

Canada's Story: Canadian Identity and the Journal of Canadian Studies

William Hamilton
Concordia University

Abstract

National identity was receiving an unprecedented level of scholarly attention during the 1960s and 1970s. Although several new Canada-focused journals went into publication during this time, the *Journal of Canadian Studies* emerged as the academic focal point for this discussion. The journal therefore offers an ideal lens through which to view evolving scholarly attitudes towards Canadian nationalism. This is particularly true for the debate between nation building and limited identities, which dates back to the journal's origins. The most well-known monograph on this subject was published in 1998. This article follows up on the debate by examining how the topic of identity has been studied in the *Journal of Canadian Studies* from 1999 to 2009.

The majority of the *Journal of Canadian Studies'* contributors adopted limited identities. This provides an opportunity to consider whether scholars who write in this vein have lost sight of national issues or ceased to have a social role, as the nation builders feared. The journal's contributors have remained in tune with leading scholarly developments, and their works thus lend themselves to a reflection upon how recent trends such as activist scholarship, new biography, and oral history are shaping identity studies. The scholars under consideration have continued to study Canada as whole. Writing from novel perspectives, their critically minded works help us set goals for the future. If this journal can be taken to reflect wider scholarly trends, it would suggest that issues of social justice and diversity are not necessarily opposed to pan-Canadianism.

Introduction

The 1967 Centennial celebrations provided the Canadian government with an opportunity to promote unity at a time when national identity could have been the

poster child for liminality.¹ Many nationalist historians lent their talents to the cause by publishing works that detailed Canada's rise from colonial holding to fully fledged nationhood. However, there was no clear consensus within the academic community at the time regarding how Canada should be studied. The federalist model employed by nationalist historians was opposed by those who argued that scholars should take a more limited approach and study the way different regional, class and cultural groups understand Canada. For all their differences, nationalism and limited identities are not necessarily mutually exclusive. However, the dynamic between these two perspectives that are often pitted against each other continues to be one of the most important forces in Canadian historiography, even after forty years of intense discussion, reflection and contemplation.

The debate between nation builders and the proponents of limited identities emerged during the 1960s and 1970s, a time when nationhood and national identity were receiving an unprecedented level of scholarly attention.² Indeed, experts from a range of disciplines including history, political science, and lexicography were applying themselves to explaining and defining Canada.³ This topic had become so important by 1972 that the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada launched the Commission on Canadian Studies to investigate the state of Canadian studies. It was chaired by T. H. B. Symons, who had been instrumental in creating the first scholarly journal on the topic, the *Journal of Canadian Studies*, in 1966.⁴ Several new Canada-focused journals went into publication during the 1960s and 1970s. However, since the *Journal of Canadian Studies* emerged from this dynamic period as the academic focal point for this discussion, it offers an ideal lens through which to view evolving scholarly attitudes towards Canadian nationalism.⁵ This is particularly

¹ Gary Miedema, *For Canada's Sake: Public Religion, Centennial Celebrations, and the Re-making of Canada in the 1960s* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005).

² Ryan Edwardson, *Canadian Content: Culture and the Quest for Nationhood* (Guelph: University of Guelph, 2008), 152; Coral Ann Howells, "Margaret Atwood's Discourse of Nation and National Identity in the 1990s," in *The Rhetoric of Canadian Writing*, ed. Cornelia Janneke Steenman-Marcusse (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002), 199-216; Janet Beverly Friskney, *New Canadian Library: The Ross-McClelland Years, 1952-1978* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

³ Jen Hamel, *A Brief History of the Writing (and Re-Writing) of Canadian National History* (Master's thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 2009), 5-6; Steven High, "The 'Narcissism of Small Differences,'" in *Creating Postwar Canada, 1945-1975*, ed. Magda Fahrni and Robert Rutherford (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008), 89-110; Philip Alphonse Massolin, *Canadian Intellectuals, the Tory Tradition and the Challenge of Modernity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 339.

⁴ Ronald D. Lambert, "To Know Ourselves: The Report of the Commission on Canadian Studies Volumes I and II," *The Canadian Journal of Sociology* 2, no. 3 (1977): 332-334; James E. Page, *Reflections on the Symons Report: The State of Canadian Studies in 1980* (Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services Canada, 1982); T. H. B. Symons, *To Know Ourselves: The Report of the Commission on Canadian Studies. Volumes I and II* (Ottawa: Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 1975).

⁵ A few examples include the *Journal of Canadian Fiction* (1972), *Studies in Canadian Literature* (1976) and *Canadian Poetry* (1977). Edwardson, 152.

true for the debate between nation building and limited identities which dates back to the journal's origins. Considering identity pieces from this publication in more recent years may provide a small glimpse into the nature of the relationship between pan-Canadian identity and issues of social justice and diversity.

The interest in Canadian identity that spurred the creation of the *Journal of Canadian Studies* can be seen as a response to the fact that the nation's longstanding sense of self was imploding in spectacular fashion. Historian Bryan Palmer explains that the idea that Canada was a singular entity unified by its historic connection to Britain, an identity that had always been contested, finally collapsed during the 1960s. He suggests that the irony of this decade is that it dismantled the country's longstanding sense of itself without offering a replacement.⁶ Scholars of the post war period agree that Canada underwent tremendous political, social and economic change that brought previous assumptions about a unified Anglo-Saxon nation into question. They explain that the relaxation of racial barriers to immigration and labour demand created by the postwar economic boom made it possible for over half a million people to arrive in Canada, largely from Eastern Europe, Asia and the Middle East.⁷ This massive and sudden influx of people from outside of the Commonwealth presented a very visible challenge to the idea of a white, Nordic nation.⁸

Even faith in the moral good of national progress in the British model, which framed colonial Native-Newcomer relations under the guise of "improvement" and spreading "civilization," was being brought into question by the rise of the Red Power movement. Inspired by Black Power in the United States and the anti-colonial movements of the Third World, Native peoples in Canada began to organize on a national level and assert more control over their land, resources and education.⁹ These groups were so successful at drawing attention to the previously ignored issue of Native Rights that one historian has suggested that the 1960s was a time when

⁶ I would like to thank Dr. Barbara Lorenzkowski, Tom Hamilton and the anonymous reviewers from *Past Tense* for their valuable feedback and contributions to this paper. Bryan Palmer, *Canada's 1960s: The Ironies of Identity in a Rebellious Era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 1-26.

