

Drawing Out Illustration History in Canada

Jaleen Grove

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Résumé de l'article

Cette historiographie critique documente la réception des illustrateurs canadiens anglophones par l'histoire de l'art, la *cultural theory*, la politique culturelle et les collections institutionnelles, de la fin du dix-neuvième siècle au présent. Nous montrons que la préservation de la culture visuelle canadienne a été biaisée en faveur d'un agenda culturel nationaliste qui a mis à l'écart la majorité de la culture visuelle populaire illustrée et qui, par ailleurs, a négligé l'héritage culturel états-unien en faveur des liens avec la Grande-Bretagne. En outre, à cause du manque d'espace pour des archives et des expositions, d'importantes collections d'illustration attendent urgemment un foyer, et les archives existantes sont incapables de gérer les fonds existants. Avec une méthodologie guidée par la pratique, nous proposons un centre de recherche idéal pour l'histoire graphique canadienne qui serait opéré sur un modèle d'affaires autarcique.

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Jaleen Grove is an art historian with specialization in illustration studies and illustration history. She is currently based in Hamilton, Ontario, where she maintains a studio practice alongside her research and writing.
—jaleen@gmail.com

1. Randall Speller, "Hidden Collections: The Invisible World of English Canadian Book Illustration and Design," *ARLIS: Essays In The History Of Art Librarianship In Canada* (Ottawa, 2006), n.p.

2. Patricia Demers et al., *Expert Panel Report on The Future Now: Canada's Libraries, Archives, and Public Memory*, Royal Society of Canada (Ottawa, 2014), 11.

In 2006, the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) librarian Randall Speller wrote a brief historiography of illustration in Canada. Like many others commenting on the field since 1966, as this article will document, he found, "The field [of Canadian illustration studies] is still in infancy. Basic reference tools do not as yet exist."¹ Nine years later, the situation has yet to be rectified.

Illustration was the most ubiquitous form of colour imagery in European-language countries prior to 1940. As the 2014 Gustave Doré exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada demonstrated, early illustrators established the majority of popular culture tropes used in games, television, film, toys, advertising, and science, and in enduring print forms such as comics, magazines, and books. In universities and museums, interest in illustration studies and illustration history has been expanding exponentially with the establishment of devoted illustration research groups and journals (described below). The time is now ripe for the establishment of a dedicated centre for studying and preserving Canadian illustration history. But this important moment coincides with the November 2014 Royal Society of Canada Expert Panel Report, *The Future Now: Canada's Libraries, Archives, and Public Memory*, which warns of an "air of crisis" concerning "vanishing and undervalued national, cultural resources" and emphasizes "the urgency of the present moment when disregard or neglect must be challenged and countered."²

More hopefully, the report also suggests the opportunity (and necessity) of "re-imagining and re-locating" repositories of public memory.³ Canada's historic neglect of the history of illustration, however, threatens its chances of survival in any re-imagined re-location. Part of the problem is that the extent of this systemic neglect is little known, which permits the current structure to perpetuate marginalization. I will therefore probe the absence of illustration documentation in some detail, examining illustration's past and present reception in Canada. I will also comment on current international trends in illustration studies to give context for my concerns and recommendations. Then, from the perspective of practice-led research with the lessons of history in mind, I will start "re-imagining" the archive, the first stage of the design process for the shape, location, and self-funding apparatus of a future research centre.

In this endeavour I am guided by the sizable literature stemming from the sociology of art, from theories of nationalism, and from practice-led methodology. In the sociological discourse and in historiographies of art, Howard S. Becker, Janet Wolff, Pierre Bourdieu, Larry Shiner, and others have shown how

Who Will Win The
Fight Between
Landlord & Tenant?

MY FIRST SEVEN DAYS
OF TV

BY ROBERT THOMAS ALLEN

MACLEAN'S

JANUARY 15 1954 CANADA'S NATIONAL MAGAZINE 15 CENTS



Figure 1. James Hill, cover illustration, *Maclean's*, 15 February 1954.
Rogers Communications (Photo by the author, from a copy in the New York Public Library).

the category of “art” is policed and maintained by the collusion of various actors and institutions that stand to benefit from an arbitrary division they have created between “high” and “low” forms.⁴ In Canada, many scholars have shown how received cultural-nationalist assumptions have influenced public collections, arts policy, the popular reception of Canadian art, and anglo-Canadians’ resulting self-conception.⁵ The critical historiography I offer below falls in line with this body of work. In particular, I build upon Angela E. Davis’s important book *Art and Work*, which traces the origins of the marginalization of illustrators in the divisions of labour that occurred between roughly 1870 and 1940, and I comment on resulting attitudes that have since affected institutional policies and historical lenses. A key point Davis makes—which confirms my own research and my reason for conducting this study—is that the elision of illustrators from “art” has compromised Canadian art history. Davis says (and I agree) that the study of commercial art is integral to the study of fine art, since the makers of both were often one and the same; and in her words, “the graphic arts industry can be thought of as a bridge between commercial and fine art.”⁶

My tracing and re-imagining of this bridge’s place and use coincides with a swell in practice-led theory and methodology, which provides me with an opportunity to shift the frame of art discourse in ways congenial to the applied arts by leveraging my own professional practice as a designer and illustrator. Practice-led research explores the nature of creative and manual work in order to inform and intervene in practice and profession.⁷ It also aims at an equal partnership between professional practice and academic research.⁸ The invention, implementation, and assessment of practice-led research has been underway for almost two decades in UK-based art and design, but this trend has not been widely pursued in Canada.⁹ In education circles, practice-led research has mainly been discussed in the limited terms of fitting art and design doctoral students into academic conventions.¹⁰ But why not reverse the flow? As outsiders and expert creators, practitioners have perspectives and creative methods that can usefully critique academic discourse and policy. A major study on practice-led methodologies found that “creative practice can disrupt the status quo and allow us to explore new scenarios as well as the ones that exist;” and furthermore, that “If [practitioners who are also academics] are to control their own destiny they need an approach to the creation of knowledge that is relevant to them.”¹¹ In bringing a practice-led perspective to bear on entrenched patterns of thought and policy, I am attempting to intervene in the legacy of those patterns and to change them. As a practitioner, then, I offer in the concluding section of this paper a proposal in the form of a design charrette in an effort to bridge theory and practice.

The Past

1919–1960. The neglect of illustration in Canada was fuelled by more than art history’s customary downgrading of illustration and commercialism that occurred from roughly 1860 to 1970. Canadian illustration carried the additional burden of being viewed by cultural nationalists as un-Canadian because so much of it was tied to US popular culture.¹² St. George Burgoyne, author of the first sizable survey of Canadian illustrators (1919), observed that

3. *Ibid.*, 10–11.

4. Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field Of Cultural Production: Essays On Art And Literature*, ed. Randal Johnson (New York, 1993); Janet Wolff, *The Social Production of Art* (London, 1981); Howard S. Becker, *Art Worlds* (Berkeley, 1982); Larry Shiner, *The Invention of Art: A Cultural History* (Chicago, 2001); Preben Mortensen, *Art in the Social Order: The Making of the Modern Conception of Art* (New York, 1997).

