revealed, “Artists say the human figure is beautiful but it isn't . . . there are really no long legged girls; we have to make them look that way . . . artists lengthen the legs for the effect and then women try to create the illusion.”⁹⁶ He provided an illustration showing a normally-proportioned figure, and then one with elongated legs. That he held similar contempt for the Hollywood meat market

⁹¹ Brown, “American Girl of the Post-War Days,” *L. A. Times*, August 1, 1943, n.p., Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators. Versions of this article ran in the *Boston Herald* as well, and probably many other papers nationwide. He was right in that the famous “New Look” of 1947, launched by Christian Dior, re-introduced femininity in a pronounced hourglass shape and ladylike details. This look affected fashion until the 1960s.

⁹² “Beauty Contests,” *The Youth's Companion*, October 14, 1926, 744.

⁹³ “Two More Spurn Beauty Pageant,” *New York Times*, September 10, 1925, 29.

⁹⁴ Russell Patterson, “For Men Only,” *College Humor*, ca. 1933, collection of Illustration House New York.

⁹⁵ Russell Patterson, quoted in “Now Comes a Beauty War to the Last Curve,” ca. 1936, Russell Patterson folder, tear sheet collection of New Britain Museum. See also Russell Patterson, “Excerpt: 1955 Article by Russell Patterson, 1933 Pageant Judge,” *Miss America Pageant of 1933*, accessed November 5, 2012, <http://missamerica1933.com/judges.html>.

⁹⁶ “Now Comes a Beauty War.”

is suggested by an exposé on the exploitation of pretty girls in the film industry, for which Patterson provided a specially commissioned illustration.⁹⁷

As far as I can determine, Brown did not criticize the glamour girl racket (as he called it) in any American publication. To Canadian press at the advent of the 1939 New Year, however, he said that the ideal girl was “a little lady who would biff on the nose the first person who called her a glamour girl:”

I think any girl to even qualify as being charming should have a supreme contempt for a cheap, mass-mind expression like that . . . the thing I feel should be dominant in the make-up of the girl of 1939 is not so much physical as spiritual . . . [the democratic spirit of] individual liberty, tolerance, independence of thought and a free way of life. ⁹⁸

This article appeared in at least three Canadian newspapers.⁹⁹

Following her win of the 1944 Miss America beauty pageant title (Brown may have judged it; it has been difficult to verify), Venus Ramey became outspoken about the poor pay, sexual exploitation, and humiliations contestants were expected to go meekly along with as part of their “prize.”¹⁰⁰ Brown saved clippings of Venus Ramey’s complaints.¹⁰¹ Later, after judging Miss Canada in 1947, Brown warned Canadian girls in a long article that, “Unfortunately, ninety-nine times out of a hundred [a prospective model] is headed for disillusionment, disappointment and despair”—giving frank details about the cost of living, the necessary but often fruitless outlay of investment in lessons and clothes, the frequent bilking of naïve

⁹⁷ Dolores Del Rio as told to Russell C. Birdwell, “Heartbreak Town: The Real Facts About Hollywood’s 17,000 Pretty Girls on the ‘Auction Block’,” *Saturday Home Magazine*, ca. 1936, Russell Patterson folder, tear sheet collection of New Britain Museum.

⁹⁸ Ted Farah, “Glamour Girl Cheap Phrase Says Artist,” *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, January 2, 1939, 6.

⁹⁹ Ted Farah, “Yen to Biff Noses Will Be Hall Mark of New Glamor Girl,” unidentified news clipping, marked “Edmonton B.H.”, 1939, Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators. A version of this article also ran in “Les Qualités de la Jeune Fille Moderne,” *Le Soleil*; and in another unidentified Canadian newspaper.

¹⁰⁰ Evelyn Blankenship, “Venus Ramey, Miss America ’44, Claims Crown Not Worth Effort,” *Daily World*, October 29, 1945, 2; “Pageant Criticism Stirs Resentment,” *Daily World* (Atlantic City) 11, no. 155, October 29, 1945, 1; Fannie Hurst, “Miss America’s Hollow Throne,” *American Weekly*, October 28, 1945, 5; Oliver Jensen, “Miss America Disenchanted,” *Life*, September 16, 1946, 63; Jane Eads, “Washington Letter,” *Daily Mail* (Hagerstown, MD), August 12, 1946, <http://www.dealerschoice1.com/pulaski/Bios/R/VenusRamey/VenusRamey.htm>.

¹⁰¹ Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators.

girls by agencies and photographers, and sexual harassment.¹⁰² Brown also once planned to establish a charity to support failed glamour girls.¹⁰³ Yet, despite his and Patterson's apparent awareness of the ugliness of the glamour girl rackets they encouraged, Brown and Patterson continued to judge beauty competitions, including the Canadian Sweater Queen Contest in 1952.¹⁰⁴

In a bright moment showing how the glamour girl racket could make positive social change, in 1945 Brown helped elect Bess Myerson, the first Jewish Miss America, despite threats from pageant heavyweights. It was a landmark moment that Myerson valued, but she too within months declined to co-operate with Pageant officials, for the same reasons Ramey gave.¹⁰⁵ Yet Brown soon helped make Miss Canada winner Margaret Marshall eligible to run in the Miss America pageant in 1947, as if Canada were simply another state. That Miss Canada was thus made secondary to Miss America rather than her equal was presented as a privilege rather than a loss.¹⁰⁶ As will be discussed in Chapter 4, some Canadians considered Margaret Marshall a figure of national pride, rather than a debasement of the resilient nineteenth century political cartoon personification also known as Miss Canada. The relentless marketing of the glamour industry and the illustrators' power to make it attractive must have contributed to the erosion of Canadian resistance to the heavily commodified American Girl.

The tradeoffs

I conclude here by summarizing what Brown and Patterson gained by trading their Canadian identities for careers in the United States. As described in Chapter 1, Canadian expatriates were encouraged to expand their horizons by going to the United States, but were cautioned to reject American ideas, exhorted to reform Americans if they could, and expected to return home enriched with experience and cash to reinvest in Canadian development. But Brown and Patterson did not do any of that. Instead, they helped entrench the trope of the American Girl by illustrating her in American national magazines, newspapers, comics, and advertising; by defining the beauty standards of the Miss America pageants; by selecting models

¹⁰² Arthur William Brown, "My Friends Say I'm Beautiful," edited by Evelyn Cooper, *Canadian Home Journal*, February 1948, 6-7, 30-31.

¹⁰³ Reference to the charity appears in Brown, *College Humor*, and in "Fifty Years," p. 4.

¹⁰⁴ "Final Judging: Canadian Sweater Queen Contest," *Globe and Mail*, May 14, 1952, 3, advertisement.

¹⁰⁵ Bess Myerson in *Miss America*, directed by Lisa Ades (Brooklyn, NY: Clio Inc. and Orchard Films, 2001); transcript at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/missamerica/>

[filmmore/pt.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/missamerica/filmmore/pt.html).

¹⁰⁶ "Canadian Girls May Seek Title of Miss America," unidentified newspaper clipping, 1946, Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators.

and actresses whose looks they favoured; and by employing their beauty expertise in the making of Hollywood films. They had an uncommon influence on North American women's appearances and comportment between the two world wars, and on men's viewing of women. Patterson especially contributed to the increasing sexualization of women in visual culture. Both men amassed great fortunes and lived celebrity lifestyles, and neither moved back to Canada.

By not returning to Canada, and by developing the sexy American Girl, Arthur William Brown and Russell Patterson traded respectability among nationalists for wide popular acclaim. Brown was hailed in 1917 as "an artist, a real artist," and received accolades in the Canadian newspapers his entire life.¹⁰⁷ When he consented to judge Miss Canada in 1946, his hometown newspaper claimed not that he was a cultural turncoat, but that "his eminence in the art world as an illustrator is foremost among contemporaries," and that "the alacrity with which Mr. Brown responded is taken as further evidence of his loyalty to the old home town . . ."¹⁰⁸ Meanwhile, with the sole exception of being mentioned in one survey of Canadian art history, Brown remained conspicuously absent from Canadian art discourse and exhibitions after 1924.¹⁰⁹ He was not even included in the Centennial Exhibition at the Art Gallery of Hamilton in 1946, despite being asked to officially open the exhibition. Instead, his work was displayed at the city library.¹¹⁰

The illustrators' clubs supplied rationale and acclaim for members' work by peers, as well as access to clients and models. Brown and Patterson certainly found wealth, although they then lost large portions in unwise investments (Brown lost his in the 1929 crash; Patterson tried to make a movie starring his Personettes puppets). For both men, popularity waned along with finances after the Second World War, although both remained associated with S.I. As I have attempted to demonstrate in this chapter, it was the social milieu that mattered to them more than money. Late in life, Brown asserted:

Achievement is the hope of all men, or should be. We dream about it, worry about [it], think about it, each in our own way. . . as I built up my reputation though the years as an illustrator I felt I was reaching that goal. Again in 1929 when I had owned stocks worth

¹⁰⁷ Partridge, "Successful Young Canadian," 1; "Illustrator Half Century Doesn't 'Prefer' Blondes Likes 'Em All, If Beautiful," *Toronto Evening Telegram*, June 1, 1946, 29. In this article Brown is referred to as "a local boy who made good."

¹⁰⁸ "Famous Artist to Judge Centennial Beauty Show," *The Hamilton Spectator*, May 10, 1946, n.p., Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators.

¹⁰⁹ William Colgate, *Canadian Art: Its Origin and Development* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1967 [1943]), 221. Brown was included in a display of American and English illustration at the Canadian National Exhibition in 1924. "Collection of Art at 1924 Exhibition Is of High Order," 13.

¹¹⁰ Pearl McCarthy, "Busy Centres Need Art, Hamilton Exhibition Told," *Globe and Mail*, July 2, 1946, 10.

one million dollars . . . before the crash I believed I had it, and to me it seemed one of the high points of achievement . . . [But] In my estimation, and also of my friends, my greatest achievement was when I was elected President of the Society of Illustrators in 1944, a post I held for three years.¹¹¹

Women helped make S.I. a success and illustrators' careers last, while illustrators expanded the visibility of women. The participation of models in S.I. shows and girlie magazines was made to appear a matter of their voluntary consent. Explaining why models chose to "bare their precious charms to the pop-eyed gaze" of show attendees, Brown could only say it was "Because they are not only big bosomed, they are big-hearted, and it pleases them to please others."¹¹² Ambition and pecuniary advantages (the real reasons) would have blurred the models' jobs with prostitution (and illustrators' work with that of johns and pimps), making it therefore taboo to mention. As long as girls continued to clamour for work as models, for clothes, for sultry illustrations, and as long as publishers and directors competed to secure the best illustrators,¹¹³ and as long as glamour was seen to be healthful and good by other women, then pretty girl illustrators and their models had a sense of contributing usefully to social life and the progress of North Americans in the United States *and* Canada together, where by 1925 Canadians read eight American magazines for every single Canadian magazine.¹¹⁴

In 2006, Armando Mendez wrote in a Fantagraphics book on Patterson, "it can be said with confidence that Patterson's trademark girl touched virtually every girlie comic artist working between 1930 and 1960."¹¹⁵ In 1991, the Delaware Art Museum counted Brown "one of the six or eight giants of American illustration in the first half of the twentieth century" in terms of output and consistency, a judgment reiterated by Taraba for collectors in 2011.¹¹⁶ Brown's and Patterson's success suggests that in principle, privileged Canadians like them enjoyed considerable cultural capital that potentially allowed them the opportunity to change popular culture at the source. Their work stands as an example of Canadian continentalist values insofar as they achieved great personal success at American business. However, the desired outcome of continentalist theorists—that American-style success would materially benefit Canada—was not realized with them. My

¹¹¹ Brown, "Fifty Years," chap. 16, p. 1.

¹¹² Brown, "Fifty Years," chap. 16, p. 4.

¹¹³ This competition is evident in a letter from Curtis Publishing that advises Brown "Mr Lorimer [the editor] would rather your work didn't appear in other magazines. He feels that you belong to us." B. Y. R. to Brown, November 22, 1929, Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators.

¹¹⁴ Peterson, *Magazines in the Twentieth Century*, 110.

¹¹⁵ Mendez, "Nymph Errant," 29.

¹¹⁶ Elzea and Snyder, *American Illustration*, 208; Taraba, *41 Illustrators*, 108.

finding is that any control Brown and Patterson might have exerted, and their occasional expressions of Canadian difference, were subsumed by the network in which they found themselves—a system that channeled consumers’ self-fashioning through advertising, entertainment industries, and publishing. They became leaders in a system that channeled consumers’ self-fashioning through advertising, entertainment industries, and publishing, because their personal satisfaction for doing so, even more than monetary rewards, was great. Brown and Patterson’s imagery of glamour and wealth contributed to the American national narratives of individualism and progress.

Perhaps Brown did not value Canadian nationalism much because his eyes were on a different ideal: a conviction that mass media contributed to international co-operation. Instead of articulating it himself, in his memoirs Brown proudly quoted a letter from British cartoonist David Low, written between 1944 and 1947. Low wrote:

Re cartooning and Anglo-American relations, would say we makers of pictures have easiest means of communicating ideas, therefore we have direct educative responsibility in helping our two democracies to grow up in empathy and friendship. We could make a start to better understanding by tying a brick to outworn symbols of narrow nationalism like John Bull and Uncle Sam etc. and heaving them into the Atlantic in future, avoiding the Nazi practice of magnifying national differences and expressing the fundamental truth that in these days the common man of Britain and America is pretty much the same fellow with the same standards, and the same wish to live and let live.¹¹⁷

In Canada, anxiety over the pretty girl’s American provenance and her slippage into prurient forms continued to rankle nationalists. But while dissemination of morally alarming representations such as Brown’s and Patterson’s justified Canadian nationalists’ condemnation of American print, it nevertheless usefully bolstered a sense of Canadian difference—as the following chapter will explore.

¹¹⁷ Brown, “Fifty Years,” chap. 15, pp. 7–8.

Chapter 3

Arthur Heming and the Wilderness Tradition in Canada

Arthur Henry Howard Heming (1870-1940) produced works between 1920 and 1940 that model ideals of Canadian citizenship, social values, and aesthetics by way of wilderness imagery and the north, a trope that has dominated Canadian identity ever since.¹ As we shall see, contrasting the Canadian wilderness with the morally corrupt American city was an integral component in Heming's prescription for Canadian national identity. Arthur Heming's heroic depictions of adventurers, fur trappers, loggers, and animals were an attempt to make a visual culture of Canadian nationalism, but I will argue here that his oeuvre actually reflects a more continentalist position than it would seem at first glance.

As I will discuss, Heming's concept of the wilderness as a spiritual, healthful place was American in origin as much as it was Canadian, while images of the northern frontier supported the national narrative of the United States too. I will suggest that Heming's turn to more nationalistic work for a primarily (but not exclusively) Canadian market after 1910 was in response to the political climate in Canada that birthed the Group of Seven and "Canadian School" painting.² I explore networks between art, artists and political figures, and the rhetoric of cultural nationalism, to show in what ways Heming was not compatible with these painters, despite his and their many shared points as illustrators and nationalists. While he was sincere in his nationalism, Heming paradoxically exploited "American" commercial techniques and popular-culture elements taken from the American popular print media he also criticized, in order to reach a broad continental audience. His technique remained illustrative even when he turned to easel painting, at a time when illustration was increasingly connoting "American" commercial culture and Canadian School painters were abandoning narrative. I argue that in doing so Heming stayed true to the nationalist goals that continentalism was supposed to serve, and effectively sacrificed his reputation among more cultural-nationalist artists and art-world actors as a result.

¹ The relation between nationalism and the north comprises the established view in Canadian art. See Grace, *On the Art of Being Canadian*; Sherrill Grace, *Canada and the Idea of North* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007); Edwards and Saltman, *Picturing Canada, 193-195*; McKay, *Picturing the Land*; Michael Tooby, ed., *The True North: Canadian Landscape Painting, 1896-1939* (London: Lund Humphries, 1991).

² Throughout, I am using the phrase "Group of Seven" to refer to the rhetorical construct as cultural nationalists that the Group has come to represent, rather than actual beliefs of individual members. Lawren Harris, J. E. H. MacDonald, A. Y. Jackson, Arthur Lismer, and Frederic Varley were the Group's principle members; Franz Johnston quit in 1921, replaced by A. J. Casson in 1926. Frank Carmichael kept a low profile. Tom Thomson would have been the eighth member had he not drowned in 1917. L. Lemoine Fitzgerald was invited to join in 1932, and then the Group disbanded to form the Canadian Group of Painters in 1933. Other associates include Edwin Holgate and Emily Carr. The Group of Seven enjoys a large body of canonical literature that would be redundant to iterate in depth here. A thorough review of the Group and their legacy is in Hill, *The Group of Seven*.

Continentalism in visual culture prior to 1910

Although Canadian rhetoric often characterized American media as “invading” Canada, the visual culture of Anglophone Canada never had any moment “before” American print arrived.³ Heming’s frontier, bush, and animal pictures continued continentalist traditions that had already formed Anglo-Canadian and American audience expectations of what Canada should look like long before he took to the trade in the late 1880s. Paul Kane’s (1810-1871) travels and documentary oil paintings of native peoples were directly inspired by those of American George Catlin (1796-1872); Kane in turn inspired Frederick A. Verner (1836-1928).⁴ These precedents of depicting colonial exploration and heroic adventure informed drawings Heming made on a trek with *Harper’s* editor Caspar Whitney in 1895 (published as a serial and a book)—a trek that established Heming’s reputation as an expert on the north, despite his early return due to an injury.⁵ An empirical, ethnological manner of viewing the north was conveyed by meticulous documentation of costumes on figures turned front, back, and three-quarter like scientific illustration—a visual rhetoric that gave Heming a personal reputation for being authoritatively factual and reportorial about the north [Figure 7]. The same anthropological gaze characterized the descriptive line drawings of northern dwellers that Heming made in 1897 for the report of a geological survey led by James Williams Tyrrell (1863-1945).⁶

³ Smith, “The Imported Image;” Kesterton, *A History of Journalism in Canada*.

⁴ Paul Kane, *Paul Kane’s Frontier: Including Wanderings of an Artist among the Indians of North America*, ed. J. Russell Harper (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971); Joyce Murray, *The Last Buffalo: The Story of Frederick Arthur Verner, Painter of the Canadian West* (Toronto: Pagurian Press, 1984).

⁵ Caspar Whitney, *On Snow-Shoes to the Barren Grounds: Twenty-Eight Miles after Musk-Oxen and Wood-Bison* (New York: Harper, 1896); illustrated by Arthur Heming.

⁶ J. W. Tyrrell, *Across the Sub-Arctics of Canada: A Journey of 3,200 Miles by Canoe and Snowshoe Through the Barren Lands* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1897).

no one, except luckless travellers, at Edmonton cares a rap about intermittent electric lights, or railroads that run passengers on a freight schedule, so long as they do not affect the fur trade. Fur was originally the *raison d'être* of Edmonton's existence, and continues the principal excuse of its being. In the last three years the settlement of a strip of land south and of one to the north has created a farming or ranching contingent, but to date of my visit canned goods appeared to remain the chief article of sustenance, as furs were certainly the main topic of conversation. Edmonton may in time develop the oasis upon which it is built, between the arid plains immediately to the south and the great lone land to the north, into something notably agricultural; but for many years the town will be, as it is to-day, the gateway of the well-nigh boundless fur-producing country to the north, and the outlet for the numberless "packs" gathered by the great Hudson Bay Company.

And what a company is this!—with the power of a king and the consideration of a partner. A monopoly that does not monopolize, it stands alone a unique figure



SARCEE BELLE.



WINNIPEG DRAGOON.



WAPITI-HUNTER.

in the commercial history of the world. Given its charter by the impecunious Charles II. in 1670, the pioneers of this "Governor and Company of Adventurers of England Trading into Hudson's Bay" sailed for the southern shores of St. James Bay, where they set up their first post and took possession of the new country in the name of Prince Rupert. Here they found a rival French company, with a previous charter granted by Louis XIII., and an equally keen sense of Indian barter, so that for

many years there was more fighting than trading. When Wolfe, on the Heights of Abraham, crushed the power of France in Canada, the French company entered upon a decline that finally ended in dissolution. But in their stead came numbers of Englishmen, pushing their way westward, eager to trade for the furs of which they had heard so much and seen so little. Thus many trading-posts came into being, and eventually (about 1780) combined to form the Northwest Fur Company, the longest-lived and most determined rival that ever disputed trade with the Hudson Bay Company. It is not my purpose to fill space with historical research, but a

Figure 7. Arthur Heming, illustrations for Caspar Whitney, *On Snow-Shoes To The Barren Grounds: Twenty-Eight Miles After Musk-Oxen And Wood-Bison* (New York: Harper, 1896). Photograph by the author.

Landscape traditions also existed in both Canada and the United States, with the Hudson River School's Thomas Cole espousing the exceptionalism of the American landscape, its difference from that of Europe, and its promise not just for new artistic forms but for launching a new, great nationhood—in much the same

way the Group of Seven later would.⁷ Traveling painters in Canada and the United States aimed to document every part of the continent's glorified potential. Most relevant in this vein for my study here is the three-volume book *Picturesque Canada: The Country as It Was and Is*.⁸ *Picturesque Canada's* selection and presentation of Canadian cities, sights and scenery were based on the volumes of *Picturesque America* of 1872 and 1874; *Picturesque Canada* was in fact published by the Belden Brothers of Chicago, who set up a branch office in Toronto for this purpose.⁹ No fewer than five American illustrators were employed to assist the lead artist, Canadian Lucius O'Brien (1832-1899), who had himself traveled in the United States and exhibited and researched art education there.¹⁰ Several of the Americans, including the eminent Thomas Moran (1837-1926) (who had worked on *Picturesque America*) completed most of the work, and there is little formal difference between the two productions. As Marilyn J. McKay has discussed, landscape art in Canada was tied to resource exploitation and colonial development.¹¹ Landscape in and of itself was not the book's focus: of the perhaps 400 scenes presented in *Picturesque Canada*, almost all showed industrial or civic development, while twelve of the fourteen "pure" landscapes showed waterfalls—the potential power source for mills.

Despite similarity to *Picturesque America*, and despite the ruckus raised among Canadian artists who felt they ought to have had a greater part in the production,¹² the Canadian magazine *Rose-Belford's* assured "patriotic Canadians" that they would prize *Picturesque Canada* highly. The books represented nothing less than "a leap to the front" in "illustrated book manufacture," making "a great artistic epoch in the intellectual progress of our people, which must have an immense influence upon the present and future of Canadian art and Canadian literature." Intended to "heighten the sense of possession of our fair heritage," it catalogued contemporary natural, cultural and industrial "national characteristics of the Dominion" and "weave[d] into the narrative whatever of historic lore" could be mustered to frame the contemporary into a story of "growth in settlement and civilization."¹³ Furthermore, the primary illustrator, American F.B. Schell (1838-

⁷ Thomas Cole, "Essay on American Scenery," *American Monthly Magazine*, New Series 1, January 1836, 1–12. The primacy of landscape for American nationalism compared to Canadian activity is discussed by Ann Davis, *A Distant Harmony*, 1982.

⁸ George Monro Grant, ed., *Picturesque Canada: The Country As It Was and Is* (Toronto: Belden Bros., 1882).

⁹ Dennis Reid, "O'Brien, Lucius Richard," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, vol. 12, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed January 10, 2014, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/o_brien_lucius_richard_12E.html.

¹⁰ Colgate, *Canadian Art*, 39; Reid, "O'Brien, Lucius Richard."

¹¹ McKay, *Picturing the Land*, 145-159.

¹² Reid, "O'Brien, Lucius Richard."

¹³ *Rose-Belford's Canadian Monthly And National Review* 7, no. 6 (December 1881), 653.

1902), was “an artist of rare ability, and one of the chief illustrators of the highest class of modern American periodical work well known in Canada.” *Picturesque Canada* not only represented everyday Canadian taste,¹⁴ it represented a distinctly progressive and capitalistic attitude toward development of industry and resources that was shared south of the border. Arthur Heming’s scenes complement the narrative of national development in *Picturesque Canada* by documenting the “before” and “during” stages of northern development, couched in the contrivances of the picturesque with striking views carefully framed by rocks or trees in the foreground.

Also popular with Anglo-Canadians were genre scenes by Montreal painter Cornelius Krieghoff (1815-1872) (to whom Heming was later compared)¹⁵ of sentimentalized habitants, aboriginals, hunters, and trappers. Originals and prints of these were sold in Heming’s hometown, Hamilton, as early as 1864.¹⁶ Related to these were picturesque views of chic winter sports that were sold in print and photography to Americans and other tourists in Montreal as souvenirs of Canadian culture, while fashionable Anglo-Montrealers appropriated the Quebecois costume and winter sports such as tobogganing and moose hunting that Krieghoff pictured. Soon, New Englanders adopted the winter sport fad in the U.S.¹⁷ Following the trend, Heming’s earliest commissions in both American and Canadian periodicals of the late 1880s and 1890s were on outdoors topics such as hunting, exploring, sports, and aboriginals, featuring people in colorful Quebecois costumes. With the commodification of fashionable wintery lifestyles, Heming, like other Canadian illustrators and authors who moved between the two nations—such as Henry Sandham (1842-1910), Tappan Adney (1868-1950), John Innes (1863-1941), and the most successful of them all, Ernest Thompson Seton (1860-1946)—found that the north constituted an established niche market in the U.S. publishing and that Canadians were easily typecast by American publishers as experts on it.¹⁸

¹⁴ *Picturesque Landscapes in North American Illustrated Publications 1800–1900*, ed. Brian Foss, (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2010), exhibition catalogue.

¹⁵ William Colgate, *Arthur Heming: Recorder of the North* (Toronto: T. H. Best Printing, 1933). Reprinted as *Arthur Heming, Recorder of the Northland of Canada: Exhibition of Paintings...June 5th – July 31*, ed. William G. Colgate (London: Frost and Reed’s Art Galleries, 1934), exhibition catalogue.

¹⁶ J. Russell Harper, *Kriehoff* (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1999), 156.

¹⁷ Gillian Poulter, “Becoming Native in a Foreign Land: Visual Culture, Sport, and Spectacle in the Construction of National Identity in Montreal, 1840–1885,” (PhD diss., York University, 1999).

¹⁸ Mount, *When Canadian Literature Moved to New York*, 36. Of these men, only Seton stayed permanently in the United States, but he maintained Canadian ties and renounced citizenship only to facilitate his second marriage. John Wadland, conversation with author, 2010; John Wadland, *Ernest Thompson Seton: Man in Nature and the Progressive Era, 1880–1915* (New York: Arno Press, 1978).

The provenance of Heming's outdoors subjects also included the magazine spreads by many American illustrator-reporters of the American west who had ventured into Canada, such as Mary Hallock Foote (1847-1938), W.A. Rogers (1854-1931), Frederic Remington (1861-1909), and Ernest L. Blumenschein (1874-1960). To these middle-class periodicals can be added the many dime-novels and pulps later known as "Northerns" that made Canadian adventure and eventually the Mounties into staples of popular culture.¹⁹ Because the northern sojourns to Canada of American illustrator-reporters were side-trips in the course of mainly American western experiences, north-themed subjects amounted to a variation on the American national narrative of the wild west. Embedded within this narrative is the concept of a "frontier" of savagery receding before Caucasian settlement, which was promoted in government literature and advertising, travel books, and popular prints such as Currier & Ives' *Westward The Course Of Empire Takes Its Way*.²⁰ In the popular American imagination, where the north was the last bastion of freedom and free land, where natives still lived in a purportedly undisturbed state and the hard worker could still make a fortune in ranching, ore, furs, or lumber, the Canadian north figured as the next American frontier after the west was "closed" (famously proclaimed in 1893 by Frederick Jackson Turner).²¹ Canadian government promotion of settlement of the west after 1890 adopted many hallmarks of the prior American visual culture; Heming's illustrations of the Whitney and Tyrell expeditions complemented the heroic optimism of pioneering and the 1897 Klondike goldrush in the media and advertising (Heming himself tried to lead a Klondike expedition).²²

Finding sympathies in the romantic spiritual philosophy of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, northern nature also figured heavily in nineteenth-century American sociological and medical discourses as a healthful

¹⁹ Jeffrey Blair Latta, "Editorial, September 23, 2003: Looking for Dudley Do-Right," *The Original Pulp and Dagger Fiction*, accessed April 7, 2013, <http://www.pulpanddagger.com/pulpmag/editorial11.html>.

²⁰ Ibid.; Renée Hulan has noted that the North is an offshoot of the American West in *Northern Experience and the Myths of Canadian Culture* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002). See also Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1950); *Across the Continent: "Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way,"* lithograph, (Currier and Ives, 1868), reproduction number LC-DIG-ppmsca-03213, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington D.C.

²¹ Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," (speech, American Historical Association, Chicago Worlds Fair, Chicago, July 12, 1893). Just one example of the north as the next American frontier is found in Courtney Ryley Cooper, *Go North, Young Man* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1929). Its title is a take-off of the catchphrase popularized by advocate of western expansion, Horace Greely, "Go West, Young Man."

²² *The Mackenzie River Klondike Expedition, Hamilton, Canada* (Hamilton: P. G. Heming, 1897), collection of the Hamilton City Archives, pamphlet.

corrective to urbanization. The “strenuous life” and the replenishment of nature was famously promoted by outdoorsman, hunter, park builder, and president-to-be, Theodore Roosevelt—sentiments shared by Canadians who also believed in the mythology of the northern wilderness breeding a hardy superior race.²³ Canadians were quite happy to serve this lucrative, fashionable market: the expatriate poets Bliss Carman (1861-1929), Charles G.D. Roberts (1860-1943), and William Wilfred Campbell (1860-1918) composed their woodsy poems for tourist literature aimed at outdoorsy Americans who looked to Canada as a vacation spot, hunting ground, and spa.²⁴

Ironically, C.W. Jefferys claimed that it was these poets and the American Transcendentalists Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman and others, who inspired him and other Canadian artists in the Toronto Art Students’ League to begin drawing and painting nationalistic landscapes, which they published annually as illustrated calendars in the 1890s. In Jefferys’ words, it was the Americans who “confirmed and deepened our consciousness of a quality peculiar to North America that we felt was essential to its artistic expression”²⁵ The Canadian School that found its feet in the Toronto Art Students’ League calendars and contributed to the formation of the Group of Seven therefore sprang from a continentalist sympathy, in order to divide itself from the Old World academicism. Nevertheless, over time, these continentalist roots have been downplayed and even forgotten as Canadian School painting apologists consolidated a position of Canadian exceptionalism in their rhetoric. In contrast, Heming’s brand of Canadian art never quite shed its continentalist legacy.

Although at times Heming expressed Canada-first politics, before 1910 he lived a continentalist life, pursuing illustration jobs in both Canadian and American publications, and curating an exhibition of *Harper’s* illustration in Hamilton in 1896.²⁶ Then, after attending the New York Art Students League, he happily assimilated into professional life the United States, sojourning most summers at an art colony at Old Lyme, Connecticut, 1902 to 1911.²⁷ He joined the just-established New York Society of Illustrators in 1901, and was proud to boast of it in 1932.²⁸ Artistically, Heming was, from the point of view of the New York editors of

²³ Theodore Roosevelt, “The Strenuous Life,” (speech, Hamilton Club, Chicago, Illinois, April 10, 1899). See McKay, *Picturing the Land*, 157-166 for discussion of identical Canadian notions of the north, outdoor life, race, and health. McKay, however, does not mention the American embrace of the same ideas.

²⁴ D. M. R. Bentley, “Charles G. D. Roberts and William Wilfred Campbell as Canadian Tour Guides,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 32, no. 2 (Summer 1997): 79.

²⁵ Jefferys, quoted in Stacey, *C. W. Jefferys*, 12–13.

²⁶ “Art League Exhibition,” *Hamilton Daily Spectator*, December 2, 1896.

²⁷ Heming’s presence at Old Lyme was ascertained from press clippings and records in the archives of the Florence Griswold Museum.

²⁸ Heming, quoted in *Bridle and Golfer*, December 1932, 22, clipping on file at the National Gallery of Canada Library.

Metropolitan magazine, so un-foreign that they proclaimed: "It is to men of Mr. Heming's artistic conscience and high endeavor that we must look for the future of American illustration."²⁹

Perhaps, like Ernest Thompson Seton, Heming would have stayed on in New York, but after 1901 new young American illustrators Charles Livingston Bull (1874-1932) and Frank Schoonover (1877-1972) succeeded in securing contracts that Heming would have expected to win. He had, after all, already established himself as the logical choice to illustrate the Canadian-authored animal stories and fur trade stories.³⁰ But these Americans had better social connections and a more contemporary technique. Bull was a taxidermist who enjoyed President Roosevelt's support, and who fashionably applied Japonisme and the look of aquatint to his designs, while Schoonover was a protégée of illustration master Howard Pyle, with an expressive, painterly hand. Both were also good colourists, while Heming, due to colour blindness, had never developed that facility.³¹

Canadian School art and nationalism after 1910

Although Arthur Heming specialized in Canadian subjects and professed his expertise in them,³² his work in American magazines did not express any overt nationalism. The Heming who returned to Canada in 1910, however, seemed much more concerned with Canadian cultural loyalty. Being displaced by well-connected American competitors likely already made him think about Canadian protectionism (in 1921 he would challenge Schoonover's competency as a foreigner to interpret Canadian subjects).³³ But the political climate following 1910 ensured he would

²⁹ "An Illustrator of Wild Animal Life," *Metropolitan*, October 1903, 27-29. This article was reprinted in *The Hamilton Spectator*, September 23, 1903.

³⁰ By 1903, Heming had illustrated two animal stories and one book for W. A. Fraser, and a story for Charles G. D. Roberts, and two books and many articles on the fur trade. But after Bull arrived, Roberts preferred Bull, and in 1903, W. A. Fraser's fur trade book *The Blood Lilies* was assigned to Schoonover.

³¹ Schoonover's catalogue raisonné notes that after his trips to Canada in 1904 and 1911, he established himself as an expert on Hudson's Bay subjects. John Schoonover, Louise Schoonover Smith, and LeeAnn Dean, *Frank E. Schoonover—Catalogue Raisonné* (Newcastle, Delaware: Oak Knoll, 2009), 20.

³² Arthur Heming, "An Artist in the Wilds of Northern Canada," *Metropolitan*, September 1905, 789.

³³ Heming refers to Schoonover misinterpreting a native girl's actions as "a sign that she was willing to comply with any evil intentions he might entertain toward her," thus implying that Americans had no business poaching Canadian subjects of which they had little understanding. One is reminded here of the satirical images of Miss Canada being wooed or accosted by Uncle Sam (described in the introduction). Heming, *Drama of the Forests*, 66; Schoonover et al., *Catalogue Raisonné*, 129. The original story, illustrated by Schoonover, is Frank E. Schoonover, "The Edge of the Wilderness," *Scribner's Magazine*, April 1905, 452.

assert his authority on the Canadian north against both American takeover in publishing and fellow Canadian competitor artists of “Canadian School” painting who began to look even more “Canadian” than Heming. This section describes the political aspects of Canadian School art *vis a vis* Canadian identity as distinct from Americans, which will provide the context for Heming’s mature works and his surprising omission from the annals of Canadian art.

Heming’s return to Canada in 1910 was just in time for one of the most fervent periods of Canadian nationalism. Late that year Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier announced the trade deal named Reciprocity, in which tariffs would be lifted on certain American goods. This triggered an election and debate on Canadian autonomy. In the introduction I suggested, following Arthur Lower, that a convergence of Canadian and American culture spawned a reactionary divergence. Such divergence occurred when the Conservative Party, which had for some time also sought such a deal when they had been in power, fought against Reciprocity by calling up imperialist sympathies so strong that one journalist termed it “militant patriotism,”³⁴ to denounce Reciprocity as disloyalty to the Crown and tantamount to annexation.³⁵ Canadians were still smarting from the underhanded manner in which the U.S. had won the Alaskan Boundary Dispute, and President Taft and other prominent Americans unfortunately fueled suspicion of a hidden annexationist agenda with some unwise comments.³⁶ Subsequently, anti-Americanism affected culture and the arts in Canada, with film boards 1911-1913 even censoring films that contained “unnecessary display of the American flag.”³⁷ It is in light of this political debate that the subsequent rise of Canadian School painting, the Group of Seven, and the attendant loss of continentalist awareness in Canadian art must be seen—because, alongside the Group of Seven’s aim to break away from European academicism, Tory imperialist politicking and Canadian School art operatives were closely linked, as I will show.

In the political backlash against Reciprocity, Conservatives had the unexpected assistance of a group of formerly Liberal Ontario manufacturers, financiers, and insurance company leaders known as the Toronto Eighteen. They were led by banker Sir Edmund Walker, and included among their followers Lloyd Harris of the Massey-Harris Company, and Lyman Melvin-Jones, president of same (these are the same Massey and Harris families of cultural nationalists Vincent

³⁴ V. M. Kipp, “As Canada Sees Her Place in the Sun,” *New York Times Magazine*, September 25, 1932, 5.

³⁵ Baker, “A Case of Anti-Americanism,” 426.

³⁶ Dafoe *Canada: An American Nation*, 106; Granatstein and Hillmer, *For Better or for Worse*, 48. Dafoe claims Taft actually floated the idea of annexation; Granatstein says Taft saw British sympathies as a threat to American security.

³⁷ Granatstein and Hillmer, *For Better or for Worse*, 58–59.

Massey and Lawren Harris).³⁸ Massey-Harris in particular stood to lose with Reciprocity promising to import cheaper American farm equipment.³⁹ Walker exercised his imperialist anti-American rhetoric to successfully help bring about the demise of the Laurier government and Reciprocity in 1911.⁴⁰ In 1912 he joined Massey-Harris's board.⁴¹

Walker was also a founding member of the imperialist Round Table movement in 1910 (which proposed the idea of the Commonwealth, as antidote to the colonies' independence—independence that in Canada was feared might lead to annexation).⁴² Walker's anti-Americanism is important to note because he was the most influential art world figure of the day. In 1910 he assumed an advisory role in the recently reformed National Gallery of Art, and then became Chairman of its Board of Trustees in 1913. Walker was instrumental in ensuring that the National Gallery began collecting the works of the emerging Canadian School, whose most prominent member was Lawren Harris, cousin of Lloyd Harris. Vincent Massey, Lawren Harris's close associate and his equivalent on the Massey side of Massey-Harris (neither descendent was directly involved in company operations), was an active participant in the Round Table movement⁴³ and was soon to be an important art patron and cultural nationalist himself. Several others of the Eighteen, and Chester D. Massey, joined Walker on the Toronto Art Museum's Council at his behest.⁴⁴ In 1919, Walker arranged an exhibition of Canadian School painting at the Art Gallery of Toronto (which he had founded).⁴⁵

³⁸ Charlie Strazzeri, "Networks, Boundaries and Social Capital: The Historical Geography of Toronto's Anglo Elites and Italian Entrepreneurs, 1900–1935,"

(PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2010), 181; Allan John Fletcher, "Industrial Algoma and the Myth of Wilderness: Algoma Landscapes and the Emergence of the Group of Seven, 1918–1920," (master's thesis, University of British Columbia, 1989), 33; Ross King, *Defiant Spirits: The Modernist Revolution of the Group of Seven* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 2010), 38.

³⁹ J. L. Granatstein, *Yankee Go Home? Canadians and Anti-Americanism* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 1996), 40, 56.

⁴⁰ Baker, "A Case of Anti-Americanism," 436–437.

⁴¹ Fletcher, "Industrial Algoma," 33.

⁴² James Eayrs, "The Round Table Movement in Canada, 1909–1920," *Canadian Historical Review* 38, no. 1 (1957): 4; David Kimmel, "Walker, Sir Byron Edmund," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, vol. 15, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed June 24, 2013, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/walker_byron_edmund_15E.html.

⁴³ Eayrs, "The Round Table Movement," 19.

⁴⁴ Strazzeri, "Networks," 171.

⁴⁵ McKay, *Picturing the Land*, 177.

The social connections of Walker, Lawren Harris, and Vincent Massey indicate a distinctly political aspect in the institutionalization of Canadian School art. Although Canadian School painting was characterized as a move away from European precedents in favour of Canadian autonomy, in fact their distance from popular and more commercially viable continental art forms complemented the anti-American sentiment surrounding Reciprocity, the Toronto Eighteen and Canadian business interests—and therefore leaned towards imperialism.

Briefly, the accomplishment of the Group, as stated by their followers, was to discover and express a kind of painting that could pass for being native of the soil, signaling Canada's emergence as a politically and culturally autonomous nation.⁴⁶ Although Group members also painted portraits, city and town views, and industrial sites, they were celebrated mainly for unpopulated landscapes rendered in oils during wilderness treks and worked up into larger canvases in the studio; landscapes that in the national imaginary became synonymous with the north and, less consciously, the myths of racial superiority, moral purity, and entrepreneurship that went with it.⁴⁷ The forced patriotism of "Canadian art" versus "art in Canada" was noted by Newton MacTavish, a lone-wolf holdout on the National Gallery's Board, who titled his 1925 book *The Fine Arts in Canada* expressly to avoid the narrowness and political connotations that the phrase "Canadian art" had come to signify.⁴⁸ In 1928, it was alleged that "We know that these 'freakists' by political influence and press manipulation have, for the time, captured the seats of power in connection with the National Gallery of this Dominion . . ."⁴⁹ More recent analysis on Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven confirming their monopoly on the very definition of "Canadian art" through institutional patronage and publicity is plentiful.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ The most triumphant version of this claim was made by Fred Housser, *A Canadian Art Movement*.

⁴⁷ Grace, *On the Art of Being Canadian*; McKay, *Picturing the Land*, 184-188; 245-247.

⁴⁸ Newton MacTavish, *The Fine Arts in Canada* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1925), v.

⁴⁹ J. William Ogden, quoted in James King, *Inward Journey: The Life of Lawren Harris* (Toronto: Thomas Allen, 2012), 279.

⁵⁰ See, for just a few examples, Charles C. Hill, "The National Gallery, a National Art, Critical Judgement, and the State," in Tooby, *The True North: Canadian Landscape Painting 1896-1939*; Hill, *Group of Seven*, 287-292; Boyanoski, *Permeable Border*, 6-7; Jonathan Bordo, "The Terra Nullius of Wilderness—Colonialist Landscape Art (Canada and Australia) and the So-Called Claim to American Exception," *International Journal of Canadian Studies* 15 (Spring 1997): 13-36; Lynda Jessup, "Prospectors, Bushwhackers, Painters: Antimodernism and the Group of Seven," *International Journal of Canadian Studies* 17 (Spring 1998): 193-214; Whitelaw, "'Whiffs of Balsam, Pine, and Spruce,'" 122-137; Scott Watson, "Race, Wilderness, Territory and the Origins of Modern Canadian Landscape Painting," *Semiotext(e)* 6 (1994): 93-104; John O'Brian and Peter White, ed., *Beyond Wilderness: The Group of Seven, Canadian Identity, and Contemporary Art* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007); King, *Defiant Spirits*.

Although graphic arts aficionados have claimed that the Group members regarded their commercial work as equal in status to their paintings,⁵¹ I do not find this to be true. Sherrill Grace has argued the Group's modernism was predicated on a rejection of the sentimental nineteenth-century taste for domestic figures and the picturesque⁵²—mainstays of illustration. Her analysis is corroborated by contemporaneous commentary that eschewed illustrative functions and form. For instance, modernist painter John Lyman praised the Group's forerunner, landscape painter James Wilson Morrice, by saying, "Morrice's art is so perfect, so pure, so unadulterated by verisimilitude, the episodic, 'smartness', etc., and refrains so completely from appealing to the literary or the 'fleshy' senses!"⁵³ Writer and journalist Agnes Laut in 1926 stated, "In the plain, brutal language of the street, [Lawren] Harris is trying to get away from the billposter, commercialized type of art, which has too often been the most and only paying kind of art in Canada."⁵⁴ Indeed, most members of the Group quit making advertising art as soon as it was feasible (though they did occasionally take fine book illustration commissions for many years).⁵⁵ Lawren Harris, the Group's mastermind, was no fan of mass culture, in later years saying the public should be rescued from an "inexhaustible" supply of "pin-up girls, coca-cola virgins, [and] boogie-woogie."⁵⁶

Nevertheless, scholars have sometimes noted similarities between the works of Canadian School artists and the leading American illustrators. James King detects the influence of Howard Pyle on Lawren Harris,⁵⁷ while Joan Murray has remarked upon the similarity of J.W. Beatty's handling of beech trees and work by the leading American fiction illustrators Maxfield Parrish (1870-1966) and N.C. Wyeth (1882-1945).⁵⁸ Harris, J.E.H. MacDonald, and Wyeth all found inspiration in the very same Scandinavian Art Exhibition of 1912-1913—the exhibition catalogue of which expounded the cult of nationalistic landscape painting and romanticized the north

⁵¹ Fetherling, "The Fine Art of Design." For more on the Group of Seven's design work, see Lockyer, "The 'Art' in Selling the First Canned Goods;" Porter, "A. J. Casson's Graphic Arts," 37-40; Pantazzi, "Group of Seven," 22.

⁵² Sherrill Grace, *Inventing Tom Thomson: From Biographical Fictions to Fictional Autobiographies and Reproductions* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), 178-179.

⁵³ John Lyman, quoted in Nicole Cloutier, "Morrice, James Wilson," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, vol. 15, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003-, accessed December 4, 2013, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/morrice_james_wilson_15E.html.

⁵⁴ Agnes Laut, "Does Canada Lack Artistic Soul?" *Maclean's*, February 15, 1926, 32.

⁵⁵ Pantazzi, "Book Illustration and Design."

⁵⁶ Lawren Harris quoted in Kuffert, *A Great Duty*, 162.

⁵⁷ King, *Inward Journey*, 36.