⁷ Nicholas Harney, "Building Italian Regional Identity in Toronto: Using Space to Make Cultural Material," *Anthropologica XLIV*, no. 1 (2002), 45.

⁸ Cory Blad, *Neoliberalism and National Culture: State-Building and Legitimacy in Canada and Quebec* (The Netherlands: Brill, 2011), 165; Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540-2006*, 2nd Edition (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2007), 15-178; Philip Resnick, *The European Roots of Canadian Identity* (Peterborough: Broadview Press Limited, 2005), 39; Örn B. Bodvarsson and Hendrik Van den Berg, *The Economics of Immigration: Theory and Policy* (New York: Springer, 2009), 387; Magda Fahrni and Robert Rutherford, "Introduction," in *Creating Postwar Canada, 1945-1975*, ed. Magda Fahrni and Robert Rutherford (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008), 3.

⁹ Anna Hoefnagels, "Native Canadian Activism and the Development of Powwows in the 1960s," in *The Sixties in Canada: A Turbulent and Creative Decade* ed. by M. Athena Palaeologu (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 2009), 233-235; Palmer, 368.

mainstream Canadians “discovered” Aboriginals.¹⁰

The Aboriginal push for self determination is often overshadowed by the Quiet Revolution and the growth of separatism in Quebec. Canadian historian Alvin Finkel explains that liberal ideology replaced conservative thinking as the province become increasingly secular and modern.¹¹ As Quebec began to take more control over its social and economic situation, some people, including a large number of French-Canadian scholars, began to push for national sovereignty under the leadership of the Parti Québécois.¹²

The shift towards liberal ideology in Quebec was part of a much broader intellectual trend. During the postwar era, liberalism made serious inroads in Europe and North America to become the most influential mode of thought among the scholars of those two continents.¹³ Political economist Stephen Clarkson and law professor Stepan Wood have explained that this shift helped to move Canadian foreign policy away from its traditional protectionism and to weaken the tariffs and other trade barriers that separated the economies of Canada and the United States.¹⁴ However, the same increase in foreign investment that helped usher in an age of post-war prosperity also raised fears that Canada was losing itself to the growing economic and cultural influence of its southern neighbour. Canada was also seeking to establish itself as a country that was fully independent from Britain at this time and to this end adopted a new flag to replace the Red Ensign in 1965.

Within this context of unprecedented change, Canada celebrated its Centennial in 1967, and the first issue of the *Journal of Canadian Studies* rolled off the press a year later. Although the government took the lead in attempting to unify the country by celebrating its heritage, some historians also played important roles by producing works that reaffirmed the familiar “colony to nation” storyline.¹⁵ These

¹⁰ Alvin Finkel, *Our Lives: Canada After 1945* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1997), 243; Palmer 378.

¹¹ Montserrat Guibern, *The Identity of Nations* (Cambridge: Polity Press 2007), 33-34; Lance W. Roberts and Rodney A. Clifton and Barry Ferguson, *Recent Social Trends in Canada, 1960-2000* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 415-416.

¹² Berch Berberoglu, *The National Question: Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict, and Self-Determination in the 20th Century* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 208-221; Allen J. Matusow, *The Unraveling of America: A History of Liberalism in the 1960s* (Athens: Georgia University Press, 2009).

¹³ Finkel, 187-190; Craig A. Lockard, *Societies, Networks, and Transitions: A Global History*, Volume 3 (Boston: Wadsworth, 2010), 842.

¹⁴ Lawrence Aronsen, *American National Security and Economic Relations With Canada, 1945-1954* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1997), 6; R. Kenneth Carty and W. Peter Ward, “Canada as a Political Community,” in *National Politics and Community in Canada* ed. R. Kenneth Carty and W. Peter Ward (Vancouver: University of British Columbia press, 1986), 2-7; Stephen Clarkson and Stepan Wood, *A Perilous Imbalance: The Globalization of Canadian Law and Governance* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia press, 2010), 69.

¹⁵ Gail Cuthbert Brandt, “Canadian National Histories,” *The History Teacher* 30, no. 2 (February 1997): 139-140; Larry A. Glassford, “The Evolution of ‘New Political History’ in English Canadian Historiography: From Cliometrics to Cliodiversity,” *American Review of Canadian Studies* 32 (2002).

monographs, intended to promote unity, ignited what remains one of the most important debates in Canadian historiography. On one side were historians who supported the traditional nation building approach. Although these scholars came from across the political spectrum and studied different geographic areas of Canada, they were united by their top-down perspective, which focused on constitutional history and the political and economic structures of nation building. A landmark summary of their beliefs was published by historian Michael Bliss in the *Journal of Canadian Studies*. They were opposed by the proponents of limited identities who endorsed more of a bottom-up philosophy. Led by historians Ramsay Cook and J. M. S. Careless, these academics argued that Canadianism could be found by examining the country's many regional, cultural, and class identities.¹⁶ Perhaps the most well-known monograph on this issue was published by historian Jack Granatstein in 1998.

This paper follows up on the debate between nation building and limited identities by examining how identity has been studied in the *Journal of Canadian Studies* from 1999-2009. This study focuses on the work that has been done in this journal rather than its editorial policies and does not claim to cover all of Canada's identity literature. However, it does examine the scholarship that has been printed in the most important journal for Canadian studies over a ten-year period, and this exercise provides two important opportunities. The first is prepositioned by the fact that most of the academics under consideration embraced limited identities. As a result, this case study offers the chance to consider whether, at least within the *Journal of Canadian Studies*, scholars who have adopted this approach have lost sight of national issues or ceased to have a social role, as the supporters of the nation building agenda feared. Secondly, since the journal's contributors have remained in tune with leading scholarly developments, a careful reading of their work lends itself to a reflection upon how recent scholarly stances, theories, approaches, and methodologies are shaping identity studies. Particular attention will be paid to activist scholarship, new biography, and oral history.