5. See, for just a few examples, Lynda Jessup, “Prospectors, Bushwhackers, Painters: Antimodernism and the Group of Seven,” *International Journal of Canadian Studies* 17 (Spring 1998): 193–214; 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, 2000), 122–37; Scott Watson, “Race, Wilderness, Territory and the Origins of Modern Canadian Landscape Painting,” *Semiotext(e)* 6 (1994): 93–104.

6. Angela E. Davis, *Art and Work: A Social History of Labour in the Canadian Graphic Arts Industry to the 1940s* (Montreal and Kingston, 1995), 99.

7. L. Candy, *Practice Based Research: A Guide* (Sydney, Australia, 2006), 1.

8. M. Mäkelä, and N. Nimkulrat, “Reflection and documentation in practice-led design research,” Paper presented at the Making Design Matter conference, Helsinki, Finland (29–31 May, 2011), <http://ocs.sfu.ca/nordes/index.php/nordes/2011/paper/view/375>.

9. Chris Rust, Judith Mottram, and Jeremy Till, “Review Of Practice-Led Research In Art, Design & Architecture” (London, 2007).

10. M. Mäkelä, N. Nimkulrat, D.P. Dash, and F.-X. Nsenga, “On Reflecting And Making In Artistic Research,” *Journal of Research Practice* 7, 1 (2011), <http://jrp.icaap.org/index.php/jrp/article/view/280/241>.

11. *Ibid.*, 57.

12. I draw here from my work in “A Cultural Trade? Canadian Illustrators at Home and in the United States, 1880–1960,” Ph.D. dissertation (Stony Brook, 2014).

illustrators who moved to the United States were punished: trained in American ways and working mainly for American publications, they were henceforth “regarded as American artists.”¹³

Anti-American demonization of popular print had long been a cultural-nationalist hobby horse. In just one such example, Dalhousie University English professor Archibald MacMechan warned in 1920 that the similarity of the design and content of Canadian to American papers (illustrations and comics were mentioned specifically) would render Canada “a spiritual slave” to the United States.¹⁴ Since Canadians bought eight US magazines for every Canadian one,¹⁵ expatriate (and US) illustrators were very much a part of Canadian popular culture too—which cultural nationalists found abhorrent and deviant, rather than seeing this as a legitimate, longstanding aspect of Canadianness, however deserving of criticism it might be. A typical reaction was a 1931 exhibition of Canadian book illustration, where 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.”¹⁶

Gatekeepers like Kennedy sanitized Canadian culture by championing Canadian subject matter, for instance Henri Julien’s *habitants*, C.W. Jefferys’s historical figures, and Thoreau MacDonald’s pastorals. But this comprised only a small segment of Canadian visual culture; most illustrators did indeed follow popular illustration trends in the United Kingdom, France, and United States (e.g. Palmer Cox, Norman Price, Rex Woods). Even “Canadian” subjects such as Arthur Heming’s Mounties were staples of American pulp. The defection of many Group of Seven members from their mediocre illustration practices in order to tout landscape painting as Canada’s preferred marker of visual identity also skewed Canadians’ self-knowledge. A review of the literature of exhibitions and monographs on illustration proves that the work of illustrators of nationalistic subjects has been carefully preserved, at the expense of the work of their peers who at the time were just as successful, if not more, but who did not specialize in Canadian symbols.¹⁷ William Colgate’s 1943 *Canadian Art: Its Origin and Development* contained a comprehensive survey of illustrators, but failed to mention Rex Woods, despite the fact that Woods conducted his entire career in Canada and was the illustrator most published on magazine covers, including nearly every *Canadian Home Journal* cover since 1930 (the few exceptions are photographs). Likely the omission occurred because Woods’s “pretty-girl” illustrations were unabashedly reminiscent of Chicago illustrator Haddon Sundblom’s Coca-Cola advertising art, and of calendar girls by US artists such as Rolf Armstrong and Zoë Mozert.

In 1951 the landmark Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (Massey-Lévesque Commission) characterized the influx of periodicals and other media from the south as an “invasion” from an “alien source.”¹⁸ These, the Commission argued erroneously, had “caused an uncritical acceptance of ideas and assumptions which are alien to our tradition.”¹⁹ In fact, US print had always been in Canada, and Canadians had frequently resisted “assimilation.”²⁰ American market advantages of scale and political power certainly deserved Harold Innis’s wrath when in 1952 he described US graphic production as capable of killing Canada,²¹ but this was

13. St. George Burgoyne, “Some Canadian Illustrators: Article 1,” *Canadian Bookman* (January 1919): 21–25; “Article 11,” *Canadian Bookman* (April 1919), 27–30.

14. Archibald MacMechan, “Canada as a Vassal State,” *Canadian Historical Review* 1, 4 (December 1920): 349–50.

15. Theodore Peterson, *Magazines in the Twentieth Century* (Urbana, IL, 1956), 112–13.

16. Howard Angus Kennedy, quoted in Randall Speller, “Fragments of an Exhibition: A Loan Exhibition of Drawings by Canadian Illustrators,” *Devil’s Artisan* 42 (Spring 1998): 9 (emphasis in the original).

17. I examine this inequality of preservation in “A Cultural Trade.” Speller also links the modest interest in illustration since 1965 to cultural nationalist sensibilities. Speller, “Hidden Collections,” and interview with author, 26 September 2014.

18. Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (Ottawa, 1951), chapter II, items 23–26, p. 17–18 and chapter V, items 60–65.

19. *Ibid.*, chapter II, item 17, p. 15.

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

21. Innis wrote, “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.... [O]ur status on the North American continent is on the verge of disappearing.” Harold Innis, *The Strategy of Culture* (Toronto, 1952), 2, 19–20.

an overreaction: as Maria Tippett and Jeffrey D. Brison have convincingly shown, significant cultural development in Canada was often enabled by selective collaboration with Americans.²²

In 1948, the various design disciplines managed to garner respect in the form of the establishment of the Industrial Design Committee, later re-formed as the National Design Council. In keeping with the art-in-industry rhetoric of the day, art directors Dick Hersey, David Battersby, Stan Furnival, and Gene Aliman encouraged more experimental illustrators such as Eric Aldwinckle, Oscar Cahén, Harold Town, Ed McNally, Ghitta Caiserman, and Mike Mitchell by allowing them to deliver illustrations that utilized visual languages borrowed from cubism, expressionism, surrealism, and cartooning. The success of these illustrators led designers and critics Paul Arthur and Carl Dair to claim that Canadians had at last broken up the monopoly of American-looking illustration.²³

This claim was a bit of an exaggeration, however: a comparison of the more progressive Canadian work shows it to be in keeping with cutting-edge illustrators in the United States and elsewhere, and both US and European avant-garde styles won awards at annual Canadian competitions. Furthermore, the design community was happy to bring in celebrity New York illustrators Austin Briggs, Harold von Schmidt, and Al Dorne as guests of honour at the annual Toronto Art Directors Club award events.²⁴ A more objective analysis was not available at the time because the desire to spin a national narrative of difference from Americans was more pressing—and besides, the foundations of rigorous illustration history and criticism had not been laid. Only two years later, Paul Arthur (who had European design training and who was also art editor of *Canadian Art*) complained that most Canadian illustration and design was a pathetic imitation of America's worst: "unimaginative and preoccupied with 'technical excellence.'"²⁵ Such berating, however, encouraged the design profession to stick safely to dated nationalistic Canadian precedents, or to look to the European avant-garde for inspiration, when US styles would have been more fitting for many Canadian audiences. Indeed, the brightest illustration newcomer of the 1950s, James Hill (1930–2004), achieved his place in the 1960s not by chasing after Canadian values alone, but by using the best American examples, from Maxfield Parrish to Ben Shahn and Bernie Fuchs, as his starting points.

