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**Selling Themselves:
Professionalizing Adworkers
and the Business of Culture in Toronto,
1900-1930**

by

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A thesis submitted to the Department of History
in conformity with the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Queen's University

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Abstract

In 1890, the Canadian publishing industry was host to a lively selection of periodicals, from major market daily papers and rural weeklies, to a wide array of magazines serving religious, agricultural, and industrial constituencies. In these periodicals, advertising played only a minor part, and it was placed primarily by local merchants and shopkeepers. In 1930, this picture had radically changed. The industry was dominated by the country's metropolitan dailies, their weekend editions, and one consumer magazine. Their pages were filled with the advertisements of companies with national, if not international, profiles.

There were two forces behind this change. First, the population and the economy entered a dynamic period of growth in the late 1890s which fostered investment in both publishing houses and the manufacture of consumer items. Second, a select group of white-collar workers within the publishing industry recognized the opportunity that lay in encouraging and managing the flow of advertisements between advertisers and publishers. These were the advertising agents.

Though their work was little appreciated by anyone in the nineteenth century, agents and their counterparts handling advertising for publishers and major advertisers strove to attain the same status and rewards as recognized professionals. To do so, they adopted the new tools of the emerging social sciences – in particular applied psychology and economics – and cultivated their own new field of expertise. Among Canadian adworkers, those in Toronto took a leading role in these developments, a role manifest in their trade papers, clubs, and trade associations.

This attempt at professionalization encouraged a new logic for advertising. This logic rationalized the expenditure of advertising appropriations by attempting to minimize the risk of failure through increased research and planning. Campaign strategies and media-buying practices were re-oriented around the pursuit of the largest, most prosperous social groups available. Whenever possible, media buyers used as few media as possible. In the process, however, the 'objective' nature of the tools adopted from social sciences had a tendency to lead all adworkers to the same conclusions regarding markets and media. As a result, existing media which served marginal or less-than-prosperous social groups were forced to adapt to the new logic of advertising, or fall by the wayside. The very characteristics which had once made the periodical industry rich and diverse was increasingly seen as a handicap in the eyes of adworkers. Ironically, one set of periodicals largely overlooked by adworkers – the agricultural papers – had, perhaps, adapted the new tools to the Canadian market better than the consumer magazines.

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A number of historians have given their time and wisdom to this process. Klaus Hansen introduced me to the vast American historiography on middle-class culture, while Donald Swainson offered me invaluable contacts in the pursuit of archival sources. Michael Gauvreau, Peggy Cunningham, and Gerald Tulchinsky all offered to read sections, and, even though those sections never materialized as planned, they too provided tips on books and possible avenues of research. Paul McKenzie deserves a special thanks in this regard: he not only criticized an early draft of some of the ideas contained in this thesis, but he also helped to shape the ideas that finally emerged.

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Table of Abbreviations

ACA	Association of Canadian Advertisers
ANA	Association of National Advertisers (United States)
BAA	British American Advertising & Circular Delivery Agency, Montreal, Quebec
CAAA	Canadian Association of Advertising Agencies
CPA	Canadian Press Association
NAC	National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario
HSC	Historical Statistics of Canada
JCK	John C. Kirkwood
JWT	J. Walter Thompson Company, New York, New York
JWTA	J. Walter Thompson Archives, Duke University Library, Durham, North Carolina
M-H	Maclean-Hunter Publishing Company
PAO	Public Archives of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario
SLA	Sun Life of Canada Corporate Archives, Scarborough, Ontario
UMA	University of Manitoba Archives, Winnipeg, Manitoba
UTA	University of Toronto Archives, Toronto, Ontario

Introduction

Advertising is everywhere. It pervades almost every medium of expression available to us. On bus shelters and billboards, in buses, taxis, and subway cars, on t-shirts and knapsacks, in the mail and on blimps, before and during movies, and above public urinals, businesses reach out to the consuming public. Many people consider themselves oblivious to its charms; two generations of adults raised on a steady diet of television believe they are too savvy to be open to its call. And yet, advertisers would not seem to agree. Billions of dollars are spent each year in Canada alone by companies seeking to bend the ear of the audience.

This is not a new phenomenon. At the turn of the century, advertising was no less common. Anyone walking the streets of Canada's larger cities would have seen hoardings, sandwich boards, handbills, trade cards, posters, shop windows, and street car advertising, not to mention the ads that appeared on the pages of their favourite newspapers and magazines. Most of these forms were widely used even in smaller cities and towns.

Then as now, the advertising industry was composed of three basic groups: media outlets, advertisers, and advertising agencies. Traditionally, media outlets meant newspapers, periodicals, and prime spaces such as billboards, public transit cards, and the like. Since 1920, this list has grown to include radio and television broadcasters and web sites on the internet. By advertisers we can understand any individual, company, or organization that pays media owners for space or time to publicize their products, services, or cause. Although the vast majority of advertisers are commercial businesses, some advertising is conducted by non-profit organizations. The third group,

advertising agencies, operate as intermediaries between media outlets and advertisers. Agencies serve advertisers by recommending and designing campaigns. Such service may include anything from copywriting to package design to market surveys. However, agencies got their start by contracting space or time from media outlets on behalf of their clients, and this remains the core function of most agencies.

Beyond these three groups, the industry has also employed people in numerous other occupations, but these have never assumed a permanent, structural position within the industry. Artists, writers, photographers, typesetters, contract printers and others may work for any of the main three groups, but advertising is neither the only nor necessarily the primary source of their income.

For the sake of simplicity, it seems appropriate to use the word 'adworker' in reference to everyone engaged in the advertising trade. While agency executives and publishers might have resented this description, it will serve a purpose here. On an immediate level, it offers a means to refer to the employees of publishing houses, agencies, and corporate advertising departments in one short term; it avoids the pitfalls of the gender-specific terms 'adman' or 'adwoman.' But on a deeper level, it should remind us that the people engaged in the advertising trade were labouring at their daily jobs. They were not star characters of novels and movies or other works of fiction, such as Frederic Wakeman's *The Hucksters* (1946), which painted them in romantic -- if frequently garish -- strokes. Rather, they were salesmen and clerks, statisticians and typesetters, freelance writers and secretaries, whose weekly paycheques all came from the same source: the manipulation of white space into meaningful, persuasive, commercial intelligence.

It is one thing to name the media and people involved in the advertising industry, quite another to define what exactly advertising is. Given that different media use different techniques to achieve the same goals, practitioners in 1900 had a difficult time putting their finger on the exact nature of their business. Not surprisingly, it was agents who were in the thick of this debate. In

their roles as solicitors, agents sought out retailers and manufacturers who were not advertising and attempted to bring them into the fold. Many such businessmen believed that advertising was money poorly invested. The returns were difficult to trace. Agents eager to turn reluctant prospects into satisfied clients were compelled to justify the expense, and in so doing they inadvertently began to theorize the *practice* of advertising itself.

One of these agents was Albert Lasker, who in 1900 was a young and newly hired employee at the Lord & Thomas Advertising Agency of Chicago, Illinois. According to legend, Lasker made it his goal to uncover the secret of advertising, the essence of the successful ad that made it memorable and effective. His first belief was that advertising was news, no different from any other kind of information found in the papers. Effective advertising had to report the news about the product for sale.¹ Certainly, this had been the traditional role of advertising. As late as 1900, ads still appeared which merely reported that a certain retailer had new goods in stock, or that a manufacturer had created a new product which the reader might find useful. This conception of advertising was reinforced by publishers who adopted such names for their papers as the *London Advertiser* or the *Commercial World*, in contrast to the more politically oriented *Whigs*, *Sentinels*, and *Advocates*.

However, Lasker's opinion was soon changed by another agent, John E. Kennedy. Kennedy arrived in Chicago in 1904 after a very successful ten years selling men's clothing in Montreal. Hearing of Lasker's quest, Kennedy arranged to meet the younger man and share the great mystery. Lasker was not disappointed. Advertising, Kennedy confided, was 'salesmanship in print.' A copywriter had to do more than simply describe the goods for sale or make claims about their value. The copywriter had to recreate in cold type the sense of friendly persuasion that a salesman might

1. Albert D. Lasker, *The Lasker Story, As He Told It*, ed. S.R. Bernstein (Lincolnwood, Illinois: NTC Business Books, 1987) 13-15

use in a personal encounter. Twenty years later, Lasker – by then president of Lord & Thomas – told his staff that this revelation had changed ‘the whole complexion of advertising for all America.’²

Perhaps. Conceptions of advertising did change after 1900, but it would be more accurate to suggest that Kennedy’s idea was only one of many attempts to define the nature of the business. Certainly newspapers, magazines, and industry trade papers had long since begun to educate their readers in the advantages of advertising for all concerned. In the same year that Lasker met Kennedy, two books were written on this very topic: one by an agency team and another by a psychologist keenly interested in advertising.

Ernest Elmo Calkins and Ralph Holden had a successful shop in New York City. In 1905, they published a tract called *Modern Advertising* to publicize their shop’s approach. Like Kennedy, Calkins and Holden believed that advertising had to be more than simply news about a product. They claimed that ‘advertising is that subtle, indefinable, but powerful force whereby the advertiser creates a demand for a given article in the minds of a great many people or arouses the demand that is already in latent form.’³ This indefinable force seemed to describe something beyond mere salesmanship, beyond mere persuasion. It implied some power latent in the written word that overcame sales resistance by appealing to the inner drives or desires of readers.

Throughout his career, Calkins upheld the artist as the archetype of the advertising counsellor. Only those with an artist’s intuition could know the public mind and craft advertisements appealing to this subtle force.⁴ It should not be surprising, then, that his book did not make reference to one published the year previously by Walter Dill Scott. Scott, an academic psychologist, had given a name to this ‘indefinable force,’ and the name he gave it was the power of suggestion.

2. Ibid, 19

3. E.E. Calkins and R. Holden, *Modern Advertising* (New York: Appleton, 1905), 4

4. On Calkins, see Michele H. Bogart, *Advertising, Artists, and the Borders of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

Scott's thesis was rooted in the findings of empirical psychology, particularly those concerned with the association of ideas in the human mind and the ability to guide these associations through suggestion. The best advertisements, he reasoned, were those which fostered in the mind of the reader pleasant associations between a given product and a desired end, to the exclusion of similar products. Then, when the reader decided to pursue that end, that specific product would come to mind as a means of achieving it. It would not be a matter of art, but of simple human psychology to determine the ends with which any one product should be associated.⁵

Information, persuasion, suggestion, a force acting according to scientific laws: by 1905, the advertising trade had begun to accept these views of its work, and themselves as a special élite with the power to shape public opinion. Henry Foster Adams, a business professor at New York University, tied these strands together in 1920 when he wrote that advertising was 'the endeavour of an individual or a group to persuade others, without personal solicitation and by means of a paid medium, to perform some specific act which will result in pecuniary advantage to the individual or group which is making the endeavour.'⁶ This definition has remained at the core of advertising theory ever since. A recent university textbook could have had Kennedy, Calkins, and Scott in mind when it described advertising as 'a persuasive form of marketing communications designed to stimulate positive response (usually purchase) by a defined target market.'⁷

Although many different types of media carried advertising, only newspapers and magazines provided something more than a mere delivery system. Advertising had always been a part of the press, but it had been peripheral to the primary function of newspapers and magazines: the delivery of news and opinion. The audience for hoardings and handbills did not have to pay for the privilege of reading the commercial messages they contained. Newspapers had made their living by collecting

5. Walter Dill Scott, *The Theory of Advertising* (Boston: Small, Maynard, 1904), ch.3, 4

6. Henry Foster Adams, *Advertising and Its Mental Laws* (New York: MacMillan, 1920), 4

7. Keith J. Tuckwell, *Canadian Advertising in Action* (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1988), 3

news relevant to their audience, and then charged that audience for the service. Advertising, when it was carried, was a source of bonus revenue to the papers. Before 1840, ads ran at the request of the advertiser, who approached the publisher for space. Certain literary magazines in the United States were infamous for their refusal to carry any advertisements whatsoever. Only after the introduction of faster machines in the printing trades – costly machines which required publishers to have access to greater sources of capital – did publishers begin to think more seriously about cultivating their advertisers as a steady source of income. Only then did they begin to solicit business actively from advertisers. During the period under examination, this state of affairs changed once again. Between 1890 and 1930, publishers in Canada learned to fully embrace the advertiser as a partner in the publishing industry. Further, the balance between the readership that publishers had hitherto served and the advertisers they now courted began to tip in the latter's favour.⁸

This shift is historically significant, as Jürgen Habermas argues in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1991).⁹ 'The public sphere' was an idealized notion of public debate that emerged within enlightened European societies of the seventeenth century. Since the rising merchant classes were excluded from the traditional seats of power in feudal societies, the idea of public opinion became a powerful rhetorical tool available to advance their interests. 'Public opinion' was the collective reason of a free and informed citizenry, in opposition to the arbitrary will of an absolute sovereign. Although this idea of public opinion grew out of the informal discussions found in coffee houses and salons, it became institutionalized in the pages of the press. In print, the otherwise local opinions of commoners could participate in national debates. Upon this ideological foundation, the press built its reputation as a watchdog over the actions of the government. To be

8. H.A. Innis, 'The Newspaper in Economic Development,' *Journal of Economic History*, 2:Supplement (December 1942): 1-33

9. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, trans. T. Burger (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT, 1991)

effective, absolute freedom from that government was necessary.

With the collapse of feudal monarchies and the ascension of democratic assemblies, the press still had a role to play. Editors continued to report and critique public policy, but usually in alliance with one party contending for the reins of power. No less than before, the freedom of the press was held as a sacred right to ensure that all policy matters were given their proper scrutiny in the public eye. Frequently, publishers would emphasize this role in the mastheads of their papers, with names such as the *Free Press*, *The Spectator*, or *The Intelligencer*. An alternative was to name their paper for that mythic citizen for whom they wrote, such as *The Novascotian*, *L'Electeur*, or *Le Canadien*. Under either system, the crucial element was the same: the papers existed for the distribution of news and ideas to an audience willing to pay for them. Again, it was not a revolution in state systems, but in production that fostered a change in the structure of publishing. Rotary presses made it possible to print thousands of pages more per day than ever before imagined. As historian Richard Ohmann has argued, this in itself did not cause the change in publishing, although it was the material condition that made it possible.¹⁰ But over time, as publishers realized that the returns from advertising were limited only by the number of pages at their disposal, their attention was turned – first to the increased profits to be had from advertising, and second, to the need to satisfy those who contributed most to the upkeep of their businesses. By 1900, publishers of mass market papers had begun to realize that their primary market was no longer readers seeking information. Rather, it was the advertisers, who sought media sympathetic to their corporate goals. If before the news and information had been the commodity of publishing, now it was the readership itself.¹¹

This shift was simply a rational development within the publishing industry. Publishers too were businessmen, and there was no necessary contradiction between running their papers and

10. Richard Ohmann, *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century* (New York: Verso, 1996), 31-47

11. Innis, 22-30; Habermas, 181-210

pleasing their advertisers. To them, the opposite was in fact true. The massive circulation figures achieved by the most popular papers and magazines were built upon editorial content that readers enjoyed and found useful. Presumably, readers would not have bought papers at all if they did not find them so.

Nor was this change monolithic, which Habermas at times suggests. It did not become *impossible* to publish papers which did not have mass appeal or the approval of advertisers. However, it did become more difficult. By definition, a publication with less than mass appeal had a smaller audience upon which to draw for subscriber support. Due to its smaller circulation, it would also command less advertising revenue. As such, publications catering to niche markets, or even large markets less sizable than the 'mass' general audience pictured by advertisers and agencies, had a difficult time competing on the same terms. Higher-grade papers and inks, top-notch editors, name writers, artists, and photographers -- all of these were the tools of the mass magazines. By contrast, traditional magazine genres, and those that served particular interests, suffered by comparison when they became incapable of affording them. As new media became available to advertisers, the same pattern repeated itself.

As such, the story of advertising in the print media is the crucial story of advertising. Many of the techniques adopted by agents in print advertising after 1900 had been used in trade cards and posters before 1900. However, trade cards, posters, and billboards were not enmeshed within media offering ostensibly objective news-reporting and trusted editorial opinions on behalf of the reader. While trade cards and posters could access the public sphere, they did not alter its structure. For these reasons, Raymond Williams has dubbed advertising 'the magic system,' a term which invokes both sides of advertising's social role. Advertising is 'magic' in so far as it endows material objects with identifications and associations which they otherwise would not have. On this point, Williams says no more than Kennedy, Calkins, and Scott. However, advertising is also a system, in that it

provides financial support to cultural producers in the public sphere. It provides the structure to publishing, broadcasting, and other electronic media. Hence, advertising's role in society is both cultural and structural.¹²

Scholars have examined these roles individually and in combination. The earliest critiques of advertising tended to draw upon both. As modern copywriting and illustration techniques became widespread after World War I, they were soon met by a wave of criticism – both popular and academic. Most damning were those that came from economists, who were critical not of the relationship between advertisers and media but of that between advertisers and consumers. Stuart Chase and F.J. Schlink published one of the best-known scholarly attacks in 1927. In *Your Money's Worth*, the authors drew upon several lines of criticism then common.¹³ Primary among these was the notion that advertising added unnecessarily to the cost of consumer goods. Essentially, the argument went as follows: if demand for a product was genuine, then consumers would seek it out. If consumers sought it out, the product would not have to be advertised. This line of thinking led to two conclusions. First, for those staple goods which found a ready market whether they were advertised or not, advertising represented an irrational business practice which forced the public to bear an unnecessary cost on top of the authentic costs of production. Second, where advertising was used to draw attention to non-staple items, it distorted the natural (and hence 'proper') demands of the marketplace. Fundamental to this second conclusion was the fact that Chase and Schlink did not challenge the industry's self-image; they too believed that advertising had the power to influence consumer behaviour. But working from this supposition, they argued that businesses which adopted

12. Raymond Williams, 'Advertising: The Magic System,' *Problems in Materialism and Culture* (London: Verso, 1980), 327-335; see also William Leiss, Stephen Kline, and Sut Jhally, *Social Communication in Advertising: Persons, Products, & Images of Well-Being* (Toronto: Methuen, 1986), 270-280

13. Stuart Chase and F.J. Schlink, *Your Money's Worth* (New York: MacMillan, 1927); on the same theme, see also Stuart Chase, *The Tragedy of Waste* (New York: Macmillan, 1931) and F.J. Schlink and A. Kallett, *100,000,000 Guinea Pigs* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1933).

advertising as a part of their corporate marketing strategies were acting in an ethically dubious fashion. Similar conclusions were later drawn by A.S.J. Baster in England and John Kenneth Galbraith in the United States.¹⁴

Arguments such as these found an easy fit with a popular belief that 'advertising agent' was merely a modern term for 'snake-oil salesmen.' Although such critics tended to slam the entire industry, they did in fact recognize that new products and ideas were well-served by advertising's ability to disseminate information quickly and efficiently. Rather than eliminate advertising, these critics sought to reform it. In Jackson Lears's terms, they wanted the industry to adhere to an ideal form of communication which he dubs 'plain speech' – advertising which described the product, the price, and the nearest retailer without the bombast. In essence, they wanted Lasker's information without Williams's magic.¹⁵

More critical were the second wave of economists and sociologists who questioned the connection between advertising and the role of media as modes of public communication. While these writers did not ignore the importance of specific advertising messages, their prime concern was for the financial structure of modern media outlets. Perhaps inspired by the propaganda efforts of various governments during the 1930s, perhaps by the general questioning of corporate power that occurred during the Depression, scholars such as Harold Innis in Canada, Paul Lazarsfeld in the United States, and the Frankfurt School in Germany (such writers as Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno), made explicit the growing links between corporate power and the free flow of information in the western democracies. Habermas's study of the public sphere reveals an awareness of all of these, and his approach is unusual only for its theoretical rather than empirical orientation. That said,

14. A.S.J. Baster, *Advertising Reconsidered* (London: King & Son, 1935); John Kenneth Galbraith, *The Affluent Society* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1958)

15. Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York: Basic, 1994), 53

Habermas and the Frankfurt School take a decidedly different tack in their conclusions. Where Innis and the Americans admitted that advertising posed a great danger to the free flow of information, they accepted this as the price of a society that guaranteed personal liberties. Habermas saw the domination of the public sphere by advertising-dependent media as an historical failure of the capitalist system.