⁵⁸ Joan Murray, "Gleams From a Light That Failed," *Maclean's*, March 16, 1981, 58.

for an American audience.⁵⁹ (C.W. Jefferys had already proselytized for the "Racialist" advantages of Scandinavian art as early as 1911; the interest in Scandinavian art complemented the duty of young nationalists to forge unity among Anglo-Saxons at large.)⁶⁰ A rigorous comparative analysis of the Group and American illustrators is missing due to the rhetorical emphasis over the years on the Group as uniquely Canadian painters, but such an analysis is too large and off-topic to address here. If such a study is completed, it may show further affinities between the Group and American art. My concern here, however, is in how the myth that they were entirely homegrown persisted despite the facts.

The Group of Seven and the accepted narrative of their development of a unique Canadian artform was important to the political environment in two ways: first, it helped persuade Anglo-Canadians to be patriotic and to reject continentalist policies and tastes that might lead to annexation. Second, art (and design) was thought by Canadian art educators and leaders, especially the Englishman Eric Brown, Director of the National Gallery of Canada, to enable technological innovation in industry, and thus, Canada's national development, but not at the expense of workers' dignity and well-being. Eric Brown, who had been recruited by and who answered to Sir Edmund Walker,⁶¹ put it this way:

it is largely by means of the arts, esthetics and handicrafts that the tremendous material energy of the country must be refined and *a right direction* given to its surplus wealth . . . directed into *the right channels* and educated to see more value, satisfaction and beauty in some article, however humble, which is hallowed by the individual

⁵⁹ *Scandinavian Art Exhibition, 1912–1913*. Curated by Wyeth's friend Christian Brinton, it traveled to the Albright Gallery, Buffalo N.Y., January 5, 1913. My knowledge of Wyeth's connection to Scandinavian art is derived from a conference presentation by Clarence Burton Sheffield Jr., "The Norwegian Contributions to the 1912–13 Scandinavian Art Exhibition and Their Impact on North American Painting," (paper presented in panel on *Nordic Modernism at Home and Abroad, 1880–1920*, College Art Association, New York, February 13, 2013). Brinton spoke of "national artistic expression" characterized by "chromatic brilliancy" derived from folk traditions, which had "taught the general public what the Scandinavian peoples really are." The paintings were a "typical expression of a race whose civilization is young, yet whose roots lie deep-anchored in the past," and the artists were Northern "sea-faring and forest-loving folk" expressing "that blond clarity so characteristic of the North," providing a "direct communication with nature and natural forces" such as the "magic radiance of the arctic aurora." Christian Brinton, "Introduction," in *Exhibition of Contemporary Scandinavian Art* (New York: The American Art Galleries, 1912), 19, 21, 25-26.

⁶⁰ C. W. Jefferys, quoted in Hill, *Group of Seven*, 47–48.

⁶¹ Hill, *Group of Seven*, 52.

creative thought rather than stamped and standardized by the patterned perfection of the machine.⁶² [emphasis added]

Brown's contrasting of the "right direction" of handicraft to machine implied that not only was art superior to commerce, but the Gallery's directing of Arts and Crafts development was a socialist enterprise more moral than the accumulation of private wealth by factory-owning capitalists. This Ruskinian Arts and Crafts education, for all that its doctrine of "the unity of arts" was adopted in the U.S. as well in an industrialist context as early as the 1850s, also carried a history of British nationalism and imperialism.⁶³ Rhetorically, his federally-directed Arts and Crafts arts policy reflected Tory belief in the government's right to direct the economy and redistribute wealth, and Walker's stated belief that individualist materialism was a poor substitute for real citizenship.⁶⁴

The effort to consolidate and brand Canadian identity in Canadian School art went hand in hand with protection of Canadian publishing, where American magazines and American illustrators (or Canadian illustrators working in an American style) were perceived to threaten Canadian autonomy. Fear and loathing of American print was prevalent among nationalists, in part because Americans had bragged of their victories in the First World War without acknowledging Canadian

⁶² Eric Brown frequently spoke on the merits of national art and national development. Eric Brown, "Canada and Her Art," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 45, no. 134 (January 1913): 171.

⁶³ The Arts and Crafts movement in Britain began as a patriotic reform movement following dismay that England had lost its traditional standards of craftsmanship with the rise of mechanical production of cheap goods, and that international economic competitiveness and moral collapse could only follow the deteriorating production of shoddy merchandise. See Owen Jones, *The Grammar of Ornament: Illustrated by Examples from Various Styles of Ornament* (London: B. Quaritch, 1928 [1856]); Jules Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste: The Politics of Architecture and Design in Britain, 1550–1960* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); James A. Schmiechen, "Reconsidering the Factory, Art-Labor, and the Schools of Design in Nineteenth Century Britain," in *Design History: An Anthology*, ed. Dennis P. Doordan (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995). For the American application to the profession of illustration see Masten, *Art Work*. For the Canadian embrace of Arts and Crafts, see Charles Hill, Andrea Kunard, Laurier Lacroix and Geoffrey Simmins. *Artists, Architects and Artisans: Canadian Art 1890 – 1918* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2013); Rosalind Pepall, "Under the Spell of Morris: A Canadian Perspective," in *The Earthly Paradise: Arts and Crafts by William Morris and His Circle from Canadian Collections*, ed. Katharine Jordan Lochnan, Douglas E. Schoenherr, and Carole Silver (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1993), 19; Robert Stacey, "Harmonizing 'Means and Purpose': The Influence of Ruskin, Morris, and Crane on J. E. H. Macdonald," in *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies* 6/7 (Fall/Spring 1997/98): 92. For examples of typical Canadian art primers, see John Kyle, *Design for Industrial Arts: Book 1—Woodwork* (Toronto: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1931); and Louis A. Shore, *Arts and Crafts for Canadian Schools*, 1st ed. (Toronto and Vancouver: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1946).

⁶⁴ B. Edmund Walker, "Dominion Day Message by Sir Edmund Walker: Shall Canada Go Money-Mad?" *Globe*, July 1, 1910, 1.

contributions, and in part because sensational fiction was seeping across the border.⁶⁵ *Canadian Bookman*, which despised Canadian “deserters” who wrote on Canadian subjects through Americanized formulae (Heming could have qualified as one), advocated a tariff on American magazines in order to stem the tide of “spicy” pulps (always bearing lurid cover art) that they claimed were ruining not just Canadian morals but Canadian magazine business too.⁶⁶ Arthur MacMechan, Professor of English Literature at Dalhousie University, in 1920 argued that Canada was at risk of being a “spiritual slave” to the U.S., a fate in his eyes worse than being a mere political vassal. This unhappy prospect arose because:

Not only is the Canadian newspaper built on American lines, but it is crammed with American “boiler-plate” of all kinds, American illustrations, American comic supplements. American magazines, some of them distinctly anti-British in tone and tendency, flood our shops and book-stalls. Every new Canadian magazine is on an American model, some of them borrowing an American title and changing only the national adjective.⁶⁷

Ironically, MacMechan had received his doctorate from Johns Hopkins University, and studied American writer Herman Melville with appreciation.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, his major 1924 history of Canadian literature pointedly omitted even the celebrated but largely expatriate Ernest Thompson Seton. He also found star novelist Arthur Stringer’s Canadian status “doubtful,” due to Stringer’s highly Americanized subjects, even though Stringer kept up a Canadian home and wrote nationalist pieces (including one praising Heming).⁶⁹ In 1926, typical of nationalist stance on the matter, a writer in *Canadian Forum* argued that the American print invasion amounted to annexation, and identified British influence as Canada’s salvation.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ Wharton, “The Conquest of Canada,” 55. See also Granatstein, *Yankee Go Home?*, 75. Granatstein documents this vein of rhetoric up to the 1960s.

⁶⁶ “Free Trade in Debasing Literature,” *Canadian Bookman* 1, no. 2 (April, 1919): 8.

⁶⁷ Archibald MacMechan, “Canada As a Vassal State,” *Canadian Historical Review* 1, no. 4 (December 1920): 349–50.

⁶⁸ Louis J. Budd and Edwin Harrison Cady, *On Melville: The Best from American Literature* (Duke University Press, 1988), 4.

⁶⁹ Archibald MacMechan, *Head-Waters of Canadian Literature* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1924), 213; Arthur Stringer, “Arthur Heming, Illustrator,” *Canadian Courier*, April 2, 1910, 10.

⁷⁰ J. Margorie Van der Hoek, “The Penetration of American Capital in Canada,” *Canadian Forum* 6, no. 71 (August 1926): 335.

Nationalist propaganda in Heming's mature works

A "deserter" no more, Heming settled in Toronto and answered to the political climate of cultural nationalism by adding nationalistic rhetoric to his Canadian subjects, as I will describe below.⁷¹ Lawren Harris wrote a review of Heming's work, praising it as "truly of this country;" in 1913 he brought Heming into the Studio Building that Harris and another patron completed in 1914 in order to support Canadian School art; and arranged an exhibition of Heming's work.⁷² When listing artists whom he thought would comprise a Canadian School of painting in 1914, A.Y. Jackson included Heming.⁷³

Heming busied himself writing and illustrating articles and serialized stories about the native and newcomer peoples of north central Canada who worked in the fur trade, resulting in "The Drama of Our Great Forests," serialized in 1920 and issued in book form as *Drama of the Forests* in 1921.⁷⁴ The story actually recycled much of the same plot concerning Saulteaux hunting customs that appeared in his first book, *Spirit Lake*, which had been penned in Old Lyme, Connecticut in 1904, following an excursion to northern Ontario sponsored by *Metropolitan Magazine*.⁷⁵ But "The Drama of Our Great Forests" emphasized three new messages.

First, it made the wilderness and wild life a moral exemplar opposed to city life from whence sickness and materialism were presumed to emanate. Heming wrote:

The men of the cities are much more quarrelsome, dishonest, and evil-minded than are those of the wilderness, and that, no doubt, accounts for the endless slandering of the wilderness dwellers by fiction writers who live in towns, for those authors-never having

⁷¹ The true extent of Heming's wilderness travel is unknown and exaggerated in the press, but he certainly did make several extended journeys. James Stone, "Heming's Northern Travels: Just Where Did He Go?" in Getty, *Arthur Heming: Chronicler of the North*, 33.

⁷² A. Y. Jackson, *A Painter's Country: The Autobiography of A. Y. Jackson* (Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1958), 27-28; Lawren Harris, "Heming's Black and White," *The Lamps: The Arts and Letters Club*, Toronto, October 1911, 11. Heming left the Studio Building in 1914. Charles Hill notes he participated in no further Group of Seven activities after 1914, Hill, *Group of Seven*, 50, 88.

⁷³ Jackson mentioned Heming first, then Thomson, MacDonald, Beatty, Harris, and himself. Quoted in Hill, *Group of Seven*, 51.

⁷⁴ Arthur Heming, "The Drama of Our Great Forests," *Maclean's*, November 15, 1920.

⁷⁵ Arthur Heming, *Spirit Lake* (New York: MacMillan, 1907); serialized starting with "The Way of the Wilderness," *Metropolitan Magazine*, February, 1905, 515.

lived in the wilderness—form their judgment of life . . . as they have experienced it in cities . . .⁷⁶

Second, it demonized American popular culture for its sensationalistic distortion of Canada. About the American dime story authors of his youth he stated, “As part of my boyhood education was derived from the study of American illustrated magazines, I was led by those periodicals to believe that the North American wilderness was inhabited by wild and woolly men bedecked with firearms . . .”⁷⁷ Heming also transferred this critique to film: “nothing is so supremely ludicrous as the attempts made by the average movie director to depict northern life in Canada. Never have I seen a photoplay that truthfully illustrated northern Canadian life.”⁷⁸

Third, Heming understood the power of popular media, and proposed to make its persuasiveness work for social progress. Looking deeply at his profession, Heming challenged cultural producers to be the moral compass of the public:

is not any production of the creative arts—a poem, a story, a play, a painting, or a statue—but a reflection of the composer's soul?

So, when you read a book filled with inhuman characters, you have taken the measure of the man who wrote it, you have seen a reflection of the author's soul.⁷⁹

It is time these authors [American distorters of the north] were enlightened, for a man, native to the wilderness, is a better man . . . more honest, more chivalrous, more generous, and-at heart, though he talks less about it-more God- respecting . . . than the man born in the city. That is something the public should never forget; for if the public remembers that, then the authors of wilderness stories will soon have to change their discordant tune.⁸⁰

It is a significant finding of this dissertation that magazine editors and illustrators selected one another with reference to their shared values and political aims. *Maclean's Magazine*, which bore on every cover the slogan “Canada's National Magazine,” and whose eponymous publisher was one of the agitators for protectionism against American competition, had a vested interest in fomenting nationalism.⁸¹ The serial “Drama of Our Great Forests” was a perfect fit, and so was

⁷⁶ Heming, *Drama of the Forests*, 218.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 187–188, 190, 203.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 235.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 317.

⁸⁰ Heming, *Drama of the Forests*, 203.

⁸¹ Donna Braggins, “Maclean's: The Accidental Nationalist—How Hustling for Ads Built a National Icon,” (master's thesis, York University, 2008).

Heming's public persona and personality. Besides offering sanitized writing in which alcohol was barely mentioned, Heming himself took care to cultivate a pure body and soul. An outspoken Temperance activist, he modeled clean living and tidiness to a degree many found off-putting,⁸² and being a moral exemplar recommended him as a fit author for youth—a major consideration for a family-friendly magazine.

Beginning in the first issue after Armistice Day on November 15, 1920, *Maclean's* promoted Heming's work to parents, teachers, Boy Scouts, and Girl Guides: "It fascinates, entertains, inspires, and educates. It is a powerful force working for Canadianism,"⁸³ a statement reflecting their mission to be "clean, instructive, and all-Canadian," and to "be read regularly by the young people" because "the rising generation should be raised as good Canadians."⁸⁴ They also declared, "[Heming] knows the world, not as men have 'mauled and marred it,' but as the Creator made it. Through his eyes you, readers of *Maclean's*, may also see!"⁸⁵—the illustrator's hallowed duty was to act as a prosthetic eye on behalf of Canadians, to seek out and reveal an exemplary life that could act as a moral and spiritual touchstone for national character.

"The Drama of Our Great Forests" was "fictionized fact"⁸⁶ told as an eyewitness report by Heming in first person. Heming quoted his native mentor Oo-koo-hoo at length, with plenty of visual and verbal ethnographic description of camping, hunting, canoeing, and natural history in the context of the fur trade as Heming had encountered it before 1905. Written accessibly without being juvenile, he worked to elevate the tastes of Canadian youth who (according to one learned commentator comparing them to English peers) preferred practical subjects and whose reading was normally "confined to the lightest kind of ephemeral magazine."⁸⁷ Heming's illustrations, which had been announced in June, 1920, were featured on the magazine's covers, translated by an engraver.⁸⁸ The first cover

⁸² Few private references to Heming by others omit comment on his neatness. See M. O. Hammond's diary entry, 10 December 1915, copy in the Hammond Journal, Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, original in M. O. Hammond Papers, PAO no. 1075, 1093 Diaries, Archives of Ontario, Toronto.

⁸³ From the *Maclean's* advertisement, "The Drama of Our Great Forests," *Globe*, November 16, 1920, 4.

⁸⁴ From the *Maclean's* advertisement, "For Young Canadians," *Globe* April 5, 1919, 5.

⁸⁵ "Heming," *Maclean's*, November 15, 1920, 16.

⁸⁶ This was the phrase applied to it by Charles Christopher Jenkins, "Heming, Dramatist of the Forest," *Maclean's*, November 1, 1921, 20.

⁸⁷ Edward J. Bidwell, "The Need for Background," in "The Need of More Bookishness in Canada," *Canadian Bookman* 1, no. 1 (January 1919): 5.

⁸⁸ "Pictures Canada's Northern Life," *Globe*, June 30, 1920, 10.

depicted a native man standing in a canoe, regarding two beavers on their lodge before him [Figure 8].



Figure 8. Arthur Heming, [cover illustration for “The Drama of Our Great Forests”], *Maclean's*, Nov. 15, 1920. Photograph by Jaleen Grove. New York Public Library.

The engraver made one beaver (the country’s official emblem) more visible for the magazine cover than it appears to be in the later book plate. This beaver also touches the word “Canada” in the slogan, reinforcing the beaver’s long-standing status as a national symbol to convey the magazine’s patriotism. Another beaver swims beside the man, and they in turn are observed by a lynx lurking in the foreground conifer branches that frame the scene in the tradition of picturesque painting. The lynx has also been made more visible by the engraver. The image is rendered in a duotone of black highlighted with yellow to indicate a rising moon

dappling the water (mentioned in Heming's text), while a spot colour of patriotic red enlivens the man's accouterments and the bold typography.

Heming writes a passage in "The Drama of Our Great Forests" in which he lauds the peaceful, hard-working beaver as a national symbol, superior to "a useless screeching eagle, or a useless roaring lion," the symbols of the United States and Great Britain.⁸⁹ Other images in the series, which ran until February 15, 1922, presented a similar array of Canadian game animals, hunters, and trappers in aboriginal and Métis garb. In 1921 the Royal Ontario Museum acquired twelve of Heming's illustrations through the intervention of Sir Edmund Walker, an event to which I will return momentarily.

Heeding his own advice and hoping to make the public associate the north with goodness rather than American "orgies of gun-play,"⁹⁰ in 1925 Heming published *The Living Forest* as a variant on a stock American pot-boiler. While adhering to a typical American boy's adventure formula of backwoods survivalists outsmarting bad guys, the wise "half-breed" elder, and the son of a Hudson's Bay Company factor, together with the American boy they save, win against the Chicago gangsters not with guns but with superior woodcraft skills, seeing a nonviolent justice served with the help of peaceable Mounties.⁹¹

As in the book *Drama of the Forests* and in Heming's later paintings, illustrations for *The Living Forest* conveyed moral uprightness through "conventionalization." In British Arts and Crafts theory, conventionalization conveyed morality by identifying and distilling nature's "best," most typical iteration down to a pure and uniquely characteristic, easily understood form. This expressed the subject's essence, rather than its particularity, symbolic of its highest spiritual inner meaning.⁹² Patterns that retained some truth to nature in their stylization were "noble."⁹³ The resulting flatness unified the design with the medium (the page)

⁸⁹ See same in Heming, *Drama of the Forests*, 125–129.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 203.

⁹¹ The moralizing, prissy Mountie story became standard in the (heavily censored) Canadian Mountie pulp fiction of the 1940s. Carolyn Strange and Tina Loo, *True Crime True North: The Golden Age of Canadian Pulp Magazines* (Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 2004), 24–43. Heming's tale also capitalized on the prior success of Ernest Thompson Seton's *Two Little Savages*, which also featured white boys roughing it in the bush.

⁹² For an explanation of the reasoning behind conventionalization and decoration (design), see Jones, *The Grammar of Ornament*. See also John Ruskin, *The Nature of Gothic Architecture: And Herein the True Functions of the Workman in Art*, (London: Smith, Elder, 1854); and Augustus Pugin, *Contrasts: Or, A Parallel Between The Noble Edifices of the Middle Ages, and Corresponding Buildings of the Present Day; Shewing the Present Decay of Taste* (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1836).

⁹³ Ruskin, "The Nature of Gothic Architecture;" William Morris, "Some Hints on Pattern-Designing," (speech, Working Men's College at the College, Queen's Square, Bloomsbury, 1884).

without employing the debased “falseness” of illusionistic modeling, while easily readable silhouettes and outlines enhanced the image’s ability to communicate with ease; for Morris, this was the epitome of good book illustration.⁹⁴ The development of this readable, flattened aesthetic was intended to patriotically take the British public’s taste back to its purported cultural roots in Gothic and Medieval art, in order to correct the babble of visual languages that global trade had introduced into industrially produced goods, and to reassert a British Anglo-Saxon imperialism and nationalism through cultural means.⁹⁵

Despite its British imperialist signification, Americans were also quick to adopt Arts and Crafts aesthetics—especially Heming’s chief outdoor-story competitor, Charles Livingston Bull and his protégé Paul Bransom (1885-1979). Usefully, precise delineation in flattened, outlined shapes provided for accurate rendering of species akin to scientific illustration, the clarity and accuracy of which was a welcome addition to wildlife art enthusiasts, who reveled in telling one moose from another.⁹⁶ William Morris disciple Frank Brangwyn (1867-1956), with whom Heming studied in 1904, also employed conventionalized form; Brangwyn had become immensely popular at this time in the United States as well.

It is little wonder that in Canada, caught always between British and American culture, Arts and Crafts art education was taught by the Hamilton Art School principal S.J. Ireland (1853-1915).⁹⁷ To Heming’s peers (with whom he exhibited) in the Hamilton Art Students League of the 1890s, accurate draughtsmanship was superior to painterliness, and was called “chaste” by them in comparison to the

⁹⁴ Owen Jones wrote, “these latter [floral designs] are to us very valuable lessons, showing how unnecessary it is for any work of decoration to more than indicate the general idea of a flower...The unity of the surface of the object decorated is not destroyed, as it would be by the European method of making the flower as near like a natural flower as possible, with its own light and shade and shadow, tempting you to pluck it from the surface.” See Jones, *The Grammar of Ornament*, 78. In William Morris’ words, “I do not think any artist will ever make a good book illustrator, unless he is keenly alive to the value of a well-drawn line, crisp and clean, suggesting a simple and beautiful silhouette. Anything which obscures this, and just to the extent to which it does obscure it, takes away from the fitness of a design as a book ornament. In this art vagueness is quite inadmissible. It is better to be wrong than vague in making designs which are meant to be book ornaments.” William Morris, “The Woodcuts of Gothic Books,” (speech, sponsored by Applied Art Section, Society of Arts, Society’s Rooms at John Street, Adelphi, London, 26 January 1892).

⁹⁵ Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste*, 242–246.

⁹⁶ A bull moose’s age can be determined from subtleties in the shape of its antlers, for example.

⁹⁷ S. J. Ireland, director of the Hamilton Art School where Heming attended and taught, was a graduate of the South Kensington Schools in England, which was the leading proponent of institutionalized Arts and Crafts; “Death of S. J. Ireland,” *Globe*, March 26, 1915, 11.

brush that “hides a multitude of sins.”⁹⁸ Conventionalization was also valued by the Canadian Society of Applied Art (known in the previous year as the Arts and Crafts Society of Canada). In a pamphlet issued for a 1905 exhibition, they said “decorative designs . . . should in general be flat” and that “purely naturalistic forms should in general be eschewed.”⁹⁹ The visual language of Arts and Crafts was allied with the fine book arts through the example of William Morris’ Kelmscott Press (a huge influence on Group of Seven member J.E.H. MacDonald, and on American art colonies and private press operations such as that of the Roycroft artisans of East Aurora, New York). The Arts and Crafts, then, brought Britain, Canada, and the northern United States into a shared visual culture that complemented the racial reunification Canada was supposed to foster, as was envisioned by English statesman W.A. Chapple in 1913 (quoted in Chapter 1, footnote 22) and reiterated by University of Toronto president Sir Robert Falconer in 1925.¹⁰⁰

Heming’s illustrations and paintings obeyed the Arts and Crafts tenet of conventionalization more prominently after his studies with Brangwyn and the appearance of Bull in the illustration market. In *The Living Forest*, a hard-edged canoe and a spread-winged swan by Heming are arranged in perfect symmetry on a central axis. The water and background blend as one tone, flattening middle- and backgrounds. The image illustrated no specific passage, making it plain that it was not an ordinary illustration that merely mirrors the text. Instead, the caption said, “‘My boys,’ said Old Bill, ‘be on alert for trace of trippers, because I expect the murderers of our canoemen have passed up stream.’”¹⁰¹ A black keyline around the image heightened its decorative quality [Figure 9]. Heming’s suite of paintings for *The Living Forest* took the gold medal at the 1926 Canadian Society of Graphic Arts exhibition, beating out Canadian art luminaries Walter J. Phillips, Dorothy Stevens, and Edwin Holgate.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Heming held an administrative role with the League 1896–1897; “Art League Exhibition;” “Art Students’ League,” *Hamilton Daily Spectator*, June 17, 1896; “It Will Open To-Night,” *Hamilton Daily Spectator*, June 4, 1896; “Art Students’ League,” *The Hamilton Spectator*, November 20, 1897.

⁹⁹ Canadian Society of Applied Art, quoted in Pantazzi, “Book Illustration and Design.” n. 6, p. 23.

¹⁰⁰ Robert Falconer, quoted in Ramsay Cook, “Cultural Nationalism in Canada: An Historical Perspective,” in *Canadian Cultural Nationalism: The Fourth Lester B. Pearson Conference on the Canada-United States Relationship*, ed. Janice L. Murray (New York: New York University Press, 1977), 30–31.

¹⁰¹ Arthur Heming, “The Living Forest,” *MacLean’s*, September 1, 1925, 25.

¹⁰² “Art Picture Committee Awards Several Prizes,” *Globe*, April 12, 1926, 15.



Figure 9. Arthur Heming, “The Living Forest [illustration],” *MacLean’s*, Sept. 1, 1925, 25. Photograph by Jaleen Grove. New York Public Library. Permission of Rogers Communications.

Continentalism in Heming’s nationalism

After 1930 Heming began making easel paintings in full colour for the first time, and he kept using conventionalization. By then, however, flattened, simplified form was slipping from favour among more progressive artists—even Thoreau MacDonald criticized the Group of Seven for repeating “strange and unbeautiful forms [and] artificially constructed scenery without life” that others were copying.¹⁰³ I contend that the lurking continentalism in Heming’s work—his appropriation of pulp themes, his interest in romanticized, dramatized narrative over pure landscape, and a return to more academic, slick finish—when combined with conventionalization and rendered in brilliant colour, resembled popular American magazines, calendars, and

¹⁰³ Thoreau MacDonald, “Decline of the Group of Seven,” *Canadian Forum* 12, no. 136 (January 1932): 144. See further discussion in Chapter 5.

advertising. While hugely successful with the buying public in Canada and Britain, this was too much for Canadian nationalists and art elites to like, despite Heming's nationalistic messages. This dual thrust of nationalism and continentalism spelled both Heming's relevance to the rhetoric of Canadian identity and, conversely, the disparagement he suffered as the arts allied itself with nationalism and the publishing industry's crusade against American print media.



Figure 10. Arthur Heming, *Arrest of a Whiskey Smuggler*, 1931, oil on canvas. Photograph by the author. Collection of the Government of Ontario Art Collection, Archives of Ontario, 619868.

One painting in particular contained an anti-American message. Set in the late 1890s, *Arrest of the Whiskey Smuggler* (1931) depicts a Mountie escorting a prisoner through a fantastic landscape of trees suffocating under heavy snow with a sun-touched Rocky Mountain peak in the background against a star-studded deep magnesium blue sky [Figure 10].¹⁰⁴ In a grisaille preliminary sketch dated 1910,¹⁰⁵ the prisoner was a generic cattle thief, but now Heming made him a whiskey

¹⁰⁴ Arthur Heming, *The Whiskey Smuggler*, oil on canvas, 1931, Government of Ontario Art Collection, Archives of Ontario, 619868.

¹⁰⁵ Arthur Heming, *The Cattle Thief*, oil on canvas, 1910, no. 217, collection of the National Gallery of Canada.

smuggler. This was a personally important subject for Heming, who had formerly designed posters for the Temperance movement, and it probably referred to the illegal rumrunning that American demand was creating in Canada before the repeal of Prohibition in 1933.¹⁰⁶ More than that, however, the contemporary Canadian would have understood the message was one of Canadian supremacy over immoral American infiltration, because historically whiskey smugglers had been mainly American and had been the reason for the establishment of the constabulary in the North West Territories (District of Alberta). Smugglers presented not just a disruption to the H.B.C.'s trade but also a threat to national security, with the allegiance of the native and lawless populations suspected of favouring the drink and the firearms that came with whiskey smuggling from the south.¹⁰⁷ Given the high proportion of settlers from the United States before the region became the Province of Alberta in 1905, the presence of the Mountie in the District of Alberta not only represented law and order, but Canadian dominion in that region as well lest its inhabitants choose annexation based on the appeal of family ties, whiskey trade and guns. Metaphorically, the whiskey smuggler in 1931 was an analogy for the alleged incursions of American spicy pulps, comics, and the gun-crazy Wild West tales to which Heming had specifically objected.

Using Arts and Crafts simplification of form and emphasis on “decorative” composition, the sharply delineated features and figures, as well as the careful repetition of two trees, two horses, and two riders, made the scene one of clarity and orderliness. The snowy evidence of a recent blizzard, the dominating scale of the topography, the majestically lit peak, and the intense colours were calculated to inspire feelings of the sublime.¹⁰⁸ The larger tree curves protectively around the figures, its trunk and bow framing the Mountie in a gracious arc in a manner reminiscent of various canopy and halo-like objects long-used to hallow venerable figures in Western painting. The heroic treatment and strict organization of the canvas emphasized the benefits of Canadian good government over American lawless individualism.

Choosing to see only the pro-Canada message, in 1933, in the official catalogue for the exhibition in which *Arrest of the Whiskey Smuggler* debuted, the Canadian art writer William Colgate stated, “[Heming’s] pictures indeed are so typical of the Canadian scene that one cannot imagine their transposition to any other country in the world. Invariably they are descriptive of episodes and background indigenous to our soil.”¹⁰⁹ Colgate’s acclamation of Heming’s Canadian

¹⁰⁶ Arthur Heming, *The Bar-Room or the Boy? Your Vote May Settle It: Is that you, Daddy?*, 1914, glass plate negative copy, PRG 1316/16/36, Brooker Collection, State Library of South Australia.

¹⁰⁷ L. V. Kelly, *The Range Men: The Story of the Ranchers and Indians of Alberta* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1913), 86–87, 92–93, 98–100, 104, 186, 222, 261–262.

¹⁰⁸ As Brian Foss notes, the use of the picturesque by the end of the nineteenth century was not incompatible with the sublime.

¹⁰⁹ Colgate, *Arthur Heming*.

exceptionalism reflected the rampant nationalism inflecting Anglo-Canadian art discourse in the 1920s and 1930s that had begun to elide all memory of American and continentalist content in the Canadian national narrative.

What Colgate did not acknowledge was that despite an anti-American theme, the romantic portrayal of the heroic, handsome Mountie was still derived from American pulps and films—wearing his recognizable scarlet serge dress uniform, rather than the fur coat actually worn on the job, for instance.¹¹⁰ And while he does not bear the simian jaw prescribed in caricatures, the captive man with green hat, vest, and shirt; and red hair and beard; with his head guiltily bowed, still recalls an Irishman—long associated in American and British graphic satire with alcoholism and scofflaw behavior (that Heming was prejudiced against the Irish is corroborated by the fact he made the villain of *The Living Forest* an Irish-American as well).¹¹¹

Meanwhile, the majestic treatment of the golden sunlight hitting the peak and the oversaturated twilight sky recalled the covers of pulp fiction magazines and popular calendar prints such as those by the bestselling American illustrator Maxfield Parrish. The composition made up of overlapping flattened shallow spaces receding from foreground rocks to horses, to trees, to background ridge, to distant peak, with action proceeding from left to right, recalled a melodramatic stage set. The exotic shapes of the arching trees played upon the popular idea of the wondrous north given in the highly successful 1919 film *Back to God's Country* (and Heming himself used the term “God’s country” in quotation marks to refer to the north in *The Living Forest*).¹¹² These popular culture elements, derived from a continentalist print culture, increased the appeal of Heming’s work and its nationalist message and re-united English-speaking peoples as imperialist agitators desired, and yet paradoxically undercut that nationalism and British supremacy by reiterating the domination of American cultural norms.

This paradox echoed the political situation at the time. Between 1921 and 1929, Canada had been enjoying its most profitable years ever, with a relatively freer trade that had been quietly established after the imperialist backlash of 1911. In 1927 fifty percent of all foreign investment in Canada was from the U.S., inaugurating the long period since in which the two countries have been each

¹¹⁰ Latta, "Looking for Dudley Do-Right."

¹¹¹ Lewis Perry Curtis, *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1971).

¹¹² *Back to God's Country*, directed by David M. Hartford (Canadian Photoplay and Shipman-Curwood, 1919); Heming, "The Living Forest," 11. The Hollywood film featured the beauty of the north, shot mostly in Alberta. Although classed as a Canadian film, the lead actress, Canadian born Nell Shipman, was an established Hollywood star and it was she who determined much of the look, form, and message of the film, including her notorious nude scene.

other's largest trading partner.¹¹³ That situation, however, was seriously disrupted in 1930 with the imposition of the Americans' Smoot-Hawley tariff, which effectively killed much cross-border trade. This exacerbated the Canadian depression, and led to a "Canada First" election that the Conservative Party won with imperialist anti-American rhetoric (as in 1911).¹¹⁴

It was right after the election that Heming painted *Arrest of a Whiskey Smuggler*, reminding viewers that Canada would not tolerate American insult to Canadian business, governance, and civil society. Under Prime Minister R.B. Bennett, trade with the U.S. was soon subjected to Canadian tariffs in retaliation for Smoot-Hawley, while new trade was established with the Empire; the decisions were made at the Imperial Economic Conference in Ottawa in summer 1932. Yet debates had raged at the Imperial Economic Conference about whether Canada should maintain its "friendliness" with the United States or pursue its presumed secure historic relationship with Mother Britain.¹¹⁵

Perhaps in alarm over too much imperialist policy, Canada soon experienced an upsurge of continentalist politicking that argued for a return to the cozy and lucrative 1920s relationship with the United States. John Wesley Dafoe's *Canada: An American Nation* appeared in 1935 (based on lectures given in 1934), and the highly continentalist Carnegie Endowment for International Peace conferences ran 1935-1941. William D. Herridge, the Canadian ambassador to the U.S. under Bennett who had cried out for nationalism during the 1930 election, turned continentalist and became responsible for bringing New Deal policy to Canada, and advocated free trade once more.¹¹⁶ With its contradiction of embracing American popular aesthetic form whilst condemning American infiltration in its narrative content, *Arrest of the Whiskey Smuggler* reflected both willingness to share American prosperity, and the anxious desire to retaliate and reclaim control when that prosperity was threatened.

The same mixture of national pride mixed with a lurking friendliness to American investment also drove the plot of *The Living Forest*. In this story, Canadian heroes save an American mine proprietor's heir named Lincoln (presumably a reference to President Abraham Lincoln). Heming had written the story in the mid-1920s, when Canada's economy had swelled due in very large part to exports of non-ferrous minerals and pulp paper to the U.S.¹¹⁷ Arthur Heming's works appealed because they supported national economic development in concert with American investment, while at the same time promoting nostalgia for the lifestyles of the 1890s and for Canadian nationalist autonomy, as if those lifestyles and the values he

¹¹³ David S. Jacks, "Defying Gravity: The 1932 Imperial Economic Conference and the Reorientation of Canadian Trade," (working paper 17242, National Bureau Of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA, July 2011), 4, <http://www.nber.org/papers/w17242>.

¹¹⁴ Jacks, "Defying Gravity," 7.

¹¹⁵ Kipp, "As Canada Sees Her Place;" Jacks, "Defying Gravity."

¹¹⁶ Granatstein and Hillmer, *For Better or for Worse*, 99.

¹¹⁷ Jacks, "Defying Gravity," 4.

associated with them would govern modern enterprise. As one journalist wrote in an obituary, Heming "expressed on canvas the spirit of early explorers who blazed trails through wild places that are now the scenes of varied industrial activity. He illustrated a people's progress."¹¹⁸

That Heming's work connotes either nationalism or continentalism seems perfectly in keeping with Canada's struggles to thrive without losing autonomy; proclaiming the Canadian spirit of independence, and yet reflecting the Canadian courtship of American investors, as in the Conservatives' National Plan of the 1890s that brought American branch plants to Canada instead of surrendering Canadian exports to American tariffs. His pictures, which were used to illustrate spreads in American and English publications covering the Economic Conference, effectively flaunted and advertised the rich natural resource commodities that were at stake.¹¹⁹

In Canada, mining company executives (whether Canadian or American is unknown) were among Heming's best patrons because, as one biographer put it, "They found in his pictures vicarious satisfaction of their nostalgic craving for the land they had roamed with snowshoe and hammer."¹²⁰ *Drama of the Forests* was created with the financial support of his friend, mining executive David A. Dunlap.¹²¹ Heming's books lured prospectors of all sorts by rendering the terra incognita of the wilderness quite familiar and manageable, with ethnographic and technical descriptions in text and image providing an illusion of know-how for surviving in the North. Threats became thrills, aboriginals became "picturesque," and hardship was rewarded with profit.

Heming's critical reception and impact on national identity

In 1925, a columnist wrote:

It is frequently said Canada has not a distinctive school of art; that with all her beauty her artists have failed to catch the spirit and native atmosphere. . . but anyone who has seen the great northland, stood spellbound before its giant forests, lakes, mountains, and even its more marvellous aurora borealis must surely admit that Arthur Heming has not only caught the spirit of the north but has

¹¹⁸ "Saw Beauty on the Wild Life," *Globe*, October 13, 1940, 6.

¹¹⁹ Kipp, "As Canada Sees Her Place;" "In the Dominion of the Empire Conference: Paintings of the Canadian Wilds by a Famous Canadian Artist," *Illustrated London News*, July 30, 1932, 156-157.

¹²⁰ Floyd Chalmers, "Arthur Heming," August 5, 1941, Heming file, collection of the National Gallery of Canada, manuscript.

¹²¹ M. O. Hammond, 10 December 1915. The book is dedicated to Mr. and Mrs. Dunlap.

succeeded in transferring it to canvas. If there never was a Canadian school of art before, there is now . . .¹²²

Heming clearly stood for nationalism for this writer, as it did for William Colgate and other supporters mentioned above. However, when Heming fell back upon continentalist illustration and commercial, popular forms, he incurred the disapproval of the Group of Seven and the anti-American sentiments of many of their admirers, who, it will be recalled, were associated with the anti-Reciprocity movement of 1911.

Heming's illustrative style and manner of promoting himself 1910-1940 inadvertently provided a foil for the Group of Seven. For instance, landscape painter J.W. Beatty, a close associate of the Group of Seven, resented the support Heming received from wealthy patrons and compared him to Tom Thomson, who in his estimation was more deserving because he was "such a better painter."¹²³ Beatty's focus on technique (rather than subject matter) points to the growing divide between illustration more aligned to the descriptive and accurate "chaste line" that "admits of no subterfuge" (as subscribed to by the Hamilton Art Students League, above), and the painterliness and colour of the Canadianists that served mood more than narrative. A newspaper article after Heming's death noted, "Many people regard Heming as the greatest Canadian painter of his day . . . Most Canadian artists of this generation, though, viewed Heming's work with amused contempt. So far as Canadian modernists of the more extreme school were concerned, Heming reciprocated the feeling. He regarded their abstractions as "cover" for their inability to draw."¹²⁴ Heming's adherence to traditional draughtsmanship and storytelling provided the contrast that Canadian School painters depended upon in order to claim to be painting Canada in a new way.

But it was more than just a disagreement over art versus illustration that fueled the discord and resulting entrenchment of Canadian identity in the Group of Seven at Heming's cost. Possibly in 1910 the Group's members felt overshadowed by Heming; he had had a successful career as a freelance "name" illustrator and had become more successful in American print than most.¹²⁵ Despite his inability to maintain prominence in American illustration, he had much reason to be appreciative of American opportunity and American technique in art and promotion.

¹²² Bessie Gowan Ferguson, "Author-Artist Tells Secrets of Success," *The Hamilton Spectator*, November 11, 1925.

¹²³ J. W. Beatty paraphrased by M. O. Hammond, 10 December 1915.

¹²⁴ "Unwritten Book," *Financial Post*, November 9, 1940, 3.

¹²⁵ For instance, Heming netted several book deals between 1901 and 1905, and the prestigious *Scribner's Magazine* had mentioned his name in the company of the most successful of illustrators for 1902: Howard Pyle, Jessie Wilcox Smith, A. B. Frost, William Glackens, and others. "Scribner's Magazine for 1902," *The Independent*, December 5, 1901, IX, advertisement.

By contrast, most Group of Seven members had mainly remained anonymous “bullpen” staff (with the exception of J.E.H. MacDonald, who was the art director at Grip Ltd., and widely recognized as a designer and letterer).¹²⁶ By leaving their humdrum day jobs as jobbing illustrators to go define Canada’s visual identity as landscape painters, they symbolically turned their backs on commercial art and its implicit “American” profit motive. It is significant that Hill refers to Carmichael, the only one who stayed working in commercial art, as the “silent partner” in the Group.¹²⁷ Hill also states that Franz Johnston left the Group because he was concerned about his personal commercial aims; and that art critic Fred Jacob identified Johnston as an outlier in that his work was so “decorative” and appealing—i.e., commercial.¹²⁸ Turning to more art-for-art’s-sake images of Canada and defining them as the only legitimate native style of art allowed the main Group members to beard the fairly pompous elder Heming in his own den.

The effect was felt as early as 1920, when Heming made a desperate effort to get his canvases from *Drama of the Forests* into a permanent collection, but the Hudson Bay Company and another firm, Revillon Freres, turned him down.¹²⁹ According to Arlene Gehmacher, curator of Canadian art at the Royal Ontario Museum, Heming sought the intercession of the Group’s backer and one-time member of the imperialist Toronto Eighteen and the Round Table Group, Sir Edmund Walker. But Walker had them placed in the Royal Ontario Museum’s Zoology section, without the Director of Zoology’s approval.¹³⁰ It is telling of Heming’s questionable status as an “artist” that Walker did not place the pictures in the Art Gallery of Toronto or the National Gallery or the R.O.M.’s Archaeology section (where cultural artifacts, including art, were normally deposited).

With no other major museum purchases materializing Heming joined other artists in the early 1930s in accusing the National Gallery of collecting the nationalistic Canadian School modernists while ignoring the wider, truer scope of Canadian art practices. Heming wrote the Prime Minister, directly attacking the Group of Seven, Vincent Massey, and the National Gallery:

You were right about there being “some very fine portraits” in the National Gallery show – that was its redeeming feature.

¹²⁶ “Bullpen” is the name given to a commercial studio employing many hired illustrators on salary or wages and doing mainly unsigned work for advertising. Harris was independently wealthy and so was never an employee. J. E. H. MacDonald did enjoy some “name” recognition before 1920, but the others did not get many prestigious freelance illustration assignments until after their names were made as painters.

¹²⁷ Hill, *Group of Seven*, 17.

¹²⁸ Jacob quoted in Hill, *Group of Seven*, 99–100; Hill, *Group of Seven*, 17, 99–100.

¹²⁹ Arlene Gehmacher, “Art, Illustration, and Zoology: The Drama Behind Heming’s Canadian Fur Trade Paintings,” in Getty, *Arthur Heming: Chronicler of the North*, 57.

¹³⁰ Gehmacher, “Art, Illustration, and Zoology,” 57–58.

But the great majority of Canadian artists know that Lawren Harris is running the Group of Seven, that the Group of Seven is running Vincent Massey, that Vincent Massey is running Eric Brown, that Eric Brown – a mere civil servant – is running the Board of Trustees – all save Newton MacTavish, that the Board of Trustees is running the National Gallery, that the National Gallery is run in favor of the Group of Seven...to the unpardonable detriment of the great majority of Canadian artists.

And while you and your Cabinet remain uninformed, nothing is done to right the wrong, and the Canadian people continue to pay more than a hundred thousand dollars a year in support of a mismanaged National Gallery.¹³¹

Unfortunately for Heming, Bennett was more sympathetic to the National Gallery's Trustees and asked for MacTavish's resignation at their request.¹³² Heming did not give up, however (and other artists, led by Wyly Grier, continued to threaten a boycott of the National Gallery as well).¹³³ Heming appealed to the Prime Minister again:

Herewith I am sending you reproductions of my paintings in the *Illustrated London News*, *Country Life in America*, the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung*, *The New York Times* and *Bridle and Golfer* – yet Vincent Massey, Harry Southam and Eric Brown don't think any of my paintings are good enough to be own [sic] by the National Gallery.

And Eric Brown decreed that none of my paintings were even good enough to be hung in last January's show at the National Gallery.

Isn't it time that a stop was put to incompetent laymen dictating as to what shall be considered as representative [sic] of the national art of this country?"¹³⁴

¹³¹ Heming to Prime Minister the Right Hon. R. B. Bennett, February 7, 1932, MG 26 K (RBB), vol. 457, reel M-1106, p. 288947. See also, February 18, 1932, p. 288957; December 29, 1932, pp. 289047–8; and, July 28, 1934, pp. 289158–61. My thanks to Alicia Boutilier for bringing this source to my attention.

¹³² H. S. to Prime Minister the Right Hon. R. B. Bennett, February 18, 1932, MG 26 K (RBB), vol. 457, reel M-1106, p. 288982, R. B. Bennett fonds, Library and Archives Canada; see also, April 6, 1932, p. 288957; April 12, 1932, p. 288980.

¹³³ David Milne to Prime Minister the Right Hon. R. B. Bennett, December 23, 1932, MG 26 K (RBB), vol. 457, reel M-1106, pp. 289036–40, R. B. Bennett fonds, Library and Archives Canada; Frank M. Armington to Prime Minister the Right Hon. Bennett, January 14 1933, MG 26 K (RBB), vol. 457, reel M-1106, pp. 289052–3, R. B. Bennett fonds, Library and Archives Canada.

¹³⁴ Heming to Bennett, December 29, 1932, pp.289047–8.

Again, nothing came of it, but when Heming approached Bennett once more in 1934 following good reviews and sales in London, Bennett finally intervened. That the response from the Chairman of the Board of Trustees was not positive is revealed in Bennett's reply to the Chairman: ". . . while it would appear that some of his pictures certainly attracted very high commendation, I thoroughly understand the attitude taken by the trustees in desiring to be certain of the merit of his productions before acquiring any of them."¹³⁵ Apparently nobody was "certain of the merit of his production," for the National Gallery never did acquire any major late canvases by Heming.