As a whole, the academics who published in the *Journal of Canadian Studies* during the decade under review not only adopted limited identities but also added new themes such as ethnicity, feminism and gender. This expansion was largely carried out by activist scholars. Inspired by the socially engaged scholarship of the 1960s and informed by more recent theoretical developments, these academics speak

¹⁶ Michael Bliss, "Privatizing the Mind: The Sundering of Canadian History, the Sundering of Canada," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 26, no. 4 (Winter 1992): 5-17; J. M. S. Careless, "'Limited Identities' in Canada," *The Canadian Historical Review* L, no. 1 (1969): 1-10; Ramsay Cook, "Canadian Centennial Celebrations," *International Journal* 22, no. 4 (Autumn 1967): 659-663; Lyle Dick, "'A Growing Necessity for Canada': W. L. Morton's Centenary Series and the Forms of National History, 1955-80," *The Canadian Historical Review* 82, no. 2 (2001): 223-253; Jack Granatstein, *Who Killed Canadian History* (Toronto: Harper Collins Publishers, 1998); Dirk Hoerder, *To Know Our Many Selves: From the Study of Canada to Canadian Studies* (Athabasca: Athabasca University Press, 2010), 314.

on behalf of those they study and use their research to advocate for change. Their works shed light on how a variety of Canadians construct their identity and examine national belonging from novel perspectives. This also helps them to illuminate the dynamics behind historic and contemporary formulations of nationalism.

Articles written in the vein of new biography began to appear in the *Journal of Canadian Studies* during the early 2000s. Instead of detailing the life of an exceptional individual, they probe how culture informs constructions of identity. In this innovative fashion new biography has become a tool that allows identity and history to be explored in motion: as it happened, as it was lived, and as it was built. Examining how celebrity biographies have been constructed by the mass media in this fashion allows scholars to reveal how popular culture icons became symbols of national identity.

Instead of examining identity as a distant historical phenomenon, the 2009 special issue on sharing authority explores it in an immediate, personal manner through oral history interviews. In these works the researcher and narrator share interpretative power and become partners in the research process. This has allowed scholars to contribute to nationally important issues by establishing disadvantaged groups' identity for Canada's policy makers.

Part I: Narrating the Nation

The celebration of Canada's Centennial in 1967 gave birth to many large heritage and cultural projects. For example, the National Film Board launched the Challenge for Change program, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation commissioned Canadian musician Gordon Lightfoot to write the Canadian Railroad Trilogy and Montreal hosted the 1967 International and Universal Exposition (Expo 67). Historian Gail Brandt and education professor Larry Glassford remind us that Expo 67 did more than just unleashing a wave of heritage production:

[Expo 67] did much to focus attention on the role of history in creating and sustaining national identity. In the face of a more aggressive Quebec nationalism and the attendant rise of separatist sentiment, a primary concern was once again the writing of a common history that might accurately reflect the experiences of both linguistic communities. And indeed, there were some impressive collaborative efforts in this regard, including *The Canadian Centenary Series*, the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, and a number of new textbooks.¹⁷

¹⁷ Brandt, 139-140.

Nationalist historians W. L. Morton and D. G. Creighton oversaw *The Canadian Centenary Series*. Their call to create unifying history was answered by like-minded scholars such as historians Jack Granatstein, William Stewart MacNutt, and Morris Zaslow.

Consequently, the *Series* presents Canadian history as a grand nation building project to be celebrated.¹⁸ However, it is important to note that Careless and Cook also authored books in the *Centenary Series*, since this reminds us that the barrier between nationalist historians and those who supported limited identities has never been absolute.¹⁹

Only two years after the Centennial, when works from the *Canadian Centenary Series* were still being published, historian J. M. S. Careless wrote a paper titled "Limited Identities in Canada." Historian David Frank has suggested that this article "is perhaps one of the most influential pieces of historical writing in the last half-century."²⁰ In this piece Careless draws upon historian Ramsay Cook who suggests that

instead of constantly deploring our lack of identity we should attempt to understand and explain the regional, ethnic and class identities that we do have. It may just be that it is in these limited identities that "Canadianism" is found, and that except for our over-heated nationalist intellectuals Canadians find this situation quite satisfactory.²¹

From here Careless advocates for the study of the "limited identities of region, culture and class."²² He argues that these factors "represent entities of experience for Canadians no less than the transcontinental federal union; indeed it is largely through them that Canadians interpret their nation-state as a whole."²³

From this vantage point Careless makes the case for moving away from the traditional political-national histories written by scholars such as Creighton and

¹⁸ For a more in depth discussion of how this series attempts to present a unifying, nationalist history please see Lyle Dick, "'A Growing Necessity for Canada': W. L. Morton's Centenary Series and the Forms of National History, 1955-80," *The Canadian Historical Review* 82, no. 2 (2001): 223-253.

¹⁹ The fact that Cook and Careless' contributions highlight the overlap between the nationalist and limited identities camps was pointed out by one of *Past Tense's* reviewers. J. M. S. Careless, *The Union of the Canadas: The Growth of Canadian Institutions, 1841-1857* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967); Robert Craig Brown, *Ramsay Cook, Canada, 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967).

²⁰ David Frank, "Acadiensis, 1901-1999," Paper presented to the *Organization of American Historians*, Toronto, (1999): available online at <http://www.lib.unb.ca/Texts/Acadiensis/bin/get.cgi?&filename=Article1.htm>

²¹ Here Careless is quoting Cook's analysis of the literature that was supported by the "golden coffers of the Centennial Council." See Careless, 1; Cook, 661.

²² Careless, 3.

²³ Ibid.

Morton. Careless suggests that these works are too “hung up on the plot of nation-building” which centers upon the teleological development of Canada from colony to nation.²⁴ Alternatively, Carless suggests that by examining the “articulation of regional patterns in one transcontinental state” we might find that they “exhibit something common, to be called Canadianism, as they viewed the whole country from their own regional, ethnic, or class position.”²⁵

The approach advanced by Careless was appealing to many historians because it mirrored the central tenets of new social history. This movement was beginning to have a huge impact in Canada and even displaced political-national histories from their position of dominance.²⁶ Historian Joan Sangster recalls that “by the late 1980s and certainly the 1990s, the historical profession had changed, with gender, women's, regional, local histories, and Aboriginal histories taking a central place.”²⁷

Although new social history was gaining ground overall not all historians were keen to abandon the more traditional historical practices. For example, in 1992 historian Michael Bliss argued in the *Journal of Canadian Studies* that Canadian history had become “sundered” and “privatized” by its recent turn. He asserted that new social history had caused a massive shift in historians’ substantive interest, away from political and constitutional history and towards the exploration of the experiences of people in relationships following from such non-national connections as region, ethnicity, class, family, and gender. The situations of interest to historians now tend often toward the private and personal—states of mind, standards of living, conditions of health, family values, local hierarchies. This is so true it’s become a cliché: political history has been out, social and personal history have been in.²⁸