Where these thinkers saw advertising as structure, academics and other cultural commentators after 1970 began to dissect actual advertisements for their ideological content. In so doing, they have tried to reveal the significance of particular ads by examining the iconography and associations used to construct them. The classic text in this regard is Judith Williamson's *Decoding Advertisements* (1978).¹⁶ In Canada, scholars have studied campaigns as diverse as Eaton's advertising to immigrants in the 1950s, the Canadian Pacific Railway's early tourist advertising, or the images of women in consumer magazines.¹⁷ However, as sociologists William Leiss, Stephen Kline, and Sut Jhally have pointed out, the pitfalls of content analysis are many, and have sparked debates over the selection of samples and the proper means of decoding them.¹⁸ Whether or not any one method provides a 'true' or politically 'useful' reading is outside the interests of this study. The reading of any one advertisement, campaign, or group of campaigns, reveals more about the specific advertisers, agencies, and media involved than it does about advertising in general, let alone about the intended audience. Treating advertising as text cannot reveal the structure and workings of the industry itself since it only examines the role of specific signifiers to specific groups of authors and readers at a

16. Judith Williamson, *Decoding Advertisements* (London: Marion Boyars, 1978)

17. Cynthia Wright, 'From Spectacle to Shopper: Eaton's and the Making of the Immigrant Consumer Market in Postwar Toronto,' paper presented to the Canadian Historical Association, Calgary, June 1994; E.J. Hart, *The Selling of Canada: The CPR and the Beginnings of Canadian Tourism* (Banff, Alberta: Altitude, 1983); M. Susan Bland, 'Henrietta the Homemaker and Rosie the Riveter: Images of Women in Advertising in *Maclean's Magazine*, 1939-1950,' *Canadian Working Class History*, ed. L.S. MacDowell and I. Radforth (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 1992), 595-622

18. Leiss et al., 169-174

specific point in time. Each campaign can be no more than a microstudy of the industry as a whole. That said, this approach has been used since the 1960s by scholars and activists who have rejected the portrayal of women, visible minorities, and violence in advertising. More recently, environmentalists have critiqued the cult of consumption championed by consumer advertising. *Adbusters*, a Vancouver-based magazine founded in 1992, has incorporated all of these viewpoints in its editorial programme, and much of its content relies on this form of analysis.

A number of American historians have tried to get behind the ads, to explore the intellectual world of their creators. This approach has focused attention upon the advertising agencies and related occupations, and it has been extremely illuminating. Daniel Pope, Stephen Fox, and Roland Marchand, among others, have drawn upon a wealth of primary sources to uncover the people who made the ads.¹⁹ More than any other group, it was the men and women who worked in the agencies that proselytized on behalf of advertising. The primary interest of the advertisers lay with their products and their mills; the primary interest of the publishers lay with their papers and their presses. It was the agents' job alone to think about advertising, day in and day out, from the perspective of manufacturers, publishers, and readers. It was the agents who became advertising's chief theorists. The danger with this approach is to credit agents with more power than they possessed. While they may have been 'heralds of modernity' -- in so far as they introduced the world to the astonishing products created by modern science -- they were not themselves responsible for these products. Nor were they the only spokesmen for modernity; the mores of the time were far more consciously probed in the sermons, fiction, and editorials of traditional writers.

Advertising is not created by *auteurs*. Advertising is created by committees. From the first idea for a campaign to the printed page, an advertisement passes through many hands. With each

19. Daniel Pope, *The Making of Modern Advertising* (New York: Basic, 1983); Stephen Fox, *The Mirror Makers* (New York: Morrow, 1984); Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940* (Berkeley: University of California, 1986)

set of hands comes a different perspective, with a different goal in mind. This point was made abundantly clear by workers in the fine arts. Artists who clung to romantic values and jealously guarded their independence of vision scorned their commercial counterparts, and consistently argued that commercial art represented something lower in the hierarchy of creative expression.²⁰ But the question of what constitutes art, and advertising's place in that definition, is not important here. What is important is the fact that agents were fashioning intellectual goods with a very practical purpose, and these intellectual goods were fashioned at the request of specific clients. Even when armed with the latest statistical samplings of their client's target market, agents found that their idea of an effective campaign could be shot down.²¹

That said, any researcher who intended to examine advertisers would be greatly disappointed. Apart from actual advertisements, manufacturers and retailers (with some notable exceptions) have been ruthless when disposing of records connected to marketing. What remains in Canada are the trade journals, directories, government materials, and other published records which tend to document the industry as a whole rather than particular advertisers, agents, or media. However, the story that emerges from these records reveals several sectors of an industry consciously working towards common goals. Publishers who in the mid-nineteenth century fought one another riding by riding, by the end of the century were co-operating on industry matters. There were several reasons for this change, but the major impetus was an effort to stabilize, then increase, the revenues available from advertising. Met by a newly disciplined press, advertising agents were forced to organize themselves to plead their case with the publishers. This in turn prompted the major advertisers to meet together, to ensure that their interests were not entirely frozen out by the other two. By 1915, every major

20. Richard Surrey [B. Brooker], 'Getting Your Sales Ideas across to the Artist,' *Marketing*, 23:7 (3 October 1925), 195; Angela E. Davis, *A Social History of Labour in the Canadian Graphic Arts Industry to the 1940s* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1995); Bogart, 125-170

21. Olaf P. Rechnitzer, 'Is the Advertiser a Good Judge of His Own Copy?' *Marketing*, 24:2 (23 January 1926), 42, 50

sector of the publishing industry (save the readers) was actively engaged in negotiations over inter-organizational agreements which were intended to set standards of conduct between them. During the 1910s, the general public heard tell of advertising conventions trumpeting the virtues of 'Truth in Advertising.' Behind the scenes, these same men were drafting memoranda that forced them to be honest with one another.

Like any agreement, those of the advertising industry attempted to establish a framework for their operations that would recognize the competing demands of each sector. In the debates surrounding each draft of these agreements can be found a host of arguments presenting the views of many different members of the industry. Again, what emerges are the values and goals of those engaged in the advertising world; the agreements enshrined the product of their negotiations.

In these debates, it is important not to lose sight of individuals. Modern advertising, and the institutions which shaped it, were not products of impersonal market forces, but the product of living, breathing human beings with needs and aspirations of their own. If the institutions give us a sense of the industry as a whole and how it functioned in Canada, a knowledge of the individuals who participated in the industry can give us a fuller picture of the trends and concerns that animated the industry councils. Richard Ohmann, in his study of American magazines, *Selling Culture* (1996), has made this point abundantly clear.²² Ohmann begins by sketching a picture of the American economy prior to 1890. The consolidation of northern industrial capital after the Civil War had led to the growth of a large class of educated, white-collar workers who sought some means to differentiate themselves from the ranks of the urban working class.²³ The new consumer magazines of the 1890s developed editorial voices and content which provided welcome counsel: beyond the

22. Richard Ohmann, *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century* (New York: Verso, 1996)

23. On this point, Ohmann follows Stuart Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1989)

actual advice columns written by 'experts' in various fields, there were authoritative editorials, up-to-the-minute articles on new trends and fashions, believable fiction revealing how characters not unlike the readers were successfully adapting to the new society, and the ubiquitous ads describing products that could bring these selfsame lifestyles into the reader's own home.

The members of the press and the advertising industry were part of this emerging white-collar culture. They too sought ways of fashioning a meaningful social identity for themselves in the new economy. But unlike other workers, their own livelihood involved the production of texts which were intended to guide others through the maze of new social relations. To borrow Habermas's terminology, they were workers with an economic stake in the operations of the public sphere. As such, the information they conveyed was never simply informative. It was always conditioned by the needs of advertisers. Although this may seem obvious in the case of the advertising agents, it was no less true of the editors and writers who had successful careers in the magazine industry.²⁴

In Canada, this new breed of consumer magazines did not catch on with native publishers until fifteen years later. Canadian magazines existed, but hewed to a very traditional set of genres: agricultural papers aimed at farmers, industrial trade papers, organs for each of the major religious faiths, children's periodicals, scholarly journals, and literary magazines. South of the border, the consumer magazines of the twentieth century had evolved out of the literary and domestic magazines, particularly those that had had a strong editorial personality and also carried articles of topical interest. Canadian publishers did not hesitate for a lack of readership. When *Munsey's*, *Cosmopolitan*, and the *Ladies' Home Journal* began publishing, they found an immediate audience in Canada. Certainly there were Canadians seeking the good life in the same way that Americans

24. This point has been forcefully argued by Jennifer Scanlon and Ellen Garvey; see Scanlon, *Inarticulate Longings: The Ladies' Home Journal, Gender, and the Promises of Consumer Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlour: Magazines and the Gendering of Consumer Culture, 1880s to 1910s* (New York: Oxford UP, 1996)

were. As individuals, English Canadians shared the same language, family patterns, careers, faiths, hopes, and aspirations as their American cousins. Not surprisingly, the circulation of these new magazines soon eclipsed that of any established magazine in Canada, just as they had in the United States. However, even if a Canadian magazine had wanted to make itself over into something comparable, it lacked one crucial element that had allowed the others to blossom from small-circulation, regional magazines into million-selling national ones: advertisers.

Frank Munsey's magazine is particularly instructive in this regard. In 1893, there were several literary magazines on the American market, including *Harper's*, *Atlantic*, and *Scribner's*. Each of these was sold for 25¢ a copy. To boost his readership, Munsey gambled that more people would buy his magazine than the others if its price was lower, and so he set the cover price at 15¢. This price was not sufficient to cover the cost of producing the magazine. By counting on a high level of newsstand sales, Munsey hoped to convert his circulation figures into greater advertising revenue. In effect, he shifted the cost of production from the readers to the advertisers, hoping that the advertisers would be willing to pay more for space in exchange for a greater readership for their advertising. It worked. The low cover price, combined with first-rate articles and fiction, attracted a readership that outdistanced most of his competitors. *Munsey's* was soon joined by *McClure's* and *Cosmopolitan*, and the competition among these three reduced cover prices to 10¢. Over the next decade, each title was selling over 500,000 copies per issue, and *Munsey's* frequently carried something in the range of 200 pages of advertising per issue.

Canadian publishers could not have lowered their cover prices in a similar fashion. In the 1890s, there was no comparable pool of advertisers ready to support such a venture. Outside of the railways and a handful of key manufacturers, there were no advertisers with a national presence. Of those that had one, many did not produce consumer items, but machinery and supplies intended for other businesses – such as harvesters, cash registers, or typewriters. And when the major retailers

began to expand, they did so through mail-order catalogues. A parallel observation could be made by looking at the agency situation. In 1900, there were no more than five agencies in Montreal and Toronto handling national accounts. Nor would American companies have advertised in Canadian magazines, since the American magazines they were already using had a wide distribution in Canada.

It would be another fifteen years before consumer magazines appeared in Canada. When they did, they were consciously modeled on their American predecessors. The most notable was *Busyman's Magazine*, since changed to *Maclean's*, which adopted the market niche and stance of the *Saturday Evening Post*. Cyrus Curtis, publisher of the *Post*, designed it to be a men's counterpart to his already successful *Ladies' Home Journal*. In particular, he had an audience of young, urban, white collar workers in mind – a solidly respectable readership. When John Bayne Maclean bought *Business Magazine* from a rival publisher in 1905, he targeted the same audience, and quickly changed the name to *Busyman's* to draw attention to this fact.

This situation was not a problem for Canadian newspapers. Geared as they were to regional markets, the papers were well positioned to serve regional manufacturers and local retailers. They were also attractive to American advertisers entering Canada in limited areas. For a time, it could be argued that the place of a Canadian consumer magazine was taken by the weekly, or Saturday, editions of Canada's major dailies – papers such as the Montreal *Family Herald & Weekly Star*, or the Toronto *Weekly Star*.

Historians have not paid much attention to advertising in Canada. The standard history has for fifty years been H.E. Stephenson and Carlton McNaught's *The Story of Advertising in Canada*, published in 1940.²⁵ This book remains a fascinating study. The book was designed to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the oldest agency in Canada, for whom the authors worked, but the discussion

25. H.E. Stephenson and C. McNaught, *The Story of Advertising in Canada* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1940)

of changing trends in consumption patterns offers a valuable perspective drawn from their own long experience in the industry. At times, however, their analysis remains limited by this same perspective; references to specific personalities and events tend to document their own firm's successes, and advertising agencies are credited with the entire revolution in marketing practices after 1900.

A similar situation holds with the history of the press in Canada. *A History of Journalism in Canada*, published by the Canadian Press Association (volume I) and W.A. Craick (II), could be taken as a mirror image of Stephenson and McNaught's study. These too came from the pens of participants, although they focus entirely upon the organizations involved without probing the underlying forces affecting their members.²⁶ Paul Rutherford's *A Victorian Authority* (1984) – now sadly out of print – provides an excellent snapshot of newspaper advertising, but his narrative ends at 1900.²⁷ Jean de Bonville and Minko Sotiron have examined the transformation of the press in Canada up to 1914, but do so from the point of view of its overt political consequences; neither book gives more than cursory treatment to the agencies and the changing nature of the advertising trade itself.²⁸ Noel Barbour and Fraser Sutherland have added personality profiles of the magazines and their staffs.²⁹ No major work has looked at advertisers before 1930, apart from content analyses of actual advertisements. The only attempt to draw each of these strands together during the period

26. J.R. Bone et al., *A History of Canadian Journalism* (Toronto: Canadian Press Association, 1908); W.A. Craick, *A History of Canadian Journalism II: Last Years of the Canadian Press Association, 1908-1919* (Toronto: Ontario, 1959)

27. Paul Rutherford, *A Victorian Authority: the daily press in late nineteenth-century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1982), ch.3. His more recent works have looked at television and advertising since 1950; see *When Television was Young* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1990), and *The New Icons?* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1995).

28. Jean de Bonville, *La Presse Québécoise de 1884 à 1914: Genèse d'un média de masse* (Québec: Université Laval, 1988); Minko Sotiron, *From Politics to Profits: The Commercialization of Canadian Daily Newspapers, 1890-1920* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1997)

29. Noel Barbour, *Those Amazing People! The Story of the Canadian Magazine Industry, 1778-1967* (Toronto: Crucible, 1982); Fraser Sutherland, *The Monthly Epic: A History of Canadian Magazines, 1789-1989* (Markham, Ontario: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1989)

under review can be found in Leiss, Kline, and Jhally, who provide an excellent sociological overview of the industry through this period. However, they describe few personalities or events, and their study assumes that advertising developed similarly on both sides of the forty-ninth parallel.

This study shall try to offer a more synthetic approach to the development of the modern periodical publishing industry in Canada between 1900 and 1930. There are two major themes. First, at its core, lies the 'professionalization' of the advertising trade. 'Professionalization' is used here with caution; the rise of professionalism as it has been described by M.S. Larson and Harold Perkin provides a useful model to describe the changes which occurred within the agencies from 1890 to 1930, but the advertising trade never became a 'profession' in the strict sense of that term.³⁰ Professionalism can be seen as a set of institutional structures created by those working in a specific field of enterprise. For example, those working in recognized professions such as medicine or the law have created unifying organizations, learned journals, educational programmes, and barriers to entry that prevent the unqualified or undesirables (as defined by those within the profession) from engaging in 'legitimate' participation. However, there exists a set of ideological premises upon which these institutional structures are built. The 'professional ideal,' according to Perkin, rests upon the inherent value of 'human capital' in place of material wealth; professionals, through trained expertise in a limited field of human understanding, carry within them 'socio-ideological, cultural, intellectual, or spiritual power' which – if acknowledged by their fellow citizens – confers upon professionals status and social power.³¹ In the case of the advertising trade, a small group of salesmen on the fringes of a multimillion dollar industry successfully won positions as 'experts' regarding its inner workings. While they may have attained a level of respect and recognition as managers within that

30. Margali Sarfatti Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis* (Berkeley, California: University of California, 1977); Harold Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880* (London: Routledge, 1989)

31. Perkin, 2-9

industry, they never established educational standards for their trade, nor did they successfully restrict entry into it. Nonetheless, they embraced the professional ideal wholeheartedly. Theirs was not the capital of presses, plants, and paper, but of ideas, imagery, and intuition. The strength of an advertising agency was the creative capacity of the men who ran it, both its salesmen and its creative staff.

A study of this professionalization movement brings to light the contemporary transformation of the publishing industry itself. This is the second theme. The agencies were at the cutting edge of a number of trends that found their common ends in the creation of mass market periodicals. Publishers were seeking new revenue streams to cover the rising costs of production, advertisers were seeking improved means of communicating with the buying public, and the public was developing a growing taste for inexpensive, leisure-time reading. Agencies capitalized on these trends by recruiting and developing manufacturers into constant advertisers; this in turn increased revenues for periodicals and gave editors the resources they needed to produce newspapers and magazines that appealed to ever-widening audiences. It was this dynamic set of relationships that called into existence the various associations and agreements governing the industry.

Chapter One shall set the stage by describing the various sectors of the industry that are important to the story – the publishers, advertisers, and agents – as they were at the end of the nineteenth century. This was an industry that had grown in an *ad hoc* fashion in Canada, and in the 1890s the agents were viewed by the publishers with great suspicion, as opportunists interfering where they did not belong and where they were not welcome. Chapter Two shall discuss the men and women who worked in these agencies, and examine the rationale they crafted for their occupation. Toronto adworkers were pivotal in this regard, for Toronto was the location of the publications, clubs, and trade associations that would set the temper of the Canadian trade. Chapter Three, in three parts, shall demonstrate how both groups came together with the advertisers to

reconfigure the publishing industry in the twenty years after the turn of the century. In large part, this was done through agreements signed by their representative organizations. What they created was a structural framework that systematized the previously *ad hoc* functions of the various sectors in relation to one another.

Chapter Four will look at the pivotal role played by copywriting in the re-vamped advertising industry. Through the incorporation of academic psychology, copywriters began to systematize the content of the industry just as the agreements had done for its business structure. After 1900, three distinct approaches to advertising emerged, whose advocates could be termed the salesman, the artist, and the psychologist. Although all three remained prominent at different firms, a fourth advocate emerged in the 1910s who eventually took precedence over them all, the market analyst. Where the first three had focused upon individual ads and readers, the market analyst looked at campaigns and mass readership. Seen as a 'mass,' readership behaved in accordance to predictable laws, and the market analyst sought to increase the probability of response from campaigns by targeting only the most suitable prospects with pre-tested copy appeals. The impact of these theories will be traced in Chapter Six, where the development of Canadian consumer magazines will be examined in greater detail.

Once Canadian magazine publishers began to compete against their American counterparts with consumer magazines, they were pushed out of the trade organization they had previously shared with newspaper publishers, who feared that their share of national advertising budgets would diminish proportionately. This was hardly a setback. The magazines persevered and established a general audience for themselves in Canada. Seizing onto this market share, the agencies guided by market analyses began to abandon their traditional media outlets, such as agricultural, labour, and denominational papers, in favour of less controversial magazines such as *MacLean's* and *Canadian Magazine*. The same pattern would be repeated in radio broadcasting, when agencies began to select

programmes for sponsorship.

Ultimately, the portrayal of Canadian society in these media – primarily the consumer magazines, but also the newspapers and radio stations that learned from them – became increasingly homogenized to fit an anglophone, liberal Christian, middle class. Stewart Blumin argues that middle-class identifications formed around white collar workers who developed common patterns of social interaction and material consumption.³² Advertising participated in the construction of this identification. Consistent consumption patterns were integral to the demographic categories formulated by agencies; they were also crucial to media outlets, which used them to establish market niches around which they could construct editorial content. But advertising played upon the anxieties of readers by suggesting that specific products would help them to achieve the status or acceptance they desired. It worked its magic to articulate and reinforce the relationships between lifestyle, status, and material possessions.

32. Stuart Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1989)

Chapter 1 : Newspapers, Advertising, & the Rise of the Agency, 1850-1900

Advertising: 'the crucible in which brains
can be transmuted into gold.'
Medill McCormack, 1908¹

James Poole was probably a typical mid-nineteenth-century Canadian publisher. In 1860, in the rural countryside of eastern Ontario, Poole owned and operated the Carleton Place *Herald*, a four page weekly paper upholding the Liberal cause.² It carried his reports of local people and events, stories from around the world brought in by telegraph, and – on every single page including the front – advertisements. He had a good variety of ads. Local people with produce to sell, personal ads, out-of-town financial houses offering investments and insurance, and railways and steamship operators running their monthly schedules all found a spot in his pages. But the most frequent by far were local retailers and artisans notifying readers of recently acquired goods.³ The out-of-town advertisers might come and go, but the bread and butter of Poole's advertising were the shops within his own community.