It is not surprising that some members of the Group were outspoken and determined in their counterattack against Heming. Arthur Lismer drew cutting caricatures of Heming, one of which showed Heming committing hari-kari, captioned "Ten years overdue."¹³⁶ In his memoirs Group member A.Y. Jackson derided Heming for drawing pretty girls, the most recognizable symbol of American commercial taste—a calculated low blow, considering Heming hardly ever drew women, and those that exist are all wholesome outdoorsy types. Jackson also complained that Heming boasted too much of his golden days at the art colony at Old Lyme, and how friendly he was with Woodrow Wilson.¹³⁷

Another of Lismer's caricatures ridiculed Heming for appearing to have actively solicited press attention in an unseemly way—not without reason.¹³⁸ Heming certainly had a slick patter: many publications, including the introduction of *Drama of the Forests*, recite how he heroically travelled "by canoe, pack-train, snowshoes, bateau, dog-train, buck-board, timber-raft, prairie-schooner, lumber-wagon, and 'alligator,'" and suggest that he was supplying prepared, boastful statements to the press.¹³⁹ His letterhead was engraved with a list of every

¹³⁵ Bennett to H. S., August 11, 1934, MG 26 K (RBB), vol. 457, reel M-1106, p. 289184, R. B. Bennett fonds, Library and Archives Canada.

¹³⁶ Arthur Lismer, *Hari-Kari Heming, Ten Years Overdue*, 1940, pen and ink with pencil, acc. no. 1976-94-8, Manuscript Division, H. O. and Dorothy McCurry Papers, MG 30 D198, Library and Archives Canada. My thanks to Cassandra Getty for locating the caricatures.

¹³⁷ A. Y. Jackson, *A Painter's Country*, 33; Arthur Heming, *Miss Florence and the Artists of Old Lyme* (Old Lyme, CT: Lyme Historical Society-Florence Griswold Association, 1971). The pretty-girls may have been his designs for Athabaska, the love interest in *Drama of the Forests*, whose portrait appears in "The Drama of Our Great Forests," *Maclean's*, November 15, 1920, 1.

¹³⁸ Arthur Lismer, *Heming Drops his Palette*, 1940, pen and ink with pencil, acc. no. 1976-94-9, Manuscript Division, H. O. and Dorothy McCurry Papers, MG 30 D198, Library and Archives Canada.

¹³⁹ "An Illustrator of Wild Animal Life," 27–29; Heming, "An Artist in the Wilds of Northern Canada," Arthur Stringer quoted in "Arthur Heming Home," *The Hamilton Spectator*, March 22, 1901; "Chronicle and Comment," *Bookman* 25, no. 3 (May 1907): 219; Heming, *Drama of the Forests*, 1921, xii; St. George Burgoyne, "Some Canadian Illustrators: Article II," 29.

periodical he had ever been published in, even if only once. He may have learned to play the media from his friends at Old Lyme, who submitted frequent reports of their doings to the papers.¹⁴⁰ Such overt self-promotion would have signified American-style pushiness and individualism to Canadian nationalists. The style of the Group, by contrast, was paternal encouragement of fellow artists (they disbanded the Group of Seven in order to form the Canadian Group of Painters, for instance) and devotion to art education; while Lawren Harris was always understated about his personal contributions as visionary and patron.¹⁴¹

Adding to his “commercial” reputation was Heming’s establishment of the Toronto Writers’ Club in 1923 for writers of copyright-worthy material;¹⁴² one of their first guest speakers was J. Vernon McKenzie, editor of *Maclean’s*, who advised on what made saleable copy.¹⁴³ Heming was also a member of the Canadian Authors Association (C.A.A.), which represented mainstream writers and lobbied to protect copyright¹⁴⁴—and Heming was very adroit in retaining copyrights in order to exploit the same illustrations over again in other countries.

Canadian Bookman became the organ of the C.A.A. 1921-1923, and the resulting taint of commercialism was sniffed at by the competitor magazine, *Canadian Forum*, which was associated with the University of Toronto’s elite literary contributors.¹⁴⁵ Although *Canadian Bookman* was nationalist and anti-American, in the spirit of debate it also printed rationales for allowing American periodicals to circulate freely in the name of liberalism and of Canadian erudition by both example and contrast.¹⁴⁶ It also announced its criticism would go easy on Canada’s developing literature, not demanding that it shy away abruptly from American and European standards before it was ready.¹⁴⁷ By 1921 it was running rather uncritical content that brought charges of “boosterism,” and *Canadian Forum* editor Barker Fairley accused the C.A.A. of being too inclusive of “narcotic” popular books.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁰ In a letter, Heming reports the colony sent weekly reports to the local paper, and that one colleague sent a report to the *New York Herald*. Heming to Harry Hoffman (“Ole Top”), n.d., 11, Florence Griswold Museum.

¹⁴¹ King, *Inward Journey*.

¹⁴² “Writers of Toronto Form Organization,” *Globe*, April 10, 1923, 16.

¹⁴³ “Writers Must Work to Win Their Spurs,” *Globe*, June 19, 1923, 15.

¹⁴⁴ “Canadian Authors Association,” *Canadian Bookman* 3, no. 3 (June 1921): 4.

¹⁴⁵ T. D. MacLulich, *Between Europe and America*, 89, 94.

¹⁴⁶ Arthur L. Phelps, “Let All Continue to Come Freely,” in “The Deluge of American Magazines in Canada,” *Canadian Bookman* 1, no. 2 (April 1919): 10.

¹⁴⁷ “Standards of Criticism,” *Canadian Bookman* 1, no.2 (April 1919): 7.

¹⁴⁸ Barker Fairley, “Editorials,” *Canadian Forum* 1, no. 8 (May 1921): 230; Barker Fairley, “Artists and Authors,” *Canadian Forum* 2, no. 15 (December 1921): 460–463. For a

Where *Canadian Bookman* ran profiles on commercial illustrators (including Heming) in its first two issues, Fairley—a friend of the Group of Seven—invited Thoreau MacDonald, son of Group member J.E.H. MacDonald, to be art editor at the *Canadian Forum*. MacDonald printed the Group's artwork as standalone pieces rather than as illustrations, while positive reviews of their art ran often (Chapter 5).

Because *The Living Forest* followed mainstream boys' fiction, any good that Heming intended was negated in nationalists' eyes. Critics were inclined to see Heming's use of "the 'Mounties' tale, the western tale, or the prospecting thriller" as "highly colored travesties" not worthy of being called Canadian.¹⁴⁹ What critics failed to notice, however, was that the book was published in Toronto and *New York* simultaneously, as was *Drama of the Forests*. Could Heming's work possibly stand as a valid attempt to reverse the cultural invasion from the south?

Pulp fiction historian Jeffrey Blair Latta has argued that Canadian identity was in fact well served by the Americanized, sensational stereotypes of the 1930s. To his thinking, the entertainment value—which technical inaccuracies, such as a Mountie on the job wearing his red serge, only enhance—cause symbols to form, to stick in people's minds meaningfully, and to be shared.¹⁵⁰ Rather than being only a sell-out as the Group seemed to think, Heming was consciously appropriating American form in order to deliver a subversive message of Canadian superiority over American unscrupulousness. This tactic, as he had stated in *Drama of the Forests*, was to reform immoral and ignorant American authors by tricking the public into appreciating, and hopefully then demanding, a better, more authentic Canada. This trade-off allowed him to attain the greatest exposure for his works in North America while championing Canadian difference.

For members of the Canadian School, Heming's approach was anathema, even though his wilderness subject matter was foundational to their own enterprise. Although made as a painting and shown in art galleries, even *Arrest of the Whiskey Smuggler* remained an illustration in that it portrayed a moment in a narrative, described a text (its title), depicted its subject unambiguously, and referenced popular media associated with American publishing and popular entertainment. For general audiences, however, Heming's work resonated with long-established aesthetic and ideological expectations in Canadian visual culture. More traditional and naïve viewers could identify with it in a way they frequently failed to do with

discussion of the impasse between the two magazines, see James Mulvihill, "The 'Canadian Bookman' and Literary Nationalism," *Canadian Literature*, no. 107 (Winter 1985): 48; and T. D. MacLulich, *Between Europe and America*, 89–96.

¹⁴⁹ T. D. Rimmer, "Canada's Status in Literature," *Canadian Bookman* 8, no. 7 (July 1926): 222.

¹⁵⁰ Latta, "Looking for Dudley Do-Right."

more modernist art. But Heming was omitted from surveys of Canadian art nonetheless.¹⁵¹

Daily, Canadians experienced conflict between the nationalist non-commercial ideal and the continentalist necessities of earning a living. Heming's works represented a compromise between the two political poles of dutiful patriotic Tory conservatism and self-interested Liberal individualism, and reflected the mixture of American and Canadian material on newsstands. Yet it also kept the wilderness ideal at the forefront of Canadian identity, at the expense of other symbols that were just as widely used, such as the Canadian Girl.

¹⁵¹ The sole book that actually speaks at any length on Heming is William Colgate's *Canadian Art*. Most, like Dennis Reid's *A Concise History of Canadian Painting* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1973, 1988, 2012), do not mention Heming at all.

Chapter 4

Miss Civilization? The Pretty Girl in Canada

In the introduction and prior chapters, I showed how nationalistic Canadians demonized American popular print media as corrupt, violent, and sexualized, an expression of decadent urban life. Arguing that artists ought to concentrate on worthier things, Arthur Heming identified the city with a corrupt, promiscuous figure he sarcastically called “Miss Civilization:” “Why should not artists write about it [“the beautiful side of life”]—even if only to help the poor old grown-ups forget Miss Civilization’s unlovely makeup . . . face-paint, cigarette, permanent wave, skirtless-skirt, high-ball and sexie sex-novel.”¹

This undeniably modern, transgressive Miss Civilization might have been any one of Russell Patterson’s girls. Paradoxically, in the work of Rex Woods (1903-1987) and other Canadian illustrators at home, there was a sincere, positive role-model of Miss Civilization too. As Miss Canada, the Canadian Girl, and Canadian Woman, the pretty girl could represent a city’s or country’s noblest aspirations and gentility. But because the Canadian representations were mostly indistinguishable from the American Girl and became even more similar over time, she lost any power she may once have had to represent Canadian autonomy. Instead, the pretty girl in Canada represented similarity to the United States and eventually, sameness.

In this chapter I explore Canadian creation of and conflicted reception of the pretty girl from approximately 1880 to 1960, from the powerful allegory of Miss Canada to her ultimate reduction to a generic photographed model. First I examine how the Canadian pretty girl was aligned with civic pride and nation-building. Then I pay particular attention to the covers of *Canadian Home Journal* 1930-1947 by Rex Woods, and to two advertising mascots by Rex Woods—the Macdonald Lassie of 1935 and the Robin Hood Flour mascot Rita Martin of 1947. Woods’ role as cover illustrator is especially important because—as was typical in magazine illustration in general—the illustrator was responsible for inventing and proposing the concepts of the cover designs. In Woods’ work, the American pretty girl is recast as the Canadian Woman. In what was initially a Canadian slant on continental visual culture, he blended American and British elements, but the result was an increased Canadian demand for Canadian women to take on American glamour. His emphasis on superficial appearances displaced the former emphasis on women’s capacity to take action in nation-building.

Illustration of the pretty girl in Canada therefore represented both nationalist and continentalist impulses, depending on the context in which she was seen. But as the nationalist context weakened, and as the desire for glamour intensified, picturing women was a slippery slope that eventually resulted in the loss of identity for Canadian women and an increased similarity between Canadian and American visual culture, while serving and reinforcing Canadian interest in consumerism.

¹ Arthur Heming, “Artists and Authors,” *Ontario Library Review* 13, no. 1 (August 1928): 6.

Miss Canada

In nineteenth century political cartoons, nations were often portrayed as allegorical figures: John Bull and Britannia for England, Cousin Jonathan, Uncle Sam, and Columbia for the United States, and Johnny Canuck and Miss Canada for Canada. The latter's role was to be an authoritative ideal, to represent the public good and the electorate, with the right to admonish political leaders. In a cartoon of 1879, Miss Canada tells Mr. Premier to reject the "Yankee (Political) Notions" hawked by Uncle Sam [Figure 11]. Titled "*Goods Prohibited but Evils Admitted*," and captioned "Now Mr. Premier, I don't propose to allow this country to be made a slaughter market for American ideas, any more than American goods," the scene has smiling Sam attempting to sell the Premier a racist statuette of a Chinese man (labeled "Kearneyism") and a doll representing rag money. Miss Canada stands with a tariff policy under her arm before a wall marked with "Equal Rights to all regardless of colour."² *Notions* is a pun, in which American goods, symbolized by tasteless mass produced kitsch notions, embody evil ideological notions. Yankee Notions also made a reference to the humour periodical *Yankee Notions, or Whittlings of Jonathan's Jack-Knife*, the sort of print matter that high-minded Canadians derided and feared would promote American values in Canada.³

² J. W. Bengough, "Goods Prohibited, but Evils Permitted," reproduced in *A Caricature History of Canadian Politics: Events from the Union of 1841, as Illustrated by Cartoons from "Grip", and Various Other Sources* (Toronto: Grip Printing and Publishing, 1886), 209.

³ *Yankee Notions, or Whittlings of Jonathan's Jack-Knife* (New York: T. W. Strong, 1852–1875).



Figure 11. Miss Canada chides Prime Minister John A. MacDonal for encouraging American politics (symbolized by cheap bric-a-brac). J.W. Bengough, "Goods Prohibited, but Evils Permitted," *Grip* (April 26, 1879). Reproduced in *A Caricature History of Canadian Politics* (Toronto: Grip Printing and Publishing Co, 1886), 209. Photograph by the author.

This Miss Canada was upright and powerful, her vaguely classicized dress connoting her sacrosanct ideological function. Meanwhile, in other renditions, Miss Canada was styled the daughter of Britannia or John Bull. In these, she was very

often the prey of sexually predatory Cousin Jonathan.⁴ In general, a proper, unsmiling Miss Canada sought from her “parents” protection from the unwanted advances.⁵ As both moral authority and chaste belle, Miss Canada stood for the nation’s resistance against American cultural and economic incursion.

While Miss Canada usually rejected America, her beauty (which I would suggest metaphorically represent Canada’s attractive wealth of natural resources) was always a liability, continually provoking Uncle Sam’s interest. If Sam’s offer should ever transcend sexual predation and show proper respect, Miss Canada might change her mind. During times when the United States was offering attractive trade agreements she appeared uncertain, as in *Trying Her Constancy, or, A Dangerous Flirtation* of the late 1880s [Figure 12].⁶

⁴ E.g., “A Pertinent Question,” *Diogenes*, June 1869, cartoon.

⁵ This was first discussed by J. L. Granatstein, *How Britain’s Weakness Forced Canada into the Arms of the United States* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989). See also Robyn Fowler, “Miss Canada and the Allegory of Nation,” (PhD diss., University of Alberta, 2005); David R. Spencer, *Drawing Borders: The American-Canadian Relationship during the Gilded Age* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013).

⁶ Tom Merry, *Trying Her Constancy: A Dangerous Flirtation*, lithograph, ca. 1885–1890, acc. no. R9266-3552, MIKAN no. 2838080, Peter Winkworth Collection of Canadiana, Library and Archives Canada.



Figure 12. Miss Canada appears to waver in her duty to John Bull. Tom Merry, *Trying Her Constancy: A Dangerous Flirtation* [lithograph] (circa 1885-1890). Library and Archives Canada, Acc. No. R9266-3552 Peter Winkworth Collection of Canadiana. MIKAN no. 2838080. http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam_archives/public_mikan/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayEcopies&lang=eng&rec_nbr=2838080&title=Trying+Her+Constancy%2C+or%2C+a+dangerous+flirtation.+©=e000756752. This reproduction is a copy of an official work that is published by the Government of Canada and the reproduction has not been produced in affiliation with, or with the endorsement of the Government of Canada.

Here, Miss Canada appears to seriously consider Jonathan's advances, while chaperone John Bull sleeps. Then in 1905, a postcard shows Miss Canada and Uncle Sam standing on the continent and reaching lovingly for each other, an American crest behind them [Figure 13]. Miss Canada sings:

Sammy, Oh, Oh Oh, Sammy
For you I'm pining when we're apart.⁷

⁷ "Sammy," (Germany and New York: Albert Hahn, 1905), collection of Michael J. Smith, postcard.



Figure 13. In an American postcard, Miss Canada welcomes Uncle Sam. “Sammy,” Albert Hahn & Co., 1905. Photo courtesy of Michael J. Smith.

The “pining” indicates the undeniable lure of America. Not surprisingly, this card was not produced by a Canadian, but by a New York subsidiary of a German publisher. But the card was presumably from a Canadian, Florence, who asks her correspondent Helen whether she is “coming up” to visit. American attraction was treated with far less happiness in a series of cartoons by Arthur Racey (1870-1941) that I will discuss in depth below, where American Girls’ beauty symbolized the dangerous seduction of America’s economic attractions for young Canadian men.

Good Miss Civilization

The use of beauty in political cartooning to represent the threat of assimilation and annexation informs the production and reception of pretty girl imagery in Canadian visual culture. Yet, as guardian of the national collective wellbeing, Miss Canada’s honour-inspiring good looks represented national pride too. When deployed as “the

Canadian Girl,” the pretty girl throughout the period covered in this dissertation stood for the country’s best, just as Miss Canada did.⁸

Before the unpopulated wilderness landscape came to represent the quintessential “spirit” of Canada to Anglo-Canadians, stereotypical Canada (or more properly, Montreal) was often depicted in terms of winter sports, some of which women partook of as much as men (discussed Chapter 3).⁹ Consequently, the sheet music cover for *The Canadian Girl* of 1910 shows a young woman in sweater and toque with slightly unkempt dark-hair out tobogganing, in the winter sport scene tradition [Figure 14].¹⁰ Her dark colouring and toque—long associated with Francophone costume—suggest she is Québécoise rather than Anglo-Canadian.¹¹

⁸ The “Canadian Girl” was enough of a catchphrase that at least four songs were issued under that name: Herbert Leiser, “Canadian Girl: March Two-Step” (Toronto, Winnipeg: Whaley, Royce, 1905); Wilson MacDonald, “The Canadian Girl” (Canada: Pugsley, Dingman, 1906); Joseph St. John, “The Canadian Girl: March and Two Step” (Toronto: A. H. Goetting, ca. 1910); Jos Pelisek, “My Little Canadian girl/Ma petite canadiene [sic]: Valse for Piano” (Ottawa: J. Pelisek, ca. 1918). The sheet music for Leiser’s 1905 version has a generic crayon pretty-girl head by Ewers; the 1906 version bears maple leaves; the 1916 one has a photo of the composer.

⁹ Poulter, “Becoming Native in a Foreign Land.”

¹⁰ Joseph St. John, “The Canadian Girl: March and Two Step” (Toronto: A. H. Goetting, ca. 1910), Library and Archives Canada, AMICUS no. 23888923.

¹¹ The term “Canadian” or “Canadienne” originally referred only to the Québécois.



Figure 14. The Canadian Girl here does not have the elegant clothes or sophisticated hair or fawning admirers of the Gibson Girl. The shading on her face and dark hair suggests a Québécoise more than an Anglo-Canadian. Joseph St. John, *The Canadian Girl: March and Two Step* (Toronto : A.H. Goetting, c1910). Library and Archives Canada, AMICUS No. 23888923, <http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/obj/m5/f1/csm06401-v6.jpg>. This reproduction is a copy of an official work that is published by the Government of Canada and the reproduction has not been produced in affiliation with, or with the endorsement of the Government of Canada.

But the pretty girl was also associated with the growth and sophistication of cities, by which Canada's worth and progress was measured. As *Picturesque Canada's* text and images presented (Chapter 3), the city and its abundance of cultivated young ladies in fact constituted the prize at the end of the wilderness narrative, in which stoic pioneering Loyalists, fur traders, and yeoman farmers wrested civilization from savage land and adverse elements. A few words expanding upon this narrative, which was similar to the American frontier narrative, are

necessary for understanding the vitality of the more mature Canadian Woman whom Rex Woods later portrayed, which I will examine later in this chapter.

In about 1905, there circulated a postcard template making the association between pretty girl and civility. It featured a pretty girl in profile paired with various Canadian city views, stripped interchangeably into a decorated frame [Figure 15].¹² Captioned “A Typical Canadian Girl,” and very unlike the tobogganing Canadian Girl, the cameo features the pompadour hairstyle, lowered eyelids, and elevated chin of the Gibson Girl, now surrounded with maple leaves to indicate her nationality. Being the farthest thing from a pioneer drudge roughing it in the bush,¹³ the cultivated girl gave an air of sophistication to each pictured town or building and associated her with its level of civilization in return, visually assuring the recipient of the postcard that *this* Canada was no wilderness such as Heming depicted. In fact, the image hinted that men of means (whom developing towns needed to attract) might find a suitable wife there. At least 130 towns from New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, and Manitoba were represented in the series, suggesting that the template was probably manufactured in the thousands and circulated in areas representing at least 85% of Canada’s population.¹⁴

¹² “With a Typical Canadian Girl,” (Toronto: Atkinson Bros, ca. 1905), postcard.

¹³ I allude here to Susannah Moodie’s archetypal Canadian pioneer biography, *Roughing It in the Bush* (London: Richard Bentley, 1852).

¹⁴ Michael J. Smith, “Atkinson Brothers, Toronto—Series 4,” in *The Canadian Patriotic Postcard Checklist 1898–1928: Thirty Years of Glory* (Mississauga, ON: Michael J. Smith, 2003), 31, collection of Michael J. Smith.

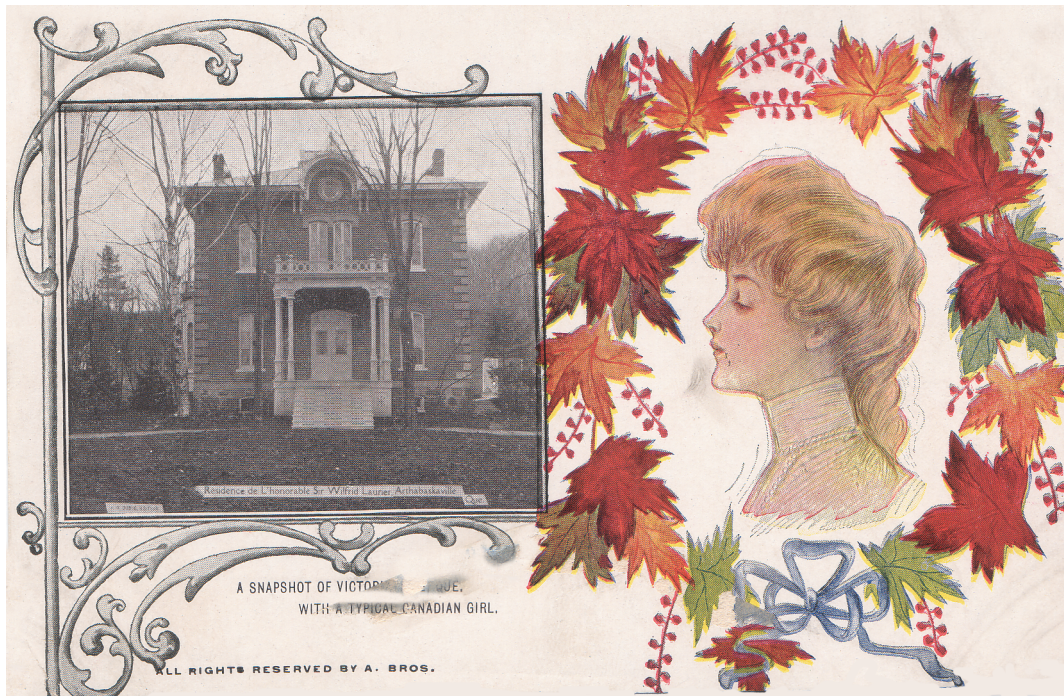


Figure 15. The “typical Canadian girl” resembles the Gibson Girl, and enhances the association of feminine sophistication with civic pride—here, Sir Wilfred Laurier’s home. “With a Typical Canadian Girl,” Atkinson Bros (Toronto), ca. 1905. Scan courtesy of Michael J. Smith.

In such numbers, and reinforced by other pretty girls in advertisements, magazines, books, and ephemera, after 1900 the Americanized Typical Canadian Girl gradually inherited the role of national symbol from Miss Canada, and displaced the toque-wearing Canadian Girl. Her cultivated blonde visage suggested Canada as a true daughter of noble, ancient Britannia, had old-family sophistication, while her American girl-next-door Gibson Girl look underscored her bright continentalist future.¹⁵

The association of civic pride with national identity was the underlying message of three nationally important visual initiatives: the highly successful 1882 tome *Picturesque Canada* with its story of “growth in settlement and civilization” (discussed previously),¹⁶ John Ross Robertson’s Historical Picture Collection, and the Seagram’s Cities of Canada exhibition which showcased works from the corporate collection of the distillers, House of Seagram. Illustrative elements played a major role in all three.

¹⁵ An analysis of how Miss Canada represented a hegemonic race and class identity and political mythology is explored by Robyn Fowler, “Miss Canada and the Allegory of Nation.”

¹⁶ *Rose-Belford’s Canadian Monthly and National Review*, 653.

The individual citizen's responsibility to contribute to nation-building through city-building was also a key theme in John Ross Robertson's Historical Picture Collection (amassed circa 1880 to 1918), which in his words, "illustrate(s) the growth of communities." This collection, which mixed together original art with all manner of prints and photographs, was eventually given by Robertson to the Toronto Public Library as a patriotic gesture. A newspaper magnate and philanthropist known for his dictatorial personality, can be inferred he wished to secure his own place in the narrative the collection told.¹⁷

Chief Librarian George Locke (1870-1937) displayed the collection because, he said, "the pictures tell the stories and link together men and events so that one can see the evolution of the nation."¹⁸ Locke, who had studied under American pragmatist John Dewey, the democratizer of art and theorist of the social function of art in the United States, elaborated:

How are we supposed to understand ourselves and our position as a nation unless there are preserved the evidence of our growth and of the struggles of our fathers to the end that a strong nation might be established? And these evidences . . . are not revealed in books, but in reproductions of the scenes of our times. These prints tell a story . . . and to see the faces of the men who accomplished great things for our country, and to see the pictures of the houses in which they lived and worked . . . gives us a thrill of "ancestor worship" which a discovery in Debrett [the register of British peerage] could never produce.¹⁹

Such attention to ancestry, democracy, and progress meant that the arrival of the pretty girl by the 1890s represented the telos of colonialism: her presence signified that the country was now safe enough and cultivated enough to produce and

¹⁷ J. Ross Robertson, quoted in "Historical Works Presented to City," *Toronto Daily Star*, January 30, 1912, 7. The bequest, which he announced in 1904, was still underway when Robertson died in 1918. Another 15,000 images (largely photographs) were to arrive, but these were not included in the officially named bequest, as originally planned. The index to the collection, which he gave to the Toronto Public Library, emphasizes person, place and deed in that order: nine pages of about 950 portraits; twenty pages of a general index of mainly places and buildings interspersed with a few genre scenes; and 560 pages describing various views and historical events. See also Ron Poulton, *The Paper Tyrant: John Ross Robertson of the Toronto Telegram* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, 1971).

¹⁸ George Locke, "Introductory," in *What Art Has Done for Canadian History: A Guide to the J. Ross Robertson Historical Collection in the Public Reference Library* (Toronto: J. Ross Robertson, 1917), n.p.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

provide for society's most "dainty" members, homegrown genteel girls able to keep up with the latest fashions.²⁰

Yet she was not to sit in idle luxury. As other scholars have shown, Canadian women's magazines made it clear that the marriageable Canadian pretty girl was expected to wed and bring up the next generation of beaver-like Canadians; sturdy, hard-working citizens with an ever-increasing degree of refinement, laboring for the collective national good.²¹

Civic-nationalist sentiment emerged again in the 1953 touring exhibition *Cities of Canada*, sponsored by distillery The House of Seagram.²² Several well-known illustrators-turned-gallery-painters contributed easel paintings of Canadian cities.²³ The catalogue's preface, written by Seagram president (and art patron) Samuel Bronfman, stated that the pictures presented "the unfolding tale of our country," and that, "[the] story of the Canadian people, their vision, their foresight, their energy, their inspired use of the rich, natural resources of the land. Of all these qualities our cities are the concrete result; in introducing them abroad, we introduce . . . the people of Canada."²⁴ The catalogue's essay by writer, editor, and Liberal partisan Bernard K. Sandwell also referred to "long generations of pioneering . . . enriched by the best blood of many other countries;" and made a favorable comparison of Canada's economic and technological development to that of the United States.²⁵ Sandwell stated that such success was proof that former

²⁰ The adjective "dainty" dominated women's personal hygiene advertisements between 1900 and 1950 and was equated with femininity and sex appeal.

²¹ Philippa Brush, "'This feminine invasion': Women and the Workplace in Canadian Magazines, 1900–1930," (PhD diss., University of Alberta, 1999); Inez Houlihan, "The Image of Women in *Chatelaine* Editorials, March 1928 to September 1977," (master's thesis, University of Toronto, 1984); Heather Molyneux, "The Representation of Women in *Chatelaine* Magazine Advertisements: 1928–1970," (master's thesis, University of New Brunswick, 2002); Rymell, "Images of Women in the Magazines of the '30s and '40s," 96–99; Mary Vipond, "The Image of Women in Canadian Mass Circulation Magazines in the 1920s," in *The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian Women's History*, ed. Susan Mann Trofimenkoff and Alison Prentice (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977), 116–124; Michelle Denise Smith, "Model Nation: Identity and Citizenship in Canadian Mass-Market Women's Magazines, 1928–1945," (PhD diss., University of Alberta, 2008).

²² The exhibition of urban and industrial landscapes was curated from the corporate collection of The House of Seagram, who had also commissioned many of them. It toured across Canada, Central America, Brazil, and Europe.

²³ Included Franklin Arbuckle, William Winter, A. Y. Jackson, R. York Wilson, Charles Comfort, and Robert W. Pilot

²⁴ Samuel Bronfman, foreword to *Cities of Canada: Reproductions from the Seagram Collection of Paintings*, ed. Bernard K. Sandwell (Toronto: The House of Seagram, 1953), n.p., exhibition catalogue.

²⁵ Bernard K. Sandwell, "Canada: Country of the Twentieth Century," in Sandwell, *Cities of Canada*, n.p.

Liberal Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier—who had attempted to form trade ties with the United States in order to develop continentalist policy—had been correct when he famously predicted that “As the 19th century was that of the United States, so I think the twentieth century shall be filled by Canada.”²⁶

The Typical Canadian Girl of Laurier’s day—product of stoic pioneers and future mother of loyal Canadians—paired with the city as an expression of national optimism—is the woman we found on the postcard above, and who became Rex Woods’ Canadian Woman in the 1930s. The Typical Canadian Girl was an icon of all that men supposedly labored for, or fought for in the case of war, but as the Canadian Woman, she too took an active role in nation building through motherhood, housewifery, and community service.²⁷

Women’s magazines and the Canadian Woman

Like Michelle Denise Smith, who wrote a dissertation on the subject, I find the Canadian Woman in magazines to have been assigned a very important part in national development.²⁸ To convey this importance, the editor of *Canadian Home Journal*, Catherine Wilma Tait, together with columnist Margaret Lawrence (not to be confused with author Margaret Laurence), employed what has been termed “feminine style” rhetoric.²⁹ Feminine style rhetoric introduced a type of feminism that supported women in their customary roles (the only authority many had) in order to put the status of traditional women’s work on par with men’s work, and thereby bring women into equal partnership with men in nation-building. It is pertinent that these feminist writers and advertisers addressed women rather than girls, signaling their claim to an equal half of adult responsibility, distancing

²⁶ Laurier, quoted in Sandwell, *ibid.* Laurier originally made the statement January 18, 1904 to the Canadian Club of Ottawa, and it became his election campaign rally cry that year. A variation was adopted as a slogan by the magazine *Canadian Life and Resources* in 1907 in connection with prospects of Western Canada, and the notion has been the subject of debate in Canadian Studies and politics ever since; *Canadian Life and Resources*, October 1907.

²⁷ “The Canadian Woman” was extensively referred to by editors of both *Chatelaine* and *Canadian Home Journal*, as well as by their advertisers. See also Katherine Arnup, “Education for Motherhood: Creating Modern Mothers and Model Citizens,” in *Contesting Canadian Citizenship: Historical Readings*, ed. Dorothy E. Chunn, Robert Menzies and Robert L. Adamoski (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2002), 247–272; Anne-Marie Kinahan, “Transcendent Citizenship: Suffrage, the National Council of Women of Canada, and the Politics of Organized Womanhood,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 42, no. 3 (2008): 5; Wayne Roberts, “‘Rocking the Cradle for the World’: The New Woman and Maternal Feminism, Toronto, 1877–1914,” in *A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada*, ed. Linda Kealy, (Toronto: The Women’s Press, 1979), 15–45.

²⁸ Michelle Denise Smith, “Model Nation”.

²⁹ See Bingham, *Gender, Modernity, and the Popular Press*, 85; Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak for Her*, vol. 1, 12.

themselves from the pretty girl trope and the limitations inherent in being an unwed “girl.”

Feminine style rhetoric is exemplified in *Canadian Home Journal* texts like “Are Women Sheep?” and “Babies Must Have Fathers” (repudiating the notion that parenting was solely a woman’s responsibility and that “modern woman” was a threat to good mothering)³⁰ and “Women of Canada . . . Wake Up!”³¹ In another piece, “Twentieth Century Women,”³² Margaret Lawrence linked the professionalization of “domestic science” to women’s political liberty, following feminists in the United States.³³ Wives now had control over household finances, she wrote, indicating that this was a recent victory and not to be taken for granted. How was this right to be maintained? In Lawrence’s formulation, the modern home was a “laboratory,” the “centre of an experiment in human relationships,” and “of the utmost importance in future democracies,” a miniature state government ruled by the new modern woman. Experience as household managers was preparing them, Lawrence argued, to take up political office.

Canadian women (with some exceptions) had achieved the vote in federal elections in 1918, had gained legal status as “persons” only in 1929, and saw the first female Senator, Cairine Wilson, appointed in 1930. Meanwhile, married and well-to-do women were being forced out of jobs to alleviate male unemployment during the Depression.³⁴ Glorifying the housewife was not a backward stance, but a necessary compromise given the opposition women faced in the patriarchal public sphere. It was even a progressive stance for those who argued that historically, undervalued women’s work was actually the key to solving national social ills thought to stem from poor homes and bad mothering.³⁵

As Smith has noted, *Canadian Home Journal* (and *Chatelaine*) made frequent references to Canadian pioneer women, making the 1930s homemaker feel like she was the next evolution of the ennobled groundbreaking women before her.³⁶ At the

³⁰ Diana Bourbon, “Babies Must Have Fathers,” *Canadian Home Journal*, January 1936, 15.

³¹ Bengé Atlee, “Are Women Sheep?” *Canadian Home Journal*, November 1931, 8; Alice Harriet Parsons, “Women of Canada . . . Wake Up!” *Canadian Home Journal*, November 1934, 12. The Atlee article bore an illustration by Woods of an allegorical woman, wearing a long gown and high heels vilified in the article, weighed down by a giant burden and dragging an unused wheelbarrow.

³² Margaret Lawrence, “Twentieth Century Woman,” *Canadian Home Journal*, May 1938, 4.

³³ For an American example, see Florence Knapp, “A Woman Politician and Proud of It,” *Ladies Home Journal*, May 1927, 37, 195.

³⁴ Beth Light and Ruth Roach Pierson, *No Easy Road: Women in Canada 1920s to 1960s* (Toronto: New Hogtown Press, 1990); Denyse Baillargeon, “Indispensable but Not a Citizen: The Housewife in the Great Depression,” in Chunn et al., *Contesting Canadian Citizenship*.

³⁵ This argument is advanced by feminist Anne Anderson Perry, “Housekeeping as a Science,” *Canadian Home Journal*, August 1930, 20.

³⁶ Smith, “Model Nation,” 28, 38.

same time, the magazine downplayed the economic devastation of the Depression, rarely addressing the poverty of many readers in words or pictures.³⁷ Instead, The Canadian Woman had cosmetics and ready-to-wear clothes—and a duty to present herself in the most upwardly mobile fashion she could. Although carrying on the work of foremothers, the twentieth century Canadian Woman had at her disposal modern conveniences, so that she would no longer be a “drudge.” That the Canadian Woman was fairly indistinguishable from the ideal housewife presented in American magazine advertising and American feminist rhetoric³⁸ did not garner any comment at all in any magazine I consulted for this dissertation. If anything, similarity bolstered the conviction that such a woman was all the more laudable for being widely accepted.

Criticism of the American Girl

Unfortunately, and ironically, the Typical Canadian Girl, indistinguishable from the Typical American Girl in appearance, was a target for cultural nationalists and American critics alike. Whatever noble intentions the pretty girl might have embodied, she quickly became hackneyed, seeming cheap and insincere in advertising.³⁹ In 1899, *Canadian Druggist* reprinted an article by a New York ad-man complaining of the sexy “corset girls,” the “bicycle coaster,” “bath-tub lady,” “hair lady,” and “the charming ingénue, sawed off right where she begins to look interesting, but wearing a tremendous smile and 7x9 teeth of amazing whiteness. Does the ingénue use all the tooth powders that are manufactured, or do all the tooth powders that are manufactured use the ingénue? She’s getting painfully familiar.”⁴⁰ The author’s choice of words associated the “used” pretty girl with prostitution, in which her smile signified a come-on.

In 1923 the Canadian *Public Health Journal* and *Maclean’s* drew attention to the dangers of imported pulp magazines such as *Saucy Stories* and *Snappy Stories*, which frequently bore pretty girl covers and promised sensual offerings inside.⁴¹ Renditions of the Typical Canadian Girl and the Canadian Woman had to take into account this tarnished reputation of the flirty, commercial American Girl, and generally it seems the Canadian Girl was a less flamboyant figure who smiled less.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 211, 213.

³⁸ My impression of how women were presented in American magazines and in early feminist rhetoric is based on my own perusal of magazines, and on the analyses of Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak For Her*; Kitch, *The Girl on the Magazine Cover*; and Damon-Moore, *Magazines for the Millions*.

³⁹ William L. Clayton’s pulp magazine, *Snappy Stories*, is a good example.

⁴⁰ Charles Austin Bates, “Practical Hints on Advertising,” *Canadian Druggist* 11, no. 7 (October 1899): 241.

⁴¹ *Public Health Journal* quoted in “Salacious Periodicals Scored,” *Maclean’s*, August 15, 1923, 31.

Other elements that contributed to the modesty of the Canadian Girl included the absence of legislated freedom of the press or speech in Canada and therefore little tolerance of pushers of smut; and a lingering prudish streak among Quebec's Roman Catholics and Ontario's Methodist, Baptist, and Quaker Anglophones.⁴² In 1900, for instance, women's groups successfully lobbied the Toronto civic government to ban posters brought in by traveling American Vaudeville acts that exposed bare limbs on public hoardings.⁴³

A contemporary critic of the American Girl was Montreal editorial cartoonist Arthur Racey, who offered in a set of caricatures titled "The American Girl" in *The Moon* in 1902 [Figure 16].⁴⁴ The editors C.W. Jefferys and Knox Magee sarcastically wrote, "As it is the fashion for almost every American Illustrated paper to publish a series of sketches of Typical American Girls, we do not intend to be left behindhand. . . . [Racey's] sketches are more nearly typical of the beauty of the American girl than any other similar art collection heretofore published on this continent."⁴⁵ The six girls were comprised of a buck-toothed, gum-chewing "Society Girl" parody of the Gibson Girl, a grinning African-American woman sarcastically named Pearl, a "Sporty" woman golfer and an "Athletic" horsey woman each in mannish attire, a Jewish woman bedecked like the Society Girl in outsized jewels, and a Native woman with a bottle.

⁴² Canadian conservatism and the compliance of pulp publishers in the 1940s with RCMP censorship is discussed in Strange and Loo, *True Crime True North*.

⁴³ "City Asked To Censor Posters," *Toronto Daily Star*, May 11, 1900, 1.

⁴⁴ Arthur G. Racey, "The American Girl (No. 1)," *The Moon*, June 11, 1902, 27, caricature.

⁴⁵ "Announcement," *The Moon*, June 11, 1902, 27.



THE AMERICAN GIRL.

FINAL ANNOUNCEMENT.

These striking pictures will be artistically reproduced in pink or heavy steel plates, and mounted on melton blue fence board, size 18 by 23 feet. The complete series of six sells for \$380.33, and are strictly limited to nine million copies. A few million only will be specially signed by the artist, price \$1000.23 per set. Nearly all are sold in advance. The remainder are bound to go fast now the announcement of their publication is definitely made.

Figure 16. A.G. Racey, "The American Girl: Final Announcement," *The Moon*, July 26, 1902, 126.

The racial stereotypes were clearly intended to decry the United States' more ethnically diverse population (at a time when Canada was controversially only just beginning to admit non-British immigrants). The captions that accompany the Society Girl and the Jewish woman give warning to the presumed white male reader

to not be fooled by their tastelessly gaudy jewelry and their families' prominence, and in the Jewish woman's case, by her ability to pass off as Aryan:

Sweet Sylvia, how your pa does slave
To trap with cash some noble knave—
For son-in-law.⁴⁶

Fair, sweet Rebecca!—Beware of imitation—
Her pa is pillar of Uncle Sam's great nation.⁴⁷

Making clear that the American Girl represented commercial enticements in mass outdoor advertising and the prostitution of art used for commerce, the series concluded with a mock advertisement in which it was announced that the series would be issued as billboards selling for \$380.33 per set, "strictly limited to nine million copies," of which "A few million only will be specially signed by the artist, price \$1000.23 per set."⁴⁸

Despite Racey's distaste for the American Girl, "Beauty" itself remained unbesmirched.⁴⁹ By rendering ugliness, Racey backhandedly confirmed that legitimate Beauty existed somewhere; otherwise there would have been nothing upon which to build a joke. This subliminally provoked the reader to imagine what "true" beauty would look like—and given the *The Moon's* editorial policy and the parodic element in the series, the answer would be, "The Canadian Girl."

As a contrast to the eugenically suspect six American Girls, and the generic pretty girls appearing on Canadian products, the Canadian Girl must be truly white, without pretensions to a class she was not born to, free of pecuniary thirsts, and certainly without the fakery of cosmetics. Such a Girl appeared on the very next cover of *The Moon*.⁵⁰ Presumably calling her "The Canadian Girl" would have been slavishly imitative, so she appeared instead as an ironic "Summer Girl of 1902" [Figure 17]—ironic, because "summer girl" usually denoted a conventional pretty girl in revealing summer clothes, in fine weather.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Racey, "The American Girl (No. 1)."

⁴⁷ Arthur G. Racey, "The American Girl (No. 5)," *The Moon*, July 12, 1902, cover illustration.

⁴⁸ Arthur G. Racey, "The American Girl: Final Announcement," *The Moon*, July 26, 1902, 126, caricature.

⁴⁹ My references to beauty throughout refer to an average type as was presented in visual culture of the years under discussion.

⁵⁰ C. W. Jefferys, "The Summer Girl of 1902," *The Moon*, August 2, 1902, cover illustration.

⁵¹ The regular definition of "summer girl" is learned from other cartoons and copy in *The Moon*.



Figure 17. Jefferys' unsmiling Canadian girl eschews the glamour of the American girl, and inhabits a wilderness landscape. C.W. Jefferys, "The Summer Girl of 1902," *The Moon*, August 2, 1902, 1. W.D. Jordan Library Special Collections and Music Library, Queen's University.

Drawn by Jefferys, *this* Summer Girl is a pleasant-looking but pointedly unsmiling young woman who walks in a rainy, undeveloped wilderness setting, clothed unpretentiously in what might be a man's voluminous overcoat, strolling informally with one hand in pocket—the exact opposite of the overly posed, sultry looks of the usual pretty girl faces with their "toothpaste smiles." Although Racey's caricatures reject American glamour on the surface, the preservation of a notion of ideal beauty embodied in a young woman betrays a desire to have what Americans have anyway.

Paradoxically, Jefferys' *Summer Girl* is both like and unlike the American Girl: not a glamour girl, but a desirable girl nonetheless.

But such interventions were in the minority in *The Moon*. Despite Jefferys' stated intention to provide a Canadian alternative to illustrated humour magazines that were "so intensely 'American' that they are always objectionable,"⁵² the high number of un-ironic Gibson-like cartoons in *The Moon* by a variety of illustrators (including social satire by a young Arthur William Brown), was a paradox that would continue to characterize Canadian visual culture.

The demonization of the American press as an agent of annexation also continued. In 1927, Canadian writer Lewis Wharton compared the presence of American media in Canada to a Trojan horse containing "warriors of the tongue and cheque book," who would obtain the desires of the throng "by subterfuge and by waving dollars before greedy eyes." He warned of the conquest of the Canadian mind through the "hysterical extravagances of our neighbours to the south,"⁵³ protesting that "their magazines (many violently anti-British) snigger, bellow or bleat at us from our news stands . . . many of them are so studiously pornographic as to constitute a standing source of corruption. . . a perpetual paean of things "American" assaults our eyes . . ." ⁵⁴ The open sexuality was especially irksome to him:

An orgy of sex problems and countless pictures of foolish, unbridled youth scream at us from their advertisements and billboards . . . their cartoons meet us everywhere, the careers of our own artists being thereby hindered or ruined. . . The vulgarity, poverty of invention and the lack of anything remotely resembling humour in most of them is fearful . . . ⁵⁵

Casting the threat in shades of annexation, he concluded, "many [of the cartoons] would seem to be part of definite propaganda against the English." ⁵⁶

Wharton may not have been wrong, because coincidentally, that same year Arthur William Brown received a fan letter from an Ottawa teen, who wanted to become a commercial artist herself.⁵⁷ It included her own sketches of flappers who lived up to Heming's description of Miss Civilization, dripping with affected sophistication and melodramatic angst, with due attention to cigarette holder,

⁵² C. W., *The Moon*, May 28, 1902, 11.