Nevertheless, the third narrator of Canadian illustration history, Paul Duval in 1961, followed precedent in denigrating American illustration:

It must be admitted that much of the illustration here has been of a tame, even commonplace, nature. Too often, it has been a pale imitation of the styles created by leading American magazines ... to make matters worse, some of the imitated artists—such as the famous William Arthur Brown [sic] and Norman Price—were originally Canadians!... It seems ironic that such a patently Canadian product as a paper bag had to be imprinted with imitations of foreign art styles.²⁶

Despite thus insulting a large proportion of illustrators, Duval meant to be laudatory toward illustration.²⁷ But his article was printed in a graphics industry publication and therefore went unseen by cultural gatekeepers, where such proselytizing might have had a remedial effect. Instead, he was silent on the crises then emerging for illustrators: magazines folding continent-wide; Canadian publishers fighting American split-run magazines; the anti-illustration

22. Maria Tippett, *Making Culture: English-Canadian Institutions and the Arts Before the Massey Commission* (Toronto, 1990); Jeffrey D. Brison, *Rockefeller, Carnegie, and Canada: American Philanthropy and the Arts and Letters in Canada* (Montreal, 2006).

23. Carl Dair, "New Patterns in Canadian Advertising," *Canadian Art* 9, 4 (Summer, 1952), 157, 173; Paul Arthur, "Canada: Advertising and Editorial Art," *Graphis* 10, 52 (1954), 100–101, 160.

24. Lotta Dempsey, "Person to Person: Co-Eds near Graduation with Grim Look Ahead," *Globe and Mail* (10 March 1950), 10; photograph of group with Al Dorne captioned "Art Directors Dinner, King Edward Hotel, 1950" in collection of the Toronto Arts and Letters Club; Pearl McCarthy, "Commercial Art Here Said Usable Anywhere," *Globe and Mail* (10 April 1952), 4.

25. Paul Arthur, "Canada."

26. Paul Duval, "Word and Picture: The Story of Illustration in Canada," *Provincial's Paper* 26, 2 (1961).

27. *Ibid.*, 21.

rhetoric of high modernist critics such as Clement Greenberg; editors turning to photography, and advertisers, to television. This neglect of actual issues (let alone that both Duval and Colgate flubbed Arthur William Brown's name despite Brown's activity in Canada as recently as 1952²⁸) shows to what extent serious study of Canada's illustrators, expatriate and otherwise, was suffering. But all this was integral to the construction of the myth that mainstream illustration styles were "foreign." So long as the everyday cross-border cultural exchanges of working illustrators and the tastes of average Canadian readers remained unmentioned, unexamined, and unappreciated, it was possible to regard the nationalistic highbrow culture (and equally constructed "folk" and Native arts) as the "authentic" culture, and to blame its lukewarm adoption among the wide public as proof of the "invasion" of American media.

After about 1960, exhibitions of Canadian illustrators whose work was not obviously patriotic were close to nil, and illustration and design were denied federal support from the Canada Council for the Arts. The 1956–57 annual report of the Hart House Art Committee at the University of Toronto is symptomatic: it recorded that although displays of "non fine art" such as a "Decorative Arts Show" and a NFB–CBC exhibition of animation and documentary film stills were very popular, such exhibitions ought to be limited because "A show at Hart House is valued by artists only for prestige; and to maintain this reputation, it is necessary that our general tone remain that of a fine art gallery."²⁹

1960–2000. As Brian Donnelly has shown, graphic design coalesced as a field in the decade from 1955 to 1965, defining itself through typography and in contradistinction to illustration and image.³⁰ This was also the period when fine artists divorced illustration. One episode especially illuminates the emerging divisions. *Canadian Art*, which had featured applied art for two decades, devoted an entire special issue to design in 1960 and promised two such issues per year (only three were published).³¹ Several artists, some associated with the avant-garde Isaacs Gallery, signed a letter of protest. They contended that design needed to examine its ethics regarding clients, messages, and methods—issues that are now mainstays of critical design studies. The tenor of the letter was malicious: not only was design a "minor aspect of our national artistic life," it was "art devoted to commerce in an uncritical and subservient fashion [that has] stolen and debased so many of the techniques of fine art." *Canadian Art*, the letter alleged, could not be a "serious" magazine with such content, and the magazine should be reserved for fine art only.³²

Ironically, the signatories' demand that design be kept from art reinforced Paul Arthur's own segregation of design to special issues, which he admitted others felt was "unhealthy."³³ In these issues, illustrators were referred to as "artists," as usual. But if these same artists were also responsible for layout and typography, they were called "designers"—design no longer being "art," as it had been in former years. Illustration, a suspect hybrid of fine art and design, was relegated to a secondary status in two newly purified entities, Arthur's arena of design and the letter-writers' arena of fine art.

The segregation did not reflect artists' working practices, however. Dennis Burton bought ad space in the same contentious *Canadian Art* design number to promote himself as "Abstract painter rep. by Isaacs Gallery. Metal Sculptor,

28. Brown judged a beauty contest in 1952, and in 1948 had illustrated and penned an article for *Canadian Home Journal*: "Final Judging: Canadian Sweater Queen Contest," [advertisement] *Globe and Mail* (14 May 1952), 3; Arthur William Brown, "My Friends Say I'm Beautiful," edited by Evelyn Cooper, *Canadian Home Journal* (February 1948), 6–7, 30–31.

29. "Annual Report of the Art Committee 1956–57," *Hart House* (March 1957), 2405, 1. The Decorative Arts Show was held from 24 October to 7 November 1956, and the NFB–CBC Graphics Exhibition, from 7 to 21 November 1956.

30. Brian Donnelly, "Mass Modernism: Graphic Design in Central Canada, 1955–1965, and the Changing Definition of Modernism," MA thesis (Carleton University, 1997), 6, 60, 117, 120.

31. Paul Arthur, "Editorial: On This Issue," *Canadian Art* 17, 3 (May 1960), 1. Subsequent issues on architecture, craft, and industrial design were November 1960, January 1961, and January 1962.

32. A formal response by Allan Fleming appeared in the same issue: "Art Forum," *Canadian Art* 17, 5 (September 1960), 307–10. Signatories in order were Robert Fulford, Gordon Rayner, Ursula A. Hanes, E. B. Cox, G. Gladstone, R. Hedrick, Michael Snow, Graham Coughtry, William Winter, Bob Markle, Dennis Burton, Richard Gorman, R. E. Varvarande, Joyce Wieland, A. Isaacs, Walter Yarwood. Town alleged Yarwood's name had been added without his consent and that Fulford was the author. Harold Town to Paul Arthur (25 July 1960), Harold Town, General Correspondence 1955–1964, Volume 11, Folder 16, Library and Archives Canada, MG 30 D404.