Why was Poole typical? Because in the early 1860s, there were some 150 other weekly papers in villages and small towns across the province, and another 79 throughout British North America. There were also some 23 dailies.⁴ None of them, weeklies and dailies alike, had

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1. *Printer & Publisher*, 17:3 (March 1908), 36
 2. William Meikle, *The Canadian Newspaper Directory* (Toronto: Blackburn's, 1858), 26
 3. Carleton Place *Herald*, 28 August 1856
 4. A. McKim & Company, *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 1ed. (Montreal: McKim, 1892), 59

circulations over 1,000 readers.⁵ Journalists like Poole were more than simple publishers, they were editors, business managers, and pressmen all rolled into one. Newspapering was more than a career for souls such as these with ink in their blood; it was a way of life, like farming or the clergy.⁶

Forty years later, rural journalism would find itself the backward cousin of the urban press. Between 1860 and 1900, a series of social and economic changes catapulted the tiny Canadian economy into the world market. As the European demand for wheat and the American demand for pulpwood and minerals grew, Canada became a favoured destination for hundreds of thousands of immigrants from Britain and continental Europe. In their wake came a host of manufacturing concerns to provide consumer goods to the growing working-class population migrating from farms to the resource hinterland and the industrializing cities. With the consumer goods came an ever-increasing volume of advertising.

There were two groups encouraging this growth in advertising: publishers and advertising agents. In particular, urban publishers who served large circulations craved faster presses to get their papers out on time. The capital required to purchase these presses could be met, in part, by increasing their volume of advertising on a daily basis. As such, advertising became an increasingly integral part of their industry, and they dedicated ever more resources to its cultivation among local and out-of-town businesses. Their enthusiasm for advertising was matched by the advertising agents. While the publishers were developing a latent economic potential within their own businesses, however, the agents were essentially outsiders, poaching on the publishers' trade. Many had formerly been salesmen in the publishers' employ. As freelance agents, they would still be selling publishers' white space, but now they would accrue a portion of the profits from this trade to their

5. Meikle, Appendix A; see also Paul Rutherford, *A Victorian Authority: The Daily Press in Late Nineteenth-Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1982), 37

6. A rather acid appraisal of this outlook appears in Mack [Joseph Clark], 'The Country Editor,' *Saturday Night*, 6:13 (18 February 1893), 9

own account.

By 1900, a new structure, planned and foreseen by no one, was emerging from within the periodical publishing industry. Through trial and error, the newspapers slowly adapted to the emerging capitalist economy, and left behind the nineteenth-century world of personal journalism. The competition among papers for more readers prompted investments in newer technologies, and the cost of these technologies necessitated ever-greater revenues; this in turn opened the papers to greater volumes of advertising. What was once a secondary source of income fast became the primary source. When it did, a new kind of business entered the publishing industry, ostensibly to manage the increased flow of advertising on the publishers' behalf. These were the advertising agencies.

Periodical Publishing before 1890

Before 1890, Canadian publishers were a remarkably independent lot. There were a wide variety of printing houses in Canada, producing newspapers, magazines, religious tracts, books, and sundry printed items. Despite the commonalities in their trades, they were in no way united as an industry, nor were they even inclined to think of themselves as a single industry. Instead, each branch hewed to its own course in the commercial world, and was served by its own trade associations and trade journals.⁷

Even within the particular branches, there were few national organizations to unite members of a trade from every province. The newspapers are a perfect case in point. The Canadian Press Association, founded in 1858, gathered together the publishers of daily and weekly newspapers, magazines, and trade papers, but only those published in the English language in Ontario. Outside

7. George L. Parker, *The Beginnings of the Book Trade in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1985), Ch.4

of this area, publishers could join the Eastern Townships Press Association (1879), Le Presse Associée de la Province de Québec (1882), or the Maritime Press Association (1888).⁸ These groups did not find common cause until the 1910s.

Within each association, there were also felt differences between the publishers of weekly and daily newspapers. Weeklies tended to be the poorer cousins of the big-city dailies, located as they were in smaller towns and rural townships. It was not uncommon for publishers to establish a weekly with the intention of building it into a daily paper. In the mid-1800s, success in this line required the prescience to locate in a town on the grow. Where population remained thin and businesses scant, few publishers could turn a substantial profit from a small circulation and few local sources of advertising. Chances were that everyone within reach of the paper would be familiar with their local merchants and craftsmen without having to see a notice in the paper. Those merchants who did advertise might have done so as much from a felt duty to keep the local paper running as a desire to place their goods before the public. Such a duty might have been prompted by an obligation to support a partizan organ, or perhaps simply to maintain a voice for their community.⁹

Despite these shaky prospects, there was never a shortage of men willing to invest in the newspaper field. Reliable statistics on newspapers first appeared in 1864. By then, most of Canada's larger centres had acquired sturdy dailies, but the weekly was still the common format. That year, there were 298 periodicals in British North America, of which 226 were weeklies and another 43 semiweekly or triweekly. By 1891, the number of weeklies had more than doubled; 580 weeklies and 24 semi/triweeklies served Canada and Newfoundland, while the total number of periodicals had expanded to 837.¹⁰

8. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 1ed. (1892), 13-14

9. 'Increasing the Value of the Advertising Columns,' *Printer & Publisher*, 19:5 (May 1910), 24-25; J.I. Little, 'Popular Voices in Print: The Local Newspaper Correspondents of an Extended Scots-Canadian Community, 1894,' *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 30:3 (Fall 1995), 134-155

10. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 1ed. (1892), 59

Before 1850, most weekly publishers opened shop in the expectation that costs could be met primarily from the sale of the paper to readers, either by annual subscriptions or individual copies on the street.¹¹ A small operation, with perhaps two men, could probably make enough to pay each of them a small competence. The division of labour would not be sophisticated. Likely, the publisher, editor, and business manager would be one man, the compositor and pressman another. Both would share ownership of the business. The latter man would frequently be assisted by an apprentice or journeyman printer, and until mid-century they too could someday hope to invest in a paper or job-printing plant of their own.¹² It was not until more modern, more mechanized presses appeared at mid-century that greater revenue was needed to improve the plant and pay for operations. Then, the expertise wielded by the business manager in attracting greater revenue began to supersede in status the technical skills of his manual co-worker.¹³ Printers resisted their marginalization through powerful trade unions.¹⁴ Nonetheless, the importance of business managers grew over time to rival that of the editors themselves.¹⁵

The dailies were the first to install the new presses. If they were located in the larger, faster-growing towns, then chances were they had the circulation to support such an investment. As dailies, they would also benefit from the speedier print runs, which allowed papers to be printed while the news was still hot and it was possible to scoop the competition. In smaller towns, where there were fewer readers and the paper only appeared once or twice a week, current and future revenue was

11. Rutherford, 97

12. Sally F. Zerker, *The Rise and Fall of the Toronto Typographical Union, 1832-1972: A Case Study of Foreign Domination* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1972)

13. Rutherford, 96; Minko Sotiron, *From Politics to Profits: The Commercialization of Canadian Daily Newspapers, 1890-1920* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1997), 23-38

14. Zerker, *passim.*; Jean de Bonville, *La Presse Québécoise de 1884 à 1914: Genèse d'un média de masse* (Quebec City: Université Laval, 1988), 88-155

15. Between 1900 and 1910, the trade papers of the MacLean Publishing Company ritually listed the names of their business managers, but rarely their editors, on their title pages; see also Stewart Lyon, 'Shall the Editor or the Business Manager Reign?' *Printer & Publisher*, 25:7 (July 1916), 17-20.

insufficiently promising to justify an investment in a modern press. Moreover, the urgency of the news was not as pronounced, and more traditional technology sufficed.

The daily Fort William *Times-Journal* is a case in point. It did not replace its hand press until 1899. At that time, the McKim Advertising Agency estimated its circulation was in the range of 250. If this number was accurate, the advantage of the new technology was questionable. The hand press could print the entire paper – four pages, 250 copies – in roughly two and a half hours; the new steam-powered press could finish the same run in one half hour.¹⁶ Either way, the paper could easily be finished overnight for morning delivery. However, the increased speed of the new machine would have been decidedly advantageous if the publisher had wanted to expand the paper to eight or twelve pages. With increased traffic between southern Ontario and the Prairies, the port city of Fort William could expect a prosperous future, especially as the eastern terminus for the Canadian Northern Railway. The *Times-Journal* was probably making its investment with that future in mind. It was a safe gamble. Six years later, McKim estimated that its circulation had grown to 1,000.¹⁷ For those papers whose circulation and size were already large, this advantage had long since been exploited.

Those weekly publishers who were not perched on a new period of growth in the 1890s found ways to maintain their financial solvency. One method – using ‘boilerplates’ or ‘ready-prints’ – reduced the cost of news collection and plate-making by having it done elsewhere. Boilerplates were pre-set plates of editorial content crafted by print shops and some of the larger metropolitan dailies, who sold them to other papers. These usually contained undated material such as human interest stories, fiction, or poetry that could be run whenever it was required to fill a page.¹⁸ Ready-prints,

16. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 2ed. (1899), 238; E. Pane and R. Bahr, *Machine Bites Dog: A Study of Technology and Work in the Ontario Newspaper Industry* (Toronto: Southern Ontario Newspaper Group, 1994), 24

17. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 4ed. (1905), 252

18. Rutherford, 66

also called 'patent insides,' were full newspaper sheets that publishers could buy with both editorial and advertising content pre-printed on one side. When folded, the pre-printed side would become pages 2 and 3 of a four-page weekly paper. That would leave only the front page and the back to be filled with the paper's masthead, local news, and advertising.¹⁹

Party politics also played a significant role in the survival of papers, both weekly and daily. In the 1800s, most papers were established to advance the fortunes of either the local Conservatives or the local Liberals, and men moved between careers in journalism and politics with great regularity.²⁰ The most notable in this regard was Sir Mackenzie Bowell, publisher of the *Belleville Intelligencer* and a long-standing member of the Press Association, who served as a member of the federal cabinet and became prime minister in 1894. Late in the century, the Liberal and Conservative newspapers were joined by others supporting politically active farm and labour organizations. Occasionally, when rifts formed among local partisans, a new paper emerged to champion one party faction against another. W.F. Maclean, a maverick Conservative and Member of Parliament, established the populist *Toronto World* in 1880. In so doing, he placed himself in open competition with the high Tory *Mail* and the Toronto-first imperialism of John Ross Robertson's *Telegram*.²¹

There were three sources of partizan support for newspapers. The first of these stemmed from the ownership of the papers themselves. The role of partizan backers intensified after 1850, in large part due to the increased capital required to purchase the new presses, and the buildings to house them. Up to that point, it was entirely possible for men such as William Lyon Mackenzie or George Brown to start a paper on their own resources or with limited financing. Combining the

19. E.E. Calkins and R. Holden, *Modern Advertising* [1905] (New York: Garland, 1985), 82-83; see also J.J. Gibbons's comments in *Printer & Publisher*, 18:4 (April 1909), 22.

20. This point becomes evident when reading any biography of a newspaperman in Canada. See especially A.H.U. Colquhoun, *Press, Politics, and People: The Life and Letters of Sir John Willison* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1935), 11-12.

21. Rutherford, 53-54, 59-60

owner and editor in one man allowed them to express their opinions as they saw fit -- which both men readily did. Then, their ability to win influence in party councils would have been proportionate to their influence with readers. By the 1870s, this relationship was gradually reversing. The capital required to establish a new paper or acquire an existing one was beyond the means of most men trained in the field of journalism.²² Josiah Blackburn bought the *Canadian Free Press* in London, Canada West, on his own for \$500 in 1850. To expand the weekly into a daily, he entered into a partnership with his brother Stephen in 1853. Twenty years later the paper was reorganized into a limited company. This time, Blackburn was only one of five shareholders, but the stock issued gave his company a paper value of \$60,000.²³

Under these circumstances, investors looking at the publishing field had the financial clout to ensure that an editor remained faithful to the party line. This was particularly true where the editor was not a stock-holder. However, many owners saw the benefit of allowing their editors a certain degree of autonomy. This approach gave greater credit to readers, for it presumed that they would not long respect a paper which went out of its way to boost a particular party at the expense of constructive commentary. Notable examples of this breed might include Sir Clifford Sifton, who owned the *Winnipeg Free Press*. Sifton's views on reciprocity with the United States were notoriously opposed to those of his editor, John W. Dafoe.²⁴ Similarly, J.E. Atkinson refused to join the *Toronto Star* unless its backers promised to give him his editorial freedom.²⁵ In both cases, however, the owners were hiring men whose party affiliations and political principles were never in doubt. Ultimately, beyond their initial investment, continued support would generally depend on the maintenance of a favourable editorial policy and the depth of the backers' pockets.

22. Sotiron, 23-38; Sir John Willison, *Reminiscences Political and Personal* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1919), 131-132

23. Michael Nolan, *Walter J. Blackburn: A Man for all Media* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1989), 2-10

24. G.V. Ferguson, *John W. Dafoe* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1948)

25. Ross Harkness, *J.E. Atkinson of the Star* (Toronto: University of Toronto), 18-22

Second, a paper could likely depend on local businessmen of the same political stripe to place advertising on a regular basis. This form of support was more tenuous than that of backers, if for no other reason than advertisers did not have a financial stake in the viability of the paper itself. The main consideration would be the paper's circulation. If the paper had competitive numbers, there was no problem. If it fell too far behind its rival's number, however, partizan advertisers would have to assess their priorities: economic self-interest or loyalty to the cause. Restless advertisers might well turn to the competitor regardless of its politics. Other problems might occur when advertisers disagreed with specific editorial stands taken by the paper. What played well with the readership may not have been popular with advertisers. Conversely, editors found it a difficult task to build up circulation while defending an unpopular set of policies adopted by the party. The Toronto *Empire* was absorbed by the *Mail* after several unsuccessful years spent parroting the Conservative line. Even a thoughtful Tory such as Hector Charlesworth thought the *Empire* provided a clear example of the pitfalls of having owners too involved in editorial policy.²⁶

The third form of partizan support was the least reliable. If the right party were in power, patronage could be sought in the form of government advertising notices or printing contracts. However, there was only so much government advertising to be done, while there was at least one paper in every hamlet in Canada insisting on official support. Nonetheless, this kind of assistance, however limited, kept many a paper alive, when local commercial advertising was scarce.

After reader subscriptions, local advertising, and party affiliations, newspapers found their last bit of financing from out-of-town commercial advertisers. Ultimately, it became the most important part of the publishers' revenue. At mid-century, however, it was by far the most neglected. Nothing could have expressed their ambivalence more than the name that publishers gave to it: 'foreign advertising.' In most cases, it actually was 'foreign,' since it was placed by American

26. Hector Charlesworth, *More Candid Chronicles* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1928), 175

or British manufacturers. As an expression, 'foreign' did not begin to wane until the volume of Canadian national advertising increased after 1900. Even then, the head of Canada's largest agency was still describing it thus in the 1910s.²⁷

Before 1900, foreign advertising was placed by manufacturers located outside the immediate region in which the paper was published. For example, McClary's Manufacturing, renowned for their black iron wood stoves, advertised not just in London, Ontario, but across the province and anywhere else their goods were sold. Railway lines and steamship companies publicized their schedules. Circuses, theatre companies, and musical shows advertised weeks before they arrived to drum up excitement. But far more common than any of these were the patent medicines makers.²⁸

More than any other trade, the patent medicine makers are given credit for pioneering the field of national distribution and foreign advertising in North America.²⁹ Inexpensive to produce, package, and transport, patent medicines were initially sold by itinerant pedlars who travelled through the small towns and rural countryside of the United States and Canada. The sophisticated pedlars learned that the patience of their prospective customers could be profitably lengthened by the offer of free entertainment. What they developed was something of a cross between vaudeville and a travelling circus - a mixture of comedy, music, acrobatics, and freaks presented from their wagons or tents. The master of ceremonies would then use the breaks between acts to introduce a lively sales pitch for the company's medicine. Ideally, the most skilled orators could make the sales pitch itself

27. 'Talk on Foreign Advertising,' *Printer & Publisher*, 2:3 (March 1893), 8; *Printer & Publisher*, 13:11 (November 1904), 8; Ansom McKim, 'Advertising Agencies--Whose Agents Are They?' *Printer & Publisher*, 24:11 (November 1915), 17-19

28. 'The Advertising Arena--Patent Medicines,' *Printer & Publisher*, 8:7 (July 1899), 4-5; Bonville, 314-316; H.E. Stephenson and C. McNaught, *The Story of Advertising in Canada: A Chronicle of Fifty Years* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1940), 14-16, 134-240

29. See for instance Daniel Pope, *The Making of Modern Advertising* (New York: Basic, 1983); James D. Norris, *Advertising and the Transformation of American Society, 1865-1920* (New York: Greenwood, 1990); Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York: Basic, 1994).

into a featured part of the show. These travelling shows found the same audiences that P. T. Barnum found: sometimes earnest, sometimes credulous, but almost always willing to be humbugged in the name of entertainment, or the off-chance that the concoction proffered actually worked. There were charlatans. Just as truly, however, the popularity and respect that the better shows earned could be attested to by the fact that they were welcomed back into communities for repeat performances.³⁰

The shift from travelling shows to advertising in newspapers seems inevitable in retrospect. When a show left town, sales there would stop. If a local merchant could be found who was willing to carry some in stock, then sales could be fostered the year round.³¹ Without the show, however, the profile of the medicine would have to be maintained in some other way. Since they already used newspaper advertising to publicize their shows, the medicine makers embraced it as a medium of pure salesmanship.³² In the tradition of their outlandish shows, the advertising of patent medicines was garishly typed, boldly set, came illustrated with eye-catching cuts, and always promised the moon. Until the 1890s, they were the single largest group of foreign advertisers in the United States and Canada. One such manufacturer in Canada, George T. Fulford, had spent \$1,000,000 in fifteen years advertising 'Dr William's Pink Pills for Pale People.'³³ His success -- Fulford was appointed to the Canadian Senate -- and that of others like him led to the gradual adoption of these techniques by other industries. The first to do so were food and clothing manufacturers, but by 1920 almost every branch of modern commerce would follow suit.³⁴

James Poole saved a raft of letters requesting advertising placements in his paper between

30. Thomas Kelley, Jr, *The Fabulous Kelley: Canada's King of the Medicine Men* (Don Mills, Ontario: General, 1974), 1-11

31. Augustus Bridle, 'Senator Fulford -- Advertising King,' *Busyman's*, 11:2 (November 1905), 7-14

32. Kelley, 137-138

33. Bridle, 11; Pope, 45-46; Stephenson and McNaught, 234-235

34. Stephenson and McNaught, 49-91

1856 and 1864.³⁵ These letters provide a valuable glimpse of the newspaper's clients and the services they requested. Many were simply handwritten letters asking that a prepared statement be run in the paper. If the letter came from an individual, payment was generally enclosed; if it came from a business, more often than not the client asked to be billed. It is interesting to note that, simply by reading their letters, one would not immediately perceive any difference between the short announcements placed by individuals and those by businesses. However, it seems likely that all parties would have understood the conventions of the day for newspaper advertising. Most ads would have been typeset and placed in the paper much like the classified ads of the twentieth century. Only those advertisers who specifically asked for larger space or 'conspicuous placement' would have been treated differently. That said, few clients asked for these services. William Virgin was perhaps more casual than most, but not untypical when he wrote the following:

... you would oblige me by advertising the following in whatever form you see proper. A black and white hound with red ears strayed to my place yesterday[.] [A]ny party claiming him can have him by paying the advertisement. I think one insertion should do. ...

Enclosed is 2/9 for advertisement.³⁶

Here, Poole could write, set, and place the ad entirely at his own discretion. More commonly, clients would have a prepared statement already written, in which case the printer would only have to set and place it. In a minority of the letters, there is some suggestion that the client also had an idea of how the ad should be laid out. These invariably came from commercial houses. The dry goods store of J. & J. Wylie sent in a handwritten letter whose prepared copy was drafted in a very stylized fashion (Illustration.1.1; Ill.1.2).

35. National Archives of Canada (NAC), MG24 K9, James Poole papers, vols.1-2

36. Ibid., v.2, f.1861, W. Virgin to J. Poole, 12 September 1861

Illustration 1.1

The Wylies' contract with James Poole, 26 May 1856.

From NAC, MG24 K9, v.1, f. January-May/1856, J&J Wylie to J. Poole, 26 May 1856.