Bliss goes on to argue that “the abdication by historians of their role as interpreter of the evolution of our public community” has grave political consequences.²⁹ He elaborates by suggesting that

[there is a] parallel relationship between the disintegration of Canadian history as a unified identity, on the one hand, and, on the other, the withering of a sense of community in Canada which I believe in part underlies our current constitutional and political malaise.³⁰

²⁴ Ibid, 9.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Margaret Conrad, “How Historians Complicate Things: A Brief Survey of Canadian Historiography,” presented at the Annual meeting of the Historical Council, Mississauga, (2002): available online at <http://www.histori.ca/prodev/article.do?id=11635>

²⁷ Joan Sangster, “Archiving Feminist Histories: Women, the ‘nation’ and metanarratives in Canadian historical writing,” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 29 (2006): 257.

²⁸ Bliss, 6.

²⁹ Ibid, 11.

³⁰ Ibid, 5.

As a cure for this condition Bliss calls on historians to remember that “their subject, after all, is Canada.”³¹

Bliss’ call for studying the “public community” of Canada, which he framed in political and constitutional terms, was contested even within the *Journal of Canadian Studies*. The very issue that carried Bliss’ indictment of the “sundering of Canadian history” also featured a different view on national identity. It was presented by Canadian Studies professor Michèle Lacombe who reflected upon her experiences at the 1992 constitutional conference *Renewal of Canada: Identity, Rights and Values*. She recalled that after “listening to civilized and constructive suggestions from all quarters, this observer at least found herself genuinely moved on more than one occasion by the deep affection of Canadians for their country.”³² In fact, Lacombe concludes her paper by suggesting that “courageous or credible political leaders, both federal and provincial, should be able to make us swallow a multiple history lesson, assuming they are themselves capable of understanding it.”³³

Bliss and Lacombe’s articles were part of a much larger debate on how to think and write about Canada that extended far beyond the *Journal of Canadian Studies*. Perhaps the most well known work on this subject is historian Jack Granatstein’s *Who Killed Canadian History*. This monograph, which the *Financial Post* likened to “a literary hand grenade,” was published in 1998. Granatstein identifies with Bliss and draws heavily upon his work.³⁴ However, Granatstein’s criticisms run deeper, and he states that

limited identities were almost openly anti-nationalist: it was not the nation that mattered, but “smaller, differentiated provincial or regional societies”; not Canadians as a whole, but the components of the ethnic mosaic; not Canadians as a society, but Canadians in their social classes.³⁵

The study of identity was clearly a very contested topic in Canadian historiography during the late 1990s. The question now is how the *Journal of Canadian Studies’* contributors responded to this debate during a time period that begins only a single year after *Who Killed Canadian History* was published.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Michelle Lacombe, “One Step Forward, Two Steps Back,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 26, no. 4 (1992): 183.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ For more detail please refer to the chapter entitled “Professing Trivia: The Academic Historians” in *Who Killed Canadian History?*

³⁵ Granatstein, 74.

Part II: Taking a Stand

Bliss did publish one of the first and most influential rebuttals of limited identities in *Journal of Canadian Studies*. However, most of the scholars who wrote in this journal during the decade under consideration embraced limited identities as a program of historical inquiry. A typical example is communications studies professors Robert M. Seiler and Tamara P. Seiler's examination of "Calgary's practice of awarding visiting dignitaries a white cowboy hat."³⁶ They argue that

the city's civic and business elite have drawn on the western heritage of southern Alberta—its ranching and agricultural history—to construct a highly charged civic identity, which during this period of rapid social change downplays social cleavages and promotes corporate interests.³⁷

Seiler and Seiler come to this conclusion through six case studies that speak to the symbolic mechanics behind the bestowing of this symbol of local identity. For example, presenting Prince Charles of England with a white cowboy hat in the 1970s was a way to assert a post-colonial Canadian identity independent of Britain. It was also a way to establish a unique local identity for Calgary within Canada. Thus, in the very way that Careless prophesizes, Seiler and Seiler find assertions of pan-Canadianism in local articulations of identity.

In addition to studying limited identities as Careless envisioned, activist scholars added ethnicity, feminism and gender to the repertoire of limited identities. The addition of these themes is not surprising given the ideological roots of activist scholarship. Although no exact and universally accepted definition exists, law professor Radha D'Souza and sociologist Richard Lempert note that it represents "socially engaged studies aimed at increasing justice."³⁸ The general consensus is that its modern form grew from the collaborative scholarship that was produced during the 1960s by academic and non-academic intellectuals who had joined forces as participants in civil rights, women's, and anti-war movements.³⁹

³⁶ Robert M. Seiler and Tamara P. Seiler, "Ceremonial Rhetoric and Civic Identity: The Case of the White Hat," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 36, no. 1 (2001): 29.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ D'Souza, Radha, "The Prison House of Knowledge: Activist Scholarship and Revolution in the Era of 'Globalization,'" *McGill Journal Of Education* 44, no. 1 (2009): 24-25; Richard Lempert, "Activist Scholarship," *Law & Society Review* 35, no. 1 (2001): 26.

³⁹ Craig Calhoun, "Introduction," in *Engaging Contradictions: Theory, Politics, and Methods of Activist Scholarship*, ed. Charles R. Hale (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), xvii; Richard Healey and Sandra Hinson, "Movement Strategies for Organizers," in *Rhyming Hope and History: Activists, Academics, and Social Movements Scholarship*, ed. David Croteau, William Hoynes and Charlotte Ryan (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2005): 60-61; Sylvia Escarcega Zamarron,

The wall separating the ivory tower from the rest of society may have begun to crumble during the 1960s. However, it was at least partially rebuilt by the structural trends that social movements adopted in the 1970s that favoured material organization over theory.⁴⁰ Conversely, the increased emphasis on research and teaching served to keep scholars chained to their desks and off the streets during the 1980s and 1990s.⁴¹

Socially engaged scholarship experienced a revival during the 1990s and 2000s.⁴² These academics generally operated independently from lobby groups and drew authority from education instead of collaboration.⁴³ They were also influenced by theoretical developments that had been made since the 1960s, especially the concept of the "subject position." As its creators, American education professor Bronwyn Davies and New Zealand sociologist Rom Harre, explain:

A subject position incorporates both a conceptual repertoire and a location for persons within the structure of rights for those that use that repertoire. Once having taken up a particular position as one's own, a person inevitably sees the world from the vantage point of that position and in terms of the particular images, metaphors, storylines and concepts which are made relevant within the particular discursive practice in which they are positioned.⁴⁴

Writing in a conceptual environment that still reverberated with the socially engaged scholarship of the 1960s, activist scholars in the 1990s and 2000s began to reflect on their own subject positions and discuss how their experiences informed their research and activist goals.⁴⁵

This practice of reflecting upon the relationship between one's subject position

"Trabajar Haciendo: Activist Research and Interculturalism," *Intercultural Education* 20, no. 1 (2009): 39-50.