⁵³ Wharton, "The Conquest of Canada," 55.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Marjorie G. Osborne of Ottawa to Arthur William Brown, August 28, 1927, Brown Fonds, Society of Illustrators.

risqué bare-back gown, bobbed and waved hair and hats, exploring the aesthetic possibilities of melodramatic weeping [Figure 18].



Figure 18: Marjorie G. Osborne of Ottawa, Aug. 28, 1927. Arthur William Brown Fonds, New York Society of Illustrators.

The confluence of sex, commercialism, print media, and American identity apparent in the work of the expatriates Brown and Patterson in this period justifies the criticisms of Canadian intellectuals and cultural nationalists. Beauty contests had become a standard of small-town fairs by the 1920s,⁵⁸ while *Canadian Home Journal* in 1929 alleged that “daddy hunters”—pretty young con artists cum gold diggers—were a menace.⁵⁹ Scarcely two years later, *Canadian Home Journal* ran a story profiling bachelors’ impressions of the “modern girl”—illustrated by Norman J. Fontaine⁶⁰ with a clear plagiarism of Patterson’s style, evident in the swift, fine lines, flat shapes, ray-beam, and fashion-plate poses [Figure 19] (Fontaine was still illustrating for the *Journal* as late as 1935).⁶¹ *The Goblin*, Canada’s equivalent of the

⁵⁸ Gordon Sinclair, “Beauty Contests Are the Bunk,” *Maclean’s*, October 15, 1949, 16, 45, 48.

⁵⁹ Margaret Gordon, “Beware of the Daddy Hunters,” *Canadian Home Journal*, October 1929, 10–11, 109.

⁶⁰ All efforts to further identify Norman Fontaine have failed.

⁶¹ Norman J. Fontaine, in Ellen Evelyn Mackie, “Bachelors Turn the Spotlight on the Modern Girl,” *Canadian Home Journal*, October 1931, 6–7, illustration; see also multiple illustrations

American *College Humor* that cemented Brown's and Patterson's flapper-era reputations, also bore Patterson-like illustration, by Victor Child (1897-1960).



Figure 19. Russell Patterson was emulated in Canadian magazines. Norman J. Fontaine, illustration for Ellen Evelyn Mackie, “Bachelors Turn the Spotlight on the Modern Girl,” *Canadian Home Journal* (Oct. 1931), 6-7. By permission of Rogers Communications.

Wharton had a point, but to George Locke—the student of Dewey who had framed Robertson’s visual culture picture collection as “national art”—Wharton overstated matters. In a *Canadian Home Journal* article of 1927, Locke argued that prurient print was not as accessible as conservatives made out; that popular pulp fiction was no evil compared to tabloid news; that people could be trusted to make their own decisions; and that many Canadians had influenced American literature, the cultural flow was not a one-way street.⁶² Accordingly, while not all of Brown’s or Patterson’s work would have pleased Locke, their productions represented the breadth that freedom of expression entailed.

by Norman J. Fontaine in F. E. Baily, “The Yes Girl,” *Canadian Home Journal*, September 1931, 6-7; as well as two other stories that same year and sporadically thereafter as late as 1935.

⁶² George Locke, “Continental Aspect of Canadian Literature,” *Canadian Home Journal*, March 1927, 15, 82.

The fact that Canadian illustrators such as Arthur William Brown and Russell Patterson were helping lead the business of pretty girl art, and that Canadian audiences were purchasing American magazines in droves, challenges the idea that “things ‘American’” were un-Canadian. Rather, it points to a difference between a prescribed ideal of culture and the actual practice of that culture. While cultural nationalists attempted to infuse the arts with something “native of the soil,” most Canadian magazine covers resembled American ones, using American illustrators and Canadian illustrators whose work was indistinguishable from American fare. On one hand the similarity was merely a bid to compete by adopting the most desirable of American lifestyles to Canadian contexts. On the other, American-looking content appealed to the shared values and Canadian national narratives that, in part, resonated with certain American symbols and values. I will turn now to how the pretty girl cover illustrations of Rex Woods expressed both continentalist values and Canadian development.

Rex Woods and The Canadian Woman, 1930-1947

All Canadian magazines with a female readership, like American magazines, used (mostly) wholesome pretty girl subjects on the covers. Rex Woods created all the illustrated pretty-girl covers of the nationalistic *Canadian Home Journal*, 144 of them, between October 1930 and November 1947. Unfortunately, I could not access Woods’ fonds being inaccessible; The Royal Ontario Museum where they are held declined several requests for access between 2009 and 2013. My study of Rex Woods’ oeuvre is mainly based upon interviews with Woods’ closest living relative, Julie Clark; and on Clark’s extensive family archives, which include Woods’ personal correspondence and samples of his *Canadian Home Journal* covers. I also consulted complete *Canadian Home Journal* copies in libraries.

Of Rex Woods’ covers, 129 (86%) depicted a little girl or woman, and 115 (89%) of this group could be considered “Canadian” women.⁶³ Woods also illustrated a boy-girl story inside almost every issue from the 1920s to the 1950s. He therefore had a considerable effect on how glamour illustration was perceived and deployed in a Canadian nationalist context. Woods was influenced by American illustrators, but his illustrations—carefully vetted by Canadian editors and accepted by Canadian readers—are reflective of Anglo-Canadian values. Woods’ pretty girl illustrations contextualized and sold the upward mobility of the Canadian Woman as

⁶³ Deciding what depictions could be showing a “Canadian” is subjective. I excluded historical figures (Mary and Jesus, Anne Boleyn, etc.), period figures (18th century types), figures in national dress of other nations (Mexico, The Netherlands, Scotland, Russia, etc.), and Britannia. I included figures in fancy dress (bunny costume) and figures in unusual occupations (circus performer, aviator).

a nationalistic democratic enterprise by giving a carefully selected North American style a subtle Canadian accent.⁶⁴

Woods was the most successful Canadian pretty girl illustrator in Canada. Besides his work for *Canadian Home Journal*, he also supplied covers and interior fiction illustration for *Maclean's* throughout the 1950s, and interior illustrations for *Chatelaine* too.⁶⁵ In June 1930, *Canadian Home Journal* circulated 131,998 issues, compared to *Chatelaine's* 113,364, *National Home Monthly's* 103,412, and *Ladies Home Journal's* 100,228.⁶⁶ Winnipeg-based *National Home Monthly* in the 1930s and 1940s offered some competition with cover art by printing pretty girl heads by Canadian Hall Smith; other magazines employed Canadians Grant MacDonald, W.V. Chambers, Carl Shreve, Jack Keay, Aileen Richardson, Jack Bush, Mabel McDermott, William Book and others for pretty girl and boy-girl subjects (and many Americans besides). But none of these Canadians matched Woods' perfection of the American "bread-and-butter" style: the polished mainstream technique closely associated with advertising (discussed below).⁶⁷ Scholar Robert Stacey and illustration art expert Walt Reed both judge Rex Woods to have been on par with the best mainstream American illustrators.⁶⁸

Woods' glamorization of the Canadian Woman must be seen in relation to editorial direction and public demand for the mounting wave of American glamour featured in other magazines and films. In 1927, a *Canadian Home Journal* article titled "Is There A Typical Canadian Woman?" focused on her personality and activities and did not dwell on what she *looked* like. The author ascribed to her common sense and thrift, said she was impervious to radical politics like suffrage, and that she was patriotic, conservative, devout; as a nurse, steadier of nerve than American nurses; cheerful, kind, sincere; and "more English than the American," but

⁶⁴ Unfortunately, there is still comparatively little information available on Woods due to his fonds being inaccessible; my information is drawn from a private family collection in England. The Royal Ontario Museum declined several requests for access between 2009 and 2013.

⁶⁵ I am indebted to Erin Wall for compiling an incomplete list of Woods' interior illustrations.

⁶⁶ J. A. Stevenson, "American Periodical Literature," in *Canada and Her Great Neighbor: Sociological Surveys of Opinions and Attitudes in Canada Concerning the United States*, ed. H. F. Angus (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1938), 162–163.

⁶⁷ The technique seems to have been so normalized that it had no name. "Bread-and-butter" was applied later by Stephen Baker, *Advertising Layout and Art Direction* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959). In more recent years, this look has been referred to as "Apple Pie" and "Rockwellian" because of its forced optimism. However, the latter is a misnomer for Rockwell's covers (but not his advertising), since Rockwell's painting technique was not as generic and his characters were considerably more individualized than bread-and-butter usually allows for.

⁶⁸ Robert Stacey, "Rex Woods" (speech, Canadian Association of Photographers and Illustrators in Commerce (CAPIC), Toronto Arts and Letters Club, Toronto, 1997), collection of Julie Clark; Reed, conversation with author, 2009.

also “more of the New World than the Englishwoman.”⁶⁹ Said the author, evoking the wilderness ideal, “To see a Canadian girl in bright sports array, guiding a canoe over a northern lake, is one of the fairest sights in August.” Only three brief references in the long article were to facial beauty and all were in reference to character, not beauty for its own sake: one referred to Quebec girls’ “demure and brunette beauty” while comparing them to the patriotic and chaste fiction heroine Maria Chapdelaine (discussed in Chapter 5). The second referred to “the health which shows itself in bright eyes and glowing cheeks.” The third—the closing line—recounted a woman collecting apples in an orchard, with “dark hair, hazel eyes and flushed cheeks . . . strong, hopeful and bright, a force which makes for peace and happiness among the nations.”⁷⁰ Two small spot illustrations, simple line drawings of a golfer and a diver in a swim-suit and socks, implied the Canadian Woman was slim and sporty. Neither illustration used any visual language cues for glamour such as close-ups of groomed faces, bare legs on the diver,⁷¹ *contrapposto* pose, or direct come-on gaze [Figure 20]. The lithe diver is presented as a figure of health rather than allure.

⁶⁹ Jean Graham, “Is There a Typical Canadian Woman?” *Canadian Home Journal*, June, 1927, 7, 96.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 96.

⁷¹ Stockings on bathers were a key measure of respectability and test of local laws: they had been mandatory in the early 1920s but were falling out of favour by 1927; Latham, *Posing A Threat*.

1940s.⁷² Magazines provided consistently contradictory messages: on the one hand, respectable women were encouraged to cultivate their looks but stop short of overt glamour and class pretension. On the other, magazines ran beauty columns and advertisements that depicted heavily groomed Hollywood types.

Cultivation of beauty was increasingly framed as a patriotic duty. A 1932 *Chatelaine* article, provocatively titled, “Is the Canadian Woman Better Dressed than her American Sister?”⁷³ anxiously compared Canadian women’s fashion sense with that of Americans, only to snobbishly conclude that American college girls looked more like actresses than actresses did (actresses then still suffering the centuries-old stigma of sex workers despite their rising influence). According to this article, Canadians dressed with more individuality, whereas New Yorkers of all classes except the richest slavishly adopted cheap knockoffs of Paris fads.

In 1934, when Paris introduced the first strapless and deep décolleté gowns, *Chatelaine*’s fashion expert referred to them as “the new nudity” and speculated that because of “our traditional conservatism” the gowns would not be immediately adopted—a lady who viewed samples at the Canadian National Exhibition called them “shocking” and insisted no respectable woman would wear them.⁷⁴ In the same year, portrait painter Sir Wylie Grier declared that women should not bob hair or pluck brows.⁷⁵

The emphasis on Canadian wholesomeness compared to presumed American bad taste occurred again in a 1935 article supposedly by beauty product magnate Helena Rubenstein.⁷⁶ She asserted that “each land has its own typical woman who thinks, looks and acts like herself and no one else,” and described a run-of-the-mill Canadian, “Mrs. Chumley:” “tall, slim, blonde, with long capable hands and a fresh, outdoor look that makes one think of October and hunting. She is poles apart from . . . the typical American young woman—restless, unanchored, and somewhat naïve.”⁷⁷ Her outdoor look domesticated by basic neatness, Mrs. Chumley was still girlishly unconscious of her looks, happy to put her husband’s career and the household duties before all else, raising perfect children, “serenely happy” and “reassuringly normal,” which was quite “typical” of her English ancestry.⁷⁸ But Rubenstein warned

⁷² “Holiday Stills,” *New Liberty*, December 27, 1947, 32.

⁷³ Gwentyth Barrington, “Is the Canadian Woman Better Dressed than Her American Sister?” *Chatelaine*, March 1932, 7.

⁷⁴ Elton Johnson, “This ‘New Nudity,’” *Chatelaine*, November 1934, 12–13.

⁷⁵ Edward Dix, “What Makes a Woman Beautiful?” *Chatelaine*, August 1934, 6–7.

⁷⁶ Rubenstein, who had no Canadian background, may have collaborated with *Chatelaine*’s editors to tailor the article to a Canadian perspective, as they had done with the contributions of American Ruby Short McKim; Grove, “A Castle of One’s Own,” 177.

⁷⁷ Helena Rubenstein, “A Canadian Woman,” *Chatelaine*, September 1935, 30.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

of a danger in retaining such laudable Canadian prudishness: Mrs. Chumley's husband might wander if she didn't pay more attention to her appearances. A barrage of beauty tips followed, and a facing page advertised Cutex nail polish.⁷⁹

Rich, judgmental descriptions like that of unillustrated Mrs. Chumley encouraged the reader to use her imagination to visualize what she, or the reader herself, ought to look like. In this way, readers did exactly what illustrators did, short of putting pencil to paper. By guiding the reader's visual interpretation of the text, cover and interior illustrations therefore helped the reader to engage with textual editorial and advertising messages, and to blur them, where those messages then became something that she customized and completed herself in a way that pleased her, in her mind's eye.

Increasingly, the messages presented American examples. Only three months after the Mrs. Chumley article, readers of the regular beauty column were instructed to study Hollywood examples for make-up tips.⁸⁰ Meanwhile, a writer for the more counter-culture youth-oriented magazine *The New Goblin*, trying to pinpoint what made a Canadian woman beautiful in 1934, acknowledged that the standard of the day for youth was the Ziegfeld Follies, the George White Scandals chorus, Mae West, Greta Garbo, and all the Miss Americas (who at that time were tawdrily crowned while wearing bathing suits).⁸¹ Of course, this rendition of Heming's "bad" Miss Civilization was bound to reappear—but by 1938 she was a bit of a figure of envy—because she was associated with advertising, as one article reveals:

Glamour Girls. . . the advertising business has stolen the thunder of "show business" as an automatic way of investing the fiction heroine with glamor, and . . . we frequently read of a Bright Young Thing behind a copy desk, coining money hand over fist, surrounded by artists and handsome young executives fairly dazzled by her brilliant ideas!⁸²

But being glamorous was not yet entirely compatible with social respectability. According to an informal poll conducted by a University of Toronto class about the time that the above article was published, 57 of the total 113 respondents said a glamour girl was not likely a lady—even though 48 couldn't rule it out.⁸³ The majority was sure a lady would not use obvious makeup, and many objected to dark nail polish. A "lady" was "defined as 'a person of refinement,' 'a well-bred cultured person,'" but "not the shrinking violet type;" she ought to be both

⁷⁹ Ibid., 32.

⁸⁰ Annabelle Lee, "Your Hidden Beauty," *Chatelaine*, December 1935, 36.

⁸¹ Dix, "What Makes a Woman Beautiful?" 6–7.

⁸² Grace Garner, "Advertising As a Career," *Canadian Home Journal*, January 1938, 2.

⁸³ Alice Harriet Parsons, "Should Girls Be Ladies?" *Canadian Home Journal*, April 1938, 8–9, 69, 74.

reserved and friendly. Interestingly, in a ranking of what qualities were most important to a lady, being well-dressed, vivacious and beautiful were well down on the list, while social status came in dead last:

1. Personality – 88 votes
2. Charm – 47
3. Amusing Conversationalist – 39
4. Ladylike Qualities – 29
5. Ability to dress well – 24
6. Vitality – 23
7. Money – 21
8. Beauty – 17
9. Skill at Sports – 17
10. Culture – 13
11. Vivacity – 12
12. Cleverness – 10
13. Education – 9
14. Social Status – 7⁸⁴

Most of the criteria—personality, charm, conversational skill, education, etc.—were harder to represent in an illustration than the less-important but easily depicted factors such as dress, beauty, sports, and luxury goods, which again spelled a focus on appearances over character and action in images.

The reserved but pleasant visages of the majority of Rex Woods' well-dressed women established his *Canadian Woman's* status as a "lady;" the cover for April 1937 is representative [Figure 21].⁸⁵ The cover for the issue that featured the above poll, however, toed the line between glamour-puss and lady, with a pastel head and shoulders portrait [Figure 22].⁸⁶ One shoulder is obviously nude while the other is indistinct, possibly but by no means certainly draped in cloth. Given that strapless and half-strapless gowns had not yet gained acceptance, the girl in this case was in a state of daring *dishabille* made demure by her modestly downcast eyes and ducked head. The question posed by this illustration of where to draw the line on decency, when paired with the byline of the story that runs at the bottom of the cover ("Should Girls Be Ladies?"), effectively asked the reader to judge whether a girl could be semi-naked and still be a lady.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 74.

⁸⁵ Rex Woods, *Canadian Home Journal*, April 1937, cover illustration.

⁸⁶ Rex Woods, *Canadian Home Journal*, April 1938, cover illustration.



Figure 21. A typical Canadian Woman by Rex Woods, rendered in bread-and-butter style, and featuring an unsmiling “lady” with fashionable hat and gloves. Rex Woods, [cover illustration], *Canadian Home Journal*, April 1937. By permission of Rogers Communications.



Figure 22. Here, the Canadian Woman hovers between the demure and the risqué. Rex Woods, [cover illustration], *Canadian Home Journal*, April 1938. Toronto Reference Library. By permission of Rogers Communications.

Predictably, the article supported ladylike qualities. Most people on the poll, however, readily agreed that “ladies” dated less than more glamorous girls. To help her glamour quotient, of the 115 Canadian Woman figures by Woods, 20% wore décolleté evening gowns or exceedingly smart outfits, and sometimes had dashing male companions. Occasionally they appeared in revealing swimsuits (8%), or exotically as an *ancien regime* courtesan on Valentine’s Day, as Cleopatra, as a circus

performer riding an elephant, or with a mermaid (11%). Glamorous and whimsical, the covers did not match the fiction inside, which, as Smith has found, emphasized a modest Canadian lifestyle where family duties were paramount. The covers did, however, complement the concurrent increase Smith finds in coverage of Hollywood and more worldly interests.⁸⁷ I contend that the editors selected Woods' covers to appeal to women's private aspirations for the glamorous life as pictured in American magazines (such as Arthur William Brown depicted, Chapter 2). This amounts to a form of continentalism: it allowed *Canadian Home Journal* to compete with those American magazines as they jostled for space and attention on the newsstands, and to appeal to women's interest in American standards—but in Canadian terms.

Rex Woods and the bread-and-butter style

By achieving the same skill and styles seen in American mass periodicals and advertising, Rex Woods built upon prior Canadian comfort with American illustration (competitor publisher Maclean-Hunter had been using American illustrators for the previous three decades, and American periodicals outsold Canadian ones). His work dovetailed with the emerging Canadian demand for American-style glamour. Being English-born, Rex Woods would have been immune to accusations from nationalists of disloyalty to the Crown for copying Americans. This freed him to render Canadian women as equivalents of American women in taste, beauty, and prosperity such as the beauty columns cited above were promoting. For Woods, such continentalism was an extension of the democratic value of self-realization.

Woods himself had benefited from contact with New York, seeking American technique and fashion there after training in English and Canadian art.⁸⁸ It was probably when he joined the Society of Illustrators in April 1935 that Woods met Arthur William Brown and Russell Patterson and other leading girl illustrators, who autographed a large paper (a napkin?) that he later framed and kept displayed in his apartment.⁸⁹ In 1946, a Canadian paper reported, "His cover girls are outstanding because he has made himself an authority on modern beauty"—just as Brown and

⁸⁷ Smith, "Model Nation," 33, 215–216.

⁸⁸ Woods started his training at Gainsborough School of Art, England, in the years 1917–1919, and had taken correspondence courses with British illustrator John Hassall. In the 1920s he ventured to Toronto (where he had an uncle in business) and studied at the Ontario College of Art. He apprenticed at Rolph-Clark-Stone lithographers. Woods to Aunt Nance [Annie Woods] and Aunt Marion [Woods], February 12, 1976, 1, collection of Julie Clark; Woods to Aunt Nance and Aunt Marion, November 4, 1976, 1, collection of Julie Clark; Woods to Aunt Marion, December 6, 1979, 5, collection of Julie Clark.

⁸⁹ Other pretty-girl artists signing included James Montgomery Flagg, Wladislaw Benda, and McLelland Barclay. Photograph documenting signed paper in collection of Julie Clark. Original presumed to be in the Royal Ontario Museum.

Patterson had. He shared with them (and with American pretty girl and boy-girl illustrators Jon Whitcomb and Al Parker) a love of popular theatre,⁹⁰ and he amassed Hollywood glamour photos in his picture files.⁹¹ Like pretty girl illustrators in New York, Woods married another arts professional, Jeanne Fontaine (1902-1996) (her biography, incidentally, is consistent with the climb out of poverty through modeling and the entertainment industry that I described in Chapter 2).⁹² Woods' formal photographic portrait by Everett Roseborough (circa 1945; in the collection of Julie Clark) shows him holding his brushes before a portrait of a young, pretty Princess Elizabeth, suggesting he took considerable professional pride in his work and saw it as an important social service, not incompatible with Tory social life at all.

The bread-and-butter look as seen on the cover for April 1937 above excelled at golden colour harmonies. Well defined modeling with strong highlights and fill lights, and illusionistic rendering of skin, glass, fabric, and metal. It especially (in American advertising) emphasized characters happily beaming good health and energy with the pictured products they endorsed. The bread-and-butter technique was originally derived from the painterliness of portraitist John Singer Sargent and from the work of prior pretty-girl illustrators Howard Chandler Christy and Harrison Fisher, and then slicked up with the precision of J.C. Leyendecker's *Post* paintings (whose technique and iconography Woods deliberately appropriated on occasion).⁹³

Bread-and-butter technique by the 1930s had come to depend very heavily on the use of photography, in the manner Arthur William Brown had pioneered (Rex Woods' studio contained extensive source photography of his own as well as life drawings, roughs, and a large morgue of movie stills and tearsheets).⁹⁴ Illustrators using this technique would make preliminary sketches for composition, and their models were then asked to enact the sketched scene wearing costumes as close to

⁹⁰ Woods to Aunt Marion, May 9, 1978, and June 15, 1978, collection of Julie Clark.

⁹¹ Stacey, CAPIC speech, 1997.

⁹² Based on government records and other verifiable sources, Rex Woods' cousin Julie Clark reports: "Jeanne was born Etheldreda Mott, of Irish descent, with one grandfather a farmer and the other a coal smith. Her father died when she was one, leaving her mother with three small children. At 5, she gained a stepfather (her name is recorded as Ethel Cogan) but his death, followed later by her mother's when she was fourteen, left her with maternal grandparents caring for her. Adopting the name Jeanne Fontaine, she became a dancer with the New York Metropolitan Opera. She met Woods, maybe while modeling at the Ontario College of Art, and they married in 1928. Now Mrs. Rex Woods, she introduced Desiree as an alternative Christian name, but was known for the majority of her life as Jeanne." Clark, email to author, January 17, 2014).

⁹³ E.g., the cover of the January 1935 *Canadian Home Journal* depicts Father Time and infant New Year that Leyendecker had popularized.

⁹⁴ Stacey, CAPIC speech, 1997.

the final product as possible; and also to pose live. This source material was combined with a carefully researched background and props from life or from a photo morgue (Woods likely used the one at the Toronto Reference Library as well as his own). The illustrator may have used a projector to compose the elements, and then the final art was finished in oil, gouache, pastel, or less frequently, watercolour. The finish could be near photographic, or “buttery” in the manner of Haddon Sundblom, who made all the advertising artists employed in his Chicago studio master his technique, since it was in demand with major clients like Coca-Cola.⁹⁵ In the 1940s Sundblom’s protégé Gil Elvgren cemented the relationship between the buttery handling and girl art with his famous pin-ups, while another Sundblom protégé, Andrew Loomis, later spread the look through his bestselling, authoritative how-to books of the 1940s.⁹⁶

This mainstream style was the visual badge of the democratic American Dream in all its cheery, unabashed assumption that prosperity and social standing were within everyone’s reach.⁹⁷ For Woods and his wife, the Dream *was* valid. Coming from a family of tradesmen to Toronto, Woods had achieved a level of renown and economic security through talent and hard work while Jeanne Fontaine danced her way out of poverty.

Woods’ cousin testifies that “Rex saw the best in everyone.” Pressed for detail on whether she meant the best in people’s looks or the best in their personalities, she replied, “Both.”⁹⁸ In finding glamour and grace in everybody he painted and met, Woods spoke to human potential regardless of social distinction. From a continentalist point of view, when Woods copied American precedents and Canadians consumed them, Canadians’ sense of difference from class-ridden British society was enhanced, and this was an important ingredient in the growing movement towards Canadian autonomy and social shift away from imperial direction of Canadian affairs.

⁹⁵ Haddon Sundblom, J. R. Taylor and Barbara F. Charles, *Dream of Santa: Haddon Sundblom's Vision* (Washington: Staples and Charles, 1994).

⁹⁶ E.g., Andrew Loomis, *Creative Illustration* (New York: Viking Press, 1947); Andrew Loomis, *Figure Drawing for All It's Worth* (New York: The Viking Press, 1943).

⁹⁷ For a related discussion see “capital realism” in Michael Schudson, *Advertising, the Uneasy Persuasion: Its Dubious Impact on American Society* (New York: Basic Books, 1984). For analysis of imagery and mythology in American advertising, see Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920–1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); Roland Marchand, *Creating the Corporate Soul: The Rise of Public Relations and Corporate Imagery in American Big Business* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); T. J. Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).

⁹⁸ Julie Clark drew from her mother’s manuscripts and from interviews with her and relayed my questions to her mother and sent me answers by email (November 13–21, December 10, 2011).

Woods' own attentiveness to North American-style democratic ideals is revealed in a letter he wrote to his family describing an incident at a formal dinner where the daughter of a titled lady was a guest. The juveniles were to be seated at a separate table. Rex reports, "But young Simon would have none of it! . . . So an extra place was set at the grown ups table and his personality was quite unmistakable amongst us. How's that for demonstrating his unconcern with social stratas [sic] and pedigrees? Good for him. And Canada is as good a place as any in which to be democratic."⁹⁹ Woods also came to harbor a negative view of imperialism:

While I was still employed at Rolph-Clark-Stone [in the 1920s], I designed a calendar for Continental Life [Insurance Company], which interpreted the company's slogan at that time, which was "Broad as the Continent and Strong as the Empire"!! How things change. At that time Canada was dominated by the WASP establishment . . . The British Empire reigned. My illustration for the calendar showed a large terrestrial globe, with the figure of Britannia using a pair of calipers or dividers to measure the breadth of Canada on the North American continent!! The large Union Jack flew in the background! Ah! The days of innocence and naive youth.¹⁰⁰

Woods' adoption of the most American of illustration forms was not un-Canadian; it simply put a face on the equality and opportunity for prosperity that North America afforded those who could assimilate into mainstream society through its rich resources and its leveling of classes. Celebrating glamour acknowledged the role beauty played symbolically and economically for Caucasian Anglophone women (like his wife) as part of that growth.

Canadian difference in Rex Woods' pretty girl illustration

So far I have described how Rex Woods resembled his New York counterparts. But he was different too—and this provides evidence for arguments put forward by some theorists of Canadian culture that Canadians make Americana their own and in doing so subvert American forms and assert Canadian autonomy.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Woods to Marion Woods and Sid Woods, May 19, 1968, 7, collection of Julie Clark.

¹⁰⁰ Woods to Aunt Marion, August 22, 1978, 7, collection of Julie Clark.

¹⁰¹ Aniko Bodroghkossy, "As Canadian As Possible: Anglo-Canadian Popular Culture and the American Other," in *Hop on Pop: The Pleasures and Politics of Popular Culture*, ed. Henry Jenkins, Tara McPherson, and Jane Shattuc (Durham, NC: Duke University Press Books, 2003), 566; Paul Rutherford, "Made in America: The Problem of Mass Culture," in *The Beaver Bites Back? American Popular Culture in Canada*, ed. David H. Flaherty (Montreal: McGill Queen's University Press, 1993); Frank E. Manning, "Reversible Resistance: Canadian Popular Culture and the American Other," in Flaherty, *The Beaver Bites Back?*

The most noticeably Canadian images were Woods' ten covers containing some indication of British allegiance. Indeed, a family member affirms Woods' English identity was dear to him, perhaps all the more so for having been an emigrant.¹⁰² Often the British element in his work was subtle, such as the March, 1941 cover depicting a woman wearing a bracelet of Union Jack flags as she consults a blueprint with her husband; the implication was that success at war would preserve the democratic institutions that permitted a liberal, progressive North American lifestyle [Figure 23]. On occasion, however, the British identity was proudly announced, as in the ennobled figure of Britannia with the British lion at her feet toasting King George V (for his Silver Jubilee) [Figure 24], and the May 1937 cover depicting the Crown Jewels and the British coat of arms with the title "God Save the King," (for the coronation of King George VI).

¹⁰² Julie Clark writes, "It's interesting that in the later stages of his career, he chose to paint important events in the history of Canada. It's as if he was determined to leave proof, catalogued, that he did not let his family down when he came to Canada, that he was useful. He was immensely proud of his roots, both his family history and his English heritage. He was interested in everything to do with Britain, from the Beatles to the Royal family." Email to author, January 15, 2014.



Figure 23. The Canadian Woman demonstrates upward mobility and allegiance to Britain. Rex Woods, [cover illustration], *Canadian Home Journal*, March, 1941. Toronto Reference Library. By permission of Rogers Communications.



Figure 24. Rex Woods, [cover illustration], *Canadian Home Journal*, May, 1935. By permission of Rogers Communications.

Unlike Brown and Patterson, Woods did not embrace attention, fame, or fortune. Robert Stacey noted that Woods had never answered any of Stacey's calls or letters, despite following Stacey's published research on poster designs.¹⁰³ Even when privately sharing news with his beloved aunt that he was being awarded an

¹⁰³ Stacey, CAPIC speech, 1997.

Honorary Lifetime Membership in a historical society, Woods apologized, “I hope this doesn’t sound like self-promotion.”¹⁰⁴ Woods did not settle into a rote signature style; consequently, no “Woods Girl” emerged, which would have called attention to the creator as did a Gibson Girl, Petty Girl, Varga Girl, Benda Girl, Patterson Girl.

Woods gently disrupted magazine norms of ethnicity on seven *Canadian Home Journal* covers (5%). On those, the women were Spanish, Mexican, Russian, Dutch or other ethnicity. In comparison, *Chatelaine* and *National Home Monthly* cover girls by other illustrators showed no ethnic diversity at all.¹⁰⁵ Also unusual was Woods’ cover for November 1937 depicting a middle-aged woman with slightly greying hair.

Nor was Woods above poking fun at stereotypical Mounties, about whom Arthur Heming was concurrently so serious (Chapter 3). For a Dominion Day issue, a Mountie—one as handsome as they always were on American pulp fiction covers and in Heming’s work—is the object of a female gaze [Figure 25].¹⁰⁶ Woods may have seen a *Life* cover from the 1923 “Canadian Number” on the same theme, titled “Get Your Man.”¹⁰⁷ The Mountie’s stern deportment and purposeful step in Woods’ iteration indicates the Mountie is chastely duty bound, oblivious to his admirers, much as the *Life* Mountie stands heroically, back turned to enterprising ladies assembled to compete for him. Where the *Life* ladies seem like rivals, Woods’ women appear to be friends sharing admiration of the Mountie—or do they? Their conspiratorial huddle, appraising eyes and slight smiles teeter on the edge of mockery of the Mountie’s somewhat pompous bearing. This, and the Mountie’s imperviousness to their charms, undermined his manliness even as his iconicity was iterated, constituting an ironic appropriation of stock Americana for Canadians who knew Mounties first-hand as regular people.

¹⁰⁴ Woods to Aunt Marion, May 24, 1979, 5, collection of Julie Clark; D. T. Birch, Secretary of the British Columbia Commemorative Royal Engineer Society, to Ivan R. Scott, Confederation Life Insurance Company, April 16, 1979, copy in collection of Julie Clark.

¹⁰⁵ Donna Braggins reports that, in her content analysis of *Maclean’s* covers 1945–1967, no ethnic “other” was depicted at all, except for ten photographs and illustrations of Inuit, which she argues helped construct national identification with the north. She overlooked an eleventh, a rare dignified, unromanticized West Coast First Nations fisherman by Arbuckle for September 15, 1951; Braggins, “Maclean’s: The Accidental Nationalist,” 128.

¹⁰⁶ Rex Woods, *Canadian Home Journal*, July 1934, cover illustration.

¹⁰⁷ C. F. Peters, “Get Your Man,” *Life*, June 28, 1923, cover illustration.



Figure 25. Rex Woods, [cover illustration], *Canadian Home Journal*, July 1934. Toronto Reference Library. By permission of Rogers Communications.

Woods' more ironic and reticent approaches did not just stem from his own personality, they also reflected Toronto's conservative standard for the public display of female bodies. Sexy glamour in Woods' work peaked 1933-1935, the most daring image being the coy bathing beauty in a seemingly transparent swimsuit on the cover for July, 1935 [Figure 26]. She is the only pretty girl by Woods that fulfills the pin-up criteria of being both scantily-clad *and* looking flirtatiously at the viewer (smirking side-long over hunched shoulder). Otherwise, Woods made comparatively

few overtly sexy pretty girls like this: only twelve of 129 covers depicting women (9%) convey a come-hither aspect;¹⁰⁸ and only nine depict women in bathing suits (5%). For the most part, Rex Woods' women are only good-looking people, with no streak of seduction, although on two occasions he emulated the parted-lips, sloe-eyed faces and sensuously elevated heads of the American Jules Erbit that *Chatelaine* used three times (April 1934, August 1934, April 1935).¹⁰⁹ During the war years, sexiness—as opposed to attractiveness—was absent in Woods' covers (with one borderline exception),¹¹⁰ featuring instead mainly solemn wives, romantic girls with soldiers, and stoic war effort workers.

¹⁰⁸ What counts as a come-on is subjective. I included images that combined two or more of the following: smiling, direct gaze, lowered eyelids, parted lips, hipshot poses, head thrown back, décolleté, bare shoulders, bare legs.

¹⁰⁹ E.g., Rex Woods, *Canadian Home Journal*, October 1931; and June 1935.

¹¹⁰ The exception is a smiling woman in two-piece bathing suit for August 1945, paired with a byline for an article titled "Guiding Sex Attitudes." This woman, however, comes across as wholesome due to her lack of coyness and natural, unposed-looking posture, in which she is seen only from the hips up from an angle that obscures a clear view of her figure.



Figure 26. Rarely did Rex Woods portray pin-ups. Rex Woods, [cover illustration], *Canadian Home Journal*, July, 1935. Toronto Reference Library. By permission of Rogers Communications.

Rex Woods and advertising

Glamour and salesmanship were frequently linked. For example, advertisements in *Canadian Home Journal* of 1935 sold newfangled Moffat refrigerators and stoves by matching their industrial aesthetic with glamour photographs of stylish women,

arguing that the appliances constituted a new kind of beauty and self-expression for the purchaser, comparable to cutting edge fashion [Figure 27]: “BEAUTY that dares to be NEW . . . the woman who is ultra-modern in spirit should be fascinated always with the new. She will express her type in the newest style notes. She will sense future trends, anticipate fashion and set her friends an example of smart modernity of beauty that dares to be new!”¹¹¹

BEAUTY THAT DARES TO BE NEW

• *The Appealing Type of Beauty chooses style that asserts her femininity. The Dignified Beauty prefers smartness with restraint. But the woman who is ultra-modern in spirit should be fascinated always by the new. She will best express her type in the newest style notes. She will sense future trends, anticipate fashion and set her friends an example of smart modernity . . . of beauty that dares to be new!*

AUTOMATIC FLOODLIGHT
When the door of a Moffat opens the interior is immediately floodlighted and every object given complete visibility. As the standard light socket is independent of the switch, the bulb is not jarred by the opening or closing of refrigerator door and therefore does not require frequent replacement.

VEGETABLE CRISPER and REMOVABLE AUXILIARY RACK
Standard on Moffat, the large porcelain enamel vegetable crisper will keep considerable quantities of vegetables and lettuce crisp and fresh. Also standard is the auxiliary food rack which can be removed, leaving space to hold largest fowl or roast.

HANDY "DOR-SHELF" RACKS
The Moffat "Dor-Shelf" Racks consist of three compartments on the door which accommodate eggs, fruit, tomatoes, small jars, and other articles of like size. The bottom rack alone holds six lbs. of butter.

GREATER USABLE FOOD SPACE
The Moffat Refrigerator is designed throughout for the needs of the average household. All space is planned for maximum service and the scientific placement of shelves enables the Moffat to accommodate considerable quantities of food. In fact the Moffat has larger usable food space than many refrigerators with larger cabinets.

• **IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN MODERNITY—in beauty that dares to be new—then the Moffat Electric Refrigerator is the realization of your every wish. For the Moffat is a combination of new beauty and utility without a parallel in electric refrigeration.**

Think of the convenience, comfort and health protection the Moffat will mean to your family through the years. Moffat with its greater usable food space will keep your food supplies always pure, fresh and wholesome. Its regulated freezing speeds will give you a new delight in improvising frozen and chilled desserts. It simply bristles with up-to-the-minute devices to save you time and toil: "Dor-Shelf" Racks; Toe-tip Door Release; Large Vegetable Crisper; Interior Automatic Floodlight; Oversize Freezing Unit and other refinements for the busy woman.

The Moffat Electric Refrigerator is finished in full porcelain enamel inside and out—a lifetime finish which will not fade or change color; stainless enamel finish inside and on exterior top—and comes in two-tone Ivory or gray and white to match up with the Moffat Electric Range. All surfaces are easily cleaned and all racks scientifically located for maximum food space.

MOFFATS LIMITED, WESTON, ONTARIO

MOFFAT ELECTRIC REFRIGERATORS
MAKERS OF MOFFAT ELECTRIC RANGES FAMOUS THE WORLD OVER

Figure 27. Advertisement encouraging consumers to think of appliances as fashion statements and expressions of their modern outlook. Moffat Electric, “Beauty That Dares to be New [advertisement],” in *Canadian Home Journal*, May 1935, 53. Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library. By permission of Rogers Communications.

¹¹¹ “Beauty That Dares to Be New,” *Canadian Home Journal*, May 1935, 53, advertisement.

Rendered in the bread-and-butter technique so favoured by Haddon Sundblom and other advertising artists that supported the rhetoric of democratic social advancement for all, Rex Woods' glamourized Canadian Woman was an effective saleswoman herself. Not only did she sell the magazine, she made Canadians less resistant to glamour and the related consumerism. As numerous studies on visual communication have found, attractive magazine and advertising images influence attitudes and behavior.¹¹² American style illustration, then, risked making Canadians into American-style consumers.

Canadian Home Journal was complicit in using glamour and fashion to promote itself as well as Canadian retail in nationalistic terms. In the May 1936 number, there appeared on the Contents page a photograph of an unsmiling, model in a conservative tailored suit with hat and gloves and high-necked blouse, with the caption "Miss Canada, in a trim suit, looks toward Summer."¹¹³ The text beside it promoted "a complete dress wardrobe" for women to make for themselves, featured on following pages. The copy encouraged women to make their own clothes to ensure they had unique, individualized outfits. Proudly, the magazine revealed that fifty shops across Canada had agreed to make special displays of this wardrobe plan using "actual fashion pages shown in this issue." The figure of a glamorized Miss Canada was thus utilized in a marketing campaign to benefit both magazine and retailers.

Covers by Woods promoted glamour products and leisure. Twenty-three (18%) depicted ladies in extravagant evening wear (excluding fancy-dress), while nineteen (15%) featured luxuries such as a fancy hat, furs, or jewelry, fulfilling (and promoting) the social expectation that "good" Miss Civilization would slowly eradicate the wild life rather than live it. The cover women with their carefully groomed hair and perfect lipstick, heads held high and wearing coordinated outfits justified personal grooming as a patriotic act, complementing the pitches for beauty products that peppered *Canadian Home Journal*. By borrowing the visual language of affluence and happiness of American mainstream illustration, the covers brought the targeted readership of housewives into a shared trans-national realm of modern progress, one that nurtured their feeling of collective endeavor with fellow women, and supported their sense of value as gentrifiers of the nation.

¹¹² This is a tenet of the field of visual communication, as explained in textbooks, e.g., Paul Messaris, *Visual Persuasion: The Role of Images in Advertising* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1997); Paul Martin Lester, *Visual Communication: Images with Messages*, 6th ed. (Boston, MA: Wadsworth, 2014); Anthony Joseph Paul Cortese, *Provocateur: Images of Women and Minorities in Advertising*, 3rd ed. (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2007). For studies using scientific methods, see Ann Marie Barry, *Visual Intelligence: Perception, Image, and Manipulation in Visual Communication* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997); Rick Williams, "Transforming Intuitive Illiteracy: Understanding the Effects of the Unconscious Mind on Image Meaning, Image Consumption, and Behaviour," *Explorations in Media Ecology* 2, no. 2 (2003): 119–134.

¹¹³ *Canadian Home Journal*, May 1936, 2.

The magazine's maternal feminist editorials and articles such as those by Margaret Lawrence were undermined by its visuals, because women at work were conspicuously absent on covers (only five, 4%, come close: an aviator, a flight attendant, a student, a driver, a wartime factory worker). Almost all other covers showed women's heads or figures against a plain background; or dancing, sunbathing, marrying, or playing sports. This allowed women to appear as if they were only passive recipients of husbands' labour, earning men's support through glamour alone.

In spite of the leisurely life of the covers, editorials, articles, and advertising in the magazine reminded the Canadian Woman that she still had the sober duty to improve the national standard of living. Expected to show more refinement than the purportedly huckstering American pretty girl, few of Woods' women make eye contact with the reader (27%) or smile (20%). Norm Platnick, a collector of pretty-girl ephemera and author of monographs on American pretty-girl illustrators, conducted a content analysis of 100 covers for each of thirteen artists and found that seven of them showed smiling girls more than Woods did, while two matched Woods' rate, and only four depicted smiles significantly less.¹¹⁴ The unsmiling faces recall the solemn Summer Girl by C.W. Jefferys and the serious political cartoon of Miss Canada,¹¹⁵ distanced from the more smiley American Girl and the toothpaste grins of cheaper advertising.

Nevertheless, the Canadian Woman was implicated in marketing and advertising. Not only did she sell the magazine, but her serious yet labour-less image also informs Woods' design of Rita Martin, the imaginary advertising spokeswoman for Robin Hood Flour's line of instant cake mixes.¹¹⁶ Martin, who addresses the consumer in first person and signs off with her own handwritten signature, was first pictured by Woods in a 1947 recipe book, and was purportedly derived from actual women who developed recipes for the company.¹¹⁷ She is not pictured doing

¹¹⁴ Norm Platnick ran the experiment at my suggestion, using his collection. He sampled 1,300 covers, 100 of each of the most prominent pretty girl artists from about 1900–1950. Smile rates were: Haskell Coffin (60%), Rolf Armstrong (50%), Earl Christy (50%), Bradshaw Crandell (50%), Zoe Mozert (36%), Frederick Duncan (32%), Henry Clive (30%), J. Knowles Hare (20%), Gene Pressler (20%), Penryhn Stanlaws (12%), Philip Boileau (10%), Coles Phillips (4%), and Neysa McMein (2%). Platnick characterizes his evaluation of what constitutes a smile as “an instant gestalt appraisal”. Platnick, email to author, December 7, 2013. Unfortunately, I could not supply Platnick with images of 100 of Woods' covers due to the cost, so I do not have his gestalt appraisal of Woods' smiles. In my own appraisal of Woods, I included the barest Mona Lisa smile as well as a toothy grin.

¹¹⁵ Woods' cover for December 1940 depicted a blond, unsmiling Miss Canada wearing a helmet, with John Bull, but her solemnity here reflected wartime.

¹¹⁶ Rex Woods, *Portrait of Rita Martin*, oil on canvas, 1947, courtesy of Michael Gourley.

¹¹⁷ *Robin Hood Prize Winning Recipes Selected by Rita Martin* (Montreal: Robin Hood Flour Mills, 1947); Elizabeth Driver, *Culinary Landmarks: A Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks, 1825–1949* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 236–237, 266.

anything—she is only a passive figure in a formal portrait, so that any appraisal of her worthiness must necessarily be based on appearances. Accordingly, the mature-looking Rita Martin is dressed in a blue zippered top that suggests workmen's coveralls or uniforms, while her brown eyes and light brown hair were perhaps intended to represent an average of ethnicities [Figure 28].¹¹⁸ Glamour is limited to her conventionally high cheekbones and slightly unzipped top. Her respectability and fastidiousness are conveyed in her businesslike pincurled hair, quite short for 1947, and her alert posture.

¹¹⁸ Recent iterations of Betty Crocker have intentionally aimed at racial ambiguity with brown hair and eyes. "The Portraits," *Betty Crocker*, General Mills, 2013, accessed July 21, 2013, <http://www.bettycrocker.com/tips/aboutthekitchens/portraits>.



Figure 28. Rex Woods, portrait of Rita Martin (Robin Hood Flour mascot), 1947, oil on canvas, size unknown. Image courtesy of Michael Gourley. Collection of Michael Gourley. By permission of Julie Clark.