J & J Wylie
 We now receiving their summer supplies
 comprising a very extensive assortment of
 Fancy Dry Goods
 Staple do do
 Heavy Goods
 Hand made Iron & Nails
 Corking Glass
 China & Canton Ware
 Sole Leather &
 Groceries of the very best description
 all of which will be offered at the lowest
 remunerating prices —
 The public are respectfully invited to call
 and see for themselves —
 The Market price will be paid for
 any quantity of Good Butter during the
 season —
 Glasgow May 26th 1856

Mr Poole.

Will please insert the above in
 a conspicuous manner — and withdraw
 our last advertisement — ~~also the~~
 J & J Wylie

Illustration 1.2

The Wylies' advertisement as it appeared each week, from June to September, 1856.

From Carleton Place *Herald*, 28 August 1856.

J. & J. WYLIE,

Are now receiving their Summer supplies,
comprising a very extensive assortment

OF

FANCY DRY GOODS,
STAPLE Do. Do.

Straw Goods,

Hardware, Iron and Nails!

CROCKERY, GLASS

CHINA & CRYSTAL WARE,
SOLE LEATHER, &

GROCERIES of the very best description,
all of which will be offered at the
lowest remunerating prices.

The public are respectfully invited to
call and examine them.

The market price will be paid for any
quantity of GOOD BUTTER during
the season.

Ramsay, May 24.

87-4f

Given this arrangement, the printer could still play with the size of the type and the justification of the lines; for example, each line could have been either centred or begun at the left of the column. The Wylies, however, submitted this to replace a previous insertion. Likely they knew how the *Herald* would set it. Similarly, Robert Watson of the Brockville & Ottawa Railway asked that his copy be inserted in the 'shape of handbills.' The handbill format would have dictated a certain look to the finished ad.³⁷ Notably, the only ads which came prewritten and printed in proof form came from foreign advertisers, such as the Provincial Insurance Company of Toronto. Its letter asked that Poole recreate the ad proof as closely as possible.³⁸ Over the next four decades, the casual requests of local retailers such as the Wylies would be almost entirely replaced by the more exacting demands of 'foreign' companies from out of town. Such demand signalled the fact that some businessmen were beginning take their advertising more seriously than they had in the past.

'A Nation Transformed'

That foreign advertising became the most important source of income for newspapers and the impetus behind the flowering of magazines is a key premise of this thesis. Behind this growth, setting the stage, were a series of important changes restructuring the Canadian economy between 1880 and 1914. It would be easy enough to recount the usual list of international trends and government policies that prompted these shifts in Canada. However, our interest here is not so much how these changes altered the country, as how these changes created a favourable environment for the development of the advertising trade.

One of the pivotal dates taken for the transformation in the Canadian economy is usually the

37. Richard Ohmann discusses this notion of shared codes in the context of copywriters and readers; see *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century* (London: Verso, 1996), 175.

38. James Poole papers, v.1, f.January-February/1858, R. Watson to J. Poole, n.d.; v.1, f.January-May/1856, Provincial Insurance Co. to J. Poole, n.d.

completion of the transcontinental railway in 1886. With this, the first commercially-viable link for moving goods between all parts of the country was opened. However, this link in itself did not greatly increase the volume of internal trade.³⁹ The British North American colonies had developed extensive trade links within the Empire and with the United States long before Confederation, and the internal trade of each had been serviced by ever-expanding networks of roads, canals, and regional railway lines.⁴⁰ In the case of British Columbia, most foodstuffs would not have survived the trip across the prairies in the days before tin cans or refrigeration cars. Even with the railway, manufactured goods were more economically purchased from local producers or south of the border. Where the Intercolonial and Canadian Pacific Railways were useful, then, was in their ability to transport raw materials to port, raw materials such as timber and wheat that improved Canada's poor balance of trade and attracted foreign investment.

It was the railway's success at moving these commodities that provided the necessary infrastructure for mass immigration to Canada. Europeans left their homelands for a variety of reasons, but Canada only became a favoured destination when it offered them a reasonable chance to win a better life than they had, on the basis of what some economists have called 'the subjective calculation of the net expected return to the individual from migrating.'⁴¹ One such 'net expected result' was prompted by the building of the Pacific railway itself. Once Sir John A. Macdonald's Conservative government made the commitment to finish the link with British Columbia, in 1880, it invested close to one hundred million dollars in cash, credit, and land in the project. The promise of construction jobs may have accounted for the influx of 100,000 immigrants to Canada each year

39. Kenneth Buckley, *Capital Formation in Canada, 1896-1930* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1974), 39-40

40. G.P. deT. Glazebrook, *A History of Transportation in Canada* vol.1 (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1964), 59-96; Gerald Tulchinsky, *The River Barons: Montreal Businessmen and the Growth of Industry and Transportation, 1837-1853* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1977), 35-67

41. W.L. Marr and D.G. Paterson, *Canada: An Economic History* (Toronto: Gage, 1980), 166

from 1882 to 1884.⁴² This more than doubled the average number for the ten years previous, which stood at 39,067. As construction began to wind down, this flow began to recede, but still it remained higher than before. Between 1885 and 1902, an average of 51,948 migrants were attracted to Canada each year.⁴³

It was one thing to draw settlers, but quite another to get them to settle. Despite the high number of immigrants, the country lost more people than it gained until the 1900s, mainly to the United States.⁴⁴ While the railway helped to make the Prairies a potential destination for settlers, poor land policies discouraged many from pursuing this option, and these policies would not be altered until after 1897.⁴⁵

After the railway, the Conservative Party's second great policy plank was the protective tariff placed on manufactured goods. In an attempt to win the emerging urban labour vote, Macdonald sought means to stimulate investment in Canada's manufacturing sector in the hopes that more factories would create more jobs. To do so, he allied himself with the Canadian Manufacturing Association, a lobby group funded in the main by industrial capital in Ontario. The CMA had long argued that a tariff would impede the flow of foreign-produced consumer goods into Canada, and allow Canadian-made products to compete on the basis of equal prices. In turn, this would provide the manufacturers with a stable, protected market within which they could invest in improvements and new plants.⁴⁶ Whether the investments made were soft or sound is subject to debate, but

42. Buckley, 39-40

43. All figures taken from F.H. Leacy, ed., *Historical Statistics of Canada* 2ed. (Ottawa: Supply & Services, 1983), A350 (hereafter cited as HSC); see also R.C. Brown and R. Cook, *A Nation Transformed: Canada 1896-1921* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1974), 50-53.

44. Marr and Paterson, 172-180; David C. Corbett, *Canada's Immigration Policy: A Critique* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of International Affairs/University of Toronto, 1957), 121

45. Cook and Brown, 54-68; Gerald Freisen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1987), 242-252

46. S.D. Clark, *The Canadian Manufacturers' Association: A Study in Collective Bargaining and Political Pressure* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1939), 7-10, 13-25; W.T. Easterbrook and H.J.G. Aitken, *Canadian Economic History* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1958), 393-394

Macdonald's chief goal was achieved. Hundreds of plants opened in the Maritimes, Quebec, and Ontario to take advantage of the arrangement. From 1871 to 1901, the aggregate value of capital invested in Canadian manufacturing rose more than five times over, from \$78,000,000 to \$481,000,000.⁴⁷ Most of the manufacturers located in Ontario.⁴⁸ In their wake, thousands of Canadians migrated into the industrializing urban centres, and for good reason. The number of jobs increased with the pace of investment, and the annual value of wages during this time increased from \$41,000,000 to \$113,000,000.⁴⁹ Between 1891 and 1901, while the rural population of Canada grew by roughly 60,000, its cities and towns grew by some 500,000.⁵⁰

After 1900, then, the economy finally began to resemble the transcontinental marketplace envisioned by Sir John A. Macdonald. An extensive transportation system was in place, and still expanding. The population was increasing at a promising rate. Manufacturers had begun to produce consumer goods which previously had been imported from the United States and elsewhere. The capstone would come a decade later when Canadian wheat became a precious commodity in Europe and commanded increasingly high prices.

In the meantime, it was the expansion of manufacturing and the urban population which proved crucial to the development of the advertising trade. Factories which provided steady jobs also provided regular paycheques throughout the year, unlike farms with their peak and off seasons. Another difference: urban dwellers tended to be more dependent on store-bought goods for food, clothing, cleansers, home furnishings, and a wide range of other desirables. Taken together, a regular flow of disposable income and dependence on local merchants for the necessities of life led

47. Canada, Department of Trade & Commerce, *The Canadian Industrial Field* 2ed. (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1933), 9

48. Buckley, 10-11; T.W. Acheson, 'The National Policy and the Industrialization of the Maritimes, 1880-1910,' *Acadiensis* 1:2 (1972), 3-28

49. Department of Trade & Commerce, 9

50. HSC 2ed., A68-A69

to a favourable market for those who both made and sold these goods.

The interrelationship between a wage-earning urban population and the trade in consumer goods was crucial to the success of Timothy Eaton. Eaton was Toronto's top dry goods merchant, who opened in 1869. By purchasing goods in massive quantities, he found that he could profitably undersell his rivals carrying similar lines. The key was to sell these goods as quickly as possible in order to pay his creditors on time. Rapid turnover required more than a solid core of repeat customers. It required a massive and constant stream of customers passing through the store on a daily basis. Eaton relied upon the working class of Toronto, and to reach them he invested heavily in daily newspaper advertising.⁵¹ His success, coupled with that of his arch rival, Robert Simpson, was matched by similar stores in other cities. It is doubtful if this strategy would have worked anywhere, however, if there were not sufficient numbers of wage earners taking home paycheques on a weekly basis. Rural dry goods stores, so often forced to wait months to collect on farmers' debts, could not replicate Eaton's success.⁵² Eaton himself had left behind a lacklustre business in St Mary's, Ontario, to try his hand in the city. Advertisers stepped up their efforts when they realized that there was a sizable audience of consumers ready to hear their messages.

The Press Transformed?

Canadian publishers were very much attuned to developments in the national and regional economies. The establishment of new papers and the improvement of existing ones could be used as a barometer to measure the confidence of locals in the future growth of their towns. The Fort William *Times-*

51. Joy L. Santink, *Timothy Eaton and the Rise of His Department Store* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1990), 39-57

52. Douglas E. Harker, *The Woodwards: The Story of a Distinguished British Columbia Family, 1850-1975* (Vancouver: Mitchell, 1976), 10-17; Kenneth Kelly, 'The Development of Farm Marketing Agencies and Competition Between Market Centres in Eastern Simcoe County, 1850-1875,' *Canadian Papers in Rural History*, vol.1 (Ganonoque, Ontario: Langdale, 1978), 67-86

Journal is a suitable case in point, but so too is the experience of the Prairie west. There, the number of dailies and weeklies each tripled between 1891 and 1904.⁵³

Nonetheless, while their industrial counterparts were forming trade associations, establishing standards, and drifting into the merger movement, publishers remained decidedly individualistic.⁵⁴ Their day-to-day operations often involved ruthless competition with crosstown rivals, and they were relatively isolated from the experiences of publishers elsewhere. Trade associations existed, but operated more as social clubs than as business organizations. Weekly papers in particular suffered for this situation, especially where the combination of publisher and editor in one man was still the rule.⁵⁵ The experience of Joseph T. Clark, who bought the *Pickering News* in 1888, was much like that of Josiah Blackburn in London almost forty years before. Together with his brother James, Clark owned, wrote, set, and printed the paper himself.⁵⁶ Few publishers could imagine their trade reduced to an impersonal process re-organized just like steel, cigarettes, or cotton to fit within the system of mass production. A newspaper was not simply a standardized product, but an expression of the editor himself and a reflection of the community he served.⁵⁷ It may have been possible for Max Aitken to rationalize several cement manufacturers into a single corporation, but newspapers were far too intimate and local to surrender to the same impulse towards consolidation.⁵⁸

In their business practices the publishers also evaded any kind of standardization. The frequency of publication and the number of pages per issue that each paper printed would be entirely

53. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 1ed. (1892); *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 4ed. (1905)

54. Michael Bliss, *A Living Profit: Studies in the Social History of Canadian Business, 1883-1911* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), 33-54; Tom Traves, *The State and Enterprise: Canadian Manufacturers and the State, 1917-1931* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1979), 30-33

55. 'The Country Editor and the Advertising Agent,' *Printer & Publisher*, 2:10 (October 1893), 6-7; 'Co-operation Among Local Publishers,' *Printer & Publisher*, 4:4 (April 1895), 4-5; 'The Circular on Foreign Advertising,' *Printer & Publisher*, 13:12 (December 1904), 12-13

56. Jock Carroll, *The Life and Times of Greg Clark* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 1981), 23

57. Rutherford, 190-227

58. J.H. Cranston, *Ink on My Fingers* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1953), vii-viii; on Aitken, see A. Chisholm and M. Davie, *Beaverbrook: A Life* (London: Hutchison, 1992), 51-68.

dependent on the paper's levels of revenue. The more subscriptions and advertising a paper enjoyed, the more pages it could afford to run. When George Brown expanded the *Globe* from a weekly to a triweekly in 1849, it was not because there was an increase in newsworthy events in Toronto. He was satisfying an increased demand for advertising space.⁵⁹ As ad content increased, editors increased their pages to accommodate it. They then increased their editorial content to maintain a respectable ratio of news to ads. Boilerplates and ready-prints offered two ways to do this. The development of telegraph news service at mid-century provided another. Up-to-date news of foreign lands brought in by wire was both exotic for readers and cheaper than hiring more reporters.⁶⁰ Similarly, fiction, poetry, and illustrations could also fill editorial space quite capably.

Just as the frequency and the page number of each paper could vary, the page size and column width of each paper could also vary. For local advertisers this would not have been a problem, since all of their typesetting was usually done by the paper itself. Note for instance James Poole's work for the Wylies. Alternatively, if the town was large enough to support a job printing plant, an advertiser could get its ad made to order in plate form before sending it to the paper. Foreign advertisers who used several papers and wanted a consistent 'look' for their advertising relied on print shops. However, the lack of standardization among papers increased the cost of plate-making dramatically; each new column size required its own setting.

The rate paid by the advertiser for the space in the paper was completely open to negotiation between the two parties. This could vary according to the size of the ad, the frequency of its

59. J.M.S. Careless, *Brown of the Globe* vol.1. (Toronto: Macmillan, 1959), 100. Peter G. Goheen argues that increased news reporting spurred larger papers, but the evidence he marshalls is ambivalent. However, advertising content paid its own way, editorial did not; it seems unlikely that publishers would have increased their pages without the promise of greater returns. Goheen, 'The changing bias of inter-urban communications in nineteenth-century Canada,' *Journal of Historical Geography*, 16:2 (1990), 177-196.

60. Goheen, 177-196; M.E. Nichols, (CP) *The Story of the Canadian Press* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1948)

insertion, and the circulation of the paper. One correspondent who wrote to James Poole avoided all of these questions and simply trusted him to use his best judgment, asking: 'Please advertise the following to the amount of one dollar'⁶¹ The value of a publisher's white space was a complex issue. Publishers could have as many as four rates: one for local business, a second for foreign business, a third for government notices, and a fourth, rarely acknowledged but generally accepted, for family and friends. To call these 'rates' may be very misleading. More often than not, they were guidelines within which a paper's advertising 'solicitor' would operate.⁶²

One group of entrepreneurs saw a tremendous opportunity in this chaos slowly emerging within the publishing industry: the advertising agents. So long as the papers continued to remain proudly independent, particularly with regard to the size of their pages and the value of their rates, there existed a niche for someone who could assist advertisers in the placement of their notices. And this is the opportunity that the agents seized.

The Agent as Opportunist

'Agents' brokering white space had worked the publishing field for decades before 1900. For much of that time they served solely as middlemen between those interested in advertising their shops or wares, and those who had blank space they wanted to fill. For merchants and manufacturers, this was a very convenient service. Each town in Canada had at least one weekly paper, with its own idiosyncratic line rates and billing practices. To place an ad in a single paper, one would have to know of its existence, inquire after its rates and schedules, draught a contract, make the plates (if one had them made oneself), send them, check that the ad actually ran as instructed on the date arranged,

61. James Poole papers, v.2, f.January/1864, W. Riddell to J. Poole, December 1864

62. The salesmen who sold white space for newspapers were called 'solicitors' or 'representatives' until 1900, when 'representatives' became more widely used; Bertram Brooker, 'Forty Years of Canadian Advertising,' *Marketing*, 20:9 (3 May 1924), 281

and then pay the bill. Any firm seeking distribution outside of its immediate locale would have to repeat this process with as many papers as it saw fit.

Enter the newspaper's solicitor. Given the wide range of chores that editor/publishers had to perform, it is not surprising that they had little time to seek out advertisers. Revenue was based primarily on reader subscriptions, and when advertisers did approach them with a proposition for space it was treated as bonus income. When the returns from advertising became more lucrative, however, and rival papers began to compete for them, astute publishers began to hire representatives to secure business. Here too, the daily papers were ahead of the weeklies. In the 1850s, only dailies could generate sufficient revenue from the sale of advertising space to cover the salary of the salesman. Representatives offered the advertisers a certain degree of convenience, since they removed the need to seek out suitable papers for their publicity. On the other hand, a thriving business might be deluged with representatives from several papers, each making an earnest claim for his own sheet. The selling point of any paper over its rivals might be the low price of its line rates or its high circulation. Shrewd advertisers would calculate the value of a paper's rates against circulation. Potential advertisers were also well advised to check for themselves the quality and distribution of the papers being pushed.

A thoughtful entrepreneur might see in this state of affairs an opportunity, and Volney B. Palmer did just that. Palmer set up shop as an independent solicitor in Philadelphia sometime around 1841. As an independent solicitor, Palmer placed ads in any paper for any company that hired him. Like any other salesman, he would take a commission on the total rate charged by each paper for the advertising he secured. Palmer's rate was 25%. He would take the paper's bill, submit it to the advertiser, then hand over the advertiser's payment, minus his 25% commission, to the paper. This was a logical development from the existing system. It was the papers that had the goods for sale,

and it was on their behalf that the solicitors operated.⁶³

Like all success stories, Palmer inspired imitators. The first in the United States was one of his own employees, S.M. Pettingill, who broke away to form his own agency. In Canada, the earliest agent on record was Robert Moore.⁶⁴ Formerly in the employ of Montreal's *Commercial Advertiser*, Moore opened shop as an independent solicitor in 1860, under a shingle bearing the impressive-sounding name of 'The British American Advertising and Circular Delivery Agency.'

For the advertiser, agency service was a great convenience. With one agent handling the placement of all of its ads, the advertiser would no longer have to deal directly with the papers. All solicitations could be referred to its agency. As Moore told one potential client, 'I can do your advertising on very reasonable terms, and save you much trouble, time and expense, besides checking any irregularities in the insertions From my knowledge of the business, I can work for you better than you can do for yourself'⁶⁵ Moreover, the agent's services were nominally 'free.' An advertiser would pay only the rate established by the paper itself, and the paper would then give the agent a commission based on the volume of business placed. Doubtless, 'invisible' might be more accurate than 'free.' It is unlikely that publishers did not raise their rates to compensate for the revenue lost.⁶⁶ Line rates for many publishers were never fixed in stone, so that preferred rates could be given to loyal clients, and the sales staff could have some flexibility and margin for personal gain. When the Toronto *Colonist* gave Moore a list of their rates outright, he commented that this would be a great convenience. It would allow him to plan campaigns and quote rates to his clients

63. Calkins and Holden, 13-26; Pope, 113-114

64. That is to say, the earliest on record that I have been able to identify.

65. NAC, MG29 E18, John Lowe Papers, v.40, British American Advertising (BAA), 'Letterbook,' R. Moore to F. Buteau, 28 April 1860

66. Two Ottawa publishers admitted to this in 1918. The CPA thought it best to deny any such practice; NAC, MG28 I 6, Canadian Press Association records, v.2, Committee on Recognition of Advertising Agencies, 'Minute Book 1910-1919,' 19 April 1918

without a lot of haggling over prices.⁶⁷

Moore charged papers the same rate that Palmer had: 25%. How this rate was established is not clear. Presumably, this had been the rate the papers paid their own representatives on staff. When John Ross Robertson began selling ad space for the *Toronto Leader* in 1863, this was his rate of commission. Hugh C. MacLean earned the same rate as a solicitor for the family firm in 1889.⁶⁸ The 25% rate began to suffer only under the onslaught of modern business techniques and calls for greater efficiency.