33. Arthur, "Editorial."

Illustrator, Graphic Designer, Animated Film Designer,” a multifaceted practice that was still normal at the time. He and three other letter-signers were in fact featured for their design work. Yet the separation of commercial and fine art proceeded apace: 1960 was also the year that the National Industrial Design Council, which had the authority to support graphic design, was removed from the National Gallery’s auspices because it was now perceived to belong in the Department of Industry, Trade, and Commerce.³⁴ Illustration and design were absent from the program of the Canadian Conference of the Arts, held in May 1961. Only three more instances of illustration or cartoon appeared in *Canadian Art* (or *ArtsCanada*, as it was renamed) thereafter.³⁵ When Arnold Rockman wrote “The Artist in the Marketplace” in 1965, he meant “the designer and the commercial artist,” but proceeded to speak only of graphic designers.³⁶ Graphic design coverage ceased after 1965 save for one exception,³⁷ although craft, industrial design, animation, and architecture continued to be reviewed. For the occasion of the 1970 Graphic Designers of Canada exhibition, editorial art (i.e., illustration) as a discrete category, a staple of Art Directors Club shows, was omitted.³⁸ Perhaps it is no coincidence that in the mid-1960s, the important printing house Rolph-Clark-Stone threw away their archives; graphic arts historian Robert Stacey contended that this occurred in part because printers and designers concealed their work was of no historical interest or value (the firms Bomac and Rous and Mann also discarded their archives).³⁹

A similar absence figured in research circles. In 1966, AGO librarian Sybille Pantazzi remarked that the lack of scholarship on and collection of Canadian illustration and illustrators was “astonishing,” and called for an index to illustrations made by Canadians.⁴⁰ She commented, “For some strange reason book and magazine illustration is the Cinderella of the graphic arts in Canada. When the merest scrap—Christmas cards for example—by Canadian artists of the 1920s fetches fabulous prices, the work of the same artists for books and magazines lies forgotten and unrecorded.”⁴¹ The AGO had in 1954 acquired a large collection of British nineteenth-century illustrated books, to which Pantazzi added; but despite American illustration being a far larger influence on Canadians, the AGO acquired none.⁴²

Coverage of illustration practitioners is difficult to find in the 1970s, when the big studios were closing down, but Pantazzi’s work seeded something: the AGO displayed illustration in 1970 and 1972–73,⁴³ promising a potential sea change. A follow-up was the AGO’s acquisition of cartoonist and illustrator Walter Trier’s collection and the establishment of the Trier-Fodor Fund on 1 December 1976. The fund was “to be used primarily to build a collection of illustrative, satirical, humorous and representational graphic art which would contextualize the work of Trier and be used to generate exhibitions and other programmes.”⁴⁴ Since 1976, however, the endowment has mainly added to collections of European art before 1945 (but includes items as varied as a Gauguin woodcut, eighteenth-century caricature, Dada drawing, and Chinese Cultural Revolution poster), and only two Canadian works have been acquired: Seth’s *Hush* in 2005, and Barbara Klunder’s *Flying Ant* in 2008.⁴⁵

In 1975 the cartoonist Ted Martin and his wife Dawn Martin began the Ted Martin Cartoon Gallery and Illustrators’ Salon to exhibit and sell original political, panel, and strip cartoons, historical and contemporary animation

34. Information Services, Department of Communications, *Report of the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee* (Ottawa, 1982), 163.

35. Peggy Ellis Livingston, “J. Fenwick Lansdowne,” *Canadian Art* 21, 1 (January 1964), 36–39; Joy Carroll, “Duncan Macpherson: Galathumpian Political Cartoonist,” *Canadian Art* 22, 1 (January 1965), 24; Frank Neufeld, “Whose Book?,” *Canadian Art* 22, 2 (March–April 1965), 46.

36. Arnold Rockman, “The Artist in the Marketplace,” *Canadian Art* 22, 2 (March–April 1965), 44.

37. “Graphic Designers and Education: Four Designers Speak Out,” *ArtsCanada* 122–123 (October–November 1968), 28.

38. Society of Graphic Designers of Canada, *Graphic Design Canada: A Comprehensive Exhibition of the Best in Canadian Graphic Design Covering the Period from 1966–68* (Toronto, 1970).

39. Robert Stacey, “*Arts Brevis: The Role of Archives and Library and Special Collections in the Study and Preservation of Canadian Art and Illustration History*,” speech delivered to City of Toronto archivists (16 March 1978), 11–12. Typescript in Robert Stacey fonds, National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives, Box 23, File 10.

40. Sybille Pantazzi, “Book Illustration and Design By Canadian Artists 1890–1940, With a List of Books Illustrated by Members of The Group Of Seven,” *Bulletin* 7, 4, 1 (1966).

41. Sybille Pantazzi, “Group of Seven: Early Magazine Drawings,” *Canadian Antiques Collector* 4, 2 (February 1969), 22–23.

42. Speller, interview.

43. Mentioned in Speller, “Hidden Collections.”

44. “The Trier-Fodor Fund, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto,” official statement of Art Gallery of Ontario, n.d., provided by Brenda Rix (17 July 2015). I thank Gail Geltner for bringing the fund’s terms to my attention.

45. Brenda Rix (Acting Head, Prints and Drawings, Art Gallery of Ontario), personal communication with author (17 July 2015).

cels—Canadian, English, and American—and illustrative art. Contemporary Canadian illustration art comprised 35 to 40 % of their stock, and they sold numerous books as well.⁴⁶ The gallery soon became a social hub that led to the foundation of the Association of Canadian Editorial Cartoonists (now Association of Canadian Cartoonists).⁴⁷ The Martins counselled emerging artists, arranged parties and interviews, and succeeded in gaining steady newspaper, radio, and television coverage of popular and commercial graphic arts.⁴⁸ They initially attracted scorn from an art critic,⁴⁹ but in 1977 one of their exhibitions was opened by the Minister of Government Services and received society-column notice.⁵⁰ Three years later a journalist reported that cartoons had become “a serious art form.”⁵¹ The successful but exhausting enterprise ended in 1983 when the Martins moved on with their careers. The significant interest in the illustration arts that they sparked indicates that a conversation and an audience for it were ready.

Meanwhile, Robert Stacey, the grandson of C.W. Jefferys, was shouldering the work on Canadian illustration history. Following custom, he traced Canadian connections to British and European graphic arts rather than US ones.⁵² In 1978 Stacey delivered a paper on the study and preservation of Canadian illustration history to City of Toronto archivists.⁵³ He warned that Canadian graphic history, sadly viewed as “trivial and effeminate,” was vanishing and that he was relying on archivists to start preserving it, because of “the refusal of public galleries and museums—with a few exceptions—to take the subject seriously.” He opined that these institutions were failing because they were run by bottom-line-minded “faceless, management-trained technocrats” who valued “prestigious major acquisitions” over the archival records that actually informed Canadian art. “The situation in some institutions is dire,” Stacey insisted, “I am not exaggerating the seriousness of the matter.”⁵⁴ As we will see, Stacey’s efforts had only limited effect, because systemic issues and entrenched attitudes continued to overwhelm the sympathy he raised.