⁴⁰ Healey and Hinson, 60-61.

⁴¹ Robert Kleidman, "Engaged Social Movement Scholarship," in *Handbook of Public Sociology*, ed. Vincent Jeffries (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005), 314; Colin Barnes, Mike Oliver, and Len Barton, "Disability, the Academy and the Inclusive Society," in *Disability Studies Today*, ed. Colin Barnes, Mike Oliver, and Len Barton (Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 256.

⁴² Calhoun, xvii; D. C. Fujino, "Who Studies the Asian American Movement?: A Historiographical Analysis," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 11, no. 2 (2008): 127-169; Rachel Pain, "Social Geography: On Action-Oriented Research," *Progress in Human Geography* 27, no. 5(2003): 650.

⁴³ Hale, xix-xx.

⁴⁴ Bronwyn Davies and Rom Harre, "Positioning: The Social Construction of Selves," *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 20, no. 1 (1990): 46.

⁴⁵ John P. Bechara and Andrew H. Van de Ven, "Philosophy of Science Underlying Engaged Scholarship," *Engaged Scholarship: A Guide for Organizational and Social Research*, ed. Andrew H. Van de Ven (Oxford: University of Oxford Press, 2007), 34-35; Joy James and Edmund T. Gordon, "Afterward: Activist Scholars or Radical Subjects," in *Engaging Contradictions: Theory, Politics, and Methods of Activist Scholarship*, ed. Charles Hale. (California: University of California Press, 2008), 367-375.

and commitment to producing socially engaged scholarship can be seen in the work of Indo-Canadian sociologist and anti-racism activist Vanaja Dhruvarajan. As Dhruvarajan explains:

My entry into North America as a graduate student in the '60s made me acutely aware of the impact of the colonization of India on the devaluation of us as a people and on the devaluation of our culture. Such devaluation had become part of a legitimate academic common-sense. My struggles against such a state of affairs as a student was feeble at best since questioning the judgment of learned professors would have sounded a death knell to my career as a student. Experiences of marginalization and devaluation of my culture and race, because of my colonial background, were particularly difficult burdens to have to carry after having had to endure devaluation as a woman. I was surprised to see that patriarchy in addition to ideologies of colonization and imperialism, were alive and well in a land that boasts of inalienable rights of the individual, democracy and freedom for all. Joining the faculty of a Canadian university did not improve that situation much and my life as an academic has been one of relentless struggle to belong, to be accepted and respected. This struggle in a significant sense has led me to choose research topics in sites where race, class, and gender intersect.⁴⁶

Dhruvarajan and Chinese-Canadian criminology professor and anti-racist activist Michael Ma were drawn by their subject positions to study ethnic identities in Canada and publish their work in the *Journal of Canadian Studies*.⁴⁷ Dhruvarajan compares how different generations of Indo-Canadians have experienced racism and explains that most first-generation immigrants were convinced that they were not welcome in this society, and they interacted mostly with members of their own ethnic group. Their reaction to racism was that, since they chose to come here, they must try to make the best of it. Most of them worried about their children going through similar experiences. The second-generation immigrants, on the other hand, were struggling to gain acceptance from the mainstream. Many of them reported experiencing racism, particularly in junior high school. Once they got into university, they found circles in which they were accepted. Many of them felt they were caught between two cultures, because approval from parents and acceptance by peers were

⁴⁶ Vanaja Dhruvarajan, "Colonialism and Capitalism: Continuities and Variations in Strategies of Domination and Oppression," in *Teaching As Activism: Equity Meets Environmentalism*, ed. Peggy Tripp and Linda Muzzin (Kingston: Montreal-Queen's University Press, 2005), 134.

⁴⁷ Michael Ma, "'High Octane Kung Fu Action': Examining Racialization in the 2nd Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival and Fantasia '98 Toronto Festival," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 35, no. 3 (2000): 138-150.

equally important.⁴⁸ Informed by her own subject position, Dhruvarajan has offered a nuanced examination of how experiences of ethnic identity can change over even a single generation.

Other scholars who have published in the *Journal of Canadian Studies* have added feminism and gender to Careless's original triad of limited identities. This includes political scientist Micheline de Seve who studies feminism and separatism in Quebec. Seve becomes the spokesperson for Quebec feminists in her work. For example, she opens her contribution to *Challenging Times*, a collection of essays comparing the Canadian and American women's movements, by criticizing American feminist Naomi Black for not adequately recognizing the differences between French-Quebec feminists and those (both French and English) from the rest of Canada.⁴⁹ After establishing French-Quebec feminists as a unique group and herself as a member of it, Seve states that her objective is "to tell you how it feels to live feminism in Quebec now and still be a Canadian, at least administratively speaking."⁵⁰

Seve speaks from the same position in her *Journal of Canadian Studies* article, which addresses the difficulties of integrating diversity into Canadian women's movements during the 1990s. Seve identifies herself as "coming from Quebec and being a Francophone."⁵¹ Speaking on behalf of Quebec feminists she explains that "my point is to show how even feminists in Canada make discordant representations in the political space we share in our respective French-Quebecker, English-Canadian or First Nations fragmented national identities."⁵²

During the 1990s English Canadian feminists employed a rhetoric of national sisterhood. However, Seve explains that their Quebec based French-Canadian counterparts attempted to use feminist politics as "a space in which to express freely their cultural and political identity as full-right citizens living in a distinct French society."⁵³ Seve uses the 1995 Quebec Referendum to illustrate her point. She suggests that while "English-Canadian feminist politics was grounded on an unquestioned pan-Canadian stand," Quebec feminists were much more ambivalent.⁵⁴ In fact, Quebec feminists exploited political tensions and made temporary alliances

⁴⁸ Vanajan Dhruvarajan, "People of Color and National Identity in Canada," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 35, no. 2 (2000): 171.