Due to the lack of records kept by agencies from any time period, it is difficult to know exactly how a typical contract would be framed between a client and an agency. Fortunately, Moore preserved a letter of agreement between himself and a publisher, and it is worth printing it here in its entirety:

Receive herewith, Advertisements of the Life Association of Scotland, in three different forms -- for insertion in the following manner -- No. 1, to be inserted in Monday next, and all next week, when it is to be taken out, and No. 2, put in its place the following week; to be succeeded by No. 3, in the same way, the week afterwards. Then to commence again with No. 1, and to continue in the same succession, till 5th April next inclusive, when the Advertisement is to be taken out entirely, -- Insertion in the Weekly Edition to be made in the same manner:- An Editorial notice, which will be sent you, to be also inserted, and copies of the Papers to be delivered at this office, and to the Life Association. The Advertisement must be in the columns of the Editorial page, and nowhere else, or no payment will be

67. BAA Letterbook, R. Moore to Mr Thomson, 23 February 1860

68. Ron Poulton, *The Paper Tyrant* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, 1971), 22; Public Archives of Ontario (PAO), F138, Maclean-Hunter (M-H) records, b.54, f.HC MacLean, H.C. MacLean to J.B. Maclean, 3 January 1945

made.— Your charge for advertising is to be _____. Charge to this office.⁶⁹

This contract provides a window into the customs of the mid-nineteenth century agent, and several practices evident here became standard in the future. The blank in the letterbook copy suggests that this was a standard form, the specifics to be changed to suit the publisher. And again, such contracts would have evolved under the in-house solicitation system; all the agent did was introduce a middleman. Note here that the ads were provided by the agency already written and engraved; provisions were made separately for the daily and weekly editions of the paper; the ad's placement on the page was specified; and copies of the paper were to be sent to the agency and client. It was customary for the publisher to send a copy of that day's paper to the advertiser to show them that the contract had been fulfilled. If a business hired an agency to conduct its advertising, this bit of housekeeping fell to the agency. Also, the agency contracted the paper to run an 'Editorial notice,' in essence a puff piece masquerading as an article written by a member of the paper's staff or perhaps the advertiser itself.

Whether or not Moore was the first to offer agency service in Canada, the novelty of his operation remains evident from the problems he faced. One business manager wrote to ask if Moore's commission was to be added to the paper's bill for its space; another wondered if Moore expected a 'discount' for the client on top of his own 25% commission. As Moore pointed out rather icily to a Mr Thomson of the Toronto *Colonist*,

You seem to be under a mistake with regard to the discount.- As I have been appointed advertising agent for the Life Association, the sole management of advertisements rests with me, and there can be no double discount. The only deduction will be 25%.- If therefore you will agree to insert these according to printed instructions for the sum of \$55. less 25%, please do so, but if not be kind

69. BAA Letterbook, R. Moore to the Montreal *Herald*, 18 February 1860

enough to return them.⁷⁰

In another case, a publisher frustrated with a delay in payment wrote directly to the client. This action infuriated Moore, who responded, 'Mr Grant has nothing to do with my business, and you had no right to write him regarding me.- ... It was a piece of pure impertinence on your part to write to a third party regarding a matter which was personal to you & myself.'⁷¹ The roles of each player in the transaction were made perfectly clear. Moore considered each component of the agency's dealings to be a discrete transaction. It took him a great deal of work to educate publishers to understand the nature of the services he was providing.

Not all publishers found this arrangement troublesome. G.J. Barthe of *La Gazette de Sorel* did not simply accept Moore's contracts, he asked him to be a free-lance solicitor for the paper. One wonders if other small town papers, some distance from commercial centres and hence less accessible to advertisers, did not do the same. Never one to let an opportunity to pass, Moore accepted the offer, and then offered to collect Barthe's bills as well.⁷²

Soon after he opened shop, Moore approached two other men to act as his agents in cities south of the border, John Styles of Boston, Massachusetts, and S.M. Pettingill, then in New York, New York. In return, Moore offered to supply them with his services for the city of Montreal, in the hopes that these partnerships would be 'mutually beneficial.' Basically, each would be able to offer his clients a more extensive and international circulation for the placement of their ads.⁷³ Styles accepted Moore's invitation, but no record of Pettingill's answer is available. That said, Pettingill had offered his clients service in British North America in the 1850s.⁷⁴

70. Ibid., R. Moore to Mr Thomson, 23 February 1860

71. Ibid., R. Moore to R. Boyle, 10 May 1860

72. Ibid., R. Moore to G.J. Barthes, 23 February 1860

73. Ibid., R. Moore to J. Styles, 14 February 1860; R. Moore to S.M. Pettingill, 14 February 1860

74. Frank Presbrey, *The History and Development of Advertising* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1929), 265

For clients, Moore offered other services beyond print advertising. The most conspicuous of these was postering – the display of show cards. When soliciting business, he claimed to have exclusive right to prime locations in steamers, railway cars, and train stations, as well as the best ‘dead walls and hoardings in the City,’ where show cards could be displayed to great advantage. For those who are privy to his letterbook, it is also evident that he did not have any such thing. On the very same day that he wrote John Styles of Boston, informing him that he had agreements with various railway companies to display show cards, he wrote the Grand Trunk Railway requesting this same opportunity. Another service provided to clients was the distribution of circulars. For delivery, he charged \$10.00 per one thousand sheets; to address them before delivery he charged an extra \$2.50 per thousand. Considering that circular delivery was part of his agency’s name, one wonders to what extent this service was key to his business.⁷⁵

Soliciting clients, placing ads, collecting bills, displaying show cards, delivering circulars, networking with other agents, and later publishing business directories: at mid-century, Robert Moore was a jack-of-all-trades, a hustler in business services. His letters even reveal the kind of practices that would later tar the entire industry: haggling over the specifics of contracts to delay payment, attempts to buy editorial columns as well as advertising space, and outright lying to his partners.⁷⁶ Moore placed ads for at least two different companies before his letterbook ended in 1864.

The following year, a tremendous change overtook this emerging industry, and again the leadership was in the United States. In 1865, George P. Rowell established an agency in Boston with a new twist. As more agencies had entered the game, the 25% commission sought by Palmer slowly eroded. In the heat of competition, many agents were willing to surrender to the advertisers part of their commission to lower the price of their service. As time went on, the margin of profit for such

75. BAA Letterbook, R. Moore to J. Styles, 22 February 1860

76. This topic will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

agencies steadily shrank. Rowell found a way to beat this system by turning it on its head. Rather than winning an advertiser's account first, and then placing its ads, Rowell contracted large amounts of space in one hundred New England papers, and then sold this list *in toto* to advertisers. By purchasing space in bulk, he became in essence a wholesaler, though he was more commonly referred to as a 'space jobber.' He knew that he had the cheapest rates available for those papers, and he could attract advertisers on that basis. Like Palmer before him, his success soon spawned imitators, who specialized in the papers of other regions or in other types of periodicals. Such agents included J. Walter Thompson, who contracted space in several general magazines, and Lord & Thomas, who did the same with religious periodicals. Thompson took the new system a step further by becoming the sole representative for the publications on his list. He initially controlled the highly successful magazines owned by Cyrus Curtis. Until the 1890s any advertiser who wished to appear in the *Ladies Home Journal* had to place its ads through him. The commission became irrelevant within this system. The agents' profits were made from the resale value of white space.⁷⁷

Papers not included on a major list had a difficult time soliciting advertising. To combat this, many papers maintained their own representatives – now called 'special representatives' to set them apart from agents – to knock on advertisers' doors. As the number and influence of these special representatives grew, advertisers began to rail against the 'closed' contracts of the space jobbers. The papers on an agency list were not selected with the advertiser's product in mind. Rather, they were merely the papers with whom the agency had contracts. A.J. Ayer, the president of N.W. Ayer & Son, exploited this resentment with the introduction of an 'open' contract in 1875. Each advertiser would be offered a judicious selection of media sensitive to its product and distribution network. In so doing, Ayer introduced the concept of advertiser-oriented service into the agency's operations.

77. George P. Rowell, *Forty Years an Advertising Agent, 1865-1905* (New York: Franklin, 1926); James W. Young, *Advertising Agency Compensation* (Chicago: University of Illinois, 1933), 23-25

The agency would not simply be a publishers' representative, nor a wholesaler, but an objective advisor to the advertiser in the purchase of advertising space. To pay for this service, Ayer re-adopted the commission system.⁷⁸ Despite the allure of service, no agency would have survived had it relied on that alone to amass clients. Advertisers still sought cheap rates, and the agencies which offered them won the contracts.⁷⁹ The constant drive for lower rates led to several problems in the publishing industry on both sides of the border after 1890.

In Canada, there is insufficient evidence to state which model the agencies followed, be it Rowell's wholesale agent, Thompson's closed contract, or Ayer's open one. Robert Moore, for one, contracted space from newspapers for each new client. Unfortunately, no other agency records have been preserved from this time period. That said, it might be suggested that the space jobbers never held sway to the same extent here as they did in the United States. Before 1890, few companies apart from the patent medicine makers advertised outside of their immediate locales. There were two reasons for this: first, advertising was traditionally the forte of retailers, and most manufacturers were happy to leave this expense to them. Second, Canadian manufacturers did not produce trademarked goods in great quantities until the late 1890s. Without recognizable trademarks, most goods could not be advertised effectively.⁸⁰ As such, it would have been a tremendous gamble for any agent without a slate of clients already lined up. It is telling that one of Robert Moore's clients was a Scottish firm. It is also telling that his agency lasted a mere three years.

The Agent as Corporate Consultant

Ansom McKim had a better go of it than did Robert Moore. But to describe his beginning, it is

78. Young, 25-28; Ralph M. Hower, *The History of an Advertising Agency: N.W. Ayer & Son at Work* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard, 1939)

79. James Playsted Wood, *The Story of Advertising* (New York: Ronalds, 1958), 242-245

80. Stephenson and McNaught, 49-75; David Monod, *Store Wars: Shopkeepers and the Culture of Mass Marketing, 1890-1939* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1996), 99-148, especially 140-141

necessary to describe the circumstances which gave him his opening in the business. In 1872, Sir John A. Macdonald surveyed the newspaper field in Toronto and decided that the local Tory organ, *The Leader*, was no match for George Brown's intellectually formidable *Globe*. To remedy this, Macdonald drew together a group of backers to create a new paper.⁸¹ So was born the Toronto *Mail*, which quickly drew off Conservative support and put the *Leader* out of business. That said, it was not an immediate financial success itself. It was sold in 1877 to its chief creditor, John Riordan, owner of a St Catharines paper company. Riordan then set out to recreate the *Mail* with an impressive new building, new presses, new type, and an editorial policy that made it a paper of record to rival the *Globe*.⁸² With these changes accomplished, the paper then did something which no one could have foreseen: the paper's enigmatic editor, Edmund Farrer, declared independence from the Conservative Party with Riordan's blessing. Other newspapermen grudgingly acknowledged that the paper's period of 'splendid isolation' represented the best journalism of the day.⁸³ Readers apparently agreed. By 1892 it had the largest circulation of any paper in Toronto, and was second only to the Montreal *Star* across the country.⁸⁴

T.W. Dyas was the paper's advertising manager. While Riordan was intent on expanding the paper's plant and influence, it fell to Dyas to make the paper profitable through its advertising columns. Since all of the Toronto papers competed for local advertisers, one of the chief means to increase revenue was to employ travelling salesmen to cultivate advertisers outside of the city. Looking south, however, Dyas noted with favour that American papers were hiring 'special representatives' to open permanent offices in major manufacturing and commercial centres. In

81. Donald Creighton, *John A. Macdonald: The Old Chieftain* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1955), 115-120

82. Carman Cumming, *Secret Craft: The Journalism of Edward Farrer* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1992)

83. Cumming, 65ff; Hector Charlesworth, *Candid Chronicles* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1925), 75

84. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 1ed. (1892), 222-223

essence, such an office would function as a branch of the paper's advertising department and offer a continuous link to 'foreign' businesses. Dyas thought this a good idea, and in 1878 he opened an office in Montreal. It was staffed by a young man, then 26, who had worked at the *Mail* for six years: Ansom McKim.

Hired as a special representative, McKim gradually transformed the office into an independent advertising agency. When he arrived in Montreal, he discovered he had been preceded by a rival from the *Globe*. Neither man found many opportunities in the city, and McKim at time went weeks without landing a new contract.⁸⁵ His fortunes changed when he decided to reorganize his operations along the lines of an agency like Moore or Pettingill's. Several advertisers wanted to place notices in Ontario centres outside of Toronto. If McKim could arrange contracts for several papers at once, he would gain a decided advantage for the *Mail* itself. The *Mail* agreed to this arrangement, and other papers willing to come into the plan were soon found. In exchange for this service, the agency took a commission from each paper on the total number of lines bought by the client, much as Moore had done. By 1889, the other publishers were convinced of the value of this operation, but had grown tired of surrendering a commission to the *Mail*. With their encouragement, McKim left the *Mail*'s employ to work for himself, and became an independent solicitor.⁸⁶

Incidentally, McKim's initial success in Montreal inspired Dyas to open a similar office in Toronto. McKim was not only selling the *Mail*, he was selling a service. There was no reason to believe that advertisers in Ontario would not appreciate this service as well. Rather than creating another special representative, however, Dyas took the next logical step and opened an 'independent' advertising agency in 1882; the Mail Advertising Agency pre-empted McKim by seven years. Although still connected to the *Mail*, and staffed by one of the paper's former solicitors, it too placed

85. McKim, 'Advertising Agencies ...,' 18

86. Ibid., 24:11 (November 1915), 18; Bertram Brooker, 'Forty Years of Canadian Advertising,' *Marketing*, 20:9 (3 May 1924), 281-282; Stephenson and McNaught, 18-35

ads in any number of Ontario papers, and sent agents throughout British North America looking for clients.⁸⁷

The success of McKim's bureau is usually credited to his own daring and imagination, but it should not be forgotten that his agency grew out of one of the most respected papers of his day. Where a man such as Moore had struck out on his own, McKim began with the prestige and credit of the *Mail* behind him, a publisher who was willing to take chances, and a capable mentor in Dyas. Only after eleven years at the *Mail*, and with the backing of several papers, did McKim sever this connection. However, the success of his agency, and those of men like Pettingill, Ayer, and Thompson in the United States, inspired other men to go into the agency business. Not surprisingly, without the same beneficial conditions that McKim had enjoyed, few succeeded in Canada. City directories for Montreal and Toronto listed agencies throughout the 1870s and 1880s; there were usually four or five in each city in any given year, and few made more than a single appearance.⁸⁸ After 1890, however, when the economy picked up steam and the volume of advertising increased, agencies began to appear in most of the regions with rapidly developing mercantile and industrial centres – cities such as Halifax, Ottawa, Hamilton, London, Winnipeg, Edmonton, and Vancouver.

The Agent as Small Businessman

Agents such as Moore and McKim were essentially middlemen within the publishing industry. They were brokers who connected publishers with advertisers, and advertisers with publishers. That much was clear, but the actual workings of this three-way relationship could become extremely complex, as Robert Moore quickly discovered. They became more complex by 1900. The growing volume of advertising, and new types of agency service, transformed the typical agency from a small office

87. Brooker, 282; 'Started in Canada,' *Printer & Publisher*, 15:5 (May 1906), 20

88. *Montreal Directory* (Lovell: Montreal, [1870-1890]); *Toronto City Directory* (various publishers: Toronto, [1871-1890])

operation into a modern, departmentalized company employing dozens of staff. After 1900, these trends prompted a reassessment of the agents' role to determine who their chief client was: the publisher or the advertiser? A sensible observer might say both. George Rowell stated pragmatically that he worked for himself.⁸⁹ Nonetheless, someone had to pay the agent; the answer to the question at hand would determine who was responsible for the agency's commission. Disputants focused on the service provided by the agencies, and whom it benefitted most.

Following Ansom McKim, Canadian agents positioned themselves within the industry as the servants of the press. 'First and foremost and all the time,' McKim's newspaper directory declared, 'it is the business of an advertising agency to promote and facilitate newspaper advertising.'⁹⁰ It was their job to solicit supralocal advertisers for the papers. Insofar as the agency system had evolved out of the advertising departments of actual newspapers, this must have seemed self-evident. The paper's own advertising staff would be paid commission on all new business secured. The agencies would be paid commission on every contract placed, whether new or not. This could be justified because the solicitation process was undertaken at the agency's expense. Long before any ad was placed, before any bill was submitted to a paper, the agency was out hustling clients on its own time and account.⁹¹ Toronto agent J.J. Gibbons boasted that, in his own shop:

A corps of intelligent and high-salaried solicitors are constantly working on the non-advertising manufacturers and others, persuading them to become regular advertisers, offering experienced direction to their campaigns, and doing everything in their power to induce them to take up newspaper advertising.⁹²

89. Young, 38-39

90. 'The Business of the Modern Newspaper Advertising Agency,' *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 2ed. (1899), 26; see also 'The System and Equipment of the Modern Newspaper Advertising Agency,' *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 3ed. (1901), 25-26.

91. W.A. C[raick], 'Brief Interviews with Advertising Men,' *Printer & Publisher*, 11:9 (September 1902), 18-19

92. J.J. Gibbons, 'The Agent's Standpoint,' *Printer & Publisher*, 14:4 (April 1905), 20-21

Few newspapers had anything comparable to attract new business.

Of course, no matter how much time and effort an agent put into this process, there was always the possibility that nothing would come of it. At times, business could simply be slow. At one point in the fall of 1898, McKim and Desbarats were placing only one contract apiece.⁹³ At other times, agencies would simply have to deal with the realities of the marketplace: a competing agency could get the account. A.R. Coffin, an executive with a Nova Scotia printing house, painted a third possible scenario:

A general advertiser who, in these days, wishes to start in advertising with a fair amount of success has a complete advertising campaign laid out for him, by an agency, which must include all detail Then after all the whole proposition may be laid on the shelf for another year, or it has been known that the advertiser would not say thank you to the agency but get a clerk in his office to put into effect the agency's scheme and hold up the papers for the agency's commission.⁹⁴

Coffin knew of one more than one manufacturer who had tried this last trick, though he understandably did not name them.

Once a client was under contract, the agency was responsible for the placement of its ads. An extensive knowledge of the periodical market was required to do this job effectively, and this became the responsibility of 'media departments.' The staff in such departments would be divided into three main groups: researchers, space-buyers, and checkers. The researchers' primary task was to know everything about every periodical in the country: where it was published and by whom, its tone and reputation, what market it served, its circulation, its political or religious affiliations, whether or not it carried advertising, and its line rates if it did.⁹⁵ Space-buyers would then use this

93. 'The Advertising Situation,' *Printer & Publisher*, 7:10 (October 1898), 3

94. 'The Advertising Agency,' *Printer & Publisher*, 15:3 (March 1906), 13

95. 'The Business ...,' *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 2ed. (1899), 26

information to maximize the value of each advertiser's appropriation. In essence, this entailed reaching the most readers with the highest potential interest in the product or service, at the lowest possible expense. Once the ad was run, it was then the checkers' task to ensure that everything appeared according to contract. In the United States, agencies such as Ayer and Rowell demonstrated their expertise in the handling of media by publishing directories of American newspapers. Canadian agencies followed suit. McKim Limited published its first directory in 1892, and eventually shared the market with similar volumes issued by Desbarats Advertising, Canadian Advertising, and W.A. Lydiatt. McKim's book was modelled on Rowell's; Lydiatt had worked for Rowell himself.

The most difficult piece of information to obtain was invariably the paper's circulation figure. Most companies wanted their advertising placed in papers that would reach as many readers as possible. In cities or regions where there was more than one paper, this generally meant they would only select the paper with the highest circulation. Competition among publishers for lucrative advertising contracts led them into a cycle of ballooning estimates and mutual recriminations. Gibbons related the following experience while speaking before the Canadian Press Association:

I went into one newspaper office in Ontario and inquired about their circulation. One partner told me 1,200, while the other a few hours later told me they were printing 600 and seemed to think they were making splendid progress. In another town the people said the local paper had a circulation of 300; the pressman after thinking it over placed the circulation at 600, while the publisher assured me on his word of honour that the circulation was 900.⁹⁶

Caught in the middle, agencies often had to draft their own estimates. Sometimes, as Gibbons's comments suggest, this was done simply by chatting with the locals and getting a sense for the paper's popularity. The agents' calls for verified numbers were resisted by most publishers, and it

96. J.J. Gibbons in *Printer & Publisher*, 13:12 (December 1904), 12-13

took the combined efforts of Canada's top advertisers to change their minds. That would not happen until the 1910s.