Also in 1978, the Canadian Association of Photographers and Illustrators in Communications (CAPIC) was founded.⁵⁵ CAPIC members began building an archive, but it has languished over the years due to a lack of people willing to commit to it and the unfeasibility of storing it. In 2014, the Toronto chapter was looking at deaccessioning their holdings.⁵⁶

In 1979, a sizable visiting Victoria and Albert Museum exhibition prompted the first scholarly book on illustration in Canada, edited by Karen McKenzie and Mary F. Williamson, and including a chapter by Pantazzi.⁵⁷ Its essays survey Canadian illustrated magazines from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries, but illustrators and illustrations are mostly mentioned rather than discussed at length. No comparable exhibitions have followed.

That same year, with the encouragement of designer Carl Dair, Frances E.M. Johnston began conceptualizing a research entity for “creations intended to promote an idea, a service, or a product.” Her Museum of Promotional Art was supposed to encompass “a library, archives, and a permanent collection, designed as a functional resource centre to further the understanding of the impact such arts have on society.”⁵⁸ The effort resulted in the Carl Dair Annual Event, which mainly gave awards to designers until the mid-1990s (illustrator Will Davies was one exception⁵⁹), but no actual museum resulted. When

46. Dawn Martin, interview with author, 5 June 2015.

47. Ibid.

48. Sid Adilman, “Broadway Kronberg Gets a New Look,” *Toronto Star* (22 October 1975), E19; Bob Pennington, “Doug Wright’s Family Old Humor Young,” *Toronto Star* (11 April 1977), D1; Slinger, “Real News is Back in the Comics,” *Toronto Star* (5 September 1980), A2; Christopher Hume, “Just One More Gift to Buy?,” *Toronto Star* (23 December 1982), B7; James Purdie, “From Tears, Rage to 3-Part Harmony,” *Globe and Mail* (25 December 1976), 28.

49. Peter White, “Excellent Designs but Are They Art?,” *Globe and Mail* (4 October 1976), 14.

50. Zena Cherry, “New Flagpole Towers at CNE,” *Globe and Mail* (18 August 1977), F3.

51. Ellen Bot, “Cartoon Art Brings Smiles to Investors,” *Toronto Star* (20 November 1980), D5.

52. Philip Dombowsky and Shane McCord, “Robert H. Stacey Chronology,” *Art Libraries Society* 18, 2/19, 1 (Spring/Fall 2009), 10–17.

53. Stacey, “Ars Brevis.”

54. Ibid., 3, 8, 18.

55. CAPIC, established in 1978, is now renamed Canadian Association of Professional Image Creators.

56. Barbara Spurrill, correspondence with the author, 15 September 2014.

57. *The Art Press: Two Centuries of Art Magazines*, Art Gallery of Ontario, 10 February–25 March 1979; Karen McKenzie and Mary F. Williamson, eds., *The Art and Pictorial Press in Canada: Two Centuries of Art Magazines* (Toronto, 1979).

58. Paul Keyes, “The Museum of Promotional Art,” *Studio Magazine* 2, 1 (February 1984), 8.

59. Will Davies, interview with author, January 2006.

Johnston died, a bequest went to the Canadian Art Database on Canadian Graphic Design and Designers, amassed by Brian Donnelly starting in 2002. This, however, did not include illustration, and since the database's funds were subsequently diverted toward the preservation of fine art, the design segment remains unfinished.⁶⁰

In 1982, the Report of the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee (the Applebaum-Hébert Report) observed that “innumerable works of art frequently escape notice as art for one simple reason—they are also useful.” The Report recommended that a new Canadian Council for Design and Applied Arts be founded, with one of its roles being to compile lists of practitioners that “could serve as the foundation for an index of Canadian design and would be a valuable resource to university and college programs in design, art history, and studio art.”⁶¹ Neither Council nor lists came to be. The Report also recommended that design be collected and exhibited by museums. The Canadian Museums Association (CMA) acknowledged that the neglect of design was “all too true” but did not support the idea of a new Council, preferring instead to divide responsibilities among existing museums, the National Design Council, and a proposed Heritage Council.⁶² Illustration fit none of these. CMA suggested that the National Gallery of Canada follow the example of the Museum of Modern Art in New York in collecting design,⁶³ but this lukewarm idea, even if carried out, would still have been insufficient: one searches MoMA's databases in vain for Norman Rockwell and J.C. Leyendecker. The National Gallery never did address its lack of design collections or its mandate to support design programming, although it did collect British and Canadian illustrated books (but, yet again, not American ones), and has displayed them from time to time in the library showcases.⁶⁴

The void for contemporary graphic arts was partly filled by *Studio Magazine* (published in Rexdale, Ontario) and *Applied Arts* magazine (Don Mills, Ontario), in 1983 and 1986 respectively. An *Applied Arts* article gives the history of Canadian design as a straight line of desirable progress from figural imagery to purely symbolic forms, but leaves illustration unmentioned except to use Thoreau Macdonald's mid-century hand-lettered pen-and-ink pastorals as an example of Canada's backwardness.⁶⁵ A breakthrough article on the Group of Seven's commercial work, based on Stacey's (unrealized) major exhibition on the topic,⁶⁶ explored the inter-relationship of fine and applied art. The exhibition plans stressed Canadians' affinity to British Arts and Crafts but was silent on US influences.⁶⁷ Around this time, Angela E. Davis was working on her book *Art and Work*. An enormous contribution, it too emphasized Canada's British connections and only occasionally mentioned the United States.

In 1989, following the personal interest of Minister of Communications Marcel Masse, the Canadian Centre of Caricature (renamed Canadian Museum of Caricature) was established by Lilly Koltun at the National Archives (which had been collecting caricature since 1906)⁶⁸ with the input of editorial cartoonists.⁶⁹ Besides exhibitions it produced a periodical (*Caricature*) and books. Illustration was not represented, and the museum closed in 1994 following budget cuts⁷⁰ (some of its research on comics remains accessible online).⁷¹ Koltun also oversaw collections of documentary art, photography, and philately, as well as the planned National Portrait Gallery that was controversially

60. “Canadian Graphic Design,” The Centre for Contemporary Canadian Art Database (n.d.) <http://ccca.concordia.ca/designers/background.html?languagePref=en&>. Brian Donnelly, in conversation with the author, 29 September 2014.

61. Information Services, Report, Recommendation 37, 163–64.

62. Canadian Museums Association, Response to the Report of the Federal Cultural Policy Review, Part II (1984), 11.

63. Canadian Museums Association, Response to the Report of the Federal Cultural Policy Review, Part I (1983), 16.

64. Charlie Hill to the author, personal communication, 25 September 2014; Philip Dombowsky to the author, personal communication, 30 September 2014.

65. Will Novosedlik, “Our Modernist Heritage [Part 1],” *Applied Arts* 11, 1 (March–April 1996), 31–35; and [Part 2], Volume 11, Number 2 (May–June 1996), 81–88.