Martin's lack of smile, slightly stiff deportment, and coloring are similar to that of the 1936 portrait of brunette, brown-eyed Betty Crocker by Neysa McMein, a New York illustrator who lived the fast lifestyle portrayed by Russell Patterson. McMein made socialite portraits and pretty girl illustrations famous for their

deadpan expressions, and also, it was said, used actual company employees as her models.¹¹⁹

Rita Martin's and Betty Crocker's supposed derivation from real professional home economists, and their stern expressions and direct gazes, conveyed their expertise in the kitchen in the manner befitting the very earnest, feminist, and scientific home economist who was the epitome of modern housewifery (likewise, Robin Hood Flour's organ, *Grist*, took care to outline their directors' degrees in Home Economics and experience as homemakers).¹²⁰ By making the Canadian Robin Hood Flour icon a sister to Betty Crocker, Woods placed the Canadian company and the Canadian Woman on par with an American icon in order to compete against the goods Betty Crocker represented. Indeed, Woods' portrait was taken to the American head office with the intention of being used in American advertising and promotion.¹²¹ But to use a fictitious character to influence the Canadian housewife's purchasing and new instant-food cooking habits was to encourage that housewife to engage with a brand and run a household exactly the same as American woman did.

In contrast to the representation of Rita Martin, the advertising portrait of the beaming, dimpled, blonde Macdonald Lassie for tobacco company Macdonald's British Consols Export Cigarettes (later, Export A) comes close to the quintessential American pretty girl [Figure 29]. The Macdonald Lassie, as she was called, began to appear in advertisements in *Canadian Home Journal* by September, 1936.¹²² That the Lassie was intended to blend seamlessly into the existing visual culture is suggested by the fact that readers had already been introduced to a similar smiling Scottish blonde that had adorned the magazine's January 1936 cover [Figure 30]. (Glamour girls as company mascots were also rife among American corporations; in addition to Betty Crocker there were such figures as the Springmaid for Springs Cotton Mills, rendered by Arthur William Brown and other illustrators.¹²³)

¹¹⁹ "The Portraits," *Betty Crocker*; Platnick, *The Lady Seldom Smiles*; Tori Avey "Who Was Betty Crocker?" *Food*, PBS, February 15, 2013, accessed November 10, 2013, <http://www.pbs.org/food/the-history-kitchen/who-was-betty-crocker/>.

¹²⁰ Driver, *Culinary Landmarks*, 237.

¹²¹ Ibid. Somehow, the painting (or a copy) made its way back to Canada, and truck driver Michael Gourley found it in Robin Hood Flour's garbage bin in Moncton, New Brunswick, ca. 1970. Gourley, email to author, March 15, 2009.

¹²² "Keep British Consols on the Tip of Your Tongue," *Canadian Home Journal*, September 1936, 55, advertisement; and *Canadian Home Journal*, October 1936, 93; "Add Fragrance to Festivity with This Smart Christmas Package," *Canadian Home Journal*, December 1936, 93, advertisement.

¹²³ "Tom Mack's Art and Humanities: State Museum Spends Time 'Between the Springmaid Sheets'," *Aiken Standard*, July 25, 2013, accessed December 18, 2013, <http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20130725/AIK0403/130729694/1046/tom-mack-x2019-s-arts-and-humanities-state-museum-spends-time-x2018-between-the-springmaid-sheets-x2019>.



Figure 29. Rex Woods, oil on canvas portrait of Betty Annan Grant as the Macdonald Lassie (Macdonald's British Consol Export Cigarettes - later, Export A - tobacco company mascot), 1934. Image courtesy of JTI MacDonal. Collection of JTI MacDonal. By permission of Julie Clark.



Figure 30. Scottish girl on cover merges with the recently launched Macdonald Lassie cigarette advertising campaign of 1935. Rex Woods, [cover illustration], *Canadian Home Journal*, January 1936. Toronto Reference Library. By permission of Rogers Communications.

Lassie's Tory Canadianness is expressed in a feminized version of a traditionally male Scottish MacDonald of Sleat burning-ember-red kilt that she wears, associating her immediately with Canada's Red Ensign flag, military

pageantry, and the Scottish background of elite Anglophone Canadians.¹²⁴ Indeed, one of these elites was Sir William Macdonald, who had owned the eponymous tobacco company until his death in 1917, and who was also director of the Bank of Montreal and a leading philanthropist.¹²⁵

When in 1934 Woods first worked with the model for the Lassie, Betty Annan Grant (1914-2004), he researched Clan Macdonald and related its history to Annan while she posed so that she could embody the type more forcefully.¹²⁶ A bit of a soubrette here, she is an anachronistic and gender-bending figure quite removed from the domesticated Canadian Woman, channeling instead some of the authority of the original Miss Canada and a hint of the costume-play of the American chorus-girl. She conveys gender neutrality by smiling confidently at the viewer with head elevated proudly, holding a drawn sword. Her other arm is cocked with fist on hip, a more masculine position than an open hand on hip, but the fist is demurely obscured by a lace cuff. Her direct gaze and handling of a well-known phallic symbol remind us she is selling a product long associated with penis envy and marketed to women as emancipation.¹²⁷ In full-length depictions in the magazine advertisements and on some packages, her kilt stops well above the knee (unlike men's kilts and unlike current ladies' fashions). She was therefore a liberated role model, in which glamour and sex appeal combined with masculine prerogative and patriotic feeling. The Lassie was to become one of Canada's most famous advertising icons, appearing in almost every single issue of each of the national magazines for decades.

The Macdonald Lassie may well have appealed to housewives' hidden desires, but she had significance for Canadian political identity as well. Not only was the British Consols Export brand emphatically British-identified, but as the Lassie became the face of a Canadian product (tobacco was a major cash crop in central Canada), wearing Scottish garb but rendered in an "American" manner, she was an apt representation of Canada's (and Woods' own) transatlantic and continentalist cultural makeup too. With her tripartite genealogy, she reinscribed the racial reunification of British and American sensibilities that had been imagined by race-

¹²⁴ T. W. Acheson, "The Social Origins of the Canadian Industrial Elite, 1880-1885," in MacMillan, *Canadian Business History* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972), 144-171.

¹²⁵ Randy Ray and Mark Kearney, "William C. Macdonald," in *I Know That Name! The People behind Canada's Best Known Brand Names from Elizabeth Arden to Walter Zeller* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2002), 165-167.

¹²⁶ Ann Baker, "50 Cents an Hour, 40 Years of Fame," *Canadian Magazine*, August 17, 1974, 15. Woods began to develop Lassie in early 1934, and the trademark was registered in March 1935. R. J. R. Macdonald Inc., statement, October 24 1997, collection of Julie Clark. Copy sent to Robert Stacey.

¹²⁷ Cigarettes were, according to marketing genius Edward Bernays, sold to women by using the psychological theory that cigarettes represented the Freudian missing phallus. Bernays, interview, in *Century of the Self: Happiness Machines*, directed by Adam Curtis, (UK: BBC, 2002). According to older Canadians I have spoken with, women smoking in the street were popularly associated with prostitution.

conscious politicians thirty years earlier to be the foundation of Canadian identity. She embodied the diplomatic role that successive Canadian and British cultural commentators assigned to Canada: to be the facilitator of British and American friendliness in trade and policy (Chapter 1). In the psychology of marketing, smoking Export A cigarettes was therefore not only a liberating act, and a demonstration of fealty to genealogical and class identity, but a patriotic service as well.

Impact of Rex Woods and the Canadian Woman on the visual culture of glamour in Canada after 1945

In 1938, *Canada and Her Great Neighbor*, a major study of Canadian attitudes toward Americans appeared. In it, professor of Political Philosophy and Sociology R.M. McIver summarized the virulent popular anti-Americanism among Canadians, and concluded that while Canadian prejudices were narrow-minded and often unfounded, they were still “as natural a phenomenon as the rising sun” due to the psyche expected of all underdogs.¹²⁸ In the chapter on American periodical literature, author J.A. Stevenson made the usual complaints against the pricing of American magazines in Canada and the negative effect on local production, and sounded the moral alarm on behalf of Canadian youth who consumed the “sensational, suggestive, and demoralizing” nature of the “literary swill” that was “cheaply printed on cheap paper” in “tens of thousands”—pulp. Figures he gives show that *True Story* sold 113,052 copies in Canada in 1934, while *Saturday Evening Post* sold only 105,199.

Although do-good groups like Knights of Columbus and the National Council of Women campaigned lawmakers to ban specific titles, neither Stevenson nor any other Canadian critic writing for a wide public audience ever seemed to openly acknowledge homegrown production of scandalous print. Examples are *Broadway Brevities* and *Garter Girls*, filled with naughty cartoons and quasi-reportage recycled from New York sources, which commenced publication in Toronto in 1937 when Canadian publisher Stephen G. Clow returned north after being jailed for blackmail in the U.S.¹²⁹ Indeed, any time the government stopped American print from entering Canada, Canadian entrepreneurs were quick to start pirating the banned material. Nevertheless, Stevenson insisted that elimination of American lowbrow print would bring about “Canadian unity, the preservation of Canadian traditions and ideals, and the development of a national consciousness.”¹³⁰ Paradoxically, the conclusion of *Canada and Her Great Neighbor* considered the advantages of “North

¹²⁸ R. M. McIver, “Introduction,” in Angus, *Canada and Her Great Neighbor*, xxv.

¹²⁹ Will Straw, “Traffic in Scandal: The Story of *Broadway Brevities*,”

University of Toronto Quarterly 73, no.4 (Fall 2004): 947-971.

¹³⁰ Stevenson, “American Periodical Literature,” 157–158, 162.

Americanism” and claimed that few contested the notion that a sort of annexation was in fact more or less complete already.¹³¹

This two-mindedness—unease over moral corruption and loss of distinct identity versus embracing of continentalism—played out in reception of the pretty girl in following years. Canadian indecision over whether Miss Civilization was good or bad followed depictions of women beyond the heyday of illustration, as photography began to oust Woods’ and other illustrators’ covers in the 1940s. Values both for and against the pretty girl previously expressed in illustrations were transferred to photographs. In 1945, Rex Woods and two other artists (sculptor Donald Stewart and photographer Everett Roseborough) chose “Canada’s Own Cover Girl” for *Canadian Home Journal* to represent the “lovely facial characteristics and lithe graceful figure” that they thought was “typical of the Canadian girl.”¹³² The winner was Lenore Johannesson, a seventeen-year-old Icelandic-Canadian (it is worth noting that her ethnicity happened to complement the traditional conceit of the north breeding superior Caucasians, discussed in Chapter 1). A colour photograph pictured her on the cover and in the article in a patriotically scarlet dress with white bow at the neck (the dress itself was the winner of the *Journal’s* prize in the Montreal Dress Manufacturer’s Guild Design Contest, and came in other colours besides red) [Figure 31].

¹³¹ H. F. Angus, “Books and Reviews,” in Angus, *Canada and Her Great Neighbor*, 356–357.

¹³² “Canada’s Own Cover Girl,” *Canadian Home Journal*, September, 1945, 5.



Figure 31. Lenore Johannesson, winner of “Canada’s Own Cover Girl” competition, modeling a demure Canadian designed dress. She was picked by Rex Woods and a sculptor and photographer. *Canadian Home Journal*, September, 1945. Toronto Reference Library. By permission of Rogers Communications.

With high neckline, long sleeves, and below-the-knee skirt, paired with flat shoes, simple hat and white gloves (the inside picture shows the latter), the ensemble is markedly demure. Like Woods’ illustrations, and like Canadian Girls before her, Johannesson does not smile in either photo. The cover image in which she stands

stiffly with hand on hip (but not with any sensual *contrapposto*), haired pulled back, surrounded by books and with a map behind her, looks so schoolmarm-stern as to rob her of any glamour at all.

The editors, calling attention to the state of returning soldiers and new horrors such as the atomic bomb, characterized Johannesson as “typical of her generation. Her wholesome loveliness and personality, her all ‘round capability and good sense, give us reason to be proud . . . She is typical of the new college girl . . . preparing for a career of practical usefulness and social responsibility.”¹³³ Role-model Johannesson was dutifully majoring in Home Economics, despite her favorite subjects being English and History. Ironically, many photographed covers of the pin-up variety or of girls smiling cheerily populated the covers and insides of other magazines of the day, making Johannesson seem all the more dowdy and prudish. Notably, in subsequent debates about Canadian young womanhood in general that I will outline below, some commentators complained about Canadian girls’ lack of sex appeal, signaling a shift in attitude away from such moral exemplars as Johannesson. Indeed, the August cover just prior to Johannesson’s debut had illustrated a smiling blonde in a two-piece bathing suit, while photographed bathing beauties ran in August 1942, August 1943, August 1944, August 1946, June 1947, and July 1950.

The debates began when large number of articles in various Canadian magazines started to criticize, question, and debunk the glamour industries. Although this included *New Liberty’s* damning exposé of corruption in the 1947 Miss Canada pageant won by Margaret Marshall, the magazine still took care to put a glamorous image of a grinning, blonde Marshall being crowned in her swimsuit on the cover [Figure 32].¹³⁴ Protests against picturing girls may have been fueled by the alarming entry of homegrown spicy pulps and pornography into Canadian publishing when wartime curtailed imports of American fare.¹³⁵ The switch to more “realistic” photography on most magazine covers, the rise in the picturing of women on the general-interest *Maclean’s* during the war,¹³⁶ and the emerging crackdown on comic books,¹³⁷ probably also contributed to the perception that print media was

¹³³ “Our Pledge to Youth,” *Canadian Home Journal*, September 1945, 88.

¹³⁴ E.g., Helen Norsworthy Sangster, “Women for Sale,” *Chatelaine*, April 1937, 21; Jack Hirshberg, “Yvonne de Carlo,” *Liberty*, June 21, 1947, 16–17; Wallace Reyburn, “Judging Miss Canada,” *Liberty*, September 27, 1947, 21; Kate Holliday, “She Wouldn’t Be Groomed,” *Maclean’s*, October 1, 1947, 8; Sinclair, “Beauty Contests Are the Bunk;” Ed Bantey, “It’s Not All Glamor for Chorus Girls,” *Liberty*, August 1950, 24–5; Frank Rasky, “Is It True What They Say about Chorus Girls?” *Liberty*, May 1952, 34–5, 72–75; Betty Hill, “My Backstage Career As a Montreal Chorine,” *Liberty*, March 1955, 32.

¹³⁵ Michele Denise Smith, “Soup Cans and Love Slaves: National Politics and Cultural Authority in the Editing and Authorship of Canadian Pulp Magazines,” *Book History* 9 (2006): 267.

¹³⁶ Braggins, “Maclean’s: The Accidental Nationalist.”

¹³⁷ Donald Lang, “Violence in the Comics,” *Magazine Digest*, September 1940, 45.

getting too sexualized. Perhaps it was: *Liberty* dared to run a cover and feature article on striptease artiste Lili St. Cyr, semi-nude with nipples airbrushed out.¹³⁸



Figure 32. Despite disapproving of the pageant, *New Liberty* ran this cover showing Toronto's Margaret Marshall winning the title of Miss Canada (judged by Arthur William Brown and others). She later became a runner-up in the Miss America competition of 1947, and was held up by some magazine readers as proof of Canadian women's excellence compared to American women. *New Liberty*, Sept. 27, 1947. Photograph by the author. Toronto Reference Library.

¹³⁸ "Lili St Cyr Paces Montreal Night Life," *Liberty*, November 29, 1947, 11-13; Betty Hango, "Oh the Shame of It!" in "Vox Pop," *Liberty*, January 10, 1948, 1.

The seedy end of the glamour girl scene may have been attracting criticism, and the frumpy Canadian Girl may have been touted as an ideal, but the cult of beauty itself was in no danger. Especially after model agency owner Harry Conover popularized the clean girl-next-door look circa 1940, numerous articles examined the careers of modeling and acting in a positive light.¹³⁹ It was getting harder to differentiate Canadian glamour from the American: in 1944, a competition resulted in selection of a Canadian cover girl that was, nonsensically but in line with earlier nationalistic rhetoric, “not of the Hollywood type of beauty, but of those all-around Canadian characteristics—clear skin, shining hair, trim figure, good grooming, poise and general charm!”¹⁴⁰ She would, it said, never put on “the glamor act” of “excessive make-up, ultra fancy hair-dos and things it takes time for a girl to live down.”¹⁴¹ Nevertheless, the feature faced an advertisement for Du Barry beauty preparations, in which a servicewoman in uniform admired an extravagant hat in a shop window, with the slogan “It Won’t Be Long”—a catchphrase normally referring to the end of the war and rationing, here appropriated to indicate the imminent return to civilian dress and luxuries.¹⁴² In 1947, a *Maclean’s* article reported glamour classes were being offered in Toronto public schools.¹⁴³

Reader feedback indicates Canadians were two-minded about “sweater girls and half-dressed hussies,” as one protester called cover girls.¹⁴⁴ Controversy erupted in *Liberty* and *Maclean’s* in 1944, 1947 and 1948 over whether girls in swimsuits should appear; many felt Hollywood looks were antithetical to Canadianness, while others equated glamour with Canada’s status as a modern and

¹³⁹ E.g., Anne Ferguson, “A Modelling Life,” *Chatelaine*, November 1938, 13; Ted Shane, “Pin-Up Mama,” *Liberty*, May 13, 1944, 16, 39; Elizabeth Wilson, “Make-up Man,” *Liberty*, August 15, 1944, 12; “Seventh Avenue Venus,” *Liberty*, September 30, 1944, 12–13; Fredda Dudley, “Vancouver Pin-Up,” *Maclean’s*, February 15, 1945, 20, 27; Elizabeth Wilson, “Triumphs with Torso and Typewriter,” *Liberty*, June 2, 1945, 23, 47; Kate Holliday, “Hey Look—I’m Beautiful!” *Maclean’s*, September 15, 1946, 12, 61; “Children Model for Charity,” *Mayfair*, May 1947, 72; Beverley Owen, “Harry Conover,” *Liberty*, November 29, 1947, 16–18; Gordon Stewart, “Beautiful but Smart,” *National Home Monthly*, January 1948, 12; McKenzie Porter, “Life’s a Pose to Sonia,” *Maclean’s*, April 15, 1949, 20–21; “Three Models Meet Manhattan,” *Weekend Picture Magazine*, January 12, 1952, 11.

¹⁴⁰ June Lawford, “Guest Editor June Lawford Introduces the Cover Girl,” *Canadian Home Journal*, September 1944, 2.

¹⁴¹ Eva Nagel Wolf, “The Collegiate Crowd Chooses That Cover Girl Look,” *Canadian Home Journal*, September 1944, 56.

¹⁴² Du Barry Beauty Preparations by Richard Hudnut, “It Won’t Be Long,” *Canadian Home Journal*, September 1944, 57, advertisement.

¹⁴³ Mary Frances, “Men are Right about Make-Up,” *Maclean’s*, September 1, 1947, 13.

¹⁴⁴ “It’s the First Time We’ve Heard This One,” in “Vox Pop,” *Liberty*, March 11, 1944, 50.

sophisticated nation.¹⁴⁵ Capturing the ambivalence around glamour, the August 30, 1947 issue of *Liberty* contained a Hollywood-like photo essay on Canadian supermodel Dusty Henderson.¹⁴⁶ Three weeks later they featured Henderson again in a satirical photographic feature in which the covers of *Mayfair*, *Chatelaine*, *Esquire*, *Vogue*, *Star Weekly*, and other magazine covers were spoofed by photographer Phyllis Scurry, with Henderson giving slightly deranged stereotypical pretty-girl poses (debutante, housewife, pin-up, true crime victim, girl next door, etc.).¹⁴⁷ Yet it was followed on the very next page by a sincere beauty makeover story from England.¹⁴⁸

More than an issue of mere prudishness, some readers expected the Canadian Girl to match or surpass the American Girl in attractiveness. “Why doesn’t the average Canadian girl look as smart and as pretty as the average American girl?” asked one;¹⁴⁹ “Compared to their American cousins, they lack polish and just don’t have the zip it takes to be attractive young women and good models,” agreed another.¹⁵⁰ Outraged defendants of the Canadian Girl’s honour pointed to Margaret Marshall, beauty pageant winner Miss Canada and runner-up in the Miss America contest, as proof of Canadian girls’ fitness.¹⁵¹ Importantly, because it underscores the wholesomeness of Canadians versus Americans in the national imaginary, several readers claimed Canadian beauty was more “natural” looking.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁵ “Morals and Morale,” and “—And Thank You, Suh,” in “Vox Pop,” *Liberty*, April 15, 1944, 49; “Raves and Rants,” in “Vox Pop,” *Liberty*, May 6, 1944, 49; “The Guys Want Gals – But Naturally!” in “Vox Pop,” *Liberty*, June 10, 1944, 49; “Honi Soit Qui Mal Y Pense,” in “Vox Pop,” *Liberty*, June 17, 1944, 50; “Palm Tree Pin-Ups,” in “Vox Pop,” *Liberty*, July 22, 1944, 49. E. May, “No Glamour Girls Need Apply Here,” in “Vox Pop,” *Liberty*, May 6, 1944, 49; “Indecent?” in “Vox Pop,” *Liberty*, July 28, 1945, 3; “Boiling Blood,” in “Vox Pop,” *Liberty*, September 15, 1945, 3; “Or Worse,” in “Vox Pop,” *Liberty*, November 3, 1945, 3; “A Matter of Opinion,” in “Vox Pop,” *New Liberty*, May 10, 1947, 3; “Turn the Page,” in “Vox Pop,” *New Liberty*, June 7, 1947, 3; “Out of Place,” in “Mailbag,” *Maclean’s*, September 1, 1947, 60; “Sex, Criminals and Nudity,” in “Mailbag,” *Maclean’s*, October 15, 1947, 60; Hango, “Oh the Shame of It!,” “Phooey on O’Niell,” *New Liberty*, January 24, 1948, 1; “Cover Controversy: Dogs Versus Girls,” *Maclean’s*, May 15, 1948, 81; “Sex,” in “Mailbag,” *Maclean’s*, March 15, 1948, 72; Ed Wilhelm, “The Change,” in “Vox Pop,” *New Liberty*, February 14, 1948, 57; “Cool Girls, Hot Dogs,” in “Mailbag,” *Maclean’s*, July 1, 1948, 53; “To the Point,” in “Mailbag,” *Maclean’s*, September 1, 1948, 66.

¹⁴⁶ Wallace Reyburn, “Canada’s Top Model,” *New Liberty*, August 30, 1947, 21.

¹⁴⁷ Wallace Reyburn, “Cover Girl,” *New Liberty*, September 20, 1947, 23.

¹⁴⁸ “Charwoman into Glamor-Girl,” *New Liberty*, September 20, 1947, 26.

¹⁴⁹ John Carnegie, “Careless Talk,” in “Vox Pop,” *New Liberty*, March 1, 1947, 2.

¹⁵⁰ Thomas Leitch, “Canadian Girls Lacking,” in “Vox Pop,” *New Liberty*, December 6, 1947, 1.

¹⁵¹ “Fie, Mr. Carnegie!” in “Vox Pop,” *New Liberty*, April 5, 1947, 3; L. Cooper, “Plenty of Zip,” in “Vox Pop,” *New Liberty*, January 10, 1948, 51.

¹⁵² “Phooey on O’Niell.”

Predictably, given how wilderness and pretty girl were positioned as opposites, for some readers, glamour girls remained the antithesis of Canadian identity. Showing antipathy for smiles, one wrote, "I'm so damned sick of painted women showing all their teeth on the front cover that I instinctively sneer at your girl in the canoe [*Liberty* March 1948 cover] . . . [with elimination of such] I see the chance of our getting a really good *Canadian* magazine" [Original italics].¹⁵³ For one British Columbia resident, all drawn illustrations were "idiotic," and were diametrically opposed to the wilderness ideal: "Why in heck do you not put Canadian scenes, pictures of Canadian wild life, her towns, or things strictly Canadian, such as a series of the different big-game animals, birds, fishes—her mountains etc etc, which would be educational and interesting to people wishing to read a Canadian magazine?"¹⁵⁴ That big-game animals, birds and fishes disregard the border on a regular basis indicates this writer's patriotic blindspot was large.

In the midst of the controversy, in December 1948, *Maclean's* finally asked readers to identify their five favorite covers of 1948's total 24.¹⁵⁵ A photograph of the fetching national heroine Barbara Ann Scott in her leg-reveling, clingy figure skating outfit came in second. Neither landscape nor more prurient pretty girls won, a couple of which had each appeared that year (first pick was Franklin Arbuckle's portrait of himself sneaking a puppy in the front door on Christmas Eve; and third was William Winter's scene of a grumpy boy being outfitted as an effeminate angel for the school Christmas pageant).

Complaints continued as *Maclean's* and other magazines persisted in printing pretty girls.¹⁵⁶ *Weekend Picture Magazine*, a syndicated national newspaper supplement, began its "Canadian Beauty" feature (title from the cover; inside the title was "Under 21") in 1952. In it, Canadian girls competed to be cover girl (professional models were disqualified). Editors said they began the feature to demonstrate that "there are as many or more pretty girls as any other country can boast . . ." ¹⁵⁷ Many of the all-Caucasian winners smiled cheerily at the camera, while brief biographies described their middle-class lives and ambitions. Nothing marked them as noticeably different from young women in American magazines.

Debates over the merits of a glamorous Canadian Girl were related to concurrent debates over American cultural and political annexation. In *Maclean's*, as

¹⁵³ Dave A. Ritchie, "Tired of Teeth," *New Liberty*, July 1948, 3.

¹⁵⁴ E. S. Baptiste, "Paintings or Photos," in "Mailbag," *Maclean's*, October 1, 1949, 62.

¹⁵⁵ "In the Editors' Confidence," *Maclean's*, December 15, 1948, 4.

¹⁵⁶ Anna Brander Gray, "Voters, Gal and Oxen," in "Mailbag," *Maclean's*, September 1, 1949, 77; Jacqueline Augur, "Face Versus Figure," in "Vox Pop," *New Liberty*, September 1949, 1; J. P. Crossman, "Nudes and Art," in "Mailbag," *Maclean's*, August 15, 1950, 50; Henry J. Matthews, "Glamour Lure," in "Vox Pop," *New Liberty*, November 1951, 49; Eugene Mulaire, "For Men Only?" in "Vox Pop," *New Liberty*, September 1952, 1; Susie E. Oille, "The New Cover Looks Toothy?" in "The Last Word is Yours," *Chatelaine*, August 1960, 112.

¹⁵⁷ "This Weekend and Next," *Weekend Picture Magazine*, March 1952, 35.

Margaret Marshall was winning the Miss Canada title, Vincent Massey warned that the proposed Pan-American Union would really be a Washington-centric infringement on Canadian autonomy.¹⁵⁸ Just two weeks later George Ferguson said Canadians should not “deny ourselves the privilege of close and friendly association with a great and powerful neighbor,” and pooh-poohed a three-day debate in the House of Commons over the presence of American military bases in Canada that some Members feared was turning Canada into an American colony.¹⁵⁹

Sounding just like men of Racey’s day, Hugh MacLennan a few months later observed that American mass production had “fed the body but starved the spirit” and made consumption of goods seem like the “final purpose of human life.”¹⁶⁰ Meanwhile, other articles documented the still-large emigration to the United States, due to higher salaries, intellectual enrichment, and the bargains on consumer goods available there.¹⁶¹ Arthur Lower defended benefits of joining the U.S., attacking Canadians’ “polite hypocrisies—the conceit that somehow or other, we are more ‘refined,’ less ‘materialistic’ than our neighbours,” but he concluded that annexation would cause Canada to lose her “soul.”¹⁶² Angry letters in reply resented any suggestion that Canada should become American, yet several other approved of full annexation or co-operation.¹⁶³ Lower’s article was illustrated with a photomontage in which an American flag was superimposed over a view of Ottawa’s Parliament Hill (federal government headquarters and a tourist destination), with a Mountie talking to a pretty girl in the foreground, as if Canada were entertaining an American visitor.

The concept of glamour continued to be incompatible with wilderness. In 1955, a Canadian chorine explained that she was not the sort who attracted “stage-door johnnies” because, she explained, she looked too “outdoorish.”¹⁶⁴ Wilderness spelled frigid: in 1957, a man writing in *Chatelaine* judged that Canadian “femmes” were not “fatales” because the Canadian Girl “has a connotation of clean living, of outdoor activity . . . sex appeal is buried under a snowdrift of wholesomeness.”¹⁶⁵

¹⁵⁸ Vincent Massey, “Should Canada Join the Pan-American Union?” *Maclean’s*, August 15, 1947, 22.

¹⁵⁹ George Ferguson, “Are the Yanks Invading Canada?” *Maclean’s*, September 1, 1947, 18.

¹⁶⁰ Hugh MacLennan, “What Does Uncle Sam Want?” *Maclean’s*, April 1, 1948, 57.

¹⁶¹ Blair Fraser, “Why Canadians Leave Home,” *Maclean’s*, September 15, 1947, 7–8; Liz Gairdner, “Why Canadians Leave Home,” *Chatelaine*, July 1945, 10–11, 70–71; Sidney Margolius, “Would You Live Better in the U.S.?” *Maclean’s*, August 1, 1949, 12–13, 38–40; “Let’s NOT Join the U.S.” *New Liberty*, July 1948, 32–33.

¹⁶² Arthur Lower, “If We Joined the U.S.A.—” *Maclean’s*, June 15, 1948, 7–8, 71–74.

¹⁶³ “Mailbag: Union with the U.S.—The Battle’s On,” *MacLean’s*, August 1, 1948, 51.

¹⁶⁴ Hill, “My Backstage Career As a Montreal Chorine.”

¹⁶⁵ Eric Nicol, “Why Aren’t Canada’s Femmes More Fatales?” *Chatelaine*, September 1957, 21, 90–91.

Perhaps trying to amend the problem, without bowing to a Marilyn Monroe sort of sex appeal, *Chatelaine* in 1960 attempted to define a unique Canadian Woman once again. They asked—on the cover, over a dour photo of a (once more) unsmiling professional model named Jacqueline Gilbert— “Is she a typical Canadian beauty?” [Figure 33]¹⁶⁶ Ethnically ambiguous, not girlish in the least, she had an unconventional low-set dimple and hazel eyes in a long face, her straight, dark hair was pulled severely back without adornment, and her direct gaze was baleful. Gilbert was characterized in the article as “Elegant, femme du monde.”

But readers complained Gilbert looked too “Spanish” and “like a squaw” to stand for Canada (the irony of disqualifying Native women was pointed out by other readers).¹⁶⁷ While Gilbert’s portrait was as far from an American Girl as possible, other women featured in the article obeyed conventional North American beauty standards, blending with the heavily coiffed head in the beauty product advertisement on the page preceding the article’s first page. Perhaps this was because the whole feature was really just a thinly veiled excuse to promote skin-care products. This attempt at constructing an identity for Canadian Woman framed the discussion around physical appearances and advertising, fulfilling the fears voiced by nationalists decades earlier that Canadians were becoming overmuch Americanized, falling for the shallow surface of splendor and profit at the expense of good citizenship.

¹⁶⁶ Eveleen Dollery, “Is There a Typical Canadian Beauty?” *Chatelaine*, April 1960, 114. *Chatelaine* absorbed *Canadian Home Journal* in 1958. Valerie Korinek also notes the controversy around this image confirms readers expected Anglo-Canadian norms, in *Roughing It in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 116–118.

¹⁶⁷ Mrs. Jacques des Rosiers, and Mrs. Guy Fortier, “La Belle from Québec,” in “The Last Word is Yours,” *Chatelaine*, June 1960, 136. Gilbert had defenders too: Ann Arthur Hitchcock, and Mrs. Henry Swing, “Why Not an Indian Beauty?” in “The Last Word is Yours,” *Chatelaine*, August 1960, 112. The other featured women were conventional pretty women.

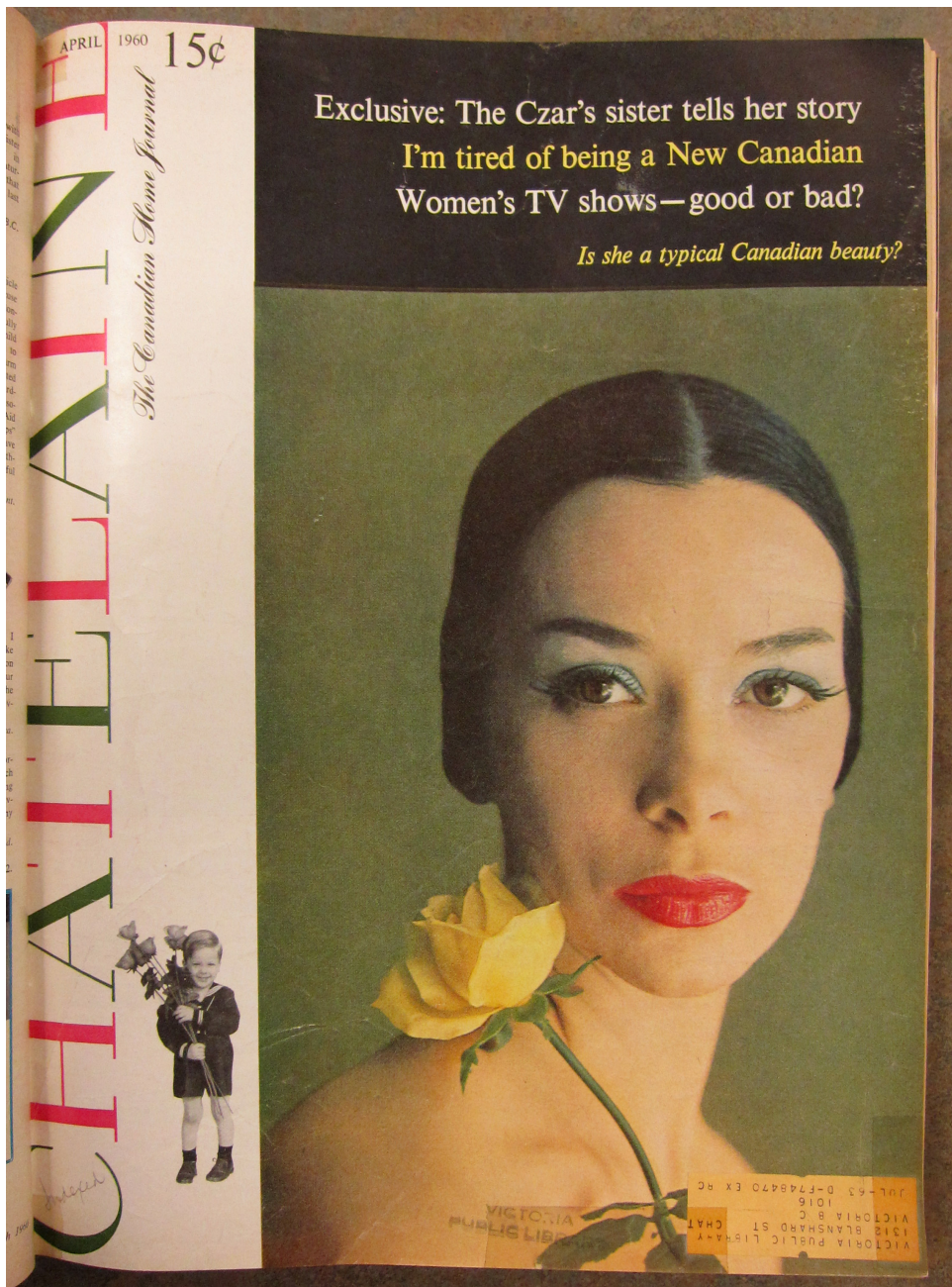


Figure 33. This unsmiling nominee for the role of “typical Canadian beauty” was in keeping with prior dour Canadian Girls, but she raised the ire of readers, who objected to her unpretty and slightly non-Anglo-Caucasian looks. *Chatelaine*, April, 1960. Victoria Public Library. By permission of Rogers Communications.

In a 1964 issue of *Maclean's*, some articles reflected both a strong liking for economic union with the United States and mounting concern about U.S. ownership

in Canada.¹⁶⁸ The 1965 landmark book *Lament For a Nation* would soon rekindle nationalism.¹⁶⁹ The pretty girl was by then too assimilated to register as a figure of Canadian Woman difference. The Miss Canada who had upbraided Canada's first Prime Minister, John A. MacDonald, for permitting American Evils to enter the country was fully eclipsed in 1967, Canada's centennial year, when *Maclean's* ran a cover photograph of an actor portraying MacDonald. He was attended by what the editors referred to as "two pretty young dollies"—models—intended to represent Canada's youth, one kissing the actor on the head.¹⁷⁰ "Woman" had lost out to "girl."

Trading off a voice for Glamour

Between 1880 and 1960, Canadians negotiated different conceptions of women's ability to represent Canadian identity, and illustrations reflected popular forms that originated in the United States, and Canadians criticisms, amendments, and adoptions of them. As we saw above, in the nineteenth century, a figurehead Miss Canada could chastise a politician on behalf of the public good, and Conservative Canadians decried the hustling American Girl. In 1927, *Canadian Home Journal's* description of the Canadian Woman focused on her character and activities far more than her looks. From 1930 to 1947, as glamour for its own sake became a social value promoted by the likes of Russell Patterson and Arthur William Brown in conjunction with the entertainment and beauty industries, Rex Woods gave the responsible Canadian Woman in *Canadian Home Journal* a variety of glamorized faces. These contrasted with the demure, dutiful Canadian Cover Girl whom Woods and *Canadian Home Journal* chose to represent the ideal Canadian female.

Woods' glamour covers were intended to honour and democratize the Canadian Woman, and they successfully presented a distinguished, elegant person. But by focusing so much on physical appearance, by limiting her activity to sports, shopping and dancing, and by merging her with advertising figures like the MacDonald Lassie and Rita Martin, Woods' images diminished and undermined what a symbolic Canadian woman like the Canadian Cover Girl did, thought, and stood for politically, making the role models who usually appeared on *Canadian Home Journal's* covers indistinguishable from American glamour girls. That Vincent Massey's 1948 cultural nationalist polemic *On Being Canadian* explicitly addressed only young men demonstrates how little the Canadian Woman had made any actual political inroads.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸ According to one survey, 65% of respondents favoured economic union. "What, If Anything, Is Wrong with U.S. Ownership?" *Maclean's*, June 6 1964, 16, 33–35; Jack Grant, "The Case for North American Union," *Maclean's*, March 7, 1964, 58.

¹⁶⁹ George Parkin Grant, *Lament for a Nation: The Defeat of Canadian Nationalism* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965).

¹⁷⁰ Horst Ehricht, *Maclean's*, January 1967, cover image; "Editor's note," *Maclean's*, January 1967, 4.

¹⁷¹ Massey, *On Being Canadian*, 183.

When photography supplanted the work of Woods and other illustrators, due to years of glamour imagery by Woods and other Canadian illustrators, resistance to increasingly generic or sexualized images of women was already eroded to the point that alternative depictions of women were few, and disapproved of when they did emerge (like *Chatelaine's* "typical Canadian beauty?" of 1960). The Canadian Woman lapsed into a smiling cover girl, indistinguishable from the American, even less diverse in type than she had ever been in Woods' illustrations. Lamenting American mass media's erosion of traditional Canadian values, the Massey Commission observed: "perhaps a "pin-up girl" grins from the exact place on the wall where used to hang the portrait of a shy young woman of twenty, of whom they used to say: '*Qui est-ce? Mais vous savez bien que c'est le portrait de grand'mère.*'"¹⁷²

The anti-American aspect of representations of Canadian women was effectually traded for the gratification of a modern, fashionable figure commensurate with images emanating from New York and Hollywood. But American-style pretty-girl imagery and print were not invaders so much as invited guests. Concurrently with political and economic debates over continentalism in the periodicals, many Canadians spoke of their wish to be equivalent to Americans, and felt that the Americanized beauty of young women like Margaret Marshall symbolized Canada's worth. The authority once accorded nineteenth-century Miss Canada, Woods' Canadian Woman, and the severe 1945 Canadian Cover Girl, Lenore Johannesson, had largely disappeared by 1950 when illustration began to be discontinued. In their place, there were photographs of the generic pretty girl, representative of lurking continentalist desires—desires the fine art world continued to disavow and suppress, as the next chapter will show.

¹⁷² Canada, "Mass Media: Introduction," *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences, 1949–1951*, (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1951), 22.

Chapter 5

Dividing the Borderlands: Outdoors With Thoreau MacDonald and John F. Clymer

As the previous chapters have shown, American values reflected in American magazines were strong and were embraced by many Canadians. Canadian illustrators such as Arthur Heming and Rex Woods attempted to recast American forms in Canadian ways in order to express values held by Canadians, but American magazines continued to dominate among Canadian readers. As in previous decades, in 1936 the Canadian National Magazine Publisher's Association warned, "Canadian readers are deluged with millions of copies of US periodicals containing fiction, illustrations, articles and features, glorifying United States history, art, literature, industry, educational and government institutions, some of which are anti-Canadian and anti-British."¹

In 1951 the Massey Commission reported that "American periodicals outsell [Canadian ones] by more than two to one in their own Canadian market," and noted that "The periodical press of Canada . . . not infrequently has the dubious pleasure of nurturing Canadian writers to the point where they can sell their wares to more affluent American periodicals." The same was true of illustrators.²

In this chapter, I discuss the continuing attraction of New York for budding talent. Then I explore how Thoreau MacDonald (1901-1989) used wilderness imagery in the Group of Seven vein to assert Canadian cultural nationalism. This I contrast to how John Ford Clymer (1907-1989) used the wilderness imagery tradition exemplified by Arthur Heming to appeal to continentalism.

Toronto-based MacDonald suppressed the pretty girl and the descriptive and narrative functions of illustration, successfully making a bibliophilic kind of illustration that was accepted as "art," one that coded Canadian national identity as exceptionally non-commercial and erudite. In contrast, finding Canadian art too restrictive, American-born, Canadian-trained Clymer eschewed the pretty girl altogether. But, setting his sights on success in the United States, he forged a North American narrative out of the wilderness adventure genre, bringing Canadian and American histories together in *Saturday Evening Post* covers and in his own self-directed genre and history paintings.

I conclude this chapter by analyzing how Canada's artistic climate resulted in the retention of MacDonald while losing Clymer, a trade-off paradigmatic of the loss of continentalist discourse in art. This neglect preserved the myth that Canada was unique in its identification with wilderness, which in turn bolstered cultural nationalism as the United States continued to lure away young Canadian illustrators,

¹ Canadian National Newspapers and Periodicals Association, "Foreign Ideas Fostered, Canadian Ideas Stifled," *Canadian Home Journal*, April 1936, 94-95, advertisement.

² Canada, "The Press and Periodical Literature," *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences, 1949-1951* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1951), 64.

while American split-run magazines with few tax burdens and privileged access to Canadian markets threatened Canadian publishers' livelihood.

Illustrators' trade-offs: continental versus parochial

The money and excellence at the centre of publishing in New York often outweighed the accusations of treachery expatriates incurred, a situation forcefully reported by cartoonist Richard Taylor in 1950, who said that Canadian firms paid a maximum of \$30 for cartoons while New York ones paid a minimum of \$100. The difference is corroborated by Arthur William Brown's account books, which reveal that in 1947 he was paid \$345 for writing and illustrating the feature "My Friends Say I'm Beautiful" in *Canadian Home Journal*; and \$900 for illustrating only one installment of "Claudia" in *Redbook*.³

Besides fame and fortune, New York also promised creative stimulation and excellence, and Canada's design community was becoming increasingly unsatisfied with lagging behind international trends, especially after the Second World War. As modernist designer Paul Arthur put it in 1954, the Group of Seven ideal had become "an undigested lump sitting on the chest of the public . . . a kind of droning of the radio" in the background of daily life, while mainstream illustration and design in Canada was a pathetic imitation of America's worst: "unimaginative and preoccupied with 'technical excellence.'" Canadian marketing, design and illustration, in an effort to be autonomous, had become parochial, nothing more than a haven for "the intellectual and artistic carpet-bagger" where it was "possible to palm-off the second rate as first class."⁴ Ambitious illustrators at midcentury had to go to New York in order to become first rather than second rate illustrators.

Gerald Lazare (b. 1927) recalls that in the 1940s, he and his friends, who had begun drawing comic books when the war shut down imports of American comics, would have weekly meetings to critique the latest work of American illustrator Al Dorne. Dorne had served as President of the Society of Illustrators and was Director of the Famous Artists School, a correspondence school for illustration based in Westport, Connecticut. Lazare would soon seek him out for advice.⁵ Dorne was asked to Toronto as guest of honour and external juror for the 1950 Toronto Art

³ Richard D. Taylor, "An Ex-Canadian Complains . . ." *Saturday Night*, October 31, 1950, 8-9; Arthur William Brown, account book, Brown fonds, Society of Illustrators.

⁴ Arthur, "Canada: Advertising and Editorial Art," 100-101, 160. Boredom with the Group of Seven was echoed by an American critic who said, "...in the case of Ontario...one is dealing with an area still crippled by the all pervasive influence of a group who made a noble beginning, but have failed signally to add anything substantial to Canadian art in the last 15 years." Joseph A. Baird, "American and Canadian Art Compared," *Canadian Art* 10, no. 1 (Autumn 1952): 15.

⁵ Gerald Lazare, quoted in Leif Peng, "FAS Alumnus, Jerry Lazare," *Today's Inspiration* (blog), March 16, 2012, <http://todaysinspiration.blogspot.ca/2012/03/fas-alumnus-jerry-lazare.html>.

Directors Awards, even after these directors began to encourage more experimental approaches from such illustrators as Eric Aldwinckle, Oscar Cahén, Ed McNally, and Harold Town.