Space rates provided a second bone of contention between publishers and agents. Many publishers had rate cards which they issued once a year for the benefit of their patrons; they did not strictly follow their stated rates. Here, competing publishers entered a dangerous spiral of price-cutting to attract agencies looking for a good deal. Agents exploited this tendency to the fullest. Indeed, it was a talking point in their solicitations. An article in McKim's directory was exceptionally frank when it stated that a good agency 'must know the rock bottom rates ... of every publication.'⁹⁷ Clients expected no less, and the agencies were expected to compete for their business. The Sun Life Assurance Company wanted to run a brief campaign in 1911. It requested estimates from two different agencies, for the exact same ad in the exact same list of papers. One reported that it could do it for \$2,330.65, the other for \$2,011.17. Naturally, it hired the second agency.⁹⁸

Taken together, solicitation and space buying were the two main services provided by agencies before the turn of the century. That said, they did provide a number of other conveniences for their clients. These had remained basically the same since the days of Robert Moore: having plates made, sending them out, checking the insertions after publication, and paying the bills.

Most agencies did not have the facilities to create plates themselves. This task would be farmed out to job printing plants, and a separate bill would be submitted to the advertiser for their cost. The 1880s witnessed the flowering of these firms in Canada, and Toronto became home to several. Among the better known may be counted Toronto Lithography, Copp Clark, Brigden's, and the legendary Grip Limited. Firms of this calibre maintained the skilled labour and equipment

97. 'The Business ...,' *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 2ed. (1899), 26

98. Sun Life Corporate Archives (SLA), Acc.00480, b.84, f.'Early Advertising Ideas,' Lawrence G. Cluxton, 23 February 1911; Desbarats Advertising Agency, 23 February 1911

necessary to produce a broad range of printed goods, from tickets and handbills to full-size posters. Agencies contracted them for many of these goods, but the most common items sought were plates.⁹⁹

Given the range of expertise at their command, the print shops were well-positioned to enter the agency business themselves. Since they were already illustrating and setting advertisements, it was only logical to place them as well. One shop that did so was the Central Press Agency, under the management of Frederick Diver. Founded in 1878, this shop enjoyed a lengthy partnership with the *Toronto World* after that paper began in 1880.¹⁰⁰ Through the 1890s, Diver expanded into the production of ready-prints for several weekly papers. These sheets carried a high volume of 'foreign' advertising, and brought Diver into contact with a number of Canadian and American advertisers. About 1897, he capitalized on this business by entering the general agency field, and began placing his client's announcements in papers beyond his own list of weeklies. Salada Tea was an early account.¹⁰¹

Copywriting and illustration were not a part of the typical agency's repertoire prior to 1900. The two core occupations within the agency were the solicitors and the space-buyers; the first were essentially in sales, the latter were essentially in purchasing. Neither were trained writers. When solicitors brought a new client into the fold, it was generally assumed that the client knew best what he or she wanted to say. An agency simply offered to place the advertising in an efficient manner.

99. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 3ed. (1901), 23-24; Angela E. Davis, 'Art and Work: Frederick Brigden and the History of the Canadian Illustrated Press,' *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 21:2 (Summer 1992), 22-36; Angela E. Davis, *Art and Work: A Social History of Labour in the Canadian Graphic Arts Industry to the 1940s* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1995)

100. Thomas L. Walkom writes that Central Press began as the job printing department of the *World*, but the print shop's advertising place its origins prior to those of the paper. *Advertisement, Economic Advertising*, 3:8 (August 1910), 18; Walkom, 'The Daily Newspaper Industry in Ontario's Developing Capitalistic Economy: Toronto and Ottawa, 1871-1911' (University of Toronto: unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, 1983), 39-40

101. CPA records, v.2, Recognition Committee, 'Minute Book 1910-1919,' 21 June 1910; Bertram Brooker, 'Forty Years of Canadian Advertising,' *Marketing*, 21:3 (9 August 1924), 68

However, some agents would prepare copy and select illustrations if the client so desired. With copy, the agent would likely write it himself. With illustrations, he would likely turn once again to the expertise of a print shop, the primary source of employment for commercial artists.¹⁰²

A demand for expert copywriting led some aspiring authors to freelance in this line of work. Freelance copywriters would occasionally work with agencies, but most often they were hired by advertisers who wanted their notices to sound more polished than the run-of-mill work that appeared in most papers. Sometimes freelancers would offer to place business as well as write copy, but more often than not they simply wrote for advertisers who placed their business direct.¹⁰³

The story of Wilson P. MacDonald is interesting in this light. In the 1920s, MacDonald was renowned for a brand of romantic poetry that critics scorned but hundreds of adoring fans embraced. While developing his craft, he earned his keep as a freelance copywriter. Macdonald travelled through much of Canada and the United States between 1900 and 1918, stopping in each town for two or three months at a time. He rarely stayed longer. He carried with him a stock of pre-written advertisements which he re-sold in every new town. When his stock was near empty, he would pack up and move to the next town. A bachelor living in hotels or boarding houses, Macdonald never had a secretary, let alone a full-service agency under his care.¹⁰⁴

The agency scene changed appreciably after 1899, thanks to J.J. Gibbons. Gibbons created the first copy and art departments to be found in any agency in Canada. This simply meant that he employed staff whose sole responsibility was the preparation of copy and illustrations. While he was not the first to offer these services to advertisers, he was the first to offer them, bundled with

102. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 2ed. (1899), 29; W.A. C[raick], 'Brief Interviews with Advertising Men,' *Printer & Publisher*, 11:9 (September 1902), 18-19; A.Y. Jackson, *A Painter's Country* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, 1958), 26-27; Joan Murray, 'The World of Tom Thomson,' *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 26:3 (Fall 1991), 5-51

103. Stephenson and McNaught, 102-105

104. NAC, MG30 D279, Wilson MacDonald papers, v.10, f.10-1, 'Notes on W.M.'s Life;' Cheryl MacDonald, 'A Shakespeare for Canada,' *Beaver*, 67:2 (1987), 4-8

solicitations and space-buying, all under one roof. In so doing, he gained much greater control over the final product, and enhanced his agency's usefulness to the client. Not surprisingly, he had an immediate impact on the agency scene, and soon won the Canadian business of Lever Brothers. Until then, Lever had worked exclusively with McKim, and this shift in allegiance would be a portent of things to come.¹⁰⁵ Every agency which sought to expand its stable of clients with prestigious, national accounts was compelled to adopt the same practices as Gibbons. The Desbarats Advertising Agency admitted as much in 1912:

In our own advertising business, changes have been the order of the day.

The more or less perfunctory service has given way to a really highly specialized one, and we look back to the times that we thought we were giving our customers good service much in the same way perhaps as we will be looking back in another ten years on our efforts today.¹⁰⁶

By 1915, McKim too was forced to follow suit.¹⁰⁷

The increasing costs incurred by these new services led to a desire for greater security among agency owners. A full service agency would have a lot of capital tied up in personnel and plant. By 1904, only two agencies were listed in R.G. Dun & Company's credit reference book for Canada.¹⁰⁸ Desbarats, which had not yet developed into a full-service agency, was listed with \$10,000-20,000 in capital assets. By contrast, Frederick Diver's print shop *cum* agency was listed

105. Bertram Brooker, 'Forty Years of Canadian Advertising,' *Marketing*, 21:10 (15 November 1924), 272, 274; 'People Who Do Things,' *Saturday Night*, 51:10 (11 January 1936), 16

106. Desbarats Advertising Agency, *The Desbarats Newspaper Directory* 2ed. (Montreal: Desbarats, 1912), 4

107. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 3ed. (1901), 23; McKim, 'Advertising Agents ...,' 18; Stephenson and McNaught, 99-109

108. Dun's manuscript credit records for Canada cover the period from 1840 to 1880; no agencies appear in these records. See Harvard University School of Business Administration, Baker Library, R.G. Dun & Company collection; copies held by National Archives of Canada.

at \$35,000-50,000.¹⁰⁹ Fifteen years later, the Montreal head offices of McKim Limited and the Canadian Advertising Agency both rated \$35,000-50,000, while the Toronto branch of McConnell & Fergusson, a full-service agency based in London, Ontario, was listed at \$75,000-125,000.¹¹⁰ Freelancers could not say the same. Gibbons had very little patience with men such as Wilson P. MacDonald. MacDonald's entire approach to the trade was antithetical to its long-term interests. Whether or not his clients succeeded might have made no difference to him; he would be off to the next town regardless. Further, with no capital investment in the trade, he could afford to undercut the commission charged by other agencies and siphon off their business. As a result, he and others who appeared tapped the system for its wealth while contributing nothing of lasting value were thoroughly scorned by the full-service agencies. Gibbons decried these 'men that had no office other than their hats.'¹¹¹ McKim argued that freelancers were not true agents, and the third edition of his directory detailed the functions of the 'legitimate advertising agency, possessing large capital, thorough equipment, and a staff of trained employees.'¹¹²

Publishers were not inclined to feel sympathetic to these complaints. The new services that Gibbons had introduced were intended to benefit the advertiser, not the publisher. Nonetheless, it was the latter who paid the agent's way. It appeared to the publishers that the rationale for the commission system was slowly eroding. As the slate of agency services had developed, for all intents and purposes the advertiser had become the agency's chief client. It was a trend that generated much controversy within the Canadian industry, a controversy that will be explored in greater detail in the following chapter. For the time being, though, the commission system remained intact.

109. R.G. Dun & Company, *The Mercantile Agency Reference Book* (Toronto: Dun, 1904), 265, 423

110. R.G. Dun & Company, *The Mercantile Agency Reference Book* (Toronto: Dun, 1919), 311, 507, 512, 526

111. J.J. Gibbons, 'The Arrangement between the Agents and Publishers,' *Printer & Publisher*, 17:2 (February 1908), 32f-32g

112. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 3ed. (1901), 21-22

Toronto Takes the Lead

Toronto emerged as the leading city in the Canadian advertising trade between 1900 and 1914. Montreal remained the centre of Canadian banking throughout the period of this study, but Quebec as a whole lost ground to southern Ontario as a manufacturing and distribution centre.¹¹³ Publishing could be counted among these manufacturing concerns, and in 1926, the Dominion Bureau of Statistics stated unequivocally that the 'printing and publishing industry in Canada is centred in Ontario;' 40% of the country's establishments in this line were located there.¹¹⁴ Toronto, as the regional hub of Ontario's economy, was the one city that benefitted most. There were a number of factors that assisted in Ontario's ascendancy. The ready accessibility of its industrial centres to water and rail transportation gave its manufacturers a decided advantage in reaching both the domestic market and large sections of the United States. After 1890, the development of mineral deposits in 'New Ontario' and hydro-electric power in southern Ontario provided the impetus for a marked shift in the balance of the province's economy, from agriculture to manufacturing.¹¹⁵ The Industrial Census of 1880 reported that the total value of production in Montreal was almost \$53,000,000; Toronto, by contrast, claimed only \$20,000,000. Thirty years later, these rankings were reversed: Toronto accounted for \$154,000,000 to Montreal's \$116,000,000.¹¹⁶ Hence, there were manufacturers producing consumer goods, a rapidly growing urban population, and relatively steady industrial wages could be found in Toronto. By locating there rather than Montreal, a new advertising agency had several advantages: it was closer to businesses headquartered in Ontario, it was closer to the 500-odd papers serving the province's growing population, and it would not have

113. Buckley, 10-11; Easterbrook and Aitken, 515-557

114. Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Paper-Using Industries in Canada, 1926-1927* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1930), 17

115. Marr and Paterson, 108-116, 355-362; H.V. Nelles, *The Politics of Development: Forests, Mines, & Hydro-Electric Power in Ontario, 1849-1941* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1974), 48-107

116. Bonville, 26-27

to compete directly against the well-established McKim (see Table 1.1).¹¹⁷

While these considerations may have provided sound economic reasons for anglophone agents to locate in Toronto, they do not explain the dearth of francophone agents in Quebec. If any advertising agency was going to challenge McKim, one might have thought that the elder agency's understanding of the francophone market was a weak point to be exploited. Unlike goods and services, advertising is dependent upon language and recognizable cultural icons to make its point. Advertising in Quebec had to be written and placed in each language to reach both the English- and French-speaking populations effectively.¹¹⁸ Since most agency men at this time received their training from the newspapers, and few moved between the French- and English-language press, their experience tended to be in one language or the other. Nonetheless, few French Canadians entered the agency field. At the turn of the century, only 3 of 23 agencies listed in the Montreal City Directory were connected to French surnames.¹¹⁹

Notably, the first francophone to establish an agency in Quebec had worked in English and French, Eduoard Desbarats. Desbarats was from a family of noted Quebec printers.¹²⁰ After a brief stint soliciting for a family paper, *The Dominion Illustrated News*, he joined Ansom McKim's office in 1889. For two years, Desbarats learned the trade and refined his skills, after which time he established a rival agency in Montreal: the Desbarats Advertising Agency, Limited. Despite McKim's prestige and the depth of his client list (100 in 1899), Desbarats's agency developed into

117. See also Donald H. Thain, 'Advertising Agencies in Canada,' *Marketing in Canada*, eds. E.J. Fox and D.S.R. Leighton (Homewood, Illinois: Irwin, 1958), 171-191

118. Frederick Elkin, *Rebels and Colleagues: Advertising and Social Change in French Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1973), 17-33

119. *Montreal Classified Business Directory* (Montreal: Lovell, 1900), 73. Gerald Tulchinsky has noted the same phenomena occurred generally among Montreal's commercial agents in the mid-1800s; see Tulchinsky, *The River Barons*, 15-16.

120. 'Georges Edward Desbarats,' *Montreal: From 1535 to 1914* (Montreal: Clarke, 1914), 469-473

Table 1.1
 Number of Newspapers in Canada and Newfoundland,
 by Province, 1891-1930

Province		1891	1898	1904	1910	1914	1916	1918	1920	1925	1930
Prince Edward Island	daily	3	3	4	4	5	4	3	3	2	2
	weekly	10	13	12	10	8	6	7	6	5	5
Nova Scotia	daily	7	11	12	13	13	13	13	13	11	9
	weekly	62	73	62	55	48	45	46	50	33	47
New Brunswick	daily	7	9	9	6	8	8	8	8	7	6
	weekly	31	37	33	32	32	33	30	30	27	26
Quebec	daily	25	17	14	18	23	19	18	19	18	19
	weekly	115	114	115	116	109	104	103	106	105	133
Ontario	daily	42	55	53	56	54	49	46	41	42	42
	weekly	392	464	457	488	449	383	499	386	347	344
Manitoba	daily	2	6	8	8	8	7	6	6	5	7
	weekly	38	71	87	105	108	96	100	96	99	105
Saskatchewan	daily	*0	*0	*1	8	7	7	7	6	6	5
	weekly	*8	*16	*41	148	166	167	166	171	176	176
Alberta	daily	*2	*1	*4	10	8	7	6	6	6	6
	weekly	*8	*16	*27	97	104	82	96	110	107	113
British Columbia	daily	9	11	12	15	17	17	14	14	18	16
	weekly	17	48	49	68	88	57	56	58	67	73
Yukon Territory	daily	0	0	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	weekly	0	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2
Totals for Canada	all	778	968	1005	1257	1258	1087	1228	1132	1084	1137
Newfoundland	daily	3	3	3	4	4	5	4	4	3	2
	weekly	7	8	8	8	9	10	8	9	8	8

* Papers located by author according to political divisions created in 1905.

Numbers for weeklies include semiweeklies and triweeklies.
 Data from A. McKim & Company, *The Canadian Newspaper Directory* 1-24eds.
 (Montreal: McKim, [1892-1931]).

a major concern, and had clients such as Sun Life Assurance within ten years.¹²¹ He was a charter member of the agent's trade association and late in life was recognized within the Toronto advertising community as a pioneer in the Canadian trade.¹²²

Fourteen years would pass before another agency was successfully launched by a francophone. In 1906, François-Émile Fontaine opened the Canadian Advertising Agency. Among certain members of the trade in Quebec, Fontaine is considered the first French Canadian agent, in part because his shop was the first to be staffed entirely of francophones.¹²³ He began his career in advertising as a solicitor at Montreal's *Le Monde* in the early 1890s. *Le Monde* was the first French-language daily to consciously adopt the populist editorial style developed in the English-language press.¹²⁴ Perhaps, then, it is not surprising that it took a leading role in the development of newspaper advertising among francophones. Its advertising manager, and Fontaine's mentor, was Alfred Lionnais. Fontaine greatly admired Lionnais, and considered him 'le premier Canadien français à s'occuper sérieusement de publicité.'¹²⁵ The reason for his success was spelled out:

Elève du Collège Ste-Marie de Montréal, M. Lionnais parlait fort bien les deux langues: c'était une distinction à cette époque. Affable, courtois, spirituel, M. Lionnais avait ses entrées partout, même dans les maisons d'affaires anglaises, moins accueillantes en ce temps-là aux Canadiens français qu'elles le sont aujourd'hui.¹²⁶

It was a lesson that Fontaine took to heart. Like Desbarats, Fontaine adopted an English name for

121. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 2ed. (1899), 36-37; SLA, Sun Life of Canada, 'Advertising Register 1901-1911,' 15

122. The CAAA became the Institute of Canadian Advertising in 1965; on Desbarats, see 'Who's Who in Advertising,' *Canadian Advertising Data*, 4:6 (June 1931), 22.

123. Maurice Watier, *La Publicité* (Montreal: Pauline, 1985), 65. Fontaine himself acknowledged that Desbarats was the first; see F.-É. Fontaine, 'Les Débuts des Canadiens Français dans la Publicité,' *La Clé d'Or*, 1:9 (Novembre 1926), 242.

124. Rutherford, 64-65

125. Fontaine, 242

126. *Ibid.*, 242

his business. It did not become l'Agence Canadienne de Publicité, Limité, until 1962.¹²⁷ In the meantime, he quickly built up a client list of anglophone and francophone businesses, while specializing in French-language media.¹²⁸

The decision to retain an English name for a francophone agency points up the problems involved in running a French-language shop in Canada. But if the prejudices of the anglophone business community provided one obstacle, the francophone community provided some of its own. To prepare a campaign in English could be costly, but potentially lucrative considering the number of papers paying commission in Canada. An agency working in French would have the same costs but never the same number of papers in which to place its advertising. In 1864, Canada West boasted 169 papers, while Canada East had 52.¹²⁹ This spread remained relatively consistent over time. When Desbarats opened shop, Ontario had 434 papers to Quebec's 140. Of this 140, only 90 served the province's francophone communities, and only 17 were dailies.¹³⁰ This latter number dropped precipitously by 1898, and remained low into the twentieth century (Table 1.2). To make matters worse, the French-language papers did not inspire confidence. Although fewer papers could have meant less competition, it was not to be. French-language dailies clustered in the larger cities, and most found it difficult to survive.¹³¹ Among those published in the 1880s, only five were still operating forty years later.¹³² In 1891, when the English language *Montreal Star* led all Canadian papers with a circulation of 32,000, *La Presse* led the French papers with only 14,500.¹³³ The

127. Watier, 65; 'Advertising Arena,' *Printer & Publisher*, 18:1 (January 1909), 25

128. Bonville, 330; Canadian Advertising Agency, *French Newspapers and Periodicals of Canada and the United States* (Montreal: Canadian Advertising, 1913), 3-11

129. Canada West had 12 dailies and 157 weeklies, semiweeklies, and triweeklies; Canada East had 8 dailies and 44 tri/semi/weeklies. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 1ed. (1892), 59.

130. Ontario: 42 dailies and 392 tri/semi/weeklies; *The Canadian Newspaper Directory* 1ed. (1892), 60

131. Rutherford, 43-44, 88

132. Bonville, 64, 68

133. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 1ed. (1892), 222-223

Table 1.2

Number of Newspapers by Province and Language,
in Quebec, New Brunswick, Ontario, and Manitoba, 1891-1930

Province		1891	1898	1904	1910	1914	1916	1918	1920	1925	1930
Quebec	French daily	17	8	7	10	12	10	10	11	10	12
	English daily	8	9	7	8	11	9	8	8	8	7
	French weekly	73	63	60	63	60	60	58	63	62	87
	English weekly	42	51	55	53	49	44	45	43	43	46
New Brunswick	French daily	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	English daily	7	9	9	6	8	8	8	8	7	6
	French weekly	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	2
	English weekly	29	35	31	30	29	30	27	28	25	24
Ontario	French daily	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1
	English daily	41	54	52	55	52	47	45	40	41	41
	French weekly	5	3	2	7	7	5	4	2	4	2
	English weekly	387	461	455	481	442	378	485	384	343	342
Manitoba	French daily	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	English daily	2	6	8	8	8	7	6	6	5	7
	French weekly	1	2	2	1	3	3	3	3	3	1
	English weekly	37	69	85	104	105	93	97	93	96	104

Numbers for weeklies include semiweeklies and triweeklies.
Numbers for majority language papers may include papers in languages
other than French and English.