⁴⁹ Micheline de Seve, "The Perspectives of Quebec Feminists," in *Challenging Times: The Women's Movement in Canada and the United States*, ed. Constance Backhouse and David H. Flaherty (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992): 110-113.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Seve evokes 'our' when writing about French Quebec Feminist and Separatists several times in Micheline de Seve, "Women's National and Gendered Identity: The Case of Canada," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 35, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 63-4, 78, 110.

⁵² Ibid, 64, 76-77.

⁵³ Ibid, 69.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 71.

with both sides in the pursuit of their own agenda. Seve thus demonstrates not only the existence of a gender-based limited identity in the context of Quebec nationalism, but also illuminates fractures within the identity category of Canadian feminists.⁵⁵

Although embracing limited identities has taken the literature into sub-national levels of community, the issue of national identity has not been forgotten in the *Journal of Canadian Studies*. For example, historians C. P. Champion and Stuart Henderson, political scientist Shauna Wilton, and geographer Patricia Wood employ the concept of limited identities to provide deeper insight into past constructions of nationalism.⁵⁶ Feminist activist and political scientist Sylvia Bashevkin, among others, explores in her words "the dynamics of contemporary nationalism with particular reference to organized feminism and other movements in English Canada."⁵⁷ Bashevkin defines English Canadian nationalism as "the organized pursuit of greater cultural and economic independence from the United States."⁵⁸ She suggests that during the 1960s organized feminism "offered a useful source of activists, public profile and legitimacy for the anti-free trade campaign."⁵⁹ From here she argues that the alliance between feminism and the anti-free trade campaign during the 1960s served to bolster a sense of pan-Canadian identity. However, this mutually reinforcing union proved to be temporary and "once organized feminism and other progressive movements were pressed towards the margins of political influence in the 1990s, the status of English-Canadian nationalism was threatened."⁶⁰ Bashevkin's concern for the relationship between a marginalized identity group and national unity shows that, far from jettisoning any interest in the nation, the ways in which Canada is socially constituted continues to be an important question.

Moreover, instead of being anti-nationalist, activist scholars such as political scientists Chantal Maille and Alexandra Dobrowolsky have set themselves to

⁵⁵ Ibid, 71-74.

⁵⁶ C. P. Champion, "A Very British Coup: Canadianism, Quebec, and Ethnicity in the Flag Debate, 1964-1965," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 40, no. 3 (2006); Stuart Henderson, "'While There is Still Time ...': J. Murray Gibbon and the Spectacle of Difference in Three CPR Folk Festivals, 1928-1931," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 39, no. 1 (2005), 145; Shauna Wilton, "Manitoba Women Nurturing the Nation: The Manitoba IODE and Maternal Nationalism, 1913-1920," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 35 no. 2 (2000): 149-168); Patricia K. Wood, "'Defining 'Canadian': Anti-Americanism and identity in Sir John A Macdonald's Nationalism," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 36, no. 2 (2001): 49-70.

⁵⁷ Bashevkin is a Member of the National Advisory Board and is noted in *Equal Voices* "Who's Who of the Feminist Political Movement." Sylvia Bashevkin, "In the Shadow of Free Trade: Nationalism, Feminism and Identity Politics in Contemporary English Canada," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 35, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 109-110; Sylvia Bashevkin, "Introduction" in *Womens' Work is Never Done: Comparative Studies in Caregiving, Employment, and Social Policy Reform*, ed. Sylvia Bashevkin (New York: Routledge, 2002).

⁵⁸ Bashevkin, "In the Shadow of Free Trade," 110.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

imagining different possibilities for federal participation.⁶¹ Concerned with the representation of women as a group, Dobrowolsky presents “a case for more and different kinds of democracy.”⁶² She argues that “conventional reforms” which are aimed at changing the existing political structure “are deficient because they tend to limit their sights on formal politics, thus bolstering liberal democratic premises and practices.”⁶³ Therefore, she suggests that “we need to expand the political by including informal political and radical democratic options.”⁶⁴ The radical options Dobrowolsky refers to are to provide established women’s groups with a role in national decision making. Thus she envisions a different Canada from the perspective of a limited identity group.

As we can see, instead of dissolving into a quagmire of difference, the study of limited identities has actually led to new discussions concerning pan-Canadianism. The production of discourses that examine the mechanics behind national identities suggests that Bliss and Granatstein’s fears that “the nation” will no longer be an object of study have turned out to be unfounded. However, it is perhaps not surprising that activist scholarship, which is aimed at social justice, would address national issues. The question now is whether the same can be said of those who wrote in the vein of new biography and published their works in the *Journal of Canadian Studies*. Can an approach that focuses on a single individual contribute to our understanding of national identity?

Part III: The Biographical Turn

Biography appears to be a genre that was marginalized in academic circles throughout the mid 1900s. Historian Lois Banner explains that it was passed over by the “‘new’ social historians of the 1960s who focused on demography, statistics, and groups as well as the deconstructionists of the 1970s who wrote about ‘the death of

⁶¹ Dobrowolsky is very politically involved, having been the head of the Canadian Political Science Association’s “Committee for the Law, Public Policy and Public Administration”, and “Women, Gender and Politics Section.” Canadian Political Science Association, *Programme Canadian Political Science Association 78th Annual Conference*, 2006. Available online at: http://www.cpsa-acsp.ca/pdfs/2006_programme.pdf

⁶² Political scientist Chantal Maille uses a similar approach and makes a parallel argument for Quebec women in the *Journal of Canadian Studies*. Alexandra Dobrowolsky, “Intersecting identities and inclusive intuitions: Women and a Future Transformative Politics” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 35, no. 4 (2001): 240; “Quebec Women and the Constitutional Issue: A Scattered Group,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 35, no. 2 (2000): 95-109.