66. According to McMichael librarian Linda Morita, the exhibition had been planned for the McMichael Gallery but Stacey's inability to focus led to its cancellation. Telephone conversation with the author, 5 June 2015. This is corroborated by Ian Thom, who had been close to the project; personal communication with the author, 5 June 2015.

67. Douglas Fetherling, “The Fine Art of Design: Commercial Work From the Group of Seven,” *Applied Arts* (Fall 1988), 56–62.

68. Margaret Conrad, “The Art of Regional Protest: The Political Cartoons of Donald McRitchie, 1904–1937,” *Acadiensis* 21, 1 (Autumn 1991), 5.

69. Jean-Robert Gauthier, “The National Archives,” Debates of the Senate (Hansard) 1st Session, 37th Parliament, Volume 139, Issue 24 (3 April 2001).

70. Lilly Koltun, telephone conversation with the author (9 June 2015); Jim Burant, “Treasures of the Art Collection at Library and Archives Canada: A Story about Collectors,” presentation, *Kaleidoscope* (22 October 2008).

71. E.g., John Bell and Michel Viau, *Beyond the Funnies: The History of Comics in English Canada and Quebec*, <https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/comics/027002-2000-e.html>.

axed by the Harper government in 2009.⁷² According to Koltun, documentary art—the indistinct definition of which was continuously discussed—included illustration. She pointed out that while illustrations were widely appreciated and consulted by researchers and archivists, they did not constitute a discrete category for collection (although they were not intentionally excluded either).⁷³ Nor were efforts made to index illustrators or illustration; one must hunt for them in Library and Archives Canada by looking up individual publications and persons.⁷⁴ This contrasts with the taxonomic space assigned to cartoons and cartoonists; the exhibition and scholarship devoted to them likely mirrors their ontological autonomy. It also contrasts with the situation in the United States, where the Library of Congress established the Cabinet of American Illustration in 1932, in partnership with a Harper's Publishing art editor.⁷⁵

When I met Robert Stacey in 2005 he claimed that his interest in commercial art had cost him recognition and promotion. The truth of this is debatable—but it is relevant that this notion was plausible to him, showing how leper-like the study of illustration had become (and the demise of Koltun's initiatives lends his assertion some credibility). Despite this, Stacey curated exhibitions and wrote books on Jefferys, Canadian bookplates, the graphics of J. E. H. MacDonald, and Canadian posters, often with the help of his partner Maggie Keith; and he steered the illustrations and fonds of Rex Woods into the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) with bookseller David Mason.⁷⁶ Stacey also penned the most recently written history of Canadian illustration (and one for design as well) for the *Canadian Encyclopedia* in 1985. At last, in these entries, anti-Americanism no longer overtly frames the discussion of commercial art.⁷⁷

The Present

Around 2001, when the Guggenheim Museum mounted a retrospective of Norman Rockwell, illustration began to gain prestige. In part, this may have related to a new illustrative form of contemporary art, which at the time was dubbed “post-illustration” to distinguish it from actual illustration (in Canada, this form was exemplified by Marcel Dzama).⁷⁸ Meanwhile, the rise of the graphic novel, coffee table books such as *Illusive* and *Vitamin D*,⁷⁹ and the launch of 3×3 magazine reinvigorated interest in contemporary illustration. Scholarly receptivity likely came because of the rise of visual culture studies, wherein numerous theorists critiqued modernism, taste, art worlds, and hierarchies of value, frequently rebutting Theodor Adorno's well-known “culture critique” and Clement Greenberg's formalism.⁸⁰

Since 2000 there has been a marked increase in the number of academic conferences around the world devoted to illustration. England has been at the forefront of publishing on illustration: new titles include the *Imaginative Book Illustration Society Journal*, *Journal of Illustration Studies*, *Varoom*, *Illustrators Quarterly*, and *Journal of Illustration*—the latter an offshoot of the Illustration Research Network's annual symposia that commenced in 2010. In 2014, the House of Illustration opened near the British Library, providing museum space, although not yet a permanent collection or archives.

The United States is strong in museum activity and research funding for illustration history. The New York Society of Illustrators has operated a gallery

72. Lilly Koltun, *All the Details: Curriculum Vitae*, <http://www.lillykoltun.com/about-lilly/all-the-details>. James Bradshaw, “Canada's Portrait Gallery is No More,” *Globe and Mail* (9 September 2009), <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/canadas-portrait-gallery-is-no-more/article1204648/>.

73. Koltun, telephone conversation.

74. *Ibid.*

75. “About this Collection,” Cabinet of American Illustration, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/cai/>.

76. Dombowsky and McCord, “Stacey Chronology.”

77. Robert Stacey, “Art Illustration,” *Canadian Encyclopedia*, <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/art-illustration/>; and “Graphic Art and Design,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia* (14 August 2014 [ca. 1994]). Stacey appears to have added updates as late as 2000.

78. The term appears in Shana Nys Dambrot, “Brendan Monroe at Richard Heller Gallery,” *Artweek* 37, 6 (July–August 2006), 17–18.

79. Robert Klanten and Hendrik Hellige, eds., *Illusive: Contemporary Illustration and Its Context* (Berlin, 2007); Emma Dexter, *Vitamin D: New Perspectives in Drawing* (London, 2005).

80. A general introduction to the impact of visual culture may be found in Mieke Bal's essay “Visual Essentialism and the Object of Visual Culture,” *Journal of Visual Culture* 2, 1 (April 2003): 5–32, and in the numerous responses to it published in the August 2003 issue of the same journal.

space for historic and contemporary work for some years, and has a permanent collection and some archives. In 2008, the Norman Rockwell Museum opened the Rockwell Center for American Visual Studies, with modest fellowships. The Center for Historic American Visual Culture, an arm of the American Antiquarian Society, holds intensive seminars on special topics every summer, and in 2014 hosted a conference on early American illustrated print.⁸¹ Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, the New Britain Museum, and the Delaware Museum are all strong in illustration art, while institutions for American art will consider funding research on illustration topics through fellowships (for example, the Smithsonian American Art Museum or the Terra Foundation for American Art). George Lucas's proposed Museum of Narrative Art in Chicago is expected to further bolster the regard for illustration and its offshoots in film, computer graphics, and animation. A long overdue textbook on the history of illustration began development in 2013, led by Susan Doyle of the Rhode Island School of Design.⁸²

In Canada, comics studies have attracted several prominent advocates, including the practitioner Seth, based in Guelph, Ontario, and Toronto/Regina journalist-researcher Jeet Heer. This area has developed internationally as a discrete field and has led to comics history being salvaged and studied. Its focus on comics industry concerns has also inadvertently marginalized the illustration careers of comics artists; nevertheless, comics share many similarities with illustration, which suggests some possibilities to which I will return below.

The History of the Book in Canada project, 2000–07, was a major contribution to knowledge, but strangely, its list of 142 book trade roles does not include *illustrator* or *artist*; and a search for “Jefferys” yields just one result.⁸³ Meanwhile, a SSHRC-funded research project on Canadian children's literature conducted by Gail Edwards and Judith Saltman resulted in an exhaustive history of the subject.⁸⁴

Canadian museums are starting to feature illustration. Museum London's unusual 2012 triple-bill of *Arthur Heming: Chronicler of the North*; *Canadian Artists as Illustrators*; and *The Drawing Board: London's Illustrators* is an important example. The same year, the Winnipeg Art Gallery hosted *American Chronicles: The Art of Norman Rockwell*. Yet museums pay little attention to contemporary illustrators: internationally renowned Anita Kunz, who was made Officer of the Order of Canada in 2009 and received a Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012, has never been given a major exhibition in Canada, while the Library of Congress showed her work in 2003.