Data from A. McKim & Company, *The Canadian Newspaper Directory* 1-28eds.
(Montreal: McKim, [1892-1931]).

Quebec field was well served by the country weeklies, but these publications were not pioneers in the use of advertising due to their lesser frequency of publication and their lower advertising rates. Agencies working on commission could not earn the profit on five weeklies that they could when placing the same ads in one metropolitan daily.¹³⁴

Much has been written on the cultural differences between French and English Canada during this era, and their respective attitudes towards commerce were no exception. Simply put, the educational system established by the Catholic Church did not encourage careers in applied fields such as commerce and engineering to the same extent that it encouraged the genteel professions.¹³⁵ While journalism qualified as a cultural institution, advertising was commerce.¹³⁶ This was not an attitude unique to French Quebec. The highbrow editors of *Atlantic Monthly* were similarly reticent to have their journal infested with advertising, and resisted its incursions until the 1860s. Even then, it was not allowed to mingle with the articles, but shunted to the magazine's back pages.¹³⁷ One stalwart literary journal in Toronto which modelled itself on the *Atlantic*, the *Canadian Magazine*, continued this practice into the 1920s. Indeed, McKim's own newspaper directories separated the gazetteer listings from the dozens of ads it carried for individual periodicals. What was different about French Quebec was the tenacity with which these ideas persisted. As late as 1926 one Québécois advertising agent conflated his culture with his ethnicity and asked if

134. A.R. Coffin, 'The Advertising Agency,' *Printer & Publisher*, 15:3 (March 1907), 13; 'Advertising Agency and Publisher,' *Printer & Publisher*, 18:8 (August 1909), 13

135. William F. Ryan, *The Clergy and Economic Growth in Quebec, 1896-1914* (Quebec: Laval UP, 1966), 273-302; William D. Coleman, *The Independence Movement in Quebec, 1945-1980* (Toronto: University of Toronto), *passim.*; Jean-Claude Guédon, 'Marginalité professionnelle et modèles déportés: le cas des ingénieurs francophones du Canada, 1867-1920,' *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 27:1 (Spring 1992), 21-43

136. Bonville, 158-161

137. Ellery Sedgwick, *The Atlantic Monthly, 1857-1909: Yankee Humanism at High Tide and Ebb* (Amherst, Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994), 82-129

advertising was simply foreign to the latin temperament of the French 'race.'¹³⁸ Advertising, it appeared, was simply not a field to which French Canadians aspired.¹³⁹

At root, then, there was much impeding the full development of the advertising trade in Quebec: two languages, proportionately fewer papers published in French than in English, and a culturally-rooted ambivalence to commercial literature limited the local opportunities for francophone agencies. Where McKim, Desbarats, and Fontaine succeeded was in their ability to do business in English, in every province of the Dominion, and, in Fontaine's case, the United States as well. It is worth repeating that McKim began as a representative for Ontario papers.

The tale of Toronto was quite different. Ontario as a whole was emerging as an industrial core, and Toronto sat at the hub of a tremendous distribution system. The broad assumption at the centre was that the population of the province was either anglophone or wanted to be. But, most importantly for the advertising fraternity, Ontario's anglophone businessmen envied the wealth and prestige of their American counterparts. They were seduced by the siren call of the advertising solicitors.

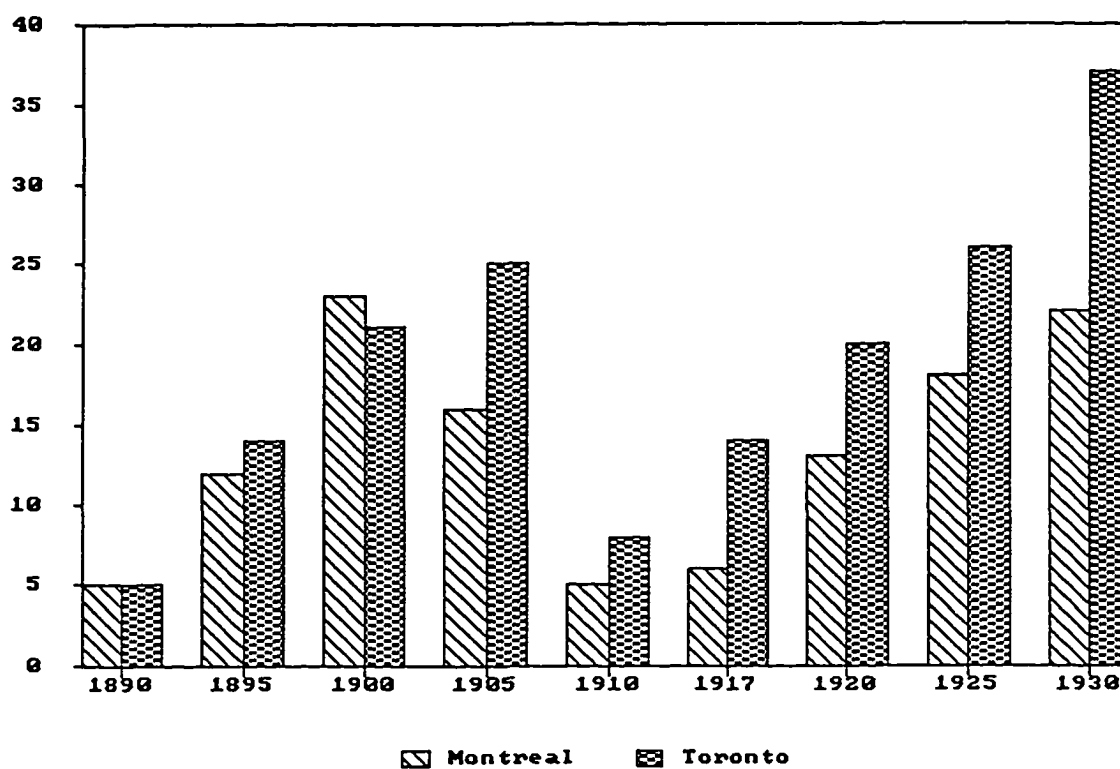
According to city directories, there was an endless procession of volunteers willing to make their way into the agency field. In the two decades prior to 1890, there were usually three to six 'advertising agents' identified as such located in Toronto. Few lasted more than a year. After 1890, the pace of entry quickened as a host of former clerks, newspaper solicitors, corporate advertising managers, railway card men, billposters, and independent agents clambered for a spot in the growing trade. It was a pattern repeated in Montreal (see Table 1.3). Between 1890 and 1910, 98 different 'agencies' appeared in the Toronto directories; of these, 68 appeared no more than twice, while another 8 disappeared after three or four listings. Almost three-quarters did not survive to see their

138. Raoul Renault, 'En quoi l'Esprit Français s'oppose à la Publicité,' *La Clé d'Or*, 1:9 (Novembre 1926), 245-248

139. Elkin, 37-43

Table 1.3

Number of Advertising Agencies in Montreal and Toronto, 1890-1930



Sources:

For the years 1890 to 1905, see *Lovell's Classified Business Directory* (Montreal: Lovell, [1885-1910]) and *The Toronto City Directory* (Toronto: Might, [1885-1910]).

For 1910 and 1917, the Canadian Press Association's list of recognized agencies was consulted; NAC, CPA records, v.2, Recognition Committee, 'Minute Book 1910-1919,' 21 June 1910; *Economic Advertising*, 10:6 (June 1917), 27

For the period 1920-1930, *Lydiatt Book's* (Toronto: Lydiatt, [1920-1930]) was consulted.

fifth year.¹⁴⁰ While not all of these agencies fell into the category condemned by J.J. Gibbons as 'fly-by-night,' their rate of attrition was symptomatic of the trade as a whole. It could only have served to sully the reputation of the entire agency field.

Nonetheless, some agencies were established during this time which did gain long-term success and credibility. The first, as previously noted, was the Mail Advertising Agency founded in 1882. As with McKim, this agency had the institutional support of the *Mail* behind it, and it remained in business until 1897. Another early agency belonged to W.W. Butcher, who placed advertising between 1885 and 1890 as a sideline to his main career as a court reporter.¹⁴¹ Similarly, J.S. Robertson was a bookseller and publisher who only gradually took on advertising in the late 1890s as a supplement to his other work. By 1900 he was doing freelance copywriting for retailers such as Eaton's and Fairweather's, among others. In 1897, a print shop known as the Central Press Agency commenced regular agency service, but it had been producing ready-prints and handling advertising materials for some time. But the most notable start-up during this period belonged to J.J. Gibbons himself. Once a solicitor for a short-lived Toronto agency, Gibbons was hired in 1898 to be the special representative for the Toronto News in New York City.¹⁴² The experience he gained there changed his conception of advertising service. When he returned, he proceeded to change the nature of the entire Canadian advertising trade.

Conclusions

The newspaper world that James Poole had known was not completely forgotten, but its sun was setting. Urban papers such as the *Star* and *La Presse* in Montreal and the *Telegram* in Toronto

140. *Toronto City Directory* ([1890-1910])

141. Stevenson and McNaught, 20; *Toronto City Directory* (1895), 817

142. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 2ed. (1899), 263; Bertram Brooker, 'Forty Years of Canadian Advertising,' *Marketing*, 21:10 (15 November 1924), 272, 274

reached over 75,000 readers daily by 1900. The rural and small town papers were now more than ever thrown to the mercy of the marketplace, and that marketplace was now dominated by out-of-town advertisers and agencies with no personal relationships with the individual publishers. Businessmen such as these had little patience for the small circulations of these papers. At the same time, the largest dailies could command the respect and patronage of advertisers due to the sheer size of their circulations. Since the weekly publishers could not, they grew to feel that they were slowly losing control of their own papers to strangers and outsiders.

After 1900, as the number of papers in Ontario peaked and competition among them reached an all-time high, publishers realized they would have to co-operate to impose restrictions on the behaviour of advertisers and agents. In so doing, they enjoined a practice conducted by many of their contemporaries in other industries, as Michael Bliss has shown.¹⁴³ In time, both the advertisers and agents agreed that such restrictions were in their own best interests, and they participated in the creation of a more stable business environment. Nonetheless, the business environment that they created did not revert back to the ways of a previous time, but reflected an acceptance of the new trends and ideas that had overtaken the industry. Primary among these was the fact that revenues from foreign advertising would soon dwarf that from any other source of income the newspapers enjoyed, including reader subscriptions.

When the publishers came together, they quickly realized that the problems they faced were not all caused by the advertisers and agents. A good many of their problems could be traced to their own practices. Their unwillingness to organize for business purposes was only the most visible evidence of this fact. Their failure to standardize their advertising practices to better handle the increased volume of ads represented the problem more clearly. Different rates, different column sizes, and different billing practices among 700 other periodicals had created the context for the rise

143. Bliss, 33-54

of the agencies. Rates were crucial in this respect. So long as each paper allowed its space to be billed at widely varying prices, then the agents were likely to insist on bargain-rate deals that undercut the financial stability of the papers. This would be the first problem addressed by the publishers and agents after 1900.

In facing these problems, adworkers were forced to assess their roles in this growing trade. If once the field had been characterized by hustlers such as Robert Moore, it was now populated by a wide assortment of companies, with innumerable backgrounds and vastly different services for sale. Out of this diversity, there emerged a core group of agents who became spokesmen for the 'new' trade. All of them were connected with the full-service agencies created in the mould of Gibbons's company. Their desires, both economically and psychologically, would play a large role in the construction of the modern advertising trade in the years to come.

Chapter 2 : Toronto Adworkers & a Professional Ideal

From a mere broker of space, the advertising agency has developed into a complete selling organization – being the connecting link between the manufacturer and the consumer.

F.A. Rowlatt, 1910¹

St Peter – You say that you were an advertising man
while on earth?

Applicant – Yes.

St Peter – This elevator, please.

Applicant – How soon does it go up?

St Peter – It doesn't go up, it goes down.

Anonymous, 1924²

Traffic stopped. Crowds gathered five deep on the sidewalk and spilled out into the streets as the exuberant sound of the pipes grew nearer. It was April 1915, and a city at war ground to a halt as a 'monster pageant parade' wound its way through the streets of Toronto. Thirty floats and wagons, decorated to the nines with bunting and flowers, were led by the 48th Highlanders Pipe & Drum Regiment. Scattered through the procession, a patriotic corps of diligent boy scouts unfurled banners boosting the merits of the Queen City. If you had followed it to its end, you would have found an even greater spectacle there: a carnival of sights, sounds, and speechifying. A massive demonstration of acrobatic stunts was performed by 500 YCMA boys dressed in colourful outfits, and they were joined by fifty clowns chasing mock elephants, ostriches, donkeys, and horses. Juggling and high-wire acts, flaming hoops and chariot races completed the show. Musical accompaniment was provided by a massed band of a hundred pieces, the Highlanders joined by the 109th Regiment.

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1. F. Albany Rowlatt, 'The Advertising Agency,' *Economic Advertising*, 1:12 (August 1909), 9
 2. *Marketing*, 21:4 (23 August 1924), 127

Behind the stage, the masterminds of this affair were members of the Toronto Ad Club, an organization of adworkers from various publications, advertisers, and agencies located in the city of Toronto. The carnival was a patriotic affair intended to raise money for the war effort. It was also a decidedly commercial enterprise. Each of the floats was sponsored by a prominent local business, who got full value for its dollar from the publicity generated by the circus. An audience participation contest offered a free pair of shoes to twenty lucky spectators, courtesy of Walkerton's shoes. According to the *Toronto World*, this was the most exciting event of the night.³

In many ways, the carnival was the capstone to a number of trends which had emerged in the Canadian advertising trade over the previous fifteen years. At the dawn of the twentieth century, it would have been difficult even to identify a recognizable trade connected to advertising. Rather, there was a hodge-podge of business practices which had developed in an *ad hoc* fashion, undertaken by a number of companies claiming some form of expertise in this arcane new field. Toronto was home to three 'advertising agencies' in 1900, but there were also newspaper publishers, magazines, print shops, freelance copywriters, and corporate advertising managers offering advice and business assistance to anyone who wanted to enhance their use of publicity. By 1915, agencies in Toronto and across the country were multiplying rapidly, and they had taken the lead in the advertising field. They owed their position in no small part to the Toronto Ad Club.

The formation of the club was in itself a sign of the changing times. Certainly, it demonstrated that those who dealt in advertising were becoming a self-conscious group of workers with common interests and problems. Men and women were emerging from a wide variety of educational and career backgrounds to develop a new field of commercial expertise. It was a potentially lucrative field, but it was also highly susceptible to the fickle winds of public opinion. In particular, adworkers laboured under the cloak of a disreputable past woven by the reputations of

3. 'Unique Carnival and Circus Held,' *Toronto World*, 23 April 1915

circus men and patent medicine makers during the previous century. In a marketplace increasingly dominated by the specialization of labour and the rise of managerial expertise, this antipathy did not sit well with white-collar adworkers, who aspired to professional status. An agent like F. Albany Rowlatt could make all the claims he wanted about the organizational abilities of his business; still, he could only laugh ruefully at the mindset that believed all adworkers were destined to an eternity of hellfire and brimstone. The ad club was in part an attempt to deal with these problems through co-operation, and by staging constructive, community events like the carnival to elevate their collective reputation in the public mind. The irony of fighting fire with fire was not entirely lost on them.

The Toronto Advertising Field

Advertising agents and their peers working in publishing houses and corporate advertising departments were part of a demographic trend that swept across Canada during this time. In the words of American historian Robert H. Wiebe, adworkers were part of an emerging new social stratum, a 'professional middle class.' This class was composed of urban, white collar workers who found their common interests in the exclusive nature of the knowledge and skills that characterized their individual occupations.⁴ In Canada, the emergence of this class has been described by R.D. Gidney and W.P.J. Millar.⁵ As they and others have pointed out, the existence of such a class was

4. Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1967), 111-132

5. R.D. Gidney and W.P.J. Millar, *Professional Gentlemen: The Professions in Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1994), especially Ch.14

not new.⁶ After 1890, however, it emerged as a self-conscious, self-interested, and increasingly unified group. Further, there was an explosion in the number of occupations seeking status equal to that of the traditional fields of the clergy, bar, and medicine. School teachers, engineers, architects, social workers, civil servants, and a multitude of others pursued a course of professionalization by forming occupational associations, setting standards of practice and codes of conduct, establishing educational programmes, and restricting entry. What these various groups shared was a common search for a higher understanding of their field that would place it on a secure and rational foundation. More often than not, this higher understanding would be grounded in some field of applied science, and require some form of university training.⁷

The broadening of this class of service-oriented professionals occurred within the expansion of the wider economy. By the 1890s, a transcontinental, railway-driven economic infrastructure was in place; by 1914, mass immigration had transformed the Dominion's demographic profile as well. According to Kenneth Buckley's estimates, the gross domestic product of the country grew five-fold between 1900 and 1930.⁸ As Paul Axelrod has noted, the middle class also expanded as never before to manage the machinery and distribution systems of the industrial economy, as well as the

6. For the United States, see Mary Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1981); Stuart Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1989); for Canada, see Michael Katz, *The People of Hamilton, Canada West: Family and Class in a Mid-Nineteenth-Century City* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard, 1975), 176-208; David A. Sutherland, 'Voluntary Societies and the Process of Middle-Class Formation in Early-Victorian Halifax, Nova Scotia,' paper presented at the Canadian Historical Association, Calgary, June 1994.

7. Colin Howell, 'Reform and the Monopolistic Impulse: The Professionalization of Medicine in the Maritimes,' *Acadiensis*, 2:1 (Autumn 1981), 3-22; J. Rodney Millard, *The Master Spirit of the Age: Canadian Engineers and the Politics of Professionalism 1887-1922* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1988); Marianna Valverde, *The Age of Soap, Light, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1991), 44-76; Alan J. Richardson, 'Educational Policy and Professional Status: A Case History of the Ontario Accountancy Profession,' *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 27:1 (Spring 1992), 44-57; Ken Rasmussen, 'Administrative Reform and the Quest for Bureaucratic Autonomy, 1867-1919,' *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 29:3 (Autumn 1994), 45-62

8. Kenneth Buckley, *Capital Formation in Canada, 1896-1930* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1974), 214

changes overtaking communities transformed by these self-same systems.⁹

Where much of the professional-middle class was indirectly dependent on the industrial economy for its income and status, agents were directly dependent on it for both. There was a certain irony in this dependence. They were simultaneously self-employed and corporate functionaries; masters of their own shops yet the underlings of industrial captains, and, ostensibly, the solicitors of the periodical press.¹⁰ Whose agency were the agents exercising? After 1900, with the introduction of Gibbons's full-service agency, the answer seemed increasingly clear: the advertisers. New shops in Toronto acknowledged this fact by adopting terms such as 'bureau' or 'service' in place of 'agency.' Nonetheless, the notion of 'agency' retained its grip on their imaginations, inspired perhaps by the same independent spirit that had prompted such men as McKim and Gibbons to leave their respective papers to open their own shops in the first place.

Between 1900 and 1914, it was adworkers in Toronto such as Gibbons who took a leading role in the Canadian advertising trade, much as their counterparts in New York City did in the United States.¹¹ Their influence can be tracked through a number of channels, but census data provide a rough overview of the numbers of people involved and the roles they played. That said, these data are frequently vague in the information they convey. Most mystifying was the bureau's understanding of 'advertising agent.' The 1901 *Census of Occupations* noted that there were 135 'advertising agents' in Canada.¹² Just what the number represents is not possible to fathom. At that time, there were 15 agencies listed in the Toronto city directory, and 23 in Montreal.¹³ This

9. Paul Axelrod, *Making a Middle Class: Student Life in English Canada during the Thirties* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1990), 7

10. Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940* (Berkeley, California: University of California, 1986), 45-62; see also Rasmussen, 45-62.