⁶³ Ibid, 244.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

the author' and saw text as independent entities."⁶⁵ However, biography began to make a comeback in the 1990s.⁶⁶ Sociologist Prue Chamberlayne, oral historian Joanna Bornat, and behavioural scientist Tom Wengraf suggest that its re-emergence was tied to the fact that the 1980s witnessed a "wide recognition that social science, in its *longues durées* of positivism, determinism and social constructionism, had become detached from lived realities."⁶⁷ For researchers who identified with the 1980s poststructuralist movement and sought to achieve "a more political and populist turn within history and sociology," biography was a way to strive for the "interweaving of human and socio-political development."⁶⁸

Practitioners of new biography almost always present their work in opposition to "old biography" and evoke historian E.H. Carr's "bad King John theory of history" to describe their antithesis.⁶⁹ According to Carr, works written in the older style present history as "the biography of great men [and] their evil counterparts."⁷⁰ Since these works hold "the view that what matters in history is the character and behaviour of individuals" they tend to ignore the larger historical context.⁷¹ Instead of focusing on an individual's character, practitioners of new biography stress the historical context and "emphasize the power of culture in shaping the self."⁷² New biography also understands life histories as social constructions produced by prevailing cultural forces. For this reason biographies and autobiographies can be interrogated as sources that help to expose the underlying processes through which culture is "'filtered' through networks of relationships and shared assumptions and meanings" to produce what initially appears to be a simple or stable identity.⁷³

During the 2000s scholars who published in the *Journal of Canadian Studies* began to use life stories in the vein of new biography to explore how the "social order is not just transmitted, in the way cultural studies might emphasize, but experienced and explored."⁷⁴ One invigorating example is the paper submitted by physical education and recreation professor Karen Fox and historian Pearl Ann

⁶⁵ Lois Banner, "AHR Roundtable: Biography as History," *American Historical Review* 114, no. 3 (2009): 580.

⁶⁶ Banner, 580; Prue Chamberlayne, Joanna Bornat, and Tom Wengraf, "Introduction: The Biographical Turn," in *The Turn To Biographical Methods in Social Science: Comparative Issues and Examples*, ed. Prue Chamberlayne, Joanna Bornat, and Tom Wengraf, (London: Routledge, 2000), 1-30.

⁶⁷ Chamberlayne et al, 1.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 1-3, 6.

⁶⁹ E. H. Carr, *What is History* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1961), 45.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ Dan Arnold, *Reading Architectural History* (London: Routledge, 2002), 35; Stella Bruzzi, *New Documentary: A Critical Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2000), 45; Carr, 45; Ben Pimlott, "Is Political Biography an Art?" in *Still More Adventures With Britannia: Personalities, Politics, and Culture in Britain*, ed. William Rodger Louis (London: I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2003), 160.

⁷² Chamberlayne, 581; Dale Cressman, "Exploring Biography," in *Methods of Historical Analysis in Electronic Media*, ed. Donald Godfrey (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2006), 283-304.

⁷³ Chamberlayne, 2.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

Reichwein. They examine how Margaret Fleming negotiated her identity as a cosmopolitan, middle class woman as she partook in the male dominated sport of mountain climbing. Fox and Reichwein explain that Fleming balanced her passion for a “manly” outdoor sport with her urban womanness by acting as the editor of the Alpine Club of Canada’s journal, a traditionally feminine position.⁷⁵ Her class background was reconciled with her strenuous hobby through an interest in botany. She also created supportive social networks with “like minded” mountaineers.⁷⁶

While Fox and Reichwein consider how an individual constructed her own identity, historian Graham Carr and music professor Robin Elliott examine how Canadian music icons have been packaged for popular consumption.⁷⁷ Carr’s exploration of the role photography and film played in creating Canadian musician Glenn Gould’s identity is a study of culture in motion. He explains that

while Gould’s exceptional musical talents were obviously crucial to his success, his stardom was equally a function of aggressive marketing strategies that successfully transformed him from a subject of critical adulation to an object of popular consumption.⁷⁸

Carr elaborates by suggesting that Gould’s image was consumed so widely because it “strove not only to represent his uniqueness as a person apart, but also to situate him in the culture of which he was a part.”⁷⁹ This was done by skillfully and subtly employing rapidly changing social expectations concerning music, gender, fame and technology. For example, drawing upon gendered assumptions about musical genius as a male quality, the mass media used images of Gould “getting massage therapy on his arms and hands” to emphasize that he played “substantial music” instead of feminine lyrical ballades.⁸⁰ Critics even “likened him to a musical broncobuster approaching his instrument ‘as he might an unbroken horse.’”⁸¹

A careful consideration of how celebrity identities have been instilled with meaning allows the development of national identity symbols that arose from the realm of popular culture to be studied, as sociologists Howard Ramos and Kevin

⁷⁵ Karen Fox and PearlAnn Reichwein, “Reading the Diaries of Margaret Fleming: Narratives of Mountaineering, Leisure, and Travel in Canadian Women’s History,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 36, no. 3 (2001): 42.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 46-48.

⁷⁷ Graham Carr, “Visualizing ‘the Sound of Genius’: Glenn Gould and the Culture of Celebrity in the 1950s,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 40, no. 3 (2006), 9.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁷⁹ Carr also explains that new technology allowed Gould to be presented in accordance with the new “ethos of ‘spontaneous witness’ and the desire to convey ‘a sense of real-world action’” (Carr, 10).

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

Gosine demonstrate. They explore how Canadian newspapers interpreted the life of French-Canadian National Hockey League super-star Maurice "the Rocket" Richard after his death in 2000. They do this in part to consider whether "hockey transcends the cultural and political division of Canada's traditional two solitudes" and thereby answer media professor Aniko Bodroghkozy's call to better theorize Canadian popular culture.⁸²

Ramos and Gosine explain that Richard's death is an instructive case study because he was an iconic figure in French-Canadian popular culture throughout his life. After a careful reading of 290 articles that were published across Canada they argue that "while Quebec mourned the loss of Richard, the RoC's [Rest of Canada's] media were content to portray the death as Quebec's loss."⁸³ As a result, the "English media surrender[ed] the Rocket as a cultural icon or symbol to French Quebec."⁸⁴ For this reason, Ramos and Gosine argue, Richard's death came to reflect the emergence of a "new, more militant [Quebec] nationalism [that] demanded greater economic opportunity for French Quebecers and insisted that the provincial government take an active role in making the Quebecois 'masters in our own home.'"⁸⁵ Thus Ramos and Gosine not only shed light upon the genealogy of Richard's legacy but also on the nationalist limitations of the "Canadian Game." In doing so they add to a growing academic literature that considers the relationship between hockey and national identity in popular culture.⁸⁶