The youthful dream of Canada's eminent graphic designer, Allan Fleming (1929-1977), was, as he said later tongue-in-cheek, to "conquer Manhattan on the strength of my superior illustrations."⁶ Art director Margaret Stewart (b. 1929) remembers that circa 1960, "New York was the grail of all the illustrators. So many had dreams of a house in Connecticut and a career in N.Y. illustration." New York money and glory were palpable. Estelle Mandel, agent for Stewart's illustrator husband James Hill (1930-2004), treated him like a celebrity: "She hired a limousine and took him to Harlem to hear Thelonius Monk . . . She sent us expensive presents. She really worked for him, got him interesting jobs."⁷ Other Canadian illustrators who took advantage of American offerings and became well-known at midcentury include Hal Foster (1892-1982), Wesley Neff (1895-1976), Hubert Rogers (1898-1982) Robert Loughheed (1910-1982), Denver Gillen (1914-1975), and Michael Mitchell (1921-unkown). Their subject matter constitutes a diverse reflection of the new forms emerging at midcentury, ranging from adventure comics to science fiction pulps to jazz-inflected compositions to cowboy painting. Compatriot John Clymer remained comparatively conservative, continuing the long tradition of wilderness and rural scenes of everyday life.

As noted in the previous chapter, the debate between 1946 and 1948 over American cultural and political annexation was a frequent feature in *Maclean's* magazine.⁸ Angry letters expressed resentment of any suggestion that Canada should become American, yet a few writers thought that Canada could gain sophistication from greater collaboration with Americans.⁹ Other magazines also compared lifestyles in the two countries and ran surveys on Canadian attitudes towards the U.S., finding that while Canadians had little desire to join the Union, Canadians wanted access to America's inexpensive goods.¹⁰

The 1951 Massey Commission considered the dominance of American magazines to be in part responsible for the failure of Canadian difference to materialize forcefully in the arts.¹¹ Indeed, as several media historians have

⁶ Allan Fleming, quoted in Donnelly, "Mass Modernism," 90.

⁷ Marg Stewart, email to author, March 5, 2012.

⁸ Hugh MacLennan, "How We Differ from Americans," *Maclean's*, December 15, 1946, 9; Massey, "Should Canada Join the Pan-American Union?," 22; Ferguson, "Are the Yanks Invading Canada?" 18; Fraser "Why Canadians Leave Home," 7; MacLennan, "What Does Uncle Sam Want?" 57; Arthur Lower, "If We Joined the USA—" 7.

⁹ "Canada and the US," in "Mailbag," *Maclean's*, August 1, 1948, 51; Gairdner, "Why Canadians Leave Home."

¹⁰ Fraser, "Why Canadians Leave Home," 7-8; Margolius, "Would You Live Better in the U.S.?" "Let's NOT Join the U.S."

¹¹ Canada, "The Forces of Geography," items 23-25, pp. 17-18.

documented, the American split-run magazines had an advantage over Canadian ones because they could produce editions cheaply and garner the best advertising dollars due to the huge clout resulting from the numbers of American readers (160 million compared to Canada's nine million, the Massey Commission reported).¹² Canadian nationalists, now joined by cultural theorists such as Marshall McLuhan, tried to combat New York seduction with intensified criticisms of American pictorial media, relying especially on the spectre of the pretty girl as symbol of American capitalist seduction. In his 1951 indictment of reified industrial man, McLuhan identified the American "love-goddess assembly line" as the archetypal visual identity of commercialized modern life.¹³ In 1958, Arthur Lower—formerly optimistic that Canadians were indelibly different and morally superior to Americans—berated Canadian masses for "worshipping" the American "symbol-goddess" of "drug-store pornography" as their own.¹⁴

Meanwhile, the Group of Seven, the North, and the wilderness motif still dominated nationalist discourse in visual art: even when Canadian design promoted by the National Gallery of Canada embraced avant-garde Scandinavian and high modernist influences, interiors of modern homes were hung with Group of Seven landscapes painted some 25 years earlier.¹⁵ Artists who wished for artistic respectability, exciting challenges, name recognition, or better recompense, had to choose between moving to the U.S. and doing illustration work there; or pursuing fine art practices acceptable to Canadian critics well versed in cultural nationalism while illustrating for money. Illustrators who chose the latter route at midcentury include William Winter (1909-1989), Franklin Arbuckle (1909-2001), York Wilson (1907-1984), Harold Town (1924-1990), Walter Yarwood (1917-1996), Jack Bush (1909-1977), Tom Hodgson (1924-2006), and Oscar Cahén (1916-1956). Winter and Arbuckle painted both landscape as well as urban scenes, while the latter six helped establish abstract expressionism in Toronto's art scene after 1950. In contrast to them, and like Clymer but in a completely different manner, Thoreau MacDonald persisted with rural and wilderness subjects.

Thoreau MacDonald and cultural nationalism

As the only son of the Group of Seven's J.E.H. MacDonald (1873-1932), Thoreau MacDonald was born into an advantageous position within Canadian art.

¹² Split-run magazines and the resulting tax and diplomacy fiascos have been discussed by Stephen Azzi, "Magazines and the Canadian Dream: The Struggle to Protect Canadian Periodicals 1955-1965," *International Journal* 54, no. 3 (Summer, 1999): 502-523. See also Mary Vipond, *The Mass Media in Canada* (Toronto: James Lorimar, 1989).

¹³ McLuhan, *The Mechanical Bride*, 95-97.

¹⁴ Arthur R. M. Lower, *Canadians in the Making*, 423.

¹⁵ Joy Parr, *Domestic Goods: The Material, the Moral, and the Economic in the Postwar Years* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 58-60.

Figuratively, he was the “native son:” born in Canada and representative of the new generation for whom the nationalists hope to establish Canadian artistic autonomy and moral worth.¹⁶ He was even befriended as a boy by Tom Thomson, who was to become an icon of Canadian art,¹⁷ and with his father had sorted Thomson’s estate when Thomson tragically drowned in 1917. Like Thomson, MacDonald was mainly self-taught (and both men learned from the elder MacDonald). He was a loner and remained a bachelor, and made art tied very much to direct experience in rural and wilderness environs.¹⁸ In a way, although he himself would have despised the suggestion, others may have seen sixteen-year-old MacDonald (who was just then beginning his first professional works) as inheritor of the energy lost when Thomson died. Certainly the weight of the Group of Seven project to define Canadian identity for others directed MacDonald’s path. Early journal entries show that he felt art was a public service: “What use is *self*-expression? When our selves are out of the way there is room for the real & universal thoughts that fill the air (Jan. 4, 1925);” “Do you make it easier for any to live, give off light? Then your life is successful though you accomplish nothing . . . Our duty is the grandest training we can have for all art & writing. Neglect it & ability dies (March 18, 1925);” and “Nothing is done well unless for someone else (April 29, 1925).”¹⁹ He demonstrated his devotion to these principles in the 1931 *A Canadian ABC*, which is filled with stock Canadiana reminiscent of Heming’s work: Hudson’s Bay Company voyageurs in a birchbark canoe, the Mountie, the beaver, and the iconic lone tree, which may be seen as a symbol of the rugged pioneer withstanding the climate [Figure 34].²⁰

¹⁶ J. E. H. MacDonald was born in Durham, England but some of his forbears were Canadian. See John W. Sabeau, ed. *A Boy All Spirit: Thoreau MacDonald in the 1920s* (Newcastle, ON: Penumbra Press, 2002), 19. It is interesting that in a small oil sketch by Tom Thomson, young Thoreau MacDonald is wearing the military style of hat common to Mounties and to the personification of Johnny Canuck, the masculine version of Miss Canada. Tom Thomson, *Thoreau MacDonald*, oil on canvas, ca. 1913, private collection.

¹⁷ E. R. Hunter, *Thoreau MacDonald* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1942), 9.

¹⁸ Sabeau, *A Boy All Spirit*, 21.

¹⁹ MacDonald, in Sabeau, *A Boy All Spirit*, 100, 107, 114.

²⁰ R. K. Gordon and Thoreau MacDonald, *A Canadian Child’s ABC* (Letchworth, Herts: The Temple Press, 1931); Matthew Teitelbaum, “Sighting the Single Tree, Sighting the New Found Land,” in *Eye of Nature*, ed. Dana Augaitas, (Banff, AB: Water Phillips Gallery, 1991), 71–88.

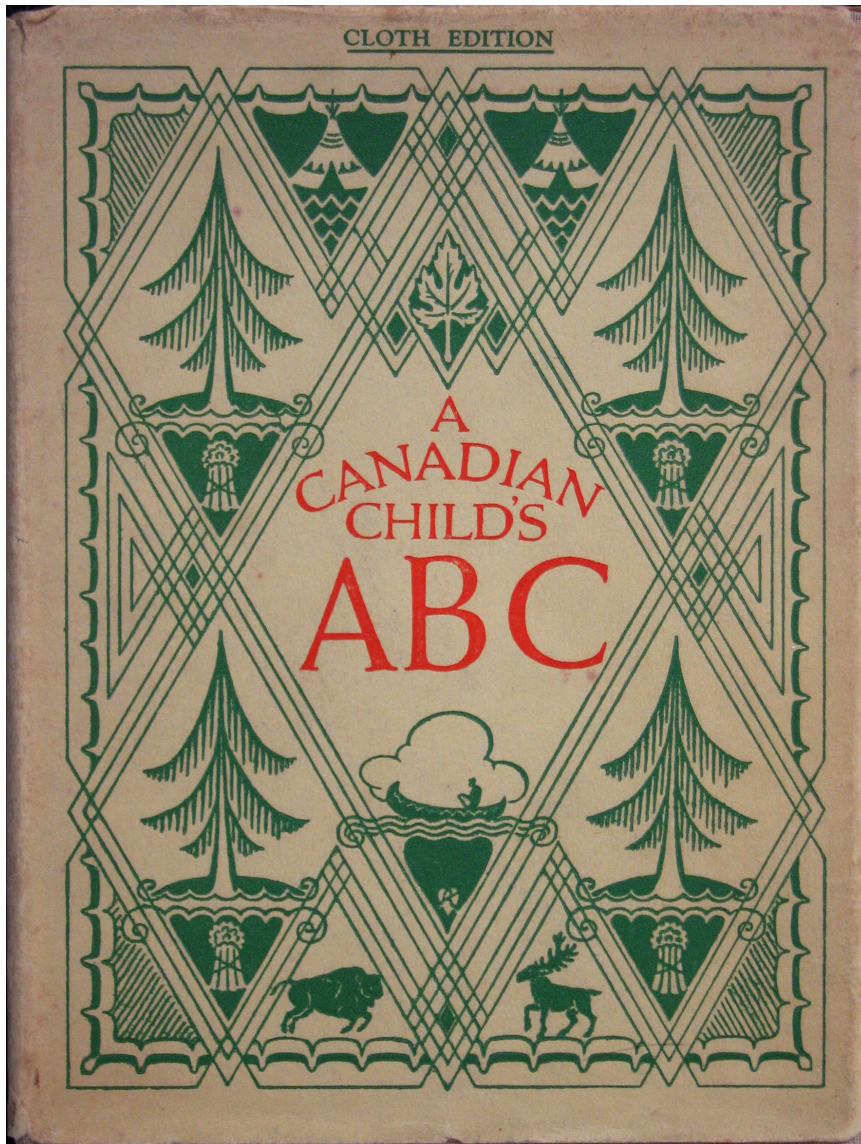


Figure 34. Thoreau MacDonald, book cover, *A Canadian Child's ABC* (Letchworth, Herts: The Temple Press, 1931). Photograph by the author. Collection of Chester Gyski.

MacDonald complained in 1942 that, "Though Canadians are patriotic enough, in one way the majority don't seem to care much about their country as a land, a home. A lot of them would sell the last acre if they could get enough to live in Bermuda or Florida. As a piece of land our country is fast deteriorating & nobody seems to care."²¹ MacDonald's work was calculated to make people care by reminding them of the Group of Seven's legacy. When he came to write the book *The*

²¹ MacDonald to Lorne Peirce, March 6, 1942, in *Thoreau MacDonald's Notebooks*, ed. John Flood (Moonbeam: Penumbra Press, 1980), 146.

Group of Seven for the nationalistic Ryerson Press in 1944, he provided a cover that portrayed a lakeside outcrop topped by a grove of pines [Figure 35].

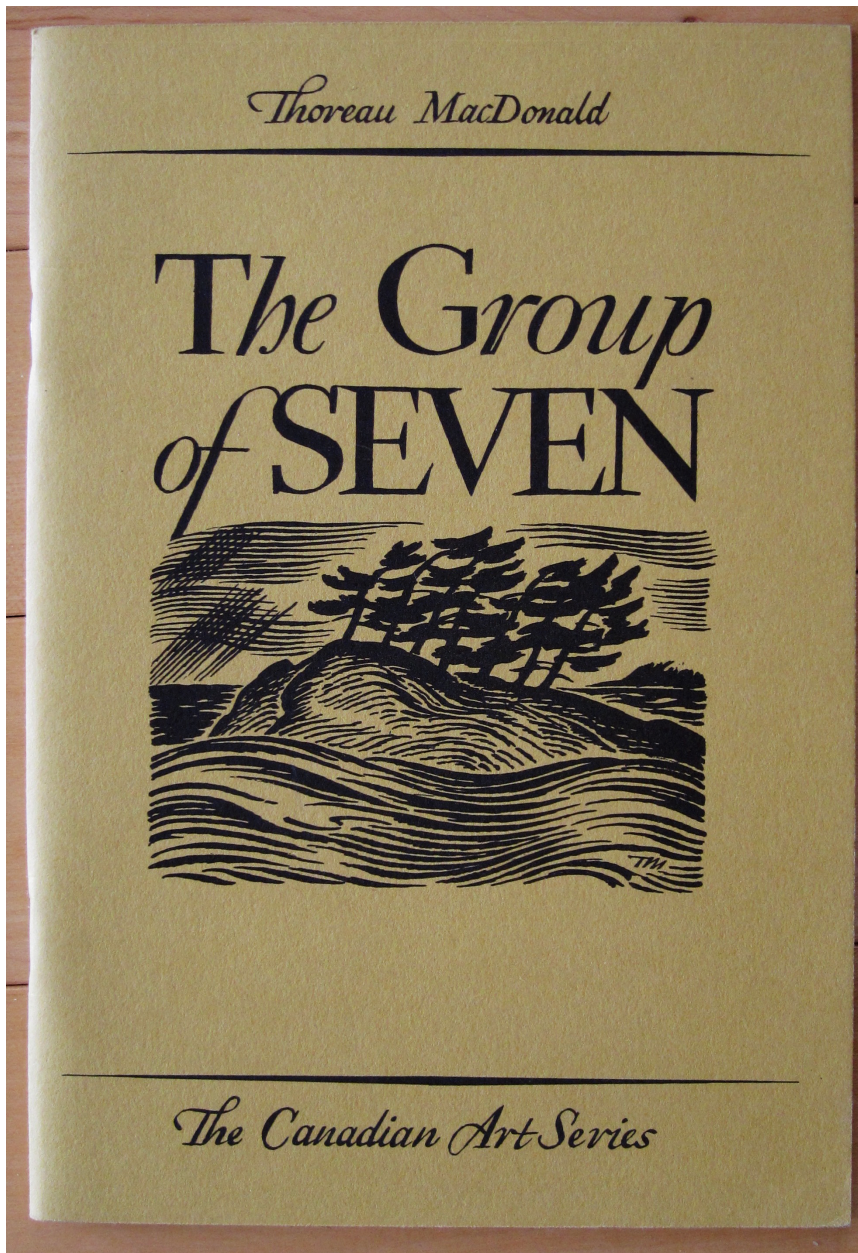


Figure 35. Thoreau MacDonald, *The Group of Seven* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1944). Photograph by the author. Collection of Chester Gryski.

Inside appear similar brush drawings by Group members. MacDonald's drawing style represented a distillation of all of the Group members' hands, carrying their collective nationalist message with it. This style became MacDonald's own, and never ceased to reflect the slightly expressionistic and conventionalized approach shared by the Group's members.

MacDonald's work was a paean to Canadian exceptionalism. Nevertheless, like any Canadian, MacDonald was a product of joint continental culture. As a boy he had been much exposed to the genre of the "realistic animal story" such as Ernest Thompson Seton and Charles G.D. Roberts had made famous, and that Arthur Heming had once illustrated for American publications. In keeping with that genre, MacDonald's juvenilia show the influence of natural history approaches based on observation from life.²² He especially recognized Seton as an influence.²³ Later, he illustrated titles for American publishers, participated in a 1946 exhibition of the American Institute of the Graphic Arts and in a touring 1948 exhibition of the Book Jacket Designers Guild, and was featured in *American Artist* twice.²⁴

Thoreau MacDonald was named after American philosopher Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862); it will be remembered from Chapter 3 that C.W. Jefferys confirmed the Transcendentalist Thoreau been popular with the nationalists of the Toronto Art Students' League. Young MacDonald had been given Thoreau's works to study from childhood.²⁵ The depth of his affinity for New England culture is revealed in a letter he wrote to his friend Doris Mills: "I like New England & the southern states next to Ontario. It would be nice to have a little room with an old desk & table & rag rugs & a steeple clock, all New England . . . The bookcase could have all New England books, & some little oval pictures of Henry, & Emerson, & Mrs. E., etc. . . ."²⁶ It is from the elder Thoreau that MacDonald derived his spiritual and Christian connection with the wilderness, his pastoral ideal, and his environmentalist outlook. Unlike moderns such as Arthur William Brown or Russell Patterson, and more like Arthur Heming, he protested against "progress" when it spelled destruction of the environment and a traditional way of life of outdoorsman, pioneer, and small family farmer as symbols of national moral ideals—symbols well known in American identity.²⁷

As a child MacDonald liked popular literature, and recalled reading the British-published *The Three Trappers: A Story of Adventure in the Wilds of Canada* three times. But later, although the book had been a school prize of his father's, he called it "nothing as literature" and advised parents to get children "something

²² Thoreau MacDonald, "An Autobiographical Note," in *Thoreau MacDonald: A Catalogue of Design and Illustration*, ed. Margaret E. Edison (University of Toronto Press, 1973), 10.

²³ Thoreau MacDonald, quoted in Sabeau, *A Boy All Spirit*, 27; Norman Kent, "Thoreau MacDonald, Canadian Illustrator," *American Artist* 10, no. 1 (January 1946): 23.

²⁴ See Edison, *Thoreau MacDonald: A Catalogue*, 26; Kent, "Thoreau MacDonald, Canadian Illustrator," 23; Norman Kent, "The Line Drawings of Thoreau MacDonald," *American Artist* 29, no. 10 (December 1965): 36.

²⁵ Sabeau, *A Boy All Spirit*, 13–14.

²⁶ Thoreau MacDonald, July 24, 1929, quoted in Sabeau, *A Boy All Spirit*, 240.

²⁷ These American national symbols were analyzed in Smith, *Virgin Land*.

worthwhile”.²⁸ MacDonald as a boy also clipped Remington’s illustrations from *Collier’s*.²⁹ We can guess this had to do with an interest in drawing horses, which MacDonald said comprised 90% of his juvenilia.³⁰

MacDonald emerges from continentalist joint culture—a culture that informed Canada’s sense of self apart from Imperialist roots in England. But quickly this continentalist link became highly selective in his work and Canadian reception, as Canadian nationalist needs came to the fore. He gravitated to elite and learned, rather than popular, visual culture. Unlike other budding illustrators who appreciated Remington, MacDonald did not retain much if any of Remington in his mature work: the dramatic moments and heroes are missing, and MacDonald’s horses are draught horses. Seton, with his anti-establishment individualism, his Rousseau-like rejection of high culture, his scientific interest in animals, and his devotion to Canadian identity, more closely resembled MacDonald’s values than Remington’s Wild West images did. In 1925, after visiting a major Toronto exhibition of British art, he advised his friend Carl Schaefer, “Perhaps not enough Nature... A lot of big names are there, often the least interesting. I wouldn’t bother looking at Frank Brangwyn.”³¹ (Brangwyn was at this time influencing the leading American mainstream illustrators, especially Dean Cornwell). In the 1920s, MacDonald noticed Rockwell Kent, whom MacDonald’s close friend Doris Huestis had met. Kent had traveled the North and gave landscapes the sublime, bleak starkness that also came to characterize MacDonald’s work. Both Kent (who had Communist sympathies) and MacDonald avoided overtly commercial applications, developing instead an affinity for bibliophilic treatments with their use or quoting of woodcut and wood engraving.

MacDonald’s concern for the environment originated in New England culture, but it was equally expressive of his personal connection to his own rural property at Thornhill, near Toronto (not far from the Don Valley where Seton got his own start). His journals record his nature observations there and the impact that the detested urban expansion was having on his farmer neighbours.³² Connection to nature was the highest ethical expression for MacDonald, and with it went a very idealistic point of view. Equating philosophical perspective on human suffering with simply not paying attention to it in favour of observing nature, he once reacted to a realist novel by saying, “. . . so much is made of the people’s wretched doings . . . They should look out the window more. I want to read about people better than myself,

²⁸ MacDonald, “An Autobiographical Note,” 9; Achilles Daunt, *The Three Trappers: A Story of Adventure in the Wilds of Canada* (London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1882).

²⁹ MacDonald to Norman Kent, 1954, in Flood, *Notebooks*, 195.

³⁰ MacDonald, “An Autobiographical Note,” 10.

³¹ MacDonald to Carl Schaefer, April 7, 1925, in Flood, *Notebooks*, 102.

³² Flood, *Notebooks*, 56, 57.

who will raise my standard of living.”³³ We can surmise that MacDonald’s illustrations were these windows offering a better view of things. In them, his aim was to look “outside” (outdoors and outside social limits) for worthy role models to contrast with and ameliorate the flaws symbolically positioned “inside” manmade spaces.

In presenting spiritually charged views, MacDonald forsook the drama, narrative, and character that made Seton’s, Remington’s, and Heming’s works so popular. For instance, the canoeists and Mountie of the *ABC* or *Maria Chapdelaine* (below) are presented passively in near silhouettes; the Mountie’s horse halted, the voyageurs paddling placid water [Figure 36].



Figure 36. Thoreau MacDonald’s illustrations were characterized by a lack of drama and generalized, undetailed faces. Illustration for *A Canadian Child’s ABC* (Letchworth, Herts: The Temple Press, 1931), 26. Photograph by the author. Collection of Chester Gryski.

Nothing is happening; few pregnant or climactic moments are conveyed in the *ABC* or any other book by MacDonald. To “read” MacDonald’s remote subjects, the viewer must search not the picture but the text and him or herself, introspectively: no faces tell what thoughts his infrequently represented characters have. MacDonald’s people, when he did include them, are generally seen at a distance, dwarfed by nature. When they do appear, as in the *ABC*, they are given generic figures, and faces are left featureless or turned away from the viewer, symbols rather than individuals. Like the landscapes of the Group of Seven, weather systems and immense sky-scapes full of beams of light and lyrical shapes express more than his living beings do. His inscrutable, quiet drawings do the opposite of

³³ Thoreau MacDonald, February 6, 1924, in Sabean, *A Boy All Spirit*, 45. The novel was Knut Hamson’s *Growth of the Soil* (1920), which described the infanticide of a deformed child.

regular illustration (and advertising) by making meaningfulness conditional upon prior familiarity with the genteel practice of meditative observation—like a naturalist—or a connoisseur of art—to decode understated images.

It took a while for MacDonald to give up the compositional tricks of a conventional designer and to turn wholly toward the idea of illustration as window into an alternative world. E.R. Hunter wrote of Thoreau MacDonald's early work (which MacDonald had destroyed by 1942):

His first oil sketches were done in a bold, decorative way—rather too decorative. Usually the subject was animals or birds appearing against a stylized background of water or sky, and the effect was often that of a colour block print . . . He did what many another student has done: he resorted to a formalized design, and coloured it.³⁴

It is instructive to remember the condemnation Arthur Heming suffered for being “too posterish” in 1926, and that John Clymer also experienced in the mid-1930s (below). Excessively formal conventionalization connoted the assembly-line production of the advertising art studio and Art Deco; in the estimation of nationalists, such calculated design lacked sophistication, and erased any sense of first-hand observation from life.

Unique autographic expression was more acceptable. MacDonald began his own artisanal Woodchuck Press in 1933 to publish books on pioneer-era Ontario.³⁵ Usually, MacDonald referenced the severity of woodcut and sometimes wood engraving with linocut and brush and ink, embellished with his fine calligraphy, in black and white. Identifying his medium with the subjects he drew, MacDonald said line drawing ought not to be “degraded” by emulating the halftone, but rather to “be marked by the apparent simplicity and decision of a well handled axe or scythe.”³⁶ Adopting this antique style and focusing on pastoral and wilderness subjects with understatement MacDonald set himself apart from commercial illustrators, and brought his work into alliance with fine book arts and the revival of printmaking in the 1930s, distancing him from more populist forms of illustration.

Literature professor and art collector Barker Fairley said to MacDonald, “What all artists dream of is that their work should finally hang together, that it should carry its own signature without having to be signed. And of whom can we say this more confidently than of you, whose handwriting is present in every line you draw?”³⁷ Fairley, who was editor of the nationalist journal *Canadian Forum*, had

³⁴ Hunter, *Thoreau MacDonald*, 34.

³⁵ E.g., Thoreau MacDonald, *A Few of the Old Gates at Thornhill and Some Nearby Farms, Carefully Drawn by Thoreau MacDonald* (Toronto: Woodchuck Press, 1933); Thoreau MacDonald, *Some Tools of the Pioneers* (Toronto: Woodchuck Press, 1936).

³⁶ MacDonald, quoted in Edison, *Thoreau MacDonald: A Catalogue*, 28.

³⁷ Barker Fairley, “A Letter,” in Edison, *Thoreau MacDonald: A Catalogue*, 5.

MacDonald as unpaid art editor. MacDonald's images appeared inside starting in 1922, and were used exclusively for the covers from 1924 to 1932 [Figure 37]. One of these depicts a woman holding Canada's emblem, the maple leaf, aloft to the rising sun in a northern Ontario Group of Seven type landscape. At her hem is a small pine tree, symbolizing the country's youth and potential. The figure recalls the personification of Miss Canada, but here she is given classical robes and a blank, conventionalized profile for a face. She is more like a bas-relief or a queen's head on a coin than a pretty girl illustration.



Figure 37. Thoreau MacDonald was especially fond of the motif of a lone tree, here paired with a heraldic Miss Canada. *Canadian Forum*, Vol. 7 #75 (Dec. 1926). D.B. Weldon Library, University of Western Ontario.

Canadian Forum, which was interested in elevated literary criticism, never ran illustration (aside from MacDonald's covers)—rather, MacDonald reproduced art by the Group of Seven and others deemed expressive of Canadian essence. These works appeared isolated on their own pages without body text, were duly titled and credited, were listed in the tables of contents as standalone pieces, and were usually only tangentially related to the authors or subjects on neighbouring pages.³⁸

As non-commercial as the *Forum* attempted to be, the consistency MacDonald brought to *Forum* covers coupled with the recognizability of his style amounts to nothing less than branding such as that employed by any other magazine—*Canadian Home Journal* covers by Rex Woods, for instance. Placing a consistent Canadian identity above competitive differentiation in the marketplace, the rival *Canadian Bookman* also employed cover designs by MacDonald from 1924 to 1939—a situation that was highly unusual, since mass magazine publishers expected regular cover artists to stick to one client (Rex Woods, for example, did not work for *Maclean's* until *Canadian Home Journal* ceased to put illustration on their covers). Other publications using MacDonald's art or lettering were *The Torch: A Magazine for Leaders of Canadian Girls in Training*, *Acta Victoriana*, and *The Northward Road*.

The years MacDonald's periodical covers appeared are also the years (1925-1950) in which the Group solidified their dominance in the public eye as the official Canadian Art. Their grip was such that one critic complained that the 1933 Ontario Society of Artists annual show was stale because "[Artists] have for years past been telling us that they have to do landscapes because only in landscape can they be essentially Canadian . . ."³⁹ Nevertheless, MacDonald continued to design covers bearing wilderness, wildlife and rural scenes for high profile Canadian art exhibition catalogues, including Toronto's annual Canadian National Exhibition from 1930 to 1939, and 1947 to 1956 inclusive; the *Exhibition of the Group of 7 & Art in French Canada* of 1926; the *Exhibition of the Work of Tom Thomson and J.E.H. MacDonald* of 1939, the *Exhibition of Canadian Art, New York World Fair, 1939*; and the *Canadian Group of Painters 1942 Travelling Exhibition*. He also provided covers for prominent books like *Canadian Landscape Painters* by A.H. Robson, and William Colgate's *Canadian Art, Its Origin and Development*, which presented the Group of Seven as the telos of Canadian art history.⁴⁰ *Canadian Art* magazine, launched in 1943, also bore MacDonald's lettering until 1947. *Canadian Author & Bookman* followed suit 1943-1945.

As the titles indicate, MacDonald had cornered the market on Canadiana, effectively providing a brandlike visual identity for Canadian art featuring landscapes, pastorals, wild animals and birds, and hand-lettering.⁴¹ A reader writing

³⁸ MacDonald felt, even so, that the *Forum's* editors were "not very fond of really modern Art," as he wrote in a letter to Carl Schaefer, August 3, 1927, quoted in Flood, *Notebooks*, 105.

³⁹ Lucy van Gogh, "The O.S.A. Show," *Saturday Night*, March 18, 1933, 13.

⁴⁰ A. H. Robson, *Canadian Landscape Painters* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1932).

⁴¹ See Edison, *Thoreau MacDonald: A Catalogue*, 14-18.

to the editor of the *Forum* signaled the success of all this visibility: "Of all Canadian artists, to me, A.Y. Jackson and Thoreau MacDonald are the most truly Canadian . . . To me, Mr. MacDonald's drawings are like a breeze from Canada and I consider them the best regular feature *The Canadian Forum* has."⁴² Most lasting has been MacDonald's contribution of the lone tree as a symbol for Canadian art (echoing Tom Thomson's iconic *Jack Pine* of 1916), as seen on the covers of the *ABC*, a *Canadian Forum* cover, and the catalogues of the Group's 1926 show and the 1929 New York World's Fair show [Figure 38].

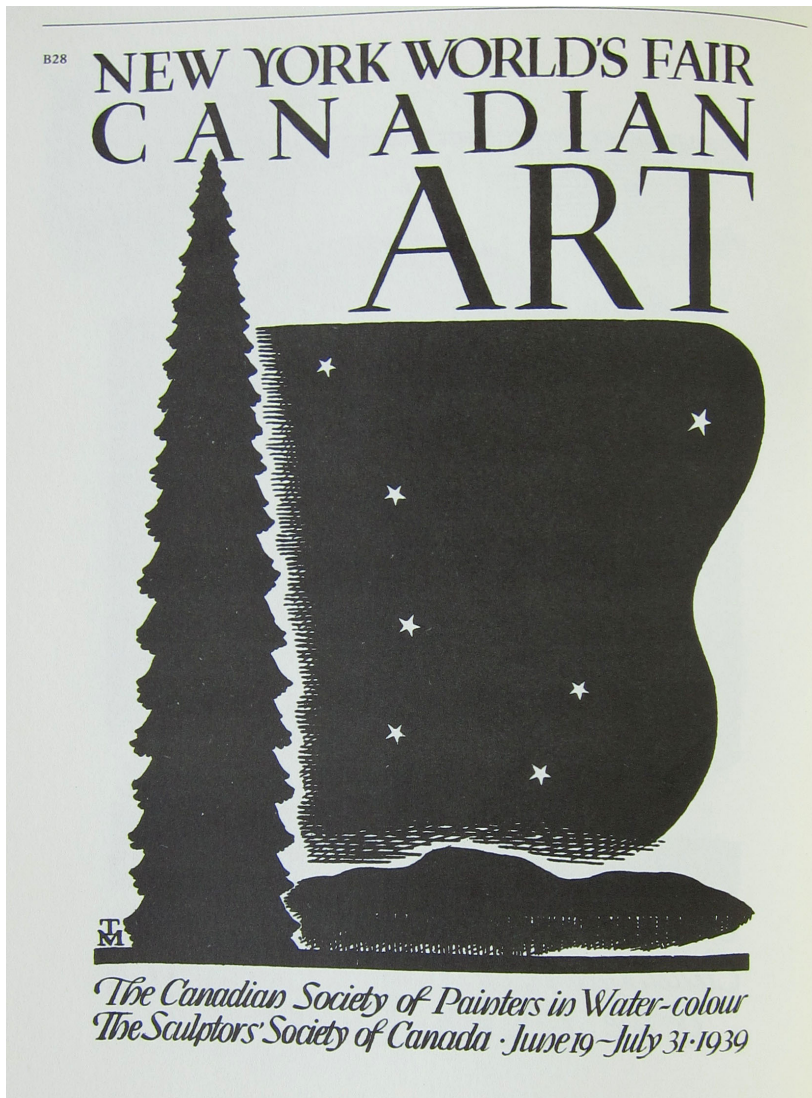


Figure 38. Thoreau MacDonald, [exhibition catalogue cover illustration] (Toronto: The Canadian Society of Painters in Water-colour; The Sculptors Society of Canada, 1939). Collection of Chester Gryski.

⁴² Robert E. Johnson, letter to the editor, *Canadian Forum* 11, no. 130 (July 1931): 397–398.

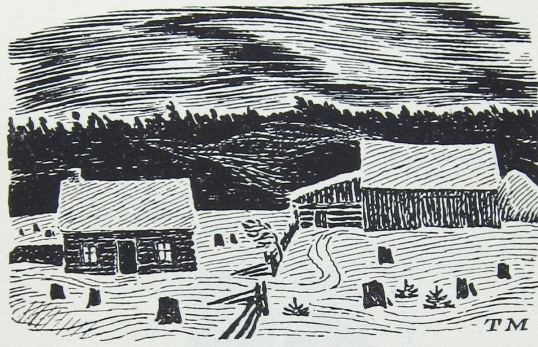
MacDonald made the lone tree Ryerson Press's logo, and later, it was the motif picked by his friend Carl Schaefer for the design of Penumbra Press's logo (the small-press publisher of Canadian School literature and art subjects, including books on Thoreau MacDonald and J.E.H MacDonald, after 1979).⁴³

Maria Chapdelaine and suppression of the pretty girl

One of only five projects MacDonald rated good enough for posterity was his illustrating of the classic story *Maria Chapdelaine*.⁴⁴ The plot of the book is this: having lost her true love to a bitter storm and her mother to illness, the attractive Maria must choose between two suitors: an ambitious expatriate pursuing the American Dream in Massachusetts, and a humble farmer working the land next to her father's in the isolated wilderness of Quebec. Mindful of her duty and guided by traditional Christian values, she chooses the farmer. MacDonald deliberately downplayed the pretty girl aspect while romanticizing the wilderness setting: the frontispiece does not show Maria, but rather her father's log-cabin homestead in a forest clearing, a bent sapling, drifting snow and agitated dusky sky indicating the sublime hardship of the land [Figure 39].

⁴³ John Flood, email to author, April 26, 2012.

⁴⁴ MacDonald, cited in Sabeau, *A Boy All Spirit*, 26. I refer throughout here to the English translation illustrated by Thoreau MacDonald: Louis Hémon, *Maria Chapdelaine*, trans. W. H. Black (Toronto: MacMillan, 1938).



MARIA CHAPDELAINÉ

Figure 39. Thoreau MacDonald's frontispiece for *Maria Chapdelaine* emphasized the remote wilderness setting of the story. Thoreau MacDonald, [frontispiece], Louis Hémon, *Maria Chapdelaine* (Toronto: MacMillan, 1938). Collection of Chester Gyski.

Although written by a French national, upon its original publication in 1913, *Maria Chapdelaine* was embraced immediately as a major icon of Québécois national identity. While a discussion of Québécois nationalism is beyond my scope here, it is important to note that the book reflected anxieties over some fifty years of

Québécois emigration to New England and the corresponding threat to French Canada's traditional rural life.⁴⁵ It is significant that MacDonald chose to illustrate this story, which lovingly portrays the oldest surviving Canadian colonial culture and relies so much on anti-American sentiment for its motivation. In illustrating the English translation, MacDonald united Quebec nationalism with the Anglophone nationalism with which he was particularly associated—a potent nationalist act in itself.

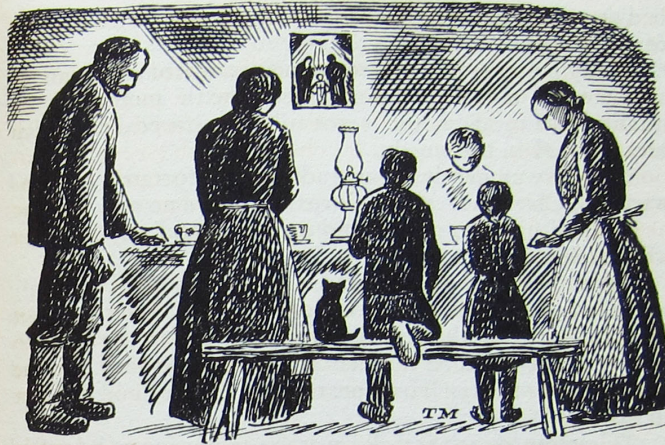
MacDonald's illustrations do the exact opposite of mainstream American illustration by suppressing the sensational. He explained:

The designs for *Maria Chapdelaine* do not attempt to show dramatic movement in the story. When illustrating a book so fine as this the designer had better merely accompany the text as harmoniously and unobtrusively as he can and not interrupt the author and reader with his conceptions. The present drawings are an attempt to make a setting or background for the dignity and simplicity of the story and to give some of the feeling of that section of our country.⁴⁶

MacDonald therefore does not even portray Maria until the tenth illustration (page 33), where we see only her back as she stands saying grace with her family. In fact, Maria is drawn exactly the same as her ageless mother [Figure 40].

⁴⁵ A basic primer is Damien-Claude Bélanger, "French Canadian Emigration to the United States 1840–1930," *Quebec History*, Marianopolis College, last revised August 23, 2000, accessed April 3, 2013, <http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/QuebecHistory/readings/leaving.htm>.

⁴⁶ MacDonald, quoted in Edison, *Thoreau MacDonald: A Catalogue*, 17.



“But he must not be allowed to come back, eh, mother! He must not be allowed to come back, this bad spirit. I will take father’s gun and I will shoot him . . .”

“You cannot shoot devils with a gun,” objected his mother. “But when you feel the temptation coming, seize your rosary and say your prayers.”

Telesphore did not dare to gainsay this; but he shook his head doubtfully. The gun seemed to him both the surer and the more amusing way, and he was accustomed to picture to himself a tremendous duel, a lingering slaughter from which he would emerge without spot or blemish, forever set free from the wiles of the Evil One.

Samuel Chapdelaine came into the house and supper was served. The sign of the cross around the table; lips moving in a silent *Benedicite*, which Telesphore and Alma Rose repeated aloud; again the sign of the cross; the noise of chairs and bench drawn in; spoons clattering on plates. To Maria

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Figure 40. The first visual representation of Maria shows her with her back to us, distinguishable from her mother only by her place at the side, rather than the head, of the table. Thoreau MacDonald, [illustration], Louis Hémon, *Maria Chapdelaine* (Toronto: MacMillan, 1938), 33. Collection of Chester Gryski.

This has some justification given that the author is at pains to appoint the mother as Maria’s most appropriate role model, but this suppression of Maria’s individuality in fact contradicts the text, where in the eighth and ninth pages Maria was immediately fetishized and spectacularized as an “inaccessible beauty” who drew all eyes. This includes her eventual sweetheart, who at that moment falls in love with her and has to struggle to not stare—it is a scene any pretty girl illustrator would have relished depicting. Then, in the most romantic passage in the book when

she and her true love pick berries alone, then sit on a log and promise themselves to each other, MacDonald shows only Maria by herself, at a distance [Figure 41].



so patient, the utter simplicity of attitude and of her rare gestures ; a great hunger for her awoke in him, and with a new and marvellous tenderness, for he had lived his life with other men, in hard give-and-take, among the wild forests and on the snowy plains.

Well he knew she was one of those women who, giving themselves, give wholly, reckoning not the cost ; love of body and soul, strength of arm in the daily task, the unmeasured devotion of a spirit that does not waver. So precious the gift appeared to him that he dared not ask it.

"I am going down to Grand'Mère next week," he said, almost in a whisper, "to work on the lumber-dam. But I will never take a glass, not one Maria !" Hesitating a moment he stammered out, eyes on the ground: "Perhaps . . . they have said something against me?"

"No."

"It is true that I used to drink a bit, when I got back from

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Figure 41. This illustration omits Maria's sweetheart from the scene altogether. Thoreau MacDonald, [illustration], Louis Hémon, *Maria Chapdelaine* (Toronto: MacMillan, 1938), 71. Collection of Chester Gryski.

We do not see Maria's face until page 98, in a half-page spot illustration representing an intense moment in the narrative when she prays hard for her sweetheart's return. But even here, she is reduced to a simple figure sitting passively in an apparently still rocking chair, her barely-described features blank [Figure 42].

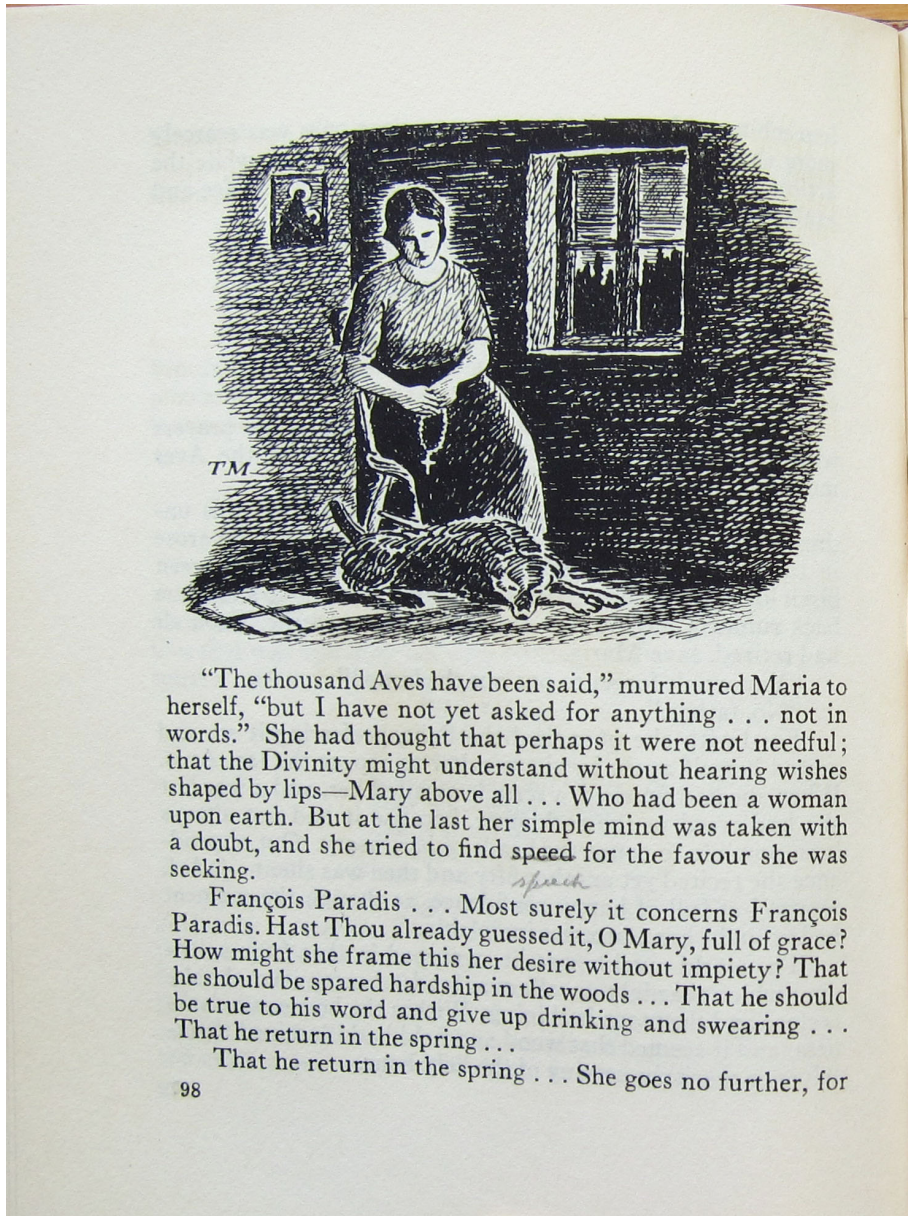


Figure 42. Despite lavish descriptions of her beauty in the text, MacDonald only shows Maria as a simplified form. Thoreau MacDonald, [illustration], Louis Hémon, *Maria Chapdelaine* (Toronto: MacMillan, 1938), 98. Collection of Chester Gryski.

In considering illustration an “interruption” rather than an accompaniment to text, MacDonald was evoking the literary values of Stéphane Mallarmé, who had stated, “I am for—no illustration, everything that a book evokes must take place in the mind of the reader.”⁴⁷ Avant-garde publishing such as Mallarmé promoted used original prints by artists rather than illustration per se, if a book had to include images at all.

MacDonald’s reticence to represent dramatic moments, plot, or Maria’s personality, individuality, or desirability is motivated by a similar wish to connote “high” culture with its classical, Christian, and Kantian taboo against engaging the “base” senses and rousing sympathies by portrayal of facial and physical expression, particularly that of fetching young damsels. This literary ideal of illustration privileged the mind over the body, specifically, the sensual body. It was fitting enough, given that the author, Hémon, has Maria also deny her own baser impulses. Maria was the perfect Canadian symbol in that she thought not of herself, but of the fabric of her society and her responsibility to it. The function of *Maria Chapdelaine* and the function of MacDonald’s illustration alike were to distance Canadian print consumption from America’s selfishness-inducing, prurient, sensationalist, and commercial fare.