Activities in illustration studies on Canadian topics seem to have been strongest in Montreal, where the *Caricature et satire graphique à Montréal* group (CASGRAM) has been finding and studying historic cartoonists with the assistance of SSHRC and in conjunction with the McCord Museum—and has begun inching into illustration proper; a book on Quebec illustrated books also recently appeared, written by a scholar in France;⁸⁵ and Kim Sawchuk of Concordia University has led a major SSHRC-funded study of Canadian medical illustration.⁸⁶ The real desert appears to be anglophone popular visual culture (apart from children's books and caricature). Individual researchers have undertaken projects on illustrators and/or illustration, such as National

81. The Visual and the Verbal: Image/Text in American Print Culture to 1900, 22 November 2014, Worcester, MA.

82. Susan Doyle, Jaleen Grove, and Whitney Sherman, eds., *A History of Illustration* (New York, 2016).

83. “Canadian Book Trade and Library Index: Authority Lists,” History of the Book in Canada Database, <http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/databases/hbic/001062-620-e.html>.

84. Gail Edwards and Judith Saltman, *Picturing Canada: A History of Canadian Children's Illustrated Books and Publishing* (Toronto, 2010).

85. Stephanie Danaux, *L'icongraphie d'une littérature. Évolution et singularités du livre illustré francophone au Québec, 1840–1940* (Québec, 2013).

86. Kim Sawchuk et al., “Illustrating Medicine: The Case of Grant's Atlas of Anatomy,” SSHRC, Standard Research Grant, 2008–11.

Gallery of Canada archivist Philip Dombowsky's work on J.E.H. Macdonald, Carlton Studios, and bookplates,⁸⁷ but I am aware of no collaborations or research networks coordinating sustained efforts, except for a group of friends informally called the Bob Club that is publishing Stacey's unfinished work.⁸⁸

Primary sources are still difficult to access. In 2006 Randall Speller discussed the invisibility of illustration in library catalogues, which usually fail to document illustrators, and the inevitable impact on researchers' ability to locate Canadian illustration; he is not aware of any change in librarians' practices since he wrote.⁸⁹ There are no private illustration art collections in Canada on the scale of The Kelly Collection in the United States. The rich Rex Woods fonds at the ROM have been inaccessible for over fifteen years, awaiting the completion of cataloguing—and the delay has made potential donors hesitate to consider the ROM for other fonds.⁹⁰

Understanding the ways audiences have viewed illustration and design over the decades is essential to the study of graphic history, but because families, publishers, and libraries have disposed of original magazines—as well as art and personal papers—it is now most challenging even to find the objects of study. Great care must be taken of the printed items that do remain. Library and Archives Canada never did compile full runs of some Canadian magazines, nor do they have substantial collections of advertising and other ephemera. In fact, few libraries hold complete runs of original popular magazines: while those considered “important” such as *Maclean's* and *Canadian Forum* are easy to find, the likes of *Canadian Farmer*, *The Goblin*, and *Canadian Home Journal* have suffered. With a digitization project underway in 2013, even Maclean-Hunter, now Rogers Communications, had to appeal to the public to supply back issues.⁹¹ Ironically, the naughtier the material, the more likely it was to have been preserved by collectors—hence, the better availability of racy pulp publishing.⁹² The imbalance can skew ideas of what visual culture was in the past.

The severe Harper government cutbacks have of course also affected acquisitions. In 2012 a collection of seven hundred *Toronto Star* political cartoons by Duncan Macpherson was nearly dispersed at a New York auction house when Library and Archives Canada did not have the means to purchase it. Luckily, it was rescued by the McCord Museum, though it took twelve months to secure the funds—only the unusual patience of the seller made the wait possible.⁹³

Robert Stacey remarked in his *Canadian Encyclopedia* entry on graphic art and design that “economics and logistics being what they are, the long-overdue museum of Canadian graphic and communication arts is likely to achieve only a virtual reality.”⁹⁴ Toward that reality I began the *Index of Canadian Illustrators* wiki in 2008, but due to time constraints it remains a paltry thing.⁹⁵ The virtual museum has evolved better, but piecemeal, among non-academic bloggers and collectors working independently from each other and without the benefit of trained archivists, curators, historians, or museums. John Adcock (*Yesterday's Paper*, *Punch in Canada*) and Leif Peng (*Today's Inspiration*) have skilfully carried out digitization and preservation of illustration, oral histories, and magazines, amassing US and British illustration alongside Canadian, providing at last a fuller context for Canadian work. In June 2015, Peng's readership successfully crowd-funded \$35,902 for a monograph on Canadian illustrator Will Davies written by himself and his son, Simon Peng.⁹⁶

87. See also Robyn Fowler's forthcoming book on editorial cartoon character Miss Canada based on her PhD dissertation “Miss Canada and the Allegory of Nation” (University of Alberta, 2005).

88. This group meets about once a month at the Toronto Arts and Letters Club.

89. Speller, “Hidden Collections” and interview.

90. Arlene Gehmacher, personal correspondence with author (22 February 2010); conversations with author (2012–14). The hesitancy has been privately expressed to me by at least three descendants of illustrators.

91. Julie Armstrong, “Digitizing the Maclean's Archives: Here's Where You Come In,” *Maclean's* (11 July 2013), < <http://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/digitizing-the-macleans-archives-heres-where-you-come-in/> >.

92. Pulp magazine and book collections exist at the University of Saskatchewan, Library and Archives Canada, York University, and University of Calgary.

93. I was personally involved with the placing of this collection at McCord.

94. Stacey, “Graphic Art and Design.”

95. <http://canadianillustrators.wikidot.com/>.

96. Leif Peng, “The Art of Will Davies,” *Kickstarter* (21 June 2015), <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1502319432/the-art-of-will-davies>.

One significant historical anomaly exists in Canadian illustration studies. Beginning in 1956, the maverick collector Eric Harvie, founder of the Glenbow Museum, acquired over four thousand pieces of original American illustration art. In 1986 the only exhibition to represent the breadth of the collection as “illustration” was mounted by an American guest curator.⁹⁷ Select works were otherwise included in other shows (e.g., on Charles Livingston Bull, 1979). But the collection was largely unused, and a few years ago it was deaccessioned save for some 1,400 works. It sits in storage awaiting a new caretaker, but none in Canada has come forward.⁹⁸

The Future

In 1981 the (then named) Public Archives of Canada told the Applebaum-Hébert Commission,

If the archives of a nation, a government or an organization are not preserved, then the history of that nation, government or organization will be forgotten, and the price which a people pay for the loss of their history is a misunderstanding of their roots, a confusion in their identity and the misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the nature of their country.⁹⁹

The absence of magazines, original illustration, indices, exhibitions, and scholarship, and the omission of Americana, mean Canada has misrepresented itself. The need to establish a home for illustration history—one that includes American illustration in proportion to what circulated in Canada—is pressing: many collectors and practitioners are in old age and have nowhere to send their life’s work; deaccessioned collections are dangerously in limbo; and studies are flawed without the benefit of verified information on visual culture.