As can be seen, in the *Journal of Canadian Studies*, new biography has provided a way for identity to be studied in motion. Through their examination of the way that Fleming understood herself and her hobby, Fox and Reichwein bring us history as it was lived. We see how an array of cultural beliefs and personal choices informed her identity. Similarly, Carr shows us how cultural and technological change guided the development and consumption of Gould's immensely popular image. The "processes and experiences of social change" also come to light in Ramos and Gosine's

⁸² Aniko Bodroghkozy "As Canadian as possible ... : Anglo-Canadian Popular Culture and the American Other," in *Hop on Pop: The Politics and Pleasures of Popular Culture* ed. Henry Jenkins, Tara McPherson, Jane Shattuc (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 568; Howard Ramos, Kevin Gosine "'The Rocket': Newspaper coverage of the death of a Quebec cultural icon, a Canadian hockey player," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 36, no. 4 (2002): 11.

⁸³ Ramos and Gosine, 15-16.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁸⁶ *Canada's Game: Hockey and Identity*, ed. Andrew Carl Holman (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009); Patricia Hughes-Fuller, "Am I Canadian?": *Hockey as "National" Culture*, (Masters' thesis, Athabasca University, undated); Steven J. Jackson, "Gretzky Nation," in *Sports Stars: The Cultural Politics of Sporting Celebrity*, ed. David L. Andrews and Steven J. Jackson (London: Routledge, 2002), 164-186. For a collection of articles that explore the relationship between hockey and national identity see *Coast to Coast: Hockey in Canada in the Second World War*, ed. John Chi-Kit Wong (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

examination of how Richard came to embody a particular form of nationalism.⁸⁷ These works help shift the discussion on national identity from the official policies of the national sanctioned bodies, such as the National Film Board, or the impact of the Massey Commission towards the discourses that circulated within popular culture.⁸⁸ Next, we shall see if another vein of research that also deals with an individual's identity can fulfill a social role by dealing with issues of national importance.

Part IV: From the Inside Out

The academics who contributed to the *Journal of Canadian Studies'* 2009 special issue on "Sharing Authority" have taken a different approach to the study of identity. In these works identity construction becomes a collaborative process in which both the academic researcher and non-academic subject partake in the history making process. As oral historian Steven High explains in the introduction to this special issue:

We would agree with psychologist Henry Greenspan, one of the world's foremost interviewers of Holocaust survivors, when he says that "A good interview is a process in which two people work hard to understand the views and experience of one person: the interviewee."... We also believe that collaboration need not end when the audio or video recorder is turned off, but that it is an ongoing process of dialogue and sharing. At its best, sharing authority is about much more than speaking to new audiences; it requires the cultivation of trust, the development of collaborative relationships, and shared decision-making.⁸⁹

The fact that even interpretive authority is being shared with non-academics represents a departure from the activist scholarship of the past two decades. Instead of understanding the right to "say how it was" as something that comes from formal education, these scholars would argue that the interviewee's life experiences afford them the authority to interpret their experiences and history.⁹⁰

Adopting this approach can produce engaged scholarship in which academics

⁸⁷ Chamberlayne, 2.

⁸⁸ Bodroghkozy; Maria Tippett, *Making Culture: English-Canadian Institutions and the Arts Before the Massey Commission* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990); Emily E. West, "Selling Canada to Canadians: Collective Memory, National Identity, and Popular Culture" (Conference Presentation, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, 2002).

⁸⁹ Steven High, "Sharing Authority: AN Introduction," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 43, no. 1 (2009), 13.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 13-14.

directly advocate for social change. This can be seen in the work of sociologist Robert Storey who interviewed injured workers regarding their struggles for compensation in Ontario from 1970-2008. Storey argues that injured workers must

persuade a regular array of decision-makers that their injuries resulted from accidents that occurred "in and or out of the course of employment," that they feel the way they say they are feeling, that they can and cannot do what they say they can and cannot do, and that they are capable of learning what they say they are capable of learning.⁹¹

Clearly, the establishment of identity is central to the life experiences of the workers Storey interviews.

Storey recognizes the role that his work can play in establishing a "truthful" identity for his narrators that is amenable to their struggle for compensation. In fact, he explains that "the author's written words about their stories and their struggles were to be used to help the decision-makers, the researchers, and the wider public understanding that faithful workers were truthful workers."⁹² In a manifestation of sharing authority Storey attempts to collaborate with a marginalized group in order to speak truth to power. By studying workers' compensation, an issue of national significance, he engages with an issue that is important to Canadian society. Therefore, Storey's article is an example of how works written in the vein of sharing authority can lead to a style of socially engaged scholarship in which academics take on a more direct role in social change.

Part V: Conclusion

At least within the purview of the *Journal of Canadian Studies*, Bliss and Granatstein's fears that limited identities will prevent scholars from addressing the nation or serving a social function have not been realized. Activist scholars have contributed to society at large by shedding light upon how marginalized groups negotiate their identity as Canadians. Their works not only provide a deeper understanding of present and past nationalisms but also demonstrate faith in the ideal of pan-Canadianism by imagining new national formulations. Similarly, scholars writing in the vein of new biography have uncovered how and why the life stories of some celebrities became important symbols of national identity in popular

⁹¹ Robert Storey, "'They Have All Been Faithful Workers': Injured Workers, Truth, and Workers' Compensation in Ontario, 1970-2008," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 43, no. 1 (2009), 154.

⁹² Ibid.

culture. Works that combine oral history with sharing authority also represent a form of socially engaged scholarship. Here scholars directly participate in social change by speaking with small groups to large audiences about issues of national concern.

The scholars under consideration here are concerned with Canada and have not lost sight of the nation. The thrust of their social contributions seems to rest in their critical stance and how their works reflect the diversity and realities of Canadian society. Consequently, instead of presenting national identity as the sum of our past achievements, they can challenge us by drawing attention to the work that remains to be done. For example, by uncovering exclusions, experiences or policy structures that sit uncomfortably beside the liberal, democratic values that seem to define our national sensibilities. Perhaps drawing attention to these contradictions can shift the discourses surrounding our national self away from listing the achievements of the past and towards setting new goals for our future.

Department of History
Concordia University
1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W., LB-1001,03
Montreal, QC H3G 1M8
will1bill2@hotmail.com