John Clymer as Canadian artist

John F. Clymer was born and raised in the tiny town of Ellensburg in the state of Washington, not far from British Columbia, and found early tutelage and publishing opportunities in Vancouver and Toronto. Clymer’s oeuvre is a later example of the wilderness adventure painting genre to which Heming had contributed. In fact, Clymer attended an exhibition of Heming’s work at Eaton’s Fine Art Gallery in Toronto on April 6, 1935, and exhibited with him in the same venue in November, 1935 (with Franklin Arbuckle, as well). They showed together again at the Royal Canadian Academy exhibitions in 1933, 1934 and 1935.⁴⁸ Clymer’s illustrations constructed a North American history that served the narratives of both Canada and the United States, a history that brings them together into one united story of colonial endeavour. Clymer’s Canadian life and its influence on his American work has been under-recognized; a review of his career and work provides an opportunity to examine how Canadian experience figures in American-directed print culture, and to ask whether Canadian cultural identity could be successfully presented in American illustration.

Clymer’s Canadian wilderness experiences built upon his childhood America, where he had been raised in hunting, fishing, and ranching traditions.⁴⁹ The young

⁴⁷ Arnar, *The Book As Instrument*, 60.

⁴⁸ “Home Bright with Bouquets as Mrs. Apted Entertains,” *Toronto Star*, April 8, 1935, 24; “Exhibition of Paintings by Nine Artists,” *Toronto Star*, November 4, 1935, 33, advertisement.

⁴⁹ Art Instruction Inc., “The Story of John Clymer,” *The Technique of J. Clymer*, (Minneapolis: Art Instruction Inc., 1951), 5; Walt Reed, *John Clymer: An Artist’s Rendezvous with the Frontier West*, (Flagstaff: Northland Press, 1976), 3–4.

Clymer admired American wilderness illustrators Frank Schoonover and Walt Louderback; perhaps he had come across the latter's illustrations for *The Alaskan: A Novel of the North* by outdoor adventure specialist James Oliver Curwood, or some similar story, in *Cosmopolitan*, issues of which his father had bought.⁵⁰

Clymer went to the new Vancouver School of Art, 1925-1927. He did not find congenial instruction with Group of Seven member Fred Varley there,⁵¹ so Clymer went to see John Innes (1863-1941), whose background was as a political cartoonist and illustrator in New York, Toronto, Calgary, and Vancouver. Innes was immersed in painting what would eventually be some 60 major canvases depicting heroic moments of pioneer life in local history.⁵² Innes proclaimed they were "a story of man's achievement in pushing back the frontiers of Canada," dedicated to "the Trail-blazers and Builders of this Dominion who made their way straight in the wilderness for those who were to follow . . . That which they conquered, we have inherited."⁵³ Innes' beliefs, which echoed the pioneer narratives so favoured in the United States,⁵⁴ would have validated the colonial project and the idea of history painting for Clymer, who was himself a descendent of early pioneer railway builders.⁵⁵

Through Innes, Clymer also met John Radford (1860-1940), an art conservative who wrote criticism in the local paper. Radford and Innes held a deep contempt for modernism in general and for the Group of Seven in particular (although they were only modestly modernist).⁵⁶ Clymer also met their friend George Southwell, an English-born portrait, landscape, and mural painter with whom Clymer then shared studio space 1925-1929. He took lessons in composition,

⁵⁰ James Oliver Curwood, *The Alaskan: A Novel of the North* (New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, 1923); Art Instruction Inc., "The Story of John Clymer," 5; Reed, *John Clymer*, 3-4.

⁵¹ F. H. Varley allegedly told Clymer to stop "attempting" to become an artist. John A. Radford, "Clymer," *Province*, July 15, 1933; John Bruce Cowan, *John Innes: Painter of the Canadian West* (Vancouver: Rose, Cowan and Latta, 1945), 23.

⁵² Cowan, *John Innes*, 11, 16, 26, 30-31. Recent research by Jason Vanderhill discusses the 30 works in *Epic of Western Canada* purchased by the Hudson Bay Company; and the *Epic of Transportation*. Jason Vanderhill, "Illustrated Vancouver Vol 35—The Epic of Western Canada by John Innes," *Vancouver is Awesome* (blog), February 10, 2013, <http://vancouverisawesome.com/2013/02/10/illustrated-vancouver-vol-35-the-epic-of-western-canada-by-john-innes/>.

⁵³ Cowan, *John Innes*, 27-28.

⁵⁴ Smith, *Virgin Land*.

⁵⁵ Doris Clymer to Reed, April 2, 1974, copy, Walt Reed correspondence file, collection of Illustration House, New York; original in John F. Clymer, Ellensburg, WA.

⁵⁶ Cowan, *John Innes*, 21-22; Hill, *Group of Seven*, 277.

perspective, colour, and did in-depth study of English illustrator, painter, and muralist Frank Brangwyn (1867-1956).⁵⁷

Clymer first developed his craft doing generic fiction illustration for Canadian magazines from 1926 on, much of which was initially run of the mill stories of social situations in domestic settings. Like other wilderness painters, he had an innate distaste for pretty-girl subjects and abandoned them as soon as he could.⁵⁸ In 1927 Clymer trekked to Whitehorse and back on a paddle-wheeler. Four native men were his crewmates, and he visited reservations and trappers' shacks. The trip must have impressed upon him the humanity and history of First Nations, as well as the importance of first-hand research. Clymer later said the trip "guided and shaped my life" and that it afforded him much primary material for subsequent illustrations.⁵⁹ He also completed a number of canvases of native people based on this trip, exhibited in the 1930s (discussed below).⁶⁰ He was to keep venturing out into rural areas, such as Île d'Orleans in Quebec and an Ontario logging camp in 1933.⁶¹ He preferred to do illustrations of specific places, taking advantage of the free passes the Canadian Pacific Railway offered to magazine artists in order to paint on site, to ensure the accuracy of his work.⁶²

Clymer went back and forth between Wilmington, New York, Vancouver, and Toronto from 1930 to 1933, associating in Wilmington with Howard Pyle (1853-

⁵⁷ Doris Clymer to Reed, March 13, 1974, copy, Walt Reed correspondence file, collection of Illustration House, New York; original in John F. Clymer, Ellensburg, WA; John A. Radford, "BC Man to Illustrate HG Wells," *Province*, February 26, 1938—clipping, John Clymer files, Vancouver Public Library; Doris Clymer to Reed, March 13, 1974. Southwell is remembered today as the creator of controversial murals (1932–1935) in the provincial legislative buildings depicting semi-nude natives passively assisting white men build the first European settlements. Petti Fong, "'Degrading' B.C. Murals Removed," *Toronto Star*, June 25, 2007, accessed November 17, 2013, http://www.thestar.com/news/2007/06/25/degrading_bc_murals_removed.html.

⁵⁸ In 1933 Clymer had stated that "painting modern boys and girls is no fun," in Radford, "Clymer," 7. It was later noted that Clymer had "eschewed the merely pretty type [of woman] as lacking character," in "Ex-City Illustrator Reaches Top," *Province*, February 14, 1942, n.p.. clipping, John Clymer files, Vancouver Public Library.

⁵⁹ John Clymer, quoted in Reed, *John Clymer*, 7; see also Art Instruction Inc., "The Story of John Clymer," 8; Clymer in John Diffily, "John Clymer: Standing Tall and Running," in unidentified art magazine, after 1976, clipping, collection of Illustration House, New York.

⁶⁰ Clymer identified *Thunder Mountain*, *Story Teller*, *Evening Song*, (*Off to the Potlatch*), and *Black Canoe*, reproduced in Walt Reed's *John Clymer: Artist's Rendezvous with the Frontier West*, as being "Coast of British Columbia Indian pictures." John Clymer to Reed, January 8, 1976, copy, Walt Reed correspondence file, collection of Illustration House, New York; original in John F. Clymer, Ellensburg, WA.

⁶¹ Radford, "Clymer;" Art Instruction Inc., "The Story of John Clymer," 9.

⁶² Art Instruction Inc., "The Story of John Clymer," 8.

1911) protégés N.C. Wyeth (1882-1945), Frank Schoonover (1877-1972), and Gayle Hoskins (1887-1962). Each of these men—as well as Harvey Dunn (1884-1952), with whom Clymer studied in 1936; and Harold von Schmidt (1893-1982), whom he met in 1937⁶³—was associated with adventure story illustration and wilderness, Western, and sometimes Northern themes. Clymer adopted Wyeth’s habit of painting from life once a week for exercise, and Wyeth occasionally critiqued Clymer’s work during that time.⁶⁴

Finding the New York publishing scene too competitive, in 1932 or 1933 Clymer went to Toronto, which he found “friendlier.”⁶⁵ He promptly began study in the Ontario College of Art’s programme in Port Hope (comprising primarily landscape painting) with J.W. Beatty, the venerable teacher associated with the Group of Seven (who disliked Heming; see Chapter 3).⁶⁶ Like Group of Seven painters, Clymer adopted the method of making 8x10” *plein air* oil sketches in which he tried to “capture the spirit of the country, the mood of the moment, the time of day or the season of the year.”⁶⁷ He began exhibiting with the Ontario Society of Artists (O.S.A.), where on the whole his work was well received, although he contributed a nude that was cause for controversy.⁶⁸ A commercial gallery gave Clymer a solo show in September 1933, boldly calling him “the young Canadian artist critics are acclaiming a veritable genius.”⁶⁹ Unappreciated, however, was his flat application of paint and carefully orchestrated compositions in the decorative manner favoured by Louderback, Brangwyn and the Brandywine illustrators Clymer had studied with. Like Heming’s “too posterish” style, this technique was going out of fashion with avant-garde artists.

For instance, a caustic Toronto-based critic of *Saturday Night* complained Clymer’s *Road to Teslin* (derived from Clymer’s trip to the Yukon River), was “original but far too much patternized for anything but a mural (or a magazine illustration)” [Figure 43].⁷⁰ Unfortunately the only known record of this unlocated painting is an unidentified halftone in the Toronto Reference Library’s picture file on John F. Clymer. Still, it can be seen that the composition is indeed marked by a pattern of vertical tree trunks, rhythmically spaced across the entire surface. Rounded clumps of foliage of similar shape repeat. The light values of the space between the trees and the uniform darkness of the tree trunks and foliage flatten

⁶³ Reed, *John Clymer*, 12; Doris Clymer to Reed, March 13, 1974, 6

⁶⁴ Doris Clymer to Reed, March 13, 1974, 6.

⁶⁵ Art Instruction Inc., “The Story of John Clymer,” 8–9.

⁶⁶ Radford, “Clymer,” 7.

⁶⁷ Art Instruction Inc., “The Story of John Clymer,” 9.

⁶⁸ Radford, “Clymer.”

⁶⁹ Robert Simpson Company Ltd., *Globe*, September 30, 1933, 10, advertisement.

⁷⁰ Van Gogh, “The O.S.A. Show,” 13.

the already-shallow perspective. The principle figure, a native woman with a baby on her back, is rendered in profile as she traverses from left to right across the picture plane, like an actor through a stage set, while three sled dogs lined up in the foreground in similar positions howl in unison. Doris Clymer reported that the painting had “a flaming autumn background . . . strong in color movement.”⁷¹ Later, Clymer recalled his first major easel paintings made at this time were done “during the time [when] I had to decide whether to work in a decorative or a realistic way.”⁷²

⁷¹ Doris Clymer to Reed, March 13, 1974, 2.

⁷² John Clymer to Reed, January 30, 1976, 2, copy, Walt Reed correspondence file, collection of Illustration House, New York; original in John F. Clymer , Ellensburg, WA.



Figure 43. John F. Clymer, *Road to Teslin*, 1933, oil on canvas, location unknown. From unidentified clipping, Toronto Reference Library artist files, "Clymer, John." By permission of the John F. Clymer Museum.

Colour, the handling of dappled light, and "patternized" composition were characteristic of other paintings and illustrations by Clymer of this time, and show his direct debt to Brangwyn. Clymer was also streamlining figures into sleek shapes and arabesque curves, exaggerating edges with outlines, and experimenting with flat, almost blank backgrounds and startling compositions reminiscent of Japansime and decorative arts. This is seen in an untitled oil painting completed while Clymer was in Wilmington (held in a private collection; I viewed a digital copy at Illustration

House in new York), in which a foreground arabesque of a snowdrift surges upwards to support totem poles and curious stems of trees that fan out against a flat, blank backdrop of more snow, framing a figure group in the middle distance.⁷³

The *Saturday Night* critic again objected to Clymer's illustrative tendencies, only a month after the first review: "Of Mr. Clymer's imaginative paintings, I do not know what to say. . . it seems to me that they are in danger of becoming stylized, and that it is possible to detect here and there an over-facility, reminiscent of Rackham and Dulac in their off moments."⁷⁴ The critic for the *Toronto Telegram* also disliked Clymer's conventionalized forms: "Crudities of drawing and brushwork begin to obtrude. One finds in one canvas a foot like a hook, in another a hand like a ham, in another legs like pasteboard cutouts. One finds paint so carelessly applied that the canvas shows through, the detail slapped in as though by a man in delirium."⁷⁵ Actually, nothing could have endeared him more to the supporters of the Group of Seven, who also employed loose painterly techniques and let the canvas or wood panel show through, as Newton MacTavish acidly pointed out in a rebuttal.⁷⁶ But art-world taste in the 1930s was moving away from even the Group's own decorative roots, which even Thoreau MacDonald criticized (quoted in Chapter 3).⁷⁷

The mixed reception Clymer received from Toronto critics may have spurred him to make his next canvases more descriptive, with developed perspective

⁷³ I viewed a digital photograph of this work at Illustration House in 2013. It appears to be oil on board, 48" x 36", made approximately 1931. The work is owned by an undisclosed party in the vicinity of Wilmington, Delaware.

⁷⁴ Lucy van Gogh, "Art World," *Saturday Night*, April 27, 1935, manuscript and clipping, John Clymer file, collection of the National Gallery of Canada. Possibly referred to some heavily outlined, Arthurian-theme illustrations for Franklin Davey McDowell, "The Red Countess," *Canadian Home Journal*, July 1934, 7. Judging by its flat floral motifs, this had been inspired by the gothic *Hunt of the Unicorn millefiore* tapestries.

⁷⁵ Unnamed critic writing in *Toronto Telegram*, October 7, 1933, quoted in Newton MacTavish, "Defends Work Young Painter," *Toronto Telegram*, October 14, 1933, clipping, John Clymer file, collection of the National Gallery of Canada.

⁷⁶ MacTavish, "Defends Work Young Painter," John Clymer file.

⁷⁷ MacDonald, "Decline of the Group of Seven," 144. It should be noted that this essay was written in the contexts of Group members' own dissatisfaction, and of what would soon become the Group's politically expedient move to become the larger Canadian Group of Painters in 1933, itself in answer to the pressure the so-called "conservative" artists such as Heming were putting on the National Gallery. It should not be taken as any indictment of Canadian School art or rejection of the Group's elite position, as James King has suggested in *Inward Journey*, 227–228, 230, given Thoreau MacDonald's current and continued work in the Canadian School vein and his own tribute, *The Group of Seven* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1944). See Alicia Boutilier, "A Vital Force: The First Twenty Years," in Boutilier, *A Vital Force*, 12. Insofar as "life" may be an oblique reference to the Group's lack of people in their scenes, however, MacDonald was likely signaling how illustrative values were necessary to achieve his ultimate goal: "love and understanding of our country."

systems. Just as at Wilmington he had painted like the Brandywine veterans, so in Toronto he made work acceptable to the average Toronto art denizen, depicting northwest First Nations in carefully orchestrated compositions that he later credited to Southwell's lessons (not Wyeth's!).⁷⁸ Yet acclaim was hard-won, on account of the continuing disapproval of illustration. The *Telegram* critic submitted:

John Clymer . . . offers yet a few new canvases that will thrill his admirers as much as they annoy me. . . . this young man is one of the most vital of the younger Canadians. . . . But— And there's the rub. Somehow there is always that large and insistent "But—" "Perhaps that "But—" which arises to confront his work when studied in a gallery is the very thing that makes him so valuable as a magazine illustrator. And maybe it's just prejudice. One thing is certain, a glimpse at even one of his canvases is an exciting adventure.⁷⁹

It is pertinent here that the reviewer classed him as a Canadian artist. This probably had much to do with his subject matter, part-romantic and part-documentary Indian scenes that were now free of ham-handed flat brushwork and the raw wood or canvas showing through. Although he called them "decorative panels" and cautioned that they were not meant to be factual,⁸⁰ they were convincing enough that Clymer was called "the last word in competence as a sociologist" for his depiction of *Little Frog*, exhibited at the O.S.A., of a little boy in a frog-like seated position that echoed a frog emblem mirrored above him on a totem pole [Figure 43].⁸¹

⁷⁸ Doris Clymer to Reed, March 13, 1974, 1.

⁷⁹ *Toronto Telegram*, December 1, 1934, clipping, John Clymer file, collection of the National Gallery of Canada.

⁸⁰ Doris Clymer to Reed, March 13, 1974, 1-2.

⁸¹ *Little Frog*, 1935, reproduction, John Clymer folder, Artist Files, collection of the Toronto Public Library; van Gogh, "World of Art," 15. In her usual snit, she facetiously found nearly all the entries by all artists "competent" and regretted none rose above that. What is important here is her equation of the work with sociology.



Figure 44. John Clymer, *Little Frog*, oil on canvas, 1935. Courtesy of the John F. Clymer Museum.

Contemporary viewers would have grouped the series with Emily Carr's ethnographic paintings that had been widely seen beginning in 1927 and embraced as a new form of nationalistic Canadian art.⁸² Although Clymer continued to be criticized for poster-like tendencies,⁸³ he was voted an Associate of the Royal Canadian Academy in November 1935.⁸⁴ Like other illustrators and painters, including the Group of Seven, he also was a member of the Toronto Arts and Letters Club (1932 to 1938).⁸⁵

⁸² The occasion that launched Carr and invested native art with nationalism was the National Gallery of Canada's *Exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art*, curated by Marius Barbeau, which opened in November 1927 and included works by Group of Seven members. McKay, *Picturing the Land*, 200.

⁸³ "Pictorial Art of Canada on Display," *Montreal Herald*, November 22, 1935, 3; Reynald, "Le 56e Salon de l'Académie," *La Presse*, November 22, 1935, 19.

⁸⁴ H. Poynter Bell, "The Fifty-Sixth Annual Exhibition," *Royal Architectural Institute of Canada*, December 1935, 198; *A Dictionary of Canadian Artists*, comp. Colin S. MacDonald, (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1976), s.v. "Clymer, John F."

⁸⁵ Arts and Letters Club records.

The ongoing censure of the posterish may have contributed to Clymer continuing to also pursue more naturalistic, realistic magazine illustrations that simultaneously would be acceptable to a broad public as “art.” Clymer himself attributed his switch to “realism and authentic detail” (as he put it) to the dominant illustration trends of the 1930s,⁸⁶ but the Canadian art critics’ words did not go unfelt. He mentioned in his memoirs forty years later that illustrators were “personae non grata” in Toronto and that in Canada “great personal jealousies and rivalry” had existed between artists.⁸⁷ This may have hastened Clymer’s 1936 departure for New York to study with Harvey Dunn, whose own work was as acceptable in galleries as it was in books and magazines. Yet even in the United States illustration was losing prestige: the first entry Clymer made to the National Academy of Design in New York in the following months was accepted, Clymer felt, because he “was not yet known as an illustrator there.”⁸⁸

John Clymer and the continentalist wilderness

When mainstream fiction illustration adopted the boy-girl “big-head” approach with little or no background (a trend set by Jon Whitcomb in the late 1930s),⁸⁹ Clymer’s mentor Harold von Schmidt advised him to ignore the fad and stick with what he liked.⁹⁰ Clymer turned to advertising illustration. He was commissioned to paint landscapes and animal pictures for a 1947 Chrysler campaign that ran in multiple magazines, including the *Post*. One depicted a highly romanticized Tom Thomson-like man alone in his birchbark canoe (rather outdated by 1947) in a northern lake bordered by scraggy pine trees such those in Thomson’s *Jack Pine* and *West Wind*.⁹¹

⁸⁶ Doris Clymer to Reed, March 13, 1974, 2.

⁸⁷ Reed, *John Clymer*, 16.

⁸⁸ Ibid. Clymer submitted *She Who Talks With the Spirits*, 1934, exhibited at the 112th Annual Exhibition of the National Academy of Design, New York (1938). It was first exhibited in the Royal Canadian Academy and described by Wyly Grier in “The 1934 Annual Exhibition,” *Royal Architectural Institute of Canada*, December 1934, 178.

⁸⁹ Alden Hatch, “Meet Jon Whitcomb,” in *How I Make a Picture*, Jon Whitcomb (Westport, CT: Institute of Commercial Art, 1949), 4, 8. The term “big-head” referred to compositions that borrowed from the frame-filling close-ups of the movies, emphasizing facial features and emotions.

⁹⁰ Doris Clymer to Reed, March 13, 1974, 6.

⁹¹ Art Instruction Inc., “The Story of John Clymer,” 9; John Clymer and Chrysler, “Fluid Ride...The Beautiful Chrysler,” *Saturday Evening Post*, November 8, 1947, 92–93, advertisement; and in *Colliers*, November 22, 1947, 56–57, collection of Illustration House, New York, tear sheet.

Like Ernest Thompson Seton, Clymer enjoyed spotting wildlife and was recording animals with the greatest fidelity from life and from taxidermy by 1950.⁹² He made naturalistic wildlife painting a sideline for the rest of his career, carrying on the shared continentalist tradition that runs from Audubon to, in Canada, William Pope and Robert Bateman.

In the United States, Clymer's first-hand experience in Canadian nature and ethnographic subjects became a selling point, just as it had been for Henry Sandham, Arthur Heming, Tappan Adney, and Ernest Thompson Seton. He was commissioned to illustrate nonfiction titles such as "The Conqueror of the Wild" in *True* magazine, a documentary on canoeing (depicted in the manner of a museum diorama).⁹³ In another vein, he also illustrated "Henry and the Happy Eskimos," a ridiculous spicy-pulp story of a preacher trying to Christianize some sex-obsessed Inuit (Clymer illustrated "the tribe's comeliest virgin" undressing).⁹⁴ The scientific pretensions of the former and the sexploitation of the latter are not incompatible in postcolonial critical theory, but a full investigation of Clymer's depiction of aboriginal peoples is out of scope here. Suffice to say, his Indian themes, as in popular culture at large, helped in the artificial construction of an opening chapter in the narrative of North American progress, a narrative his prior West Coast canvases, his later history paintings, and his optimistic, idyllic American Dream *Saturday Evening Post* covers together tell. The narrative is conventionally understood to be more "American" than Canadian, but it also resonated with John Innes' "story of man's achievement in pushing back the frontiers" cited above.

After 1949, in a modern mode of wilderness adventure, John Clymer and wife Doris toured from New England to the west coast in their car in search of suitable subjects for those *Post* covers and history paintings.⁹⁵ Clymer and the *Post* may have been inspired to pursue this documentary of coast to coast American life by Franklin Arbuckle's similar assignment for *Maclean's*, which spawned thirteen covers depicting Canadian regional life between February 1, 1947 and September 1, 1949.⁹⁶ It was so successful that he and other illustrators continued to submit such

⁹² John Clymer to Reed, "Report From Jackson Hole," December 8, 1974, 1-5, copy, Walt Reed correspondence file, collection of Illustration House, New York; original in John F. Clymer, Ellensburg, WA; Doris Clymer to Reed, March 13, 1974, 5.

⁹³ Robert E. Pinkerton, "The Conqueror of the Wild," *True*, ca. 1947, 52, collection of Illustration House, New York, tear sheet; mentioned in Doris Clymer to Reed, March 13, 1974, 3.

⁹⁴ Unidentified issue of *True* ca. 1946, collection of Illustration House, New York, tear sheet; mentioned in John Clymer to Reed, November 15, 1974, 2, copy, Walt Reed correspondence file, collection of Illustration House, New York; original in John F. Clymer, Ellensburg, WA.

⁹⁵ Due to Curtis Publishing's well-known prohibitively high fees for copyrights, I am unable to reproduce them here.

⁹⁶ Arbuckle, trained by Group of Seven members and a frequent exhibitor in Toronto art shows, contributed nearly one third of all *Maclean's* covers between 1945 and 1949. Braggins, "Maclean's: The Accidental Nationalist," 55-57.

pictures to *Maclean's* for several years after. For these, Arbuckle, who was surely influenced by American Regionalism, usually showed a figure going about some everyday life activity (street scenes, industrial workers, commercial fishermen, etc.) associated with the locale he was visiting, with an equally identifiable landscape or urban scene unfolding around him or her [Figure 45]. Together, the set of covers brought disparate regions and peoples into one unity, illustrating the story of life in Canada coast to coast.



Figure 45. In his series on Canadian regional life, Franklin Arbuckle included this image of a farm girl on the prairies riding her horse to school. Franklin Arbuckle, [cover illustration], *Maclean's*, Sept. 1, 1947. By permission of Rogers Communications.

In his own practice, Clymer placed more emphasis on landscape than on people, who usually appear off in the distance, and who are uniformly white and at leisure. Clymer made *plein air* panels initially to give his finished compositions for the *Post* covers a “feeling of reality and genuineness”—just as he had learned under the tutelage of J.W. Beatty.⁹⁷ He readily joined the stable of *Post* regulars who also made slice-of-life images, such as John Falter (1910-1982), Norman Rockwell (1894-1978), and John Atherton (1900-1952). Clymer made about eighty covers, ending with the October 20, 1962 issue.

In his travels, Clymer was conscious of following in the footsteps of his and Doris’ ancestors:

Our Western trips came more and more to be history treks. Instead of looking for *Post* cover ideas or animal subjects, I was now looking for history subjects. We began by following the Oregon Trail. It was more or less on the route we drove along on our trips to visit the family in the state of Washington . . . Doris also wanted to retrace the route over which her great-grandparents had traveled when going west. Six of her great-grandparents had traveled west on the trail by wagon, and all . . . were among the early settlers [in Washington State].⁹⁸

That Clymer took a heroic view of pioneer progress, which was so key to the American national narrative, is shown in the dedication message of his 1976 book *John Clymer: An Artist’s Rendezvous With the Frontier West*: “Dedicated to the courage and resourcefulness of the pioneering men and women recorded in the paintings in this book, and also to the countless, unknown individuals who followed their trail as settlers, enduring the rigors of a harsh land with equal courage and tenacity.”⁹⁹

Most of the *Post* covers depict the sort of sweeping, pretty landscapes Clymer had already made in 1947-1948 for Chrysler advertisements.¹⁰⁰ The blending of auto industry and tourist interests with the American pioneer narrative in Clymer’s work deserves further study. However, we can say here it was a fiction that conveniently elided the industrial encroachment that paradoxically had produced the getaway car that brings tourists to the picture (or, given Clymer’s forays, brought the picture to us) like a veritable time machine. Where Arbuckle included industrial and city scenes, Clymer’s scenes almost always omit telephone poles, power lines, railroads, clearcuts, mines, and factories—but keep cars (the cover for

⁹⁷ Art Instruction Inc., “The Story of John Clymer,” 9.

⁹⁸ John Clymer, in Reed, *John Clymer*, 27. See also John Clymer, “Northwest Saga,” *The Villager*, November 2, 1967, copy, collection of Illustration House, New York.

⁹⁹ John Clymer, in Reed, *John Clymer*, v.

¹⁰⁰ Tear sheets in the collection of Illustration House, New York.

February 4, 1961 is one example, showing a small seaport town with not a single twentieth century item except for three modern vehicles.).

On the *Post* covers, aboriginal presence is eradicated from the picture, along with hard labour and social strife.¹⁰¹ The land is undisputedly settled, enjoying the Eden-like prosperity that Manifest Destiny had promised in the previous century. As part of the narrative of national discovery and growth, Clymer's views of fertile farms, active ranches, popular holiday spots, and peaceful villages are the rewards following the romanticized Wild West episodes he was to illustrate in his late work. This happy-ending story was mailed continent-wide, making the *Post* the social glue of the United States—and Canada too.

That both countries were addressed as one is indicated in that some of Clymer's covers were Canadian scenes, which the *Post* did not mind mentioning in write-ups. One in particular merits comment here because of how it played upon the established tropes of the pretty girl and the wilderness. For the cover of August 1956, Clymer's topless little daughter offers a carrot to a doe. They are likely in the Georgian Bay park region of Ontario judging by the characteristic rocky islands and wind-shaped pine (the text says Clymer is "touring" in Ontario).¹⁰² This is the landscape the Group of Seven made famous; the tree relates very strongly to the one in F.H. Varley's famous *Stormy Weather, Georgian Bay*.¹⁰³

The girl's nudity was common and acceptable in the 1950s, as its appearance on the notoriously conservative *Saturday Evening Post* proves.¹⁰⁴ At the same time, in light of the always-present dialectic with the pretty-girl genre, it must not be overlooked that the text says, "That little dear (the big deer is thinking) is evidently offering me something to browse on . . ." ¹⁰⁵ The thinking deer in the squib refers to the girl's father (Clymer) as "her buck-papa." Addressed as a "dear," wearing a feminine pink skirt, blonde, and offering up a phallic object pointy-end first to the doe that the girl is identified with (dear/deer), in contrast with that common symbol of masculinity, the stag, sexualizes the girl.

For the period eye, it is an innocent, Edenic sexuality from a pre-Fall imaginary when the customary roles of predator and prey are suspended. Not fully

¹⁰¹ The very first *Post* cover by Clymer for January 31, 1942, which depicts a totem pole and bombers flying by in the background, came years before and is not part of the series.

¹⁰² "Our Cover," *Saturday Evening Post*, August 25, 1956, 1.

¹⁰³ F. H. Varley, *Stormy Weather, Georgian Bay*, oil on canvas, 1921, 132.6 cm x 162.8 cm, no. 1814, collection of the National Gallery of Canada.

¹⁰⁴ Child nudity also appears in period advertising, such as the Coppertone girl, or a tot in a bathing suit in a Cream of Wheat ad that ran in *Canadian Home Journal*, July 1936, 27. The most important objective of editors was "public responsibility," meaning they eliminated anything they felt not in the best interests of "society," which was presumably their majority of well-to-do readers. Curtis Publishing Department of Research, "The Idea of Impact," *Measuring the Impact of a Magazine* (Philadelphia: Curtis Publishing, 1951), 8.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

nude, the girl is Miss Civilization after she dons skirts but before she has discovered “sexie sex books,” as Heming would have said (Chapter 4). She is still half savage/innocent, magically able to act as an intermediary between nature and culture. For Canadians, as a subliminal Miss Canada, she is performing the role of a naturalist ambassador guiding the American armchair tourist into the healthful atmosphere of Canadian parkland via the “realistic animal story” encounter such as Heming and Seton used to illustrate. Evidently one of Clymer’s more popular covers, it was one of three the *Post* chose to offer mounted on canvas and framed for \$9.95, five years later.¹⁰⁶ The other two were of one certain and one probable Canadian scene as well.¹⁰⁷

Clymer’s later works focused on history paintings of the fur trade in the west and of pioneer life. They are almost all based on American places and events,¹⁰⁸ but they are populated with British men and Canadian Métis men, identifiable by the Hudson’s Bay Company blanket coats and goods. In 1967, when Clymer’s second one-man show opened in New York City, the invitation said his work told “the epic story of the struggles and triumphs of the early pioneers,” yet the show contained *Beaver Men, Fur Brigade, Free Trapper, Trap Line*, and other Canadian-identified subjects.¹⁰⁹

Although the H.B.C. had posts throughout the territory south of the 49th Parallel and it is historically accurate to show American traders in capotes made of Hudson Bay Company blankets, the Métis, voyageurs, and trappers are distinctly Canadian icons that do not serve American iconography and mythology the way Remington’s and Russell’s cowboys and soldiers do.¹¹⁰ By including men who looked like *Canadiens*, or who were blatantly Canadian, as in *Alouette* [Figure 46], alongside American explorers and settlers, Clymer ensured a fully North American story was being told, rather than just an American or Canadian one. Métis, voyageur, and mountain man figures moved as easily between the U.S. and Canada as Clymer himself did in his car, as he followed heritage trails in pursuit of accurate details for his paintings.

¹⁰⁶ “For Your Home,” *Saturday Evening Post*, May 13, 1961, 93, advertisement.

¹⁰⁷ One shows a family watching mallards fly, identified as Alberta, *Saturday Evening Post*, October 26, 1957, 1; the other, “His First Catch,” shows a family fishing bass in a canoe in an unidentified Northern-looking lake with stunted, slender, alpine spruces, *Saturday Evening Post*, June 13, 1959.

¹⁰⁸ John Clymer in Reed, *John Clymer*, 27–30.

¹⁰⁹ *John Clymer*, exhibition notice. Exhibition held November 7–18, 1967, at Grand Central Art Galleries, New York City.

¹¹⁰ Eric J. Dolin, *Fur, Fortune, and Empire: The Epic History of the Fur Trade in America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2011).



Figure 46. John Clymer paints a scene of Métis traders and trappers, one wearing a Hudson's Bay Company blanket coat. John F. Clymer, *Alouette*, 1974, oil on canvas. Courtesy of the John F. Clymer .

Clymer, like Heming, succeeded at inserting Canadian content into the American mainstream with *Post* covers and prints, and with history paintings. Did this constitute a win for Canadian nationalism? Apparently the question has never been asked, because Clymer, after he moved permanently back to the United States, was effectively forgotten in Canada by cultural nationalist art writers and thinkers (much as Heming was). The answer is not straightforward; I will return to it following a discussion of MacDonald's and Clymer's respective treatment in Canadian art history.

Making continentalist Canada invisible

With his Group of Seven pedigree and his less obviously commercial manner, MacDonald was the ideal Canadian nationalist illustrator. He did much to promote and perpetuate the notion that "true" Canadian art was non-commercial, which helped render popular work by expatriates like John Clymer invisible under the rubric "Canadian art."

In terms of cultural trades, aesthetic restraint rendered MacDonald unsuitable for the popular market. "I'm still struggling with the *Makers of Canada* . . . I'll be glad to see the last of all our National Heroes," he wrote,¹¹¹ regarding a series privately described by one of its editors as a "potboiler."¹¹² It seems the art editor

¹¹¹ MacDonald to Doris Huestis Mills, July 25, 1928, quoted in Flood, *Notebooks*, 92.

¹¹² D. C. Scott to R. H. Coats, quoted in Stan Dragland, introduction to *Duncan Campbell Scott: Addresses, Essays, and Reviews*, ed. Leslie Ritchie (London, ON: Canadian Poetry Press, 2000), 19.

was displeased as well: MacDonald reported, “Mr. Doran thought [my] work very distinguished but rather cold. Frigidaire.”¹¹³ Although a handicap for the mass market, this coldness actually made MacDonald desirable for clientele who wished to dissociate themselves from popular and mass media—those who, like MacDonald, believed most illustration was an intrusion on literature and thought.

Because of this restrained approach, MacDonald was accepted by others as an “artist,” and his work “art.” Registering as “art” and developing the Canadian School brand allowed MacDonald to overcome stigma as a “mere illustrator.” Statements by one recent and two earlier commentators attest to this. Said one, “MacDonald was able to adapt his sources of inspiration to the depiction of rural Ontario in a uniquely recognizable style. This was his great achievement as an artist.”¹¹⁴

Meanwhile, E.R. Hunter, his first biographer, said the drawings were “exciting not only as illustrations, but as works of art themselves.”¹¹⁵ He lauded MacDonald’s bird drawings over those of nature guide illustrators, claiming that those illustrators (who “rarely think of themselves as artists” he inaccurately claimed), in an excess of “visual realism,” render their subjects “lifeless” and also incorrectly, he thought. By contrast, MacDonald had “artistic sensibility” and produced “most penetrating drawings of bird life”—conveniently omitting to explain exactly how MacDonald’s less detailed renderings could be more accurate and penetrating.¹¹⁶

Joining Landon and Hunter, MacDonald’s friend Carl Schaefer (himself a good illustrator turned fine artist) showed his art students MacDonald’s work, saying, “. . . as I pointed out to my class, no doubt they were anatomically accurate and shown in their natural environment, but . . . they [also] communicated life itself and should be considered as original and creative works of art, not to be confused with work by many popular wildlife artists of the time.”¹¹⁷ Of course, the fact this needed to be pointed out to students indicates they *could* be confused.¹¹⁸ This explication of MacDonald’s staid black-and-white work in his self-produced books and prints and original works as “art” versus scientific illustrators’ and nature-painters’ colour work in large publications and amateur art exhibitions inculcated a sharper division between high and low and legitimate and illegitimate forms.

¹¹³ MacDonald to Doris Huestis Mills, July 22, 1928, quoted in Flood, *Notebooks*, 91.

¹¹⁴ Richard Landon, “Carefully Drawn by Thoreau MacDonald,” *Historical Perspectives on Canadian Publishing*, William Ready Division of Archives and Research Collections, McMaster University, accessed September 2, 2013, <http://hpcanpub.mcmaster.ca/case-study/carefully-drawn-thoreau-macdonald?page=1>.

¹¹⁵ Hunter, *Thoreau MacDonald*, 31.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹¹⁷ Carl Schaefer, quoted in Edison, *Thoreau MacDonald: A Catalogue*, 27.

¹¹⁸ The bird illustration of Fenwick Lansdowne (1937–2008) represents a melding of art and science, continuing on the Canadian bird art tradition as an offshoot of the wilderness tradition.

In addition to his work connoting cool detachment, MacDonald, like Rex Woods, set himself further apart from New York-style illustrators' culture by comporting himself in a very anti-commercial manner. He was famously shy and self-effacing, and did not attend social events.¹¹⁹ He did not sign many of his covers, and his usual signature comprised only his small initials. He stuck to black and white (in part due to colour blindness). This behaviour was not calculated—it sprang naturally from his personality—but for his peers it could not have resulted in anything but an underscoring of the difference between him and mainstream illustrators (like Arthur William Brown) who pumped their illustrations with melodramatic faces, who made sure they themselves were seen and photographed in all the right places, who boldly signed their full names, who pushed colour saturation even when they were colour blind (as Heming did), and who worked for the largest media publishers.

Many biographers, in emphasizing MacDonald's shy personality, give the impression that MacDonald was not conscious of his own power as a cultural mediator.¹²⁰ Bruce Whiteman, on the other hand, has characterized MacDonald's preservation of his father's legacy with the collusion of Lorne Pierce at Ryerson Press as a virtual marketing campaign.¹²¹ In his quiet, tasteful way, MacDonald was always proselytizing, from his careful selection of art for the *Forum* to his celebration of historical relics in his own books.

His status as an artist seems to have dissuaded previous scholars from questioning MacDonald's omissions of city, women, and modernity and, in his art writing, of artists whose output did not fit his preference for nationalist art history. When naming the Group's forerunners in his book *The Group of Seven*, he mentioned illustrators William Cruickshank, Robert Holmes, Charles W. Jefferys, Frederick H. Brigden, and David F. Thomson—but not Norman Price (who had worked at Grip Studio just prior to the Group's time there and who had given J.E.H. MacDonald crucial training in England),¹²² Arthur Heming, or Henry Sandham, whose career highlights far exceeded those of the other men (Jefferys excepted).¹²³ In his conclusion, he deplored the sinful "temptations of abstraction" then emerging, because this for him spelled public indifference to the environment. In a passage laced with religious and war metaphors, he ended with this call to arms: "They ["sturdier spirits," i.e. landscape painters] may have a lonesome time among the moderns, but let them stick it out for the Country needs them," conflating environment with nation in one word, Country.¹²⁴

¹¹⁹ Edison, *Thoreau MacDonald: A Catalogue*, 29.

¹²⁰ E.g., Hunter, *Thoreau MacDonald*, 39.

¹²¹ Bruce Whiteman, *J. E. H. MacDonald* (Kingston, ON: Quarry Press, 1995).

¹²² Norman Price, copy of autobiography manuscript, collection of Illustration House, New York.

¹²³ MacDonald, "Decline of the Group of Seven," 1.

¹²⁴ MacDonald, "Decline of the Group of Seven," 15.

MacDonald's blind spot regarding his own role in forming Canadian art canon indicates that power resides (as Bruno Latour would argue) not in individual actors but in the relationships between them—in this case, between Thoreau MacDonald and the Group, Ryerson Press, *Canadian Forum*, and the other patriotic magazines that supported him. Together, they built the set of assumptions that made it logical—indeed, preferable—to overlook John Clymer (and by extension, other illustrators in who did even fewer “Canadian” subjects, and other expatriates) in art history, collections, and archives, as we shall see next.

There is little doubt that had Clymer remained in Canada he would have enjoyed a successful career and remained in the art historical records, on par at the very least with his peer Franklin Arbuckle. With his visibility as an illustrator in Canadian magazines, and with the critical notice he was gaining in Toronto art shows 1933-1936 for his pictures of First Nations, as well as his remarkably early admission to the Royal Canadian Academy, he was more successful than most if any talent that emerged 1931-1935 in Toronto. But after moving to the United States and pursuing more illustrative kinds of art, Clymer was mainly forgotten.

The loss of John Clymer in the annals of Canadian art history was not inevitable or logical. Not only had Clymer enjoyed good reviews in the 1930s, he continued to visit and paint Canada, and kept up a Canadian art presence by sending work to Canadian exhibitions into the 1950s.¹²⁵ Clymer apparently considered himself part Canadian, even if Canadians did not: when Walt Reed's first edition of *The Illustrator in America* appeared in 1965, with input from the artist it listed both Clymer's Canadian and American schools and exhibits and said, “his loyalties have ever since [early schooling] been divided between the United States and Canada.”¹²⁶ The catalogue for Clymer's 1967 New York exhibition mentioned his Canadian training and that he was (still) a member of the O.S.A.¹²⁷ During proofing for the second edition of *The Illustrator in America* (1984), Clymer requested A.R.C.A. (Associate of the Royal Canadian Academy) be printed after his name.¹²⁸

The protective mantle around Canadian identity as espoused by Thoreau MacDonald in conjunction with culturally elite publishers such as Ryerson Press, could not admit the existence of Canadian wilderness imagery in continental visual culture, because to do so would have been to expose just how American the

¹²⁵ Art Instruction Inc., “The Story of John Clymer,” 9.

¹²⁶ Walt Reed, *The Illustrator in America 1900–1960*, 173.

¹²⁷ *John Clymer*, exhibition notice. Exhibition held November 7–18, 1967, at Grand Central Art Galleries, New York City.

¹²⁸ Tear sheet marked up in Clymer's hand, *The Illustrator in America* (1965), 173, collection of Illustration House, New York; W. Reed and R. Reed, *The Illustrator in America 1880–1980*, 213. A.R.C.A. was dropped, in an oversight according to Roger Reed, for the third edition (2001).

iconography of sublime nature, pristine forests and tall, stoic lone trees could be.¹²⁹ Recalling that Clymer found Toronto artists to be “jealous,” his assimilation into American illustration may have been hastened by Canadian neglect after he left Toronto. Four exceptions to that neglect exist, but each represents a missed—or rather, declined—opportunity to expand the definition of Canadian culture to include continentalist, popular art.

First, Clymer’s painting of the celebrated Canadian ship, the *St. Roch*, appeared in *Canadian Art* in 1961 in a Seagram’s advertisement. Clymer considered it to be among his best commercial work, but because it was only an advertising piece it—like seems to have happened with all of Seagram’s commissioned and purchased art—was never embraced by the Canadian art world as a thing of significance.¹³⁰ This was probably due to the work’s being more traditional than avant-garde, and because of commercial taint of corporate patronage, which as this dissertation documents, was especially incompatible with the construction of “Canadian art” and Canadian identity.

Second, Calgary’s Glenbow Foundation that same year curated an exhibition on buffalo that toured the United States and Western Canada. It included works by George Catlin and Charles Russell, Frederick Verner, Carl Rungius, Ernest Thompson Seton, Gerald Tailfeathers, John Innes, George Southwell, and John Clymer, in what one reviewer called a “novel ‘hands-across-the-border’ scheme.”¹³¹ This was in keeping with Calgary’s long (and unique in Canada) custom of including American Western art in their own ranching- and farming-rich culture. But although ranching and farming occur in other parts of Canada, because the subject was identified as western only, such an exhibition and sentiment remained regionalized—which is to say, marginalized by central Canada, the art epicenter, where “Western art” is perceived as only American.

It may have been these two events that momentarily raised Clymer’s profile just enough that Paul Duval, that year writing a rare history of Canadian illustration, included Clymer (while illogically dismissing Norman Price and Arthur William Brown as men who “used to be Canadian”). He remarked with truth, “Unfortunately for Canadian publishers, Clymer is now one of America’s highest paid illustrators”¹³²—because now, few Canadian firms could afford him. Indicative of how isolated illustration as a field was becoming is that, although Duval claimed Canadian illustration was better than ever, this important essay ran only in a graphic arts

¹²⁹ For instance, a lone tree motif decorated the exhibition catalogue of the 1913 Armory Show in New York City. Landscape had been integral to American identity since the establishment of the Hudson River School.

¹³⁰ John Clymer to Reed, February 25, 1974, 2, copy, Walt Reed correspondence file, collection of Illustration House, New York; original in John F. Clymer, Ellensburg, WA.

¹³¹ Marilyn McLean, “Buffalo,” *Herald Magazine*, June 10, 1961, 1.

¹³² Duval, “Word and Picture.”

trade publication and none similar ever appeared in the rest of Canada's art press.¹³³

The fourth instance was the 1975 *Animals in Art* exhibition at the Royal Ontario Museum, which was a rare landmark acknowledging the importance of the "realistic animal story"/wildlife tradition carrying on in popular culture in Canada.¹³⁴ This event is not to be taken as evidence of art world attention either, however. The R.O.M. has a natural history section and, as happened to Arthur Heming in 1921,¹³⁵ the show was aligned with that department. As Robert Bateman has noted, by being relegated to natural history museums, wildlife art has been excluded from the purview of contemporary art practice, and thus, its status as "art" has been compromised.¹³⁶

To return to the question of whether Clymer's Canadian subjects in American media comprised a win for Canadian nationalism, the answer might have been "yes" if Canadians had been monitoring the situation and taking prideful ownership of it. As it stands, because Clymer was working in isolation with no input from nationalists, his Canadian works were instead framed by American national narratives. This stands in contrast to Heming, whose works were calculated to appeal to an American audience without losing Canadian perspective.