Blogs and online databases help preserve knowledge and give second life to self-destroying acidic pulp paper while enabling superior search capability. But with digitization comes redoubled temptation to destroy originals (in fact, scanning properly requires disassembling bindings), a replay of the death-by-microfilm of past decades. What could be lost is the opportunity to show an original object in a museum and the option to re-digitize with improved future technology. In databases where search engines only fetch the precise fragment containing the search query term, surrounding context and sequentiality is compromised. Furthermore, the ability to replicate the original reader’s experience, the feel of handling the object, its actual colour and smell, and its degradation over time, are also sacrificed—a major concern with

regard to current scholarship on theories of affect, in which the meanings of print and print cultures are predicated on what leading illustration historian Jennifer Greenhill calls the “haptic and conceptual ... the affective potential ... [of] complex, multisensorial strategies of viewer engagement.”¹⁰⁰

Hard copy materials must be saved. The lesson learned from the fates of CAPIC’s archives, the Ted Martin Cartoon Gallery, the Museum of Promotional Arts, the Glenbow collection, the delay at the ROM, the Canadian Museum of Caricature, and the “national embarrassment” that Library and Archives Canada was permitted to become,¹⁰¹ is that a new model of repository must be designed. The opportunity afforded by the present vehicle—RACAR, an academic journal—is that it can be mobilized as a creative space in which to re-imagine and re-locate the archive.

97. Judy Larson [curator], *American Illustration 1890–1925: Romance, Adventure, and Suspense*, Glenbow Museum, 22 March 1986.

98. Daryl Betenia [collections manager], conversation with the author, October 2013.

99. Information Services, *Report*, 130; Hearings 53.

100. Jennifer Greenhill, personal website, description of her book, *The Commercial Imagination: Engaging Popular Illustration, 1900–1950* (in progress). http://illinois.edu/ds/search?search_type=userid&search=jgreenhi.

101. Demers, “The Future Now,” 41.

It is important to begin with an ideal, for without one, it is too easy to accept what may in fact be artificial limitations. Flexible ideals also open up creative problem-solving and guide direction. In the spirit of a charrette, then, I would like to don my designer's hat and propose the establishment of a specialized research location independent of any government that could unilaterally remove vital support. CAPIC's collection, the Glenbow's deaccessioned illustration collection, and The Cahén Archives (the sizable fonds of illustrator Oscar Cahén, currently a non-profit entity watching for a future home) could start a fine illustration research centre.¹⁰² Given there is no comprehensive home for the history and study of Canadian design either, it is reasonable to suggest combining the two areas of study. There is a danger that design studies, so much more robust than illustration studies, might unintentionally garner the spotlight and marginalize illustration—as graphic design's evolution outlined above inadvertently did in the past. However, adding in comics, game, and animation studies would rectify the tendency of illustration to disappear under the design umbrella, thus putting illustration in its rightful position as the beating heart of other illustrative forms of popular visual communication.

Where should it live? One option at the very least would be to build links to the Toronto Public Library, which already owns thousands of images due to the foresight of media magnate John Ross Robertson (1841–1918), who provided some 15,000 pictures for precisely this purpose. The TPL also has periodical collections, artist files, and one of the last remaining picture reference collections—folders of images clipped from magazines that were used by illustrators for source material long before Google (in a foreboding move, the Vancouver Public Library disposed of theirs in 2014 because they felt it was obsolete).¹⁰³ But funding such an endeavour would be unlikely or vulnerable to cuts, especially given the record of City Hall (under Mayor Rob Ford the library budget was cut in 2011).

A better alternative would be to house the centre at a university with a track record of collection in design arts, located where fonds are most likely to turn up: Toronto. A university can apply for grants, attract philanthropic funding, cross-appoint specialized librarians, house materials and art, access subscription databases of digitized antiquarian periodicals, gain the confidence of potential donors, and most of all, muster students to begin processing and studying the holdings. The Modern Graphic History Library (for American illustration) recently established at Washington University in St. Louis provides an appropriate model.

Given that an important portion of illustration research has been conducted by non-academics such as Peng and Adcock who have enormous expertise and online audiences, I further propose that the centre develop community partnerships with such individuals to facilitate their work (including library access to subscription databases, which Adcock says is his biggest impediment), and provide a permanent repository for their collections in the future.¹⁰⁴ This will necessitate dialogue to reduce the distrust I have witnessed between “amateurs” and academics, practitioners and theorists. Each party brings crucial information without which the understanding of illustration is incomplete.

102. Michael Cahén, conversation with the author, 25 June 2015.

103. Christina de Castell, Director, Resources & Technology, Vancouver Public Library, to Jaleen Grove, personal communication with the author, 15 September 2014.

104. In 1978 Stacey also recommended collaboration with collectors. Stacey, “Ars Brevis,” 8.

Considering the cutbacks of universities and the nature of commercial and industrial art, I would also propose that sponsorship by industry be pursued, and that some contents of the collections be open for commercial use. This could take the form of selling rights for the purposes of producing merchandise. The rights could be obtained from artists or their estates, thus supporting the creators directly, on an outright or royalty basis. Proceeds would fund the centre's non-profit work in acquisitions, research, conservation, exhibition, and scholarly publishing. The administration of the commercial enterprise, or entrepreneurial undertakings, would be an opportunity for business students as well as arts students. Perhaps most importantly, historic Canadian visual culture would be circulating and stimulating current cultural identity and development.

If commercializing an educational or public collection sounds debased, I would suggest considering how Canada's historic lens has prejudiced our present bias against the commercial arts in a way that blinds us to possibilities. I am not speaking of commercializing art that was never intended to be mass-produced, but of the critical and creative re-purposing of design and illustration, to expand upon and enrich their meaning. Rather than succumbing to a knee-jerk dismissal of commerce in culture, let us invent, improve, and master a communication about the arts that is respectful, useful, and most of all, encouraging to Canadian cultural growth and criticism through the customary channels of trade. The opportunity is before us to critically redefine business practices while preserving and making historical material part of a living Canadian culture.

Postscript

After this paper was submitted, I became aware of a proposal being developed by two illustration professionals, Bill Grigsby and Gail Geltner, to mount an exhibition of Canadian illustrators whose careers were launched between 1960 and 1985. Their intent is to raise support for a permanent repository for graphic history. Grigsby and Geltner reached the same conclusions that I have and state that their underlying purpose is to "create dialogue about the nature of illustration, its value and place in the future;" to "foster recognition of Canada's unsung creative sector ... to ensure that their legacy of creativity and artistic excellence isn't lost to neglect and obscurity."¹⁰⁵ I supplied a letter of support for their effort. In late July 2015 they succeeded in securing a place at the Aird Gallery in the Ontario Provincial Government's MacDonald Block building in Toronto. ¶

105. Gail Geltner and Bill Grigsby, "The Museum of the Street: 50 Years of Canadian Illustration [exhibition proposal]," manuscript (28 May 2015), n.p.