Like other illustrators who went south, and like Canadian illustrators who worked in mainstream genres, the omission of John Clymer from history books, reviews, and collections, eradicated a continentalist contribution to national identity (recall that the Canadian Authors Association in 1931 purposely omitted from an exhibition illustrators who had "crossed the line").¹³⁷ Had Canadians been more tolerant of expatriates from Arthur William Brown to Clymer, not only would Canadians have slightly less reason to fear the invasion of American media and find more reason to see that Canadian cultural power *can* influence it, but they could have asserted to American audiences that Canadians have played an active and even dominant role in some aspects of North American cultural history.

This is important because Canadians' willful indifference meant the Canadian content in Clymer's works was permitted to feed and strengthen only American national narratives. For example, when featuring Clymer in a 1951 book on *Saturday Evening Post* cover art, the author expurgated from Clymer's biography the entirety of his Canadian background. Instead, one reads, "From Ellensburg he moved to Wilmington, Delaware, where he worked to establish himself as an artist. About five

¹³³ An exception was Sybill Pantazzi's research report, "Book Illustration and Design By Canadian Artists 1890-1940," in which she emphasized the lack of illustration scholarship.

¹³⁴ *Animals in Art*, Royal Ontario Museum, October 1975. Mentioned by Clymer in letter to Reed, November 17, 1975, 2, copy, Walt Reed correspondence file, collection of Illustration House, New York; original in John F. Clymer, Ellensburg, WA.

¹³⁵ Gehmacher, "Art, Illustration, and Zoology," 49.

¹³⁶ Robert Bateman, in discussion with author, June 2006.

¹³⁷ Howard Angus Kennedy quoted in Speller, "Fragments of an Exhibition," 9.

years later, he pulled up stakes and settled in the artists' heaven-on-earth, Westport . . .”—at which point his work was said to be “characterized . . . by a deeply-rooted atmosphere of Americanism . . .”¹³⁸

When the largely autobiographic book *John Clymer: An Artist's Rendezvous With the Frontier West*¹³⁹ came out, six of seven American reviewers also left his Canadian background and the Canadian scenes pictured in the book unmentioned.¹⁴⁰ While it was beyond the power of Canadians to control what American writers chose to say, if at least one major award, book or solo exhibition had ever been extended from Canada, American press may have covered it and realized its Canadian perspective, while Canadians would have seen themselves as integral, rather than irrelevant, to the American story.

Clymer had millions of viewers. In contrast, the audience for MacDonald's nationalistic work was not widespread: Ryerson Press's Canadian Art Series did not sell well (MacDonald's *The Group of Seven* was an exception), and most Canadians did not read *Canadian Forum* or attend art shows.¹⁴¹ According to 1948 and 1954 polls conducted by *Maclean's* (Chapter 4), Canadians as a group preferred highly coloured, funny, and recognizable genre scenes—everything Rex Woods and John Clymer were, and MacDonald was not. In this sense, while Thoreau MacDonald's wilderness imagery was an expression of a common prescribed Canadian *identity*, it was not an expression of everyday Canadian *culture* of the period.

¹³⁸ Ashley Halsey, *Illustrating the Saturday Evening Post* (New York: American Book-Knickerbocker Press Inc., 1951), 19–21, 48.

¹³⁹ Reed, *John Clymer*. Clymer made recorded interviews with Reed and determined the pool of images from which the final selection was collaboratively made. Reed pieced together a text from letters by John and Doris, weaving into it long passages quoted from the interviews. The Clymers then edited it, adding and removing words and images, reorganizing the text, and rewording passages, often overriding Reed's decisions. They also selected Harold McCracken to write the foreword and suggested the first version of the title. Walt Reed, in discussion with author, Autumn 2011. See also, Doris Clymer to Reed, March 13, 1974, 1–7; John Clymer to Reed, November 23, 1975, 1–3; John Clymer to Reed, January 8, 1976, 1; John Clymer to Reed, January 14, 1976, 1–2; John Clymer to Reed, November 21, 1973, 1; John Clymer to Reed, January 16, 1974, 2—all copies in Walt Reed correspondence file, collection of Illustration House, New York; original in John F. Clymer, Ellensburg, WA.

¹⁴⁰ Nancy Sortore, “John Clymer,” *Arizona Daily Star*, November 14, 1976; Dale L. Walker, “Books,” *El Paso Times*, November 21, 1976; *Sunday Oregonian*, November 21, 1976; Leonard Sanders, “Photo, Art Books Ready for Yule,” *Fort-Worth Star-Telegram*, November 21, 1976, 31; *Times*, January 30, 1977; *Long Beach Press-Telegram*, February 1977; *Antiques Journal*, May 1977.

¹⁴¹ Sandra Campbell, “‘The Real Discoverers and Master-Builders of This Nation’: Lorne Pierce of Ryerson Press and Nationalism in Canadian Art, 1920–1950,” in *Canadas of the Mind: The Making and Unmaking of Canadian Nationalisms in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Norman Hillmer and Adam Chapnick (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), 183.

Where Clymer's art tended to blend into mass visual culture, MacDonald's work stood as emblematic of Canada—but this emblematic function did little to acknowledge and foster understanding of Canada's actual cultural breadth or continental self-awareness. Even when MacDonald's restrained sophistication caught the attention of the Norman Kent, publisher of *American Artist* magazine, Kent's article mentioned MacDonald's New England transcendentalism minimally; while almost an entire column outlined his Group of Seven lineage, with claims of "native" painting inspired by the "rugged North" and all.¹⁴² As in Canadian art writing, MacDonald's continentalism never raised any discussion or objection—suggesting that much of Canadian art rhetoric was really about class insofar as high culture influences such as Henry David Thoreau and Rockwell Kent were never cause for panic, the way the "invasion" of low popular culture was.

Norman Kent commented that, "With the influx and general acceptance of European book artists in America, it is earnestly hoped that we may see Canada represented also in American imprints, through the name and talents of this fine Canadian illustrator." While MacDonald was here successfully exporting Canadian identity, by focusing so much on the Group's legacy and MacDonald as the sole practitioner through whom Kent glimpsed Canadian illustration, once again Canadian art was reduced to a conservative, limited type of expression. Meanwhile, as my conclusion will show, there arose a new set of avant-garde illustrators and art directors in Canada, ignored by Kent and MacDonald, who were rejecting both Group of Seven and American mainstream precedents.

Of all of Canada's illustrators, Thoreau MacDonald is the one who has received the most sustained and scholarly attention (followed closely by that other Canadian School associate, whom he admired, C.W. Jefferys), with 61 exhibitions of his work (mainly in group shows) having occurred by 1971, 14 of which were in the United States or England.¹⁴³ Ironically, John W. Sabean in his 2002 edited collection of MacDonald's journals remarks, "Unfortunately, MacDonald is not widely known today, although a small coterie of admirers still collect his work and preserve his memory."¹⁴⁴ If MacDonald is considered "eclipsed," as Sabean puts it, the rest of Canada's illustrators—and John Clymer more than most—must be considered "disappeared" in Canadian records. The venerable Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, which maintains archives on all its members and collects their chief publications, had little trace of him, and the Glenbow Museum has only a minor drawing by him. So entirely did he disappear that the curators of the major 2009 exhibition *The Nude in Modern Canadian Art, 1920-1950* unintentionally (and in retrospect, regrettably) overlooked him—despite the existence of a F. Clymer and Gallery dedicated to him in Ellensburg, Washington.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Kent, "Thoreau MacDonald, Canadian Illustrator," 23.

¹⁴³ Edison, *Thoreau MacDonald: A Catalogue*, 175–178.

¹⁴⁴ Sabean, "Introduction," in Sabean, *A Boy All Spirit*.

¹⁴⁵ Anna Hudson, email to author, December 9, 2012.

Conclusion

The Bending Tree and the Helpmeet Wife

Cultural Trades

One function of this dissertation was to test Arthur Lower's contention that "the more Canada has become 'Americanized,' the more her people have remained themselves."¹ *A Cultural Trade* supports Lower's assertion of hardy Canadian difference, *and* it also supports Lower's later contention (and that of cultural nationalists such as C.W. Jefferys and Harold Innis) that too much exposure to American visual culture in print threatened Canada's cultural idiosyncrasies. Both wilderness and pretty girl imagery by Canadian illustrators, which differed in form only slightly from American-made imagery, could constitute forces of convergence and/or divergence with American culture, even (as in depictions of the Canadian Woman) simultaneously.

These multivalent tropes took on nationalist and continentalist (or un-Canadian, depending on one's perspective) auras depending on the rhetorical and media environments—the publications, galleries, literature, and social contexts—in which they were couched. Art rhetoric and editorial direction in magazines policed orders of imagery in ways that branded some pictures as "Canadian" (like Thoreau MacDonald's) despite continentalist influences—leaving all others to appear by default as "American" *only* (like John Clymer's). In art, the impression that Canada was different from the United States could only be sustained through the rigorous rhetoric of such figures as the Group of Seven and their apologists, and through the institutional and connoisseurial neglect of continentalist popular illustration, which was increasingly seen as insignificant, if not out-and-out "American."

While the wilderness adventure genre was largely subsumed into nationalistic Canadian School landscape painting, continentally-shared pretty-girl motifs expressed Canadians' continentalist interests in progress, sophistication, and self-realization. Although sometimes seen in nationalistic contexts such as Woods' Canadian Woman, the pretty girl was perceived as more commercially motivated than wilderness imagery. Nationalist champions in art could have retained her as a Canadian symbol on Canadian terms, as they did with wilderness images, even as she evolved towards glamorization and materialism. Instead, subsequent neglect of her implied that illustrations of women were unimportant or culturally degraded. Such tradeoffs helped Canadian difference to appear stronger than it actually was (since American-style pretty girls kept on proliferating), at the expense of accounting for Canada's continentalist makeup. In particular, homegrown interest in capitalism, self-development, and the co-operation with the U.S. that was necessary to ensure peace and security were elided from cultural expression and accounts of

¹ Arthur Lower, *Canada: Nation and Neighbour*, 41.

Canadian culture.² The Canadian art world's xenophobia was such that Paul Duval in 1956 blamed "cultural snobs in Ottawa" and others for a "gulf of ignorance and misunderstanding" between the two countries due to galleries' omission of American art from their collections in favour of British art, and their failing to circulate Canadian art in the United States. He also cited an incident where a Canadian art jury debated whether the winner, Anna Baker, should receive her prize since she was an American.³

While discourse and rhetoric have tended to polarize nationalist and continentalist positions, in practice most illustrators and consumers expressed a far more flexible and hybrid approach, often trading one kind of benefit for another (usually nationalist prestige for a greater audience and monetary reward). In the introduction I said that Canadian identity *was a process rather than an entity*—one that continually mixed nationalist and continentalist modes, finding positions along a gradated spectrum between assimilation with the United States on one end and imperial loyalty to Britain on the other. Continentalism and nationalism comprised the centre-left and centre-right on this spectrum. In illustration, a variety of cultural expressions maintained equilibrium between American and British influences, an equilibrium that garnered the benefits of being associated with both of these more powerful nations. Both continentalism (which is just another form of nationalism) and cultural nationalism are needed to check and balance each other in order to keep Canada in cooperation with the United States while maintaining some healthy distance. I will return to this argument below.

The careers and works of illustrators presented in this dissertation occupy many points on the spectrum. To recap, Arthur William Brown and Russell Patterson traded Canadian citizenship for self-realization in New York. They made the self-determining modern American Girl fashionably risqué, a symbol of liberal individualism and urban sophistication such as they themselves practiced, at a time when Canada partook in increased trade with the United States. Brown encouraged Canadians to participate in the Miss America beauty pageant, despite warning Canadian girls about the perils of the New York glamour industry. By enhancing American national identity, by intensifying the objectification of women, and by boosting consumerism and the sensationalistic U.S. media that offended nationalistic Canadians, Patterson and Brown represent a position on the spectrum of continentalism leaning to annexation.

Responding to cultural-nationalist pressure in Toronto to define a separate Canadian art, yet recognizing that the battle for Canadian visibility and identity would be fought in popular culture, Arthur Heming amended the American popular image of Canada. Deriding sexy, boozing Miss Civilization, he imbued the wilderness with a more wholesome presence, less violent and more chaste than American

² In light of the question of military alliance, it is interesting that minutes from a meeting of the New York Society of Illustrators mentions "a letter received from the Canadian Government asking for the cooperation of the Society in producing posters etc." James D. Herbert, Secretary, May 14, 1941, collection of the Society of Illustrators, New York.

³ Duval, "Canadian Galleries Snub U.S. Artists."

iterations, in order to promote Canadian exceptionalism and to even reform American social ills through example. In gaining a continental audience by adapting popular forms, Heming traded prestige with fellow nationalists who were focusing on pure wilderness landscape. Heming represents a position perfectly in the centre between continentalist and nationalist thrusts.

Illustrating within the context of maternal feminism, Rex Woods changed the American Girl into the Canadian Woman, a figure of civic and national pride, who embodied idealized Canadian moral decency and American-style prosperity in balance. Similar to Heming, Woods's work is an example of Canadian appropriation, subversion, and inversion of American forms; but his use of bread-and-butter technique and glamorization of passive models contributed to the Americanization of women's magazines and their readers. Woods balanced his British identity with resolutely democratic and North American values. But, since he adopted American glamour yet neither pursued nor achieved any American presence, he lost the most in terms of recognition in art criticism and history of all the illustrators discussed here.⁴ He represents a centre position, leaning slightly to continentalism.

Clearly inhabiting a cultural nationalist spot on the spectrum, Thoreau MacDonald continued to assert Canada's search for autonomy in the symbol of the lone tree and in pastoral ideals, suppressing the pretty girl and urban and commercial aspects in his work. In doing so he traded mass popularity for lasting renown in Canadian art. MacDonald also contributed to the institutionalization of the Canadian School of painting and its conflation with cultural nationalism. Critical evaluation of American Transcendentalism and its role in merging Canadian literary culture with that of Americans was traded for preservation of the fantasy that the north, nature, and moral purity were special Canadian traits. Homegrown continentalism and its cultural expression (other than the elite New England type) was delegitimized.

John Clymer merged Canadian and American borderlands into a continuous, shared landscape of postwar peace and prosperity in an American print environment, where Canada was subsumed into the American national narrative of the pioneer developing the "virgin land." He traded the sometimes parochial and petty Toronto art scene for national fame and renown in the United States, at the cost of a Canadian fine art audience. Also lost was recognition on both sides of the border of the importance of Canada to American history, and of how essential Canada was to Clymer's personal artistic voice as well. Clymer represents a continentalist position on the spectrum, one that serves American identity more

⁴ This evaluation is based on Woods' renown as an illustrator of women. After 1960, out of the timeframe covered in this dissertation, Woods turned to history painting and was commissioned to recreate the official portrait of the Fathers of Confederation, the original of which had been lost in a fire. These activities brought him some acclaim, but due to the poor esteem for illustration in the 1960s, not on the scale his predecessor C.W. Jefferys garnered for similar work 1900–1940. He and his work were never described in nationalist terms as was the Group of Seven; nor was he included in any art history survey or made the subject of a monograph, with the exception of an entry in Robert Stacey's *Canadian Poster Book*.

than the Canadian, in part because of institutional oversight and art historical blind spots in both the U.S. and Canada.

Benefits of Sameness

To understand what the cumulative effect of illustrators' tradeoffs has been, I turn to two vivid metaphors Arthur Lower provided for how he conceived of Canada's resilience in the face of American pressure: one, "bending before the storm;" and the other, the agreeable but assertive wife who gets "a good share of her way" while bringing the "family" together (he was referring specifically to the Commonwealth and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, entities that Canada had done much to envision and establish).⁵ Perhaps unwittingly, Lower thus identified the same two symbols that this dissertation argues are dialectically linked, that of the wilderness—the tree bending before the storm as in Group of Seven paintings—and that of the smiling pretty-girl who brings corporation and consumer together to ensure the economic progress of home and nation.⁶

The symbols of the bending tree and helpmeet wife express key characteristics of pliability and partnering skills,⁷ which Lower proposed were fundamental to achievement of Canadian political autonomy. These characteristics have nurtured a sense of sameness between Canada and the United States. Arthur Heming's compromising effort to insert Canadian values into American pulp fiction is an example of the tree bending before the storm in order to survive.

English Canadians had been raised since mid-Victorian times to recognize the wilderness as a symbol of national identity. In contrast, the pretty girl is recognized as a symbol only with difficulty—but this dissertation finds she is as much a Canadian symbol as the forest or lone tree.⁸ Rex Woods' *Canadian Woman* made

⁵ Lower, *Canada: Nation and Neighbour*, 2, 7.

⁶ The "eternal and omnipresent" pretty-girl in Canadian advertising was attested to by Allan Harrison in "Advertising Art in Canada," 108.

⁷ Unfortunate by the contra-nationalist and feminist standards of this study, referring in the first case to, seemingly, a Group of Seven tree; and in the second case to women's traditional feminine weakness as subservient to the masculine aggressiveness of Britain and the USA.

⁸ One may trace the pretty girl in fine art paintings of the 1960s, such as Jack Bush's abstract "stack" paintings with bust, waist, and hip shapes inspired by a Madison Avenue manikin, or Dennis Burton's pop art girlie torsos, or Michael Snow's walking woman motif, which he iterated in commodities as well as art pieces. Regarding Bush, it is significant that American critic wrote that she found it "icky" that a "blatantly commercial display" inspired Bush, and speculated that he was "inured to the commercial aspects" because of his background as an illustrator. Rather, I would contend that Bush, because of the critical reception of the pretty girl among Canadians, manipulated the symbol knowingly. Piri Halasz, "Two Stars," (*An Appropriate Distance*) *From the Mayor's Doorstep* (blog), March 12, 2012, <http://www.pirihalasz.com/blog.htm?post=844422>. The pretty girl may also figure dialectically in Canadian literature. For instance, in L. M. Montgomery's novel *The Blue Castle*, the heroine demonstrates her emancipation by smashing a dish against a billboard

Canadians feel like sisters to Americans, while pursuing Canadian social values. Importantly, where nationalist feeling blamed the pretty-girl for American commercialism, Lower's wife figure reveals that the pretty-girl can work slyly with Americans in the interests of international harmony and Canada's well being. The social function of Rex Woods' Canadian Woman is to blend into continental visual culture, acknowledging jointly held trans-border maternal-feminist aims such as interest in improving families' standards of living, whilst maintaining a quiet Canadian difference, such as showing respect for royalty.⁹

While nationalists have rightfully worried that Canadian identity has been diluted when illustrators and writers have made concessions to American publishers (by, for instance, using American English and place names, and removing pictorial elements that could offend certain American sensibilities),¹⁰ Canadian illustration that stayed in step with American illustration helped foster the much-touted "friendliness" of the two nations. Where adoption of American popular culture was, according to cultural nationalists, a slippery slope of complacency leading to political or economic takeover by Americans, for Lower, Canadian consumption of "comics and Coke" provided an appearance of kinship that made the thought of invading Canada by force, for Americans, akin to "a considerable degree of cannibalism." Canada thus would remain sovereign—politically sovereign in plain view, and culturally sovereign in its customary low-key way.¹¹ Scholar Allan Smith has taken this argument one step further, observing that the degree of sameness achieved by rendering Canada "friendly" is actually helping to make expression of difference possible.¹²

Recently, leaked official correspondence to Washington from an American ambassador in Canada gives credence to Smith's allegation, and shows what can happen should Canadian difference become too pronounced and lose its compatibility and "friendliness" with Americans:

advertising a "schoolgirl complexion" cosmetic and finds freedom in a log cabin with a woodsy nature book writer, who has turned his back on his father, a rube-ish, American-style self-made man. But the heroine's self-possession is signaled when she is scouted by a famous pretty girl painter with an eye for unusual beauty, who sees her in a woodland setting. She and her husband are flattered but only pursue the portrait when they have the means to buy it, so that it does not become a spectacle in some public exhibition. L. M. Montgomery, *The Blue Castle* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1947 [1926]).

⁹ That is, before 1950. Since Canada gained more independence, loyalty to the Crown has dramatically fallen off.

¹⁰ See Edwards and Saltman, *Picturing Canada*, 211–213 for examples and discussion of Canadian acquiescence to and defiance of American censorship.

¹¹ Lower, *Canada: Nation and Neighbour*, 12.

¹² Allan Smith, *Canada—An American Nation? Essays on Continentalism, Identity, and the Canadian Frame of Mind* (Montreal: McGill Queen's University Press, 1994), 6.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) has long gone to great pains to highlight the distinction between Americans and Canadians in its programming, generally at our expense . . . the degree of comfort with which Canadian broadcast entities, including those financed by Canadian tax dollars, twist current events to feed long-standing negative images of the U.S.—and the extent to which the Canadian public seems willing to indulge in the feast—is noteworthy as an indication of the kind of insidious negative popular stereotyping we are increasingly up against in Canada. . . .¹³

The ambassador recommended direct intervention:

While there is no single answer to this trend [of anti-Americanism], it does serve to demonstrate the importance of constant creative, and adequately-funded public-diplomacy engagement with Canadians, at all levels and in virtually all parts of the country While there are those who may rate the need for USG public-diplomacy programs as less vital in Canada than in other nations because our societies are so much alike, we clearly have real challenges here that simply must be adequately addressed.¹⁴

Canadian expression of a joint culture nurtures sameness with Americans, and makes it less likely that the United States would ever seek annexation by force or by propaganda, keeping American authorities from developing an urge to “adequately address” the culture of difference with beefed up “creative” (likely culturally deployed) American counter-propaganda. Cultural similarity should not therefore be prematurely condemned as being only oppressive. If the American perception is that Canadians are just snowy Americans, then there is no need for the sort of policing that characterizes the policing of the Mexican border and stigmatizes Mexican expatriates in the U.S.

For all that Canada has needed to be unique, it also wanted to be recognized as kin, and as an equal to American exemplars—not radical and not provincial. The ideal culture in nationalist theory, purported to be non-commercial and not-American and therefore more “authentic,” clashed with everyday culture as it was practiced by people who had little regard for the prescribed views of cultural commentators and politicians, or who were simply eager to keep *au courant* with the world’s most powerful nation.

¹³ Wilkins, “Primetime Images Of US-Canada Border Paint U.S. In Increasingly Negative Light,” Public Library of US Diplomacy, *Wikileaks*, accessed April 15, 2014, http://www.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08OTTAWA136_a.html.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

Remaining close to the United States allowed Canadian illustrators such as Arthur William Brown, Russell Patterson, Ernest Thompson Seton, and the scores of other expatriates to forge successful careers in the U.S. Some, like Henry Sandham, Arthur Heming and C.W. Jefferys, brought their American training and knowledge of American markets home and used it to strengthen Canadian nationalism. Defining “Canadian” icons of visual culture is not the only means by which Canadians have achieved cultural empowerment. Canadians also did and still do important work resulting in national and personal advantages by mastering the visual language of the dominant paradigm, the “American” culture industry. By adopting American standards, Canadian illustrators win cultural enfranchisement, and an ability to speak and be heard as an equal. Instead of *inevitably* eroding Canadian identity, proficiency in a shared visual culture can, paradoxically, protect it: Canada and Canadians are liked; Canadian publications can compete; Canadians can forge business ties with Americans; Canadians can find jobs that give them access to large audiences; and from there Canadian messages can be disseminated. In the process, American visual culture, which encompasses a Canadian audience, is broadened, enriched, supported, and challenged by Canadian input while economic and social cooperation is enhanced.

Benefits of Difference

Arthur William Brown’s society belles and beauty pageant winners crossed the border as if it was not there; Russell Patterson was emulated in the pages of *Canadian Home Journal* and *The Goblin*; visually, John Clymer’s rambles coast to coast for *The Saturday Evening Post* through Canada and the United States merged with Franklin Arbuckle’s similar travels for *Maclean’s*. Because wilderness and pretty girl illustration was indelibly North American, Canadians could readily express their difference from Britain through them, but found the sense of difference from the U.S. was (and remains) ambiguous.

Giving credence to fears of cultural annexation (the possibility of political annexation appearing in hindsight to have been overestimated), this dissertation shows that Canadian resistance to American-style glamour and emphasis on women’s appearances over their abilities was eroded between 1930 and 1960. Despite the arguments given above for the practicality of maintaining continentalist ties, in agreement with cultural nationalists, I find that too much similarity to Americans threatened Canadians’ ability to develop policy, values, and symbols different from that of Americans. For instance, the image of the Mountie devolved into what one specialist has showed is “a safe marketing strategy [with] lack of historical contemplation;”¹⁵ women’s share of public life was not reflected in visual culture; and images of the north continued to romanticize adventure and Anglophone business opportunity.

¹⁵ Michael Dawson, *The Mountie from Dime Novel to Disney* (Toronto: Between The Lines, 1998), 180.

Contra Jefferys and others who thought total Americanization was imminent, however, when something American replaced something Canadian, it more often triggered a deeply patriotic backlash. For example, lavish patronage by the Carnegie Foundation and the Rockefellers, and the threat of American broadcast and print media, led the Massey Commission to urge the establishment of the Canada Council.¹⁶ Canadian national identity of cultural difference was dialectically developed through artificial contrast with American excess: without condemning the boozing, sexie-sex-book-reading, short-skirted Miss Civilizations of Patterson's work, Heming would have had a tougher time selling his noble, chaste wilderness concoction. Suppression of underlying sameness allowed Canadians to resist cultural imperialism.

Placing images within specific magazine contexts allowed illustrations to be read as being more "American" or more "Canadian" than many actually were. Examples given in this dissertation demonstrate that when Canadians employed American symbols such as wilderness or pretty girl, the Canadians changed them subtly to make them more reflective of Canadian values. Thus, Rex Woods' women do not smile so much, and Heming's heroes do not depend on gunfire to win their battles. But more than this, each illustrator gravitated to and was selected by the publisher that shared that illustrator's own worldview; the resulting publication provided, through its editorial slant and the texts with which it paired the illustrations, the context that allowed a given illustration to denote or connote just how continentalist or nationalist its subject matter was supposed to be, regardless of the hybridized reality.

As we have seen throughout this study, magazines were rich environments where communities could be formed and informed, where publics and publishers mutually shaped each other. How each illustrator inflected wilderness and/or pretty girl reflected the political stances of individual publishers, Canadians, and businesses concerned with Canadian cultural and political autonomy. Illustrators helped send the visual cues that selectively attracted readers by gender, age, political belief, and openness to tradition or change, creating national communities held together by common values and visual cultures. For instance, Arthur Heming's work for *Maclean's* bolstered that magazine's claim to being Canada's national magazine.

It is because successful illustrating requires this tight relationship between creator and publisher and public that so many expatriate illustrators, once immersed and immensely rewarded socially and financially for that immersion in the U.S., became "lost" to Canada, never to return home. Besides Arthur William Brown, Russell Patterson, and John Clymer, Canada also lost David F. Thomson (1870-1948), Raoul Barré (1874-1932), B. Cory Kilvert (1879-1946), Norman Price (1877-1951), Hal Foster (1892-1982), Robert Lougheed (1910-1982), Robert Fawcett (1903-1967), Richard D. Taylor (1902-1970), Denver Gillen (1914-1974), Mike Mitchell (1921-unknown), and others.

¹⁶ Canada, *Royal Commission on National Development*.

Therefore, cultural nationalist illustrators like Arthur Racey, C.W. Jefferys and Thoreau MacDonald performed an important service by reminding Canadians of their patriotic duty and critiquing the mainstream. The most significant contribution of Canadian nationalism has been that it has offered alternatives to the American way of doing things—thus demonstrating that the status quo south of the border is not necessarily a natural unfolding of some unstoppable inevitability.

Jefferys' ironic Summer Girl in her bulky trenchcoat, or MacDonald's Maria Chapdelaine with her featureless face, remind us that women are more than their external appearance. Nationalists also reminded readers that expatriate talents like Brown's and Patterson's, and their elevation of the American Girl, enhanced the American print behemoth that continued to pressure Canadian-originated cultural expression. MacDonald's dogged determination to turn out his artisanal chapbooks and to bring so many nationalist publications into a consistent visual identity further served to provide a sense of Canada as a (usefully mythic) unified entity with concerns and attributes separate from and unconcerned with American aims, which made the demand for federal support of Canadian culture easier to defend in the political arena. Canadian nationalism could and still can also nurture dissidence in the American public sphere: being Canadian has helped Anita Kunz (b. 1956) maintain a critical voice in her illustrations for American periodicals, many of which caricature American politicians and cultural icons such as George W. Bush and Mickey Mouse.¹⁷

Another useful aspect of nourishing Canadian difference and alternatives is that it potentially helps Americans critique their own society and government. The films of director Michael Moore in particular have capitalized on that, where Canada stands in as an idealized sanctuary where people do not need to lock their doors and where they have universal healthcare. As slanted as these depictions are, like the figure of the pure-minded Mountie, Canadian difference has been used for real political commentary and to bring American attitudes into alignment with Canadian ones. The nineteenth-century imperialists who wished Canada would provoke a moral reform of its "brash" southern neighbor have thus been answered.

Balancing Nationalism and Continentalism

Unfortunately, the alienation of popular continentalist visual culture has led to a distortion of what counts as valid in cultural production. When Richard Stursberg, former head of CBC's English services, proposed that CBC produce popular television shows that would bring back viewers and compete with American shows, both CBC employees and the press jeered. Says Stursberg, "Not only was it a silly goal, they argued, it would lead to the erosion of quality. Everyone knew that there was an important choice to be made between being popular and being good. The search for a million viewers could only serve to compromise artistic excellence. It

¹⁷ E. g., Anita Kunz's cover illustration for *The New Yorker* for October 13, 2003 depicts George W. Bush on horseback, wearing his horse's blinders.

would result in the “Americanization” of Canadian television.”¹⁸ Canadian nationalism has thus made itself unable to connect with the public and often unable to make Canadian culture industries financially sustainable.

This dissertation contends that continentalist influence as expressed in magazine illustration ought to have been as vital to Canadian visual art as nationalism was. When continentalist and nationalist priorities are seen as symbiotic rather than competitive, Canadians gain. A case in point is the August 1947 cover of *Maclean’s* by Oscar Cahén—a refugee from Europe with a fresh and skeptical outlook on Canadian and American culture, who enjoyed lampooning pin-ups and pooh-poohing *plein-air* landscape.¹⁹ This cover appeared during the Miss Canada beauty pageant, just as uproar over picturing sexy women in magazines erupted, and as debates in *Maclean’s* on the brain drain and continentalism were occurring (Chapter 4).

Discussed in depth by Donna Braggins and myself elsewhere,²⁰ this cover depicts a primping blonde amateur landscape painter, who paints her face instead of her canvas, a how-to-paint manual at her feet [Figure 47]. A Canadian landscape stretches out all around her with overly cute Disney-like birdies at her feet and butterflies hovering over her canvas. A caricature of what Cahén referred to as “American junk,”²¹ and of the formulaic art instruction that he deplored,²² the image is also a fond homage to King, Ontario, his home, pictured in the background.

¹⁸ Richard Stursberg, *The Tower of Babble: Sins, Secrets and Successes Inside the CBC* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 2012), 69.

¹⁹ Jaleen Grove, “Oscar Cahén: Bringing Things into the Light,” in *Oscar Cahén: Canada’s Groundbreaking Illustrator*, ed. Jaleen Grove, Michael Cahén, and Roger Reed (New York: Illustration House, 2011).

²⁰ Braggins, “Maclean’s: The Accidental Nationalist,” 57; Grove, “Oscar Cahén.”

²¹ Stan Furnival, (untitled speech, Art Gallery of Ontario, March 25, 1959), pp. 2, 7, 11, collection of The Cahén Archives, Toronto.

²² In a private manuscript, Cahén criticized fellow Canadian illustrators and painters, saying, “It makes me sick - nauseating, depressing - to see hundreds and hundreds of artists (contemporary) who are all more or less acclaimed, to see them all paint according to one or the other scheme or line. . . Commercialism kills every one of them.” Unpublished manuscript, collection of The Cahén Archives, Toronto.

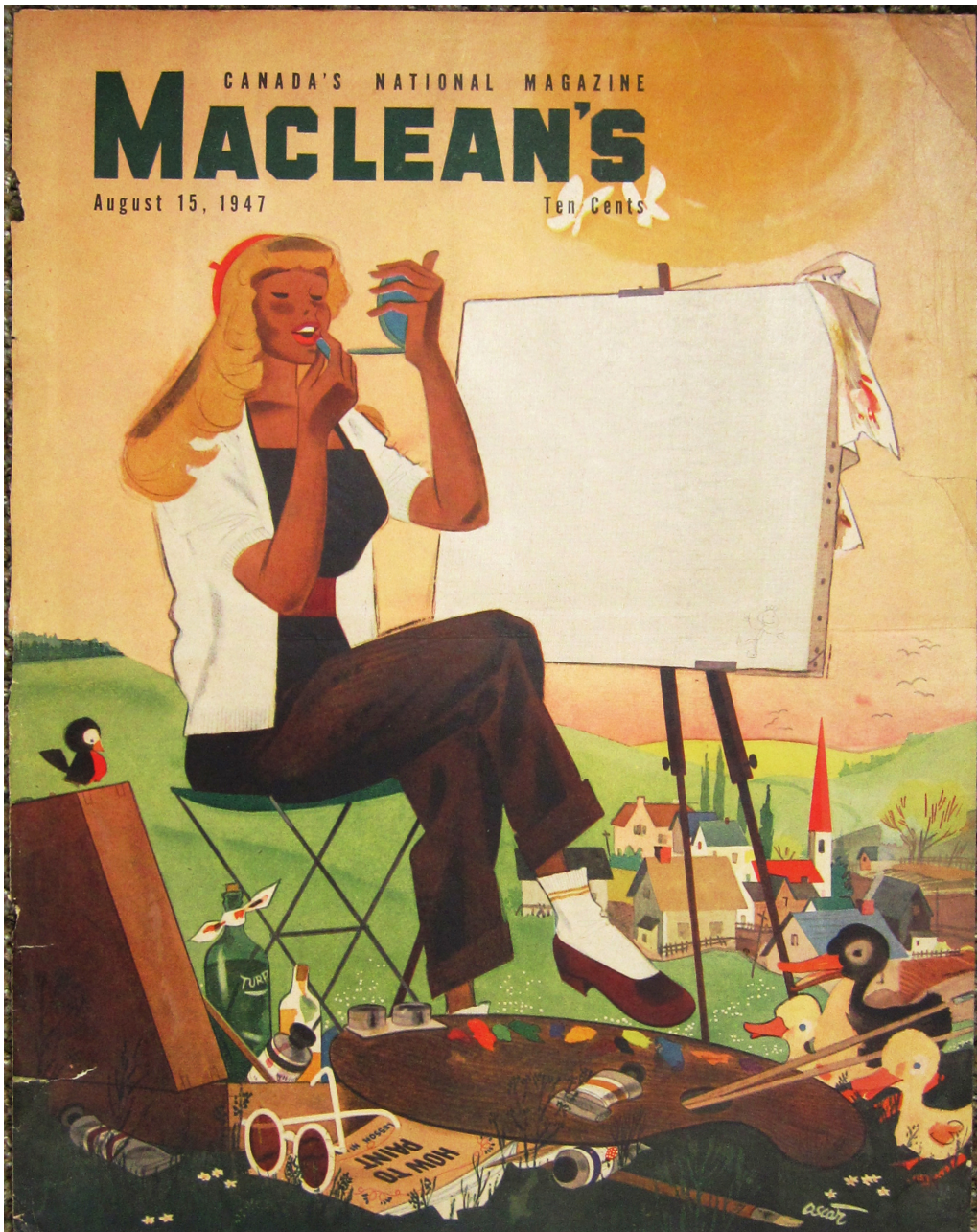


Figure 47. Both a spoof of and an homage to Canadian landscape painting and the Americanized pretty girl, this cover by immigrant Oscar Cahén demonstrates the new power of illustrators when freed from the false nationalist/continentalist binary. Oscar Cahén, [cover illustration], *Maclean's*, August 15, 1947. Courtesy of The Cahén Archives.

Bruggins argues that Cahén's European background and experimentation broke Canada's dependency on American precedents and the stranglehold of New York on Canadian illustration. But Cahén did not completely ignore American examples—he gave them a twist, ironizing Disney and the pretty girl. Cahén's work

represents a typical Canadian cultural tactic, in which American content is owned and redeployed not as a copy but as a playful and/or critical emanation of the condensed cultural influences a Canadian encounters on a regular basis.²³ Oscar Cahén is an example of the constructive advances and independence that can be achieved when continentalism and nationalism are combined. Unlike the illustrators discussed in the previous chapters, Cahén did not trade anything. He simply took the best of what was available and turned forms around to both mock and celebrate them.

Although Cahén was pivotal and a leader in innovation, a number of other Canadian illustrators were also developing new approaches: Harold Town (1924-1990), Ed McNally (1916-1971), Eric Aldwinckle (1909-1980), Eugenie Groh (unknown), Theo Dimson (1930-2012), and Ghitta Caiserman (1923-2005) among them. Collectively, they were not in advance of American experimenters such as David Stone Martin (1913-1992), Ben Shahn (1898-1969), and Rico Lebrun (1900-1964). Rather, they absorbed these influences and added their own. Their prominence was attained with the help of progressive art directors such as Gene Aliman (unknown), Dick Hersey (unknown), and David Battersby (unknown) working under nationalist publishers who fervently believed in presenting Canadians with something different from mainstream American fare without lapsing into by-then trite landscapes.²⁴

Between 1946 and 1956, these avant-garde illustrators were hailed by design critics as having created a moment of Canadian cultural innovation and achievement,²⁵ and they profoundly influenced the next generation of illustrators, which included James Hill, Frank Lewis, Ken Dallison, Tom McNeely, Will Davies, and Gerry Sevier. Asked about the new attitude that Cahén and his peers introduced to this younger cohort, art director Marg Stewart testifies, “I really looked down on that commercial style [the bread-and-butter technique such as Rex Woods employed]. So did James [Hill]. We went for real graphics. Discrimination of the best kind.”²⁶ For her, mainstream slick boy-girl illustration was associated with advertising, and represented “a very ordinary kind of artwork, not creative, almost to a formula [that] certainly wasn't giving anything new to the viewer . . . which in a kind of way is insulting.” Experimental approaches, by contrast, respected “a more intelligent reader, one who expected to see as good as they read,” Stewart felt.²⁷

²³ Bodroghkozy, “As Canadian As Possible,” 566.

²⁴ Braggins, “Maclean’s: The Accidental Nationalist,” 52–53; Grove, “Oscar Cahén: Bringing Things into the Light,” 16–17; Gene Aliman, “Editorial Fiction Illustration,” *Art Directors Club of Toronto Annual* (1953), 17.

²⁵ Dair, “New Patterns in Canadian Advertising,” 157, 173; Arthur, “Canada: Advertising and Editorial Art,” 100–101, 160.

²⁶ Marg Stewart, email to author, March 9, 2012.

²⁷ Marg Stewart, email to author, March 16, 2012.

Illustrators and art directors such as Hill and Stewart were interested in revolutionizing visual communication more than in expounding nationalism, but the two goals were not in contradiction. To offer their most sincere creative effort in challenging visual lassitude was to differentiate Canada from the American mainstream, to bring Canada into the ranks of the international avant-garde, and into more competitive business practice at the same time. If they could create better opportunities and appreciation in Canada, then young talent would not so quickly flee to New York, Paul Arthur reasoned.²⁸ Perhaps he was right: James Hill, Frank Lewis, Ken Dallison, Tom McNeely, Will Davies, and Gerry Sevier all remained in Toronto, while winning awards in New York at the Society of Illustrators.

Unfortunately, just as Canadian illustration seemed poised to achieve recognition as a thriving, fertile art form, the cultural scene in Canada changed. The sudden death of outspoken advocate Oscar Cahén;²⁹ the industry-wide troubles of magazines in general due to the competition of television; hobbling of Canadian magazines due to split-run American magazines; and the widening gap between gallery art and illustration all robbed attention. The sea-change in cultural policy to rampant cultural nationalism with the establishment of the Canada Council in 1957 also reduced interest in what commercial artists of any stripe were doing, and illustration fell out of the purview of the Canadian culture mainstream altogether.

Contemporary Art and Illustration

A significant finding of this dissertation is that each illustrator I have discussed was deeply, personally, and sincerely invested in their subject matter. They enjoyed their work. They lived lives that complemented and informed what they specialized in. They believed that what they drew—whether images of forest, city, hunter, glamour girl—was an expression of and a wish for what that illustrator (and publisher) thought was good about the world. Paradoxically, for all that illustration is made in collaboration with clients and with regard for audience, illustration retains elements of self-expression, creativity, and aesthetic power outside of its determined, commercial, and manipulative aspects. This element of the personal has been long overlooked by art critics who have spoken of illustration only in terms of “selling out.” Rediscovering the personal in the commercial, in past and present art production and consumption, recoups an element of personal investment over it, and that in turn harnesses deeper critical and creative re-imagining.

For instance, Canada’s illustrative tradition has recently been rediscovered by contemporary artists who critically assess culture, identity, and authenticity. The tropes and forms that artists such as Kent Monkman (b. 1965) and Bill Burns (b. 1957) both utilize subvert the illustrators from the period 1880-1960. One example is Monkman’s diorama *Two Kindred Spirits*, showing queer tableaux in which a Native man and his white companion are victims of crime. It was selected by

²⁸ Arthur, “Canada: Advertising and Editorial Art,” 161.

²⁹ Cahén, in Buchanan, “An Illustrator Speaks His Mind,” 3.

American curator Denise Markonish for the representative 2012 *Oh! Canada* exhibition at MassMOCA. As a painter, Monkman's debt to Cornelius Krieghoff (Heming's prototype) is well known, and this diorama's quotation of pulp fiction Northern and Westerns is obvious. Less theorized is the Canadian aspect of the pretty girl in Monkman's work, such as the apron-wearing white cowboy companion, who correlates to the Canadian Woman. In other works Monkman's drag alter-ego Miss Chief Eagle Testickle sports sexy accessories worthy of Miss Canada (the beauty pageant contestant), while obliquely critiquing the Government of Canada (as Miss Canada, the political cartoon character, once did).

Monkman's ironic appropriation of popular culture is an example of critical re-assessment, one that finds fondness and affection for the very symbols it subverts. But what has happened to sincerity in symbol use? The opening and closing ceremonies of the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver were an opportunity to present current Canadian identity on a world stage. However, directed by Australian David Atkins, the opening ceremony featured a "Landscape of Dreams" theme and quoted Group of Seven and Emily Carr paintings. The Heming-like closing ceremony spectacle featured giant inflatable figures of moose and beavers, while period-costumed First Nations and actors in canoes danced before massive pictures of Mounties and Smoky the Bear (which was invented by the Advertising Council in the United States). The closing show was supposed to be taken tongue in cheek, yet it repeated a much clichéd and grossly inaccurate idea of Canada to the world—one that had already seemed passé in 1957. Then, design critic Paul Arthur had complained that not only was too much advertising like a "bigger and brassier chorus girl," but that "besides a certain picturesqueness of snow, 'Mounties' and maple trees are about the sum total of the average European's knowledge of Canada. And why? . . . because we don't choose to correct those assumptions."³⁰

The traditional popular symbols of nationalism are exhausted—because illustrators, whose traditional role it is to update and devise new symbols, have been too long disengaged (or dismissed) from the discourse on Canadian visuality. Yet even if they had had more opportunity, few contemporary Canadian illustrators have staked their personal identities in nationalism as Heming or MacDonald did. The scarcity of paying work—dwindling every day as traditional print illustration diminishes—prohibits such narrow cultural chauvinism for most. Instead, Canadian illustrators today still find their best clientele still originates in New York (and California, since animation, film and game design have overtaken print), and it is more attractive to them to participate in international rather than national visual languages.

Recent émigrés to New York include Jillian Tamaki, Sam Weber, and Marcos Chin: each enjoys high profile in the illustration world—but not the contemporary art world, and not even in Canadian art. The legacy of ignoring continentalist illustration and Canadian illustrators does not just weaken Canadian ability to define its own national symbols, it overlooks Canadian excellence and influence in

³⁰ Paul Arthur, "Eighth Annual Exhibition of Editorial and Advertising Art," *Canadian Art* 14, no. 3 (Spring 1957): 104, 111.

the United States, while complaints about the impossibility of disrupting American cultural power drone on.

Epilogue

Walt Kelly, creator of the American comic strip *Pogo*, which ran in Canadian newspapers as well, famously observed in 1953:

Specializations and markings of individuals everywhere abound in such profusion that major idiosyncrasies can be properly ascribed to the mass . . . It is just unfortunate that in the clumsy hands of a cartoonist all traits become ridiculous, leading to a certain amount of self-conscious expostulation and the desire to join battle.

There is no need to sally forth, for it remains true that those things which make us human are, curiously enough, always close at hand. Resolve then, that on this very ground, with small flags waving and tinny blast on tiny trumpets, we shall meet the enemy, and not only may he be ours, he may be us.³¹

The last phrase is a rewording of "We have met the enemy and they are ours," uttered during the War of 1812 by Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry.³² Despite the military use of the word "enemy," this American attempt to invade Canada ended inconclusively and the two countries, with their shared English heritage, soon resumed friendly relations. Kelly's wording tells us that although the idiosyncrasies of one group or another are prone to exaggeration by artists, an underlying similarity will make peace prevail without diminishing difference. Taking a cue from Kelly, it is my hope that this dissertation may lead to a long-overdue audit of continentalist Canadian cultural production and criticism, to account for and recuperate the contributions of illustrators not just at home but those abroad as well, the so-called enemies who are ours and us after all.

³¹ Walt Kelly, foreword to *The Pogo Papers* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1953).

³² William S. Dudley, ed., *The Naval War of 1812: A Documentary History*, vol. 2 (Washington, D.C.: Naval Historical Center, 1992), 553.

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