11. Marchand, 25-51

12. Canada, Office of Census and Statistics, *Census 1901: Bulletin XI – Occupations of the People* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1910), T2

13. *Toronto City Directory* (1900), 907; *Montreal Business Directory* (1900), 73

number might reflect the total number of workers at these 35 firms, but there were also print shops offering 'agency' services, solicitors working for the periodicals, and freelance copywriters working on their own account. Who was an agent, and who was not? According to the 1931 census, only employees – 'wage-earners' – counted as agents, and employers were listed separately. Even then, the 1931 census contained two different tallies for the number of agents in Canada. Most of the line entries for 'advertising agents' totalled 2,129, but a more comprehensive breakdown of all of the workers within 'advertising agencies' totalled 3,290.¹⁴ The difference could be explained if the first tally represented only the core occupations of a full-service agency, occupations such as solicitors, writers, compositors, sign painters, and billposters, while the second tally represented everyone including receptionists and clerks.¹⁵

With these qualifications in mind, the following observations might be made. The number of people claiming to work in the advertising trade, whatever their positions, definitely rose from 1901 to 1931, as the numbers above suggest. Toronto was the prime benefactor of this growth. From 15 in 1900, the Toronto field grew to include over 70 shops providing various advertising services in 1930, among which were 36 independent, full-service agencies. This was more than any

14. Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Seventh Census of Canada, 1931* Vol.7: *Occupations and Industries* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1936), T40 and T56

15. *Census 1931* vol.7, T40 states there were 1,997 men and 132 women in advertising. T58 offers the following numbers for these selected occupations within advertising agencies:

	men	women
owners/managers	342	7
agents	1,225	64
authors/editors	35	5
compositors	23	0
signpainters	139	0
billposters	145	0
bookkeepers/cashiers	43	55
accountants	33	2
other professionals	11	0
total	1,996	133

As one can readily note, the numbers do not match perfectly, but no other combination of occupations comes close for both men and women. Those left out include truck drivers, commercial travellers, artists, clerks, stenographers, and unskilled labour.

other city in the country. Its closest rival was Montreal, and admittedly seven of Toronto's number were branch offices of agencies headquartered there (see Table 1.3; Appendix I). That said, seven Toronto agents placed branch offices in Montreal, and at least two of these maintained offices in Western Canada as well.¹⁶ Nine American agencies entered Canada from 1911 to 1930; seven located in Toronto. The city's ascendancy was more evident in the census data. By 1921, 36% of all agency personnel in the country could be found in Toronto agencies, including 35% of all executive and managerial staff. By comparison, Montreal accounted for less than half that, 16% of total staff and only 11% of executive/managerial staff.¹⁷ These proportions remained relatively stable through to the end of the decade.¹⁸ Beyond Toronto and Montreal, the advertising population of other cities dropped off precipitously. After Toronto, with 1052 adworkers in 1931, and Montreal, with 646, the next three were Vancouver, 205; Winnipeg, 188; and Hamilton, 72.¹⁹

The first generation of adworkers to emerge after 1900 dominated the field throughout the period under study. They were relatively young and overwhelmingly male, and in the heady pioneer days before World War I they cut a wide path for themselves. Of the 324 men working in Toronto in 1921, three-quarters were aged 25 to 49.²⁰ This bloc used its position to advantage, and from their ranks came most of the new managers and new agencies before 1930. At least 24 of the 36 Toronto agencies handling national accounts in 1930 were founded by men who could trace their first job to a newspaper or agency prior to 1910. Six of them established their agencies before the war.²¹ While young men continued to enter the field, the first generation maintained a lock on 53% of the

16. *Lydiatt's Book* 17ed. (1931), 310-335

17. Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Sixth Census of Canada Vol.4: Occupations* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1929), T2 and T3

18. *Census 1931* Vol.7, T57: Toronto, 32% of all Canadian staff, Montreal, 20%

19. *Ibid.*, T57

20. *Census 1921* Vol.4, T5

21. Appendix I

positions in the field in 1931.²² By contrast, the female presence was characterized by young, unmarried women in low-skilled jobs. The problems they faced in the field will be discussed in greater detail further on, but suffice to say here that women were not encouraged to make advertising a life-long career.

The men who persisted in advertising and made a success of it could enter into a very comfortable middle-class lifestyle. Roland Marchand has described the American agent's world as one of streetcars and typewriters, the hustle and bustle of city life combined with a constant anxiety over the next deal.²³ There is no reason to believe that their Canadian counterparts did not share this experience. At a time when almost half of the population of Canada was rural, the entire advertising trade lived in an urban environment. Through the 1920s, 65% of the advertising workforce lived in five of the largest, most highly industrialized cities in the Dominion. Further, they were on the cutting edge of the changes overtaking North American industry, occupying as they did consulting and managerial positions within the economy. Their workplace was the office, and it was populated almost exclusively by white-collar labour, from the receptionist at the front desk, to the clerks handling orders, to the salesmen at their telephones and adding machines. And they were well paid for it. Judging by census figures, the average starting salary for a young man in his early 20s was \$25.00 per week in 1930, or \$1,300 per year. As salaries went, that was no mean sum. By comparison, the average salary for male journalists that year was only \$26.75, whether starting or fully established. Civil servants, both federal and provincial combined, weighed in at \$31.54.²⁴ The true pay-off came with talent and persistence, however. An experienced adworker, particularly a solicitor, could look forward to substantial raises. The generation of pioneers in the 45-54 age bracket took home \$56.32 per week by 1931. Those who worked in Toronto took home

22. *Census 1931* Vol.7, T53

23. Marchand, 2-4

24. *Census 1931* Vol.7, T29

the highest average salaries in the business: \$68.64 per week, or almost \$3,600.00 per year.²⁵

There was no set educational attainment required to enter the trade. Among the first generation, there was an exceptionally wide range of backgrounds, from public school dropouts such as copywriter Bertram Brooker, to agency manager Henry R. Cockfield, an M.A. graduate of McGill. Both ended their careers as agency vice-presidents. Until the 1920s, an actual education in advertising practice or theory remained a marginal undertaking in Canada. It was taught only by private business colleges, correspondence schools, and night classes at the Young Men's Christian Association. The latter among these three was apparently held in the highest regard by Toronto adworkers. When it began in 1913, it was taught by E. Sterling Dean, for twelve years a solicitor at the Toronto *Telegram*, and a recent entrant into the agency field.²⁶ The course, taught by a variety of agents over the years, ran well into the 1920s.²⁷ Employers might have recognized certificates from such institutions, but not automatically. One trade journal based in Toronto acknowledged the value of the course taught by Dean, but thought nonetheless that the trade deserved better treatment.²⁸ The same editorial noted with approval the development of advertising courses in American universities. While degree programmes in 'Commerce and Finance' were already available at the University of Toronto and McGill by that date, they did not offer instruction in advertising until the late 1920s.

On-the-job training proved to be of far greater significance than education to the generation of 1910. The men who established Toronto's agencies came from a number of backgrounds, but aspirants had a far better chance of success if they served a part of their career first at a newspaper, a major manufacturer, or an established agency. The first agents all came from newspapers. Ansom

25. *Census 1931* Vol.7, T29, T34

26. 'Men and Media,' *Economic Advertising*, 6:11 (November 1913), 45

27. *Marketing*, 22:5 (7 March 1925), 136

28. 'Teaching Advertising,' *Economic Advertising*, 6:5 (May 1913), 3

McKim and his service at the *Mail* springs to mind, but so too does J.J. Gibbons and the Toronto *News* and F.-E. Fontaine and *Le Monde de Montréal*. As pointed out in the last chapter, certain urban dailies developed advertising departments in the 1870s and 1880s. At first, these were composed of solicitors hired to sell space to local retailers. Over time, astute publishers coaxed their advertising staff to supply creative services as well. These departments did not wither with the advent of the agency system, but remained the bastion of local advertisers while the agencies developed national advertising.

The second training ground for advertising agents was the advertising departments of major manufacturers. Just as the larger papers had advertising managers to oversee the solicitation and production of advertising, many companies appointed advertising managers to oversee the expenditure of their advertising budgets. This aspect of business practice underwent rapid development in the twenty years prior to 1900, in tandem with the growth of national advertising and the increased division of labour in large corporations. Initially, the advertising of a company was part of the president's responsibilities. As the company expanded and administrative functions became more complex, this duty was given to the sales department, whose primary concern was the actual distribution of the product or service. If the company adopted advertising on a wide scale, a separate person would then be given the responsibility of managing its advertising – hence, the advertising manager.²⁹ If his responsibilities grew to incorporate space-buying, copywriting, agency relations, or strategic planning, then a complete department might grow under his command. Variations in this process occurred from company to company, but this was the general pattern.³⁰

29. Truman deWeese, 'The Advertising Manager,' *Economic Advertising*, 3:8 (August 1910), 19-31

30. deWeese, 19-31; Harry M. Tedman, 'The Advertising Manager's Job,' *Marketing*, 26:6 (19 March 1927), 182-185; Mary Etta Macpherson, *Shopkeepers to a Nation: The Eatons* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1963), 29-30. E.J. Hart's look at CPR advertising implicitly reveals this pattern; see *The Selling of Canada: The CPR and the Beginnings of Canadian Tourism* (Banff, Alberta: Altitude, 1983).

After 1900, the most prolific training ground for new agents — at least, for agency heads — was the established agencies. J.J. Gibbons and his peers were at the cutting edge of their trade, and could offer newcomers various jobs in several different departments. Among these, an introduction into the sales staff was a plum; solicitors had the best chance of developing their skills into an entrepreneurial opportunity. As the contact person who connected the agency to its clients, it was the solicitor who won the confidence of corporate presidents and advertising managers. It was solicitor's skills as a salesman, his reputation as an individual, that built the reputation of his agency. These were not skills that could be learned in any classroom.

This pattern of career development suggests a trade in which personal relationships accounted for a great deal in a day-to-day operations. At a time when card rates were not fixed by papers, an ability to cultivate close relations with publishers and their advertising managers could have had financially lucrative benefits. The fact that many of the most successful agents first worked at the top papers in town only underscores this fact. The *Mail* and the *Globe* were papers intended for the businessmen of Toronto; the *Star* and the *Telegram* had the highest circulations. Solicitors working for these papers would have become well-known among the advertising concerns of Toronto. Between 1904 and 1913, solicitors with ten or more years experience left each one of these papers to open an agency: respectively, C.C. Norris, Robert C. Smith, Robert A. Baker, and E. Sterling Dean.

The work environment shaped by these economic relationships was reinforced through innumerable clubs. Through the early 1930s, the trade journal *Canadian Advertising Data* ran a series of short, biographical pieces on agency executives and managers.³¹ Family lives, religion, and personality traits were rarely discussed. In their place, readers found in each monthly column the worthy agent's curriculum vitae and a list of the clubs to which he belonged. Most agents

31. *Canadian Advertising Data*, vols.3-5 (1930-1932)

belonged to two or three. Among these were the elite halls of the Granite and National Clubs, as well as the more populist service organizations; the Lions and Rotary both made appearances. There was also the ubiquitous game of golf. No matter what club an agent joined, almost every last one played golf.³² The Toronto advertising journal *Economic Advertising* kept readers posted on the latest news of their 'International Advertising Golf Association' as early as 1911. It had 103 members.³³ When a club exclusively composed of agency principals formed in 1928, its first order of business was the acceptance of a silver trophy from the *Mail & Empire* – to be awarded annually to the top golfer.³⁴

At work, at lunch, and at play, adworkers surrounded themselves – both consciously and unconsciously – with people like themselves. The entry fees of most luncheon clubs would have excluded those with lesser incomes than those enjoyed by the advertising fraternity; the same could be said of the green fees at their favourite links. Moreover, underlying all of these pursuits were notions of sociability, public service, and athleticism typically reserved to the leisure classes, but increasingly claimed by a professional-middle class keen to stake out its place in the new urban landscape.³⁵

They had more in common than work, professional networks, income, age, and social pleasures might suggest. Judging by their last names, they were also overwhelmingly Anglo-Celtic by descent.³⁶ T.W. Acheson has noted that the industrial elite that emerged in Ontario during the 1880s was dominated by Scots. This group of recent immigrants came with technical knowledge then

32. Marchand has noted the popularity of this sport among American adworkers; see Marchand, 38.

33. 'About Men and Media,' *Economic Advertising*, 4:4 (April 1911), 43; see also 'Toronto Advertising Men Plan Golf Tournament,' *Marketing*, 18:8 (21 April 1923), 278

34. 'Toronto Adcraft Club Formed,' *Marketing*, 28:13 (23 June 1928), 473

35. Richard Ohmann, *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century* (London: Verso, 1996), 118-174; Rasmussen, 45-62; Sutherland, 1-31

36. Again, there are parallels in the United States; see Marchand, 25-52; Daniel Pope, *The Making of Modern Advertising* (New York: Basic, 1983), 177-180

current in Great Britain, as well as access to credit, and used these advantages to build a new set of manufacturing industries in Canada.³⁷ The Toronto publishing industry readily fit this pattern, dominated as it was by the likes of Brown, Robertson, Riordan, and Jaffray in newspapers, and Sheppard, Maclean, and Acton in magazines. As the agents were a part of this industry, it should not be surprising that those agents whose shops endured through depressions and wartime were those whose previous work experience as well as ethnicity connected them with their industrial clients as well as the publishers.³⁸ The dominant agencies of the era before 1930 were managed by men with names like Gibbons, Norris, Patterson, McConnell, Fergusson, Kirkwood, Smith, Baker, Dean, and Denne (see Appendix I). Little wonder then that Desbarats and Fontaine adopted English names for their agencies, and legally incorporated themselves as 'advertising agencies' rather than 'agences de publicité,' even in Montreal. In Toronto, the novelty of an agency serving a different ethnicity, and perhaps a different set of newspapers, was also cause for a significant name: 'Dworkin's Jewish Advertising Agency' served the Jewish advertisers of Toronto from 1910 to 1917.³⁹

It is difficult to generalize about the private lives of admen. Census data reveal that most admen were married by their mid-30s. Almost 90% of the men aged 35-54 lived in wedlock in 1931, a figure 6-7% higher than the national average for the same age group.⁴⁰ Beyond that, one ventures into the realm of pure conjecture to discern any patterns. Admen did not appear in businessmen's directories such as *Canadian Who's Who* until the late 1950s, by which point most of the pioneers had passed on. None left memoirs, and only four wrote books connected to the trade: Noel Barbour on Canadian magazines, William Colgate on Canadian commercial artists, and H.E. Stephenson and

37. T.W. Acheson, 'The Social Origins of the Canadian Industrial Elite, 1880-1885,' *Canadian Business History*, ed. D.S. Macmillan (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1972), 144-174

38. Douglas F. Campbell, 'Class, Status, and Crisis: Upper-Class Protestants and the Founding of the United Church of Canada,' *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 29:3 (Fall 1994), 63-84

39. *Toronto City Directory* (1910), 1271; *Toronto City Directory* (1917), 1629

40. *Census 1931* Vol.7, T53, T55

Carlton McNaught on the early history of Canadian advertising.⁴¹ Apart from the ritual nod to Ansom McKim, none of these discuss the men behind the ads. Even private papers, kept in public archives, reveal a selective and at times dismissive reading of their worklives. Only four Toronto admen who were active by 1930 left their records for posterity; of these, only two preserved substantial files on advertising.⁴² One wonders if the admen privately believed their work to be as ephemeral and unimportant as some of their critics made it out to be. Conversely, one wonders if book publishers and archivists failed to believe there was anything important to be learned from the lives of admen.

Six Lives

The lives of six Canadian adworkers may give some weight to the bare-threads description of their fellows drawn above. Although these six cannot speak on behalf of the entire trade, they were among the most prominent adworkers of their day, and their names shall appear frequently throughout this study. Further, they represented every sector of the trade: John E. Kennedy was a corporate advertising manager, J.B. Maclean a publisher, and J.J. Gibbons an agent. W.A. Lydiatt was active in institutional politics and published a trade journal, while John C. Kirkwood and Bertram Brooker did what many of their peers did: they moved from job to job, and firm to firm, throughout their lives.

One of the most renowned advertising managers to emerge from a Canadian company was John E. Kennedy. Born in 1864, Kennedy claimed to have served with the North-West Mounted

41. Noel Robert Barbour, *Those Amazing People! The Story of the Canadian Magazine Industry, 1778-1967* (Toronto: Crucible, 1982); W.G. Colgate, *Canadian Art: Its Origin and Development* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1943); W.G. Colgate, *C.W. Jeffreys* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1945); H.E. Stephenson and C. McNaught, *The Story of Advertising in Canada: A Chronicle of Fifty Years* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1940)

42. At NAC: H.E. Kidd and John C. Kirkwood; at PAO, W.G. Colgate; and UMA, Bertram Brooker.

Police as a young man.⁴³ Certainly his character seemed to fit the classic image; beyond his broad handlebar moustache, he was a towering figure, physically imposing and intellectually formidable.⁴⁴ Sometime around 1890, Kennedy entered the advertising trade as a copywriter for the Hudson's Bay Company at its Winnipeg store. He became fascinated with the work, and was soon writing letters to *Printer's Ink* debating the finer points of copy style.⁴⁵ Eager to expand his horizons, he gravitated to Montreal in 1873, first to work in the advertising department of the Montreal *Herald*, then as the advertising manager of A.E. Small & Company.⁴⁶ Small was a clothing manufacturer, and here Kennedy finally made his mark. Kennedy was to market ready-to-wear clothing, at that point still a novelty in Montreal. The product was the 'Fit-Reform Wardrobe,' and the campaign that Kennedy crafted for its launch became legendary in the advertising trade. He repeated his triumph with the Slater Shoe company soon after.⁴⁷ Having conquered the largest city in Canada, Kennedy turned his eyes south and left for the wider fields of the United States. There, in the employ of companies such as Lydia Pinkham's, Post Cereals, and the Lord & Thomas Advertising Agency, he became one of the highest paid copywriters in the country, earning in the range of \$16,000 in 1904.⁴⁸ Booklets outlining his ideas on copy style sold in the thousands.⁴⁹

It is impossible to state the extent of Kennedy's education. It seems readily apparent, however, that his knowledge of advertising came through on-the-job training, and perhaps his reading

43. Stephen Fox, *The Mirror Makers: A History of American Advertising and Its Creators* (New York: Morrow, 1984), 49-51

44. Albert Lasker, *The Lasker Story, As He Told It*, ed. S.R. Bernstein (Lincolnwood, Illinois: NTC, 1987), 19, 24

45. Fox, 48-49

46. Stephenson and McNaught, 82; Bertram Brooker, 'Forty Years of Canadian Advertising,' *Marketing*, 21:3 (9 August 1924), 69

47. *Marketing*, 28:2 (21 January 1928): 68; Stephenson and McNaught, 82-90. The latter reference mistakenly places Kennedy's death in 1908, rather than 1928.

48. Lasker, 24

49. Kennedy's ideas on copy will be discussed in Chapter 4; Fox, 50

of trade journals.⁵⁰ In 1910, Kennedy attempted to improve this process for future adworkers when he proposed the establishment of a research institute devoted to advertising. What he had in mind was an independent body that would operate purely for the betterment of the trade as a whole. What was needed were comprehensive facts and statistics generated in the preparation and conduct of actual campaigns. Then, every aspect of each campaign could be analyzed to discover its strengths and weaknesses. By isolating winning strategies and eliminating false assumptions, researchers could inductively construct a solid base of knowledge concerning advertising practice.⁵¹ While the plan was met with interest, it was not immediately taken up. No one was willing to invest the \$1,000,000 Kennedy thought was necessary, and few companies were willing to surrender their confidential records to an outside body.⁵²

The story of John Bayne Maclean has been recounted several times before, and with good reason: he was the most successful magazine publisher of his day.⁵³ Maclean was born in the small Ontario town of Puslinch in 1862. His father was a Presbyterian minister, a Scottish emigrant who had landed in Canada just six years prior. It was an association that the son would cherish. Three times during his lifetime he changed the spelling of his surname in order to achieve a more 'authentic' Scottish style -- moving from MacLean to McLean to MacLean to Maclean.⁵⁴

Maclean was attracted to the life of a genteel profession, but he did not follow his father into

50. Fox, 49-50

51. *Economic Advertising*, 3:6 (June 1910), 25-30

52. 'Why Advertising is not Guaranteed,' *Economic Advertising*, 3:10 (October 1910), 5-11; Quentin J. Schultze, 'An Honourable Place: The Quest for Professional Advertising Education, 1900-1917,' *Business History Review*, 56:1 (Spring 1982), 16-32. The next year, a Chicago publisher financed a similar scheme at Harvard University; this will be discussed in Chapter 5.

53. Barbour, ch.22; Sutherland, 129-149; Floyd S. Chalmers, *A Gentleman of the Press* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 1969)

54. For the sake of continuity, I have elected to use throughout this thesis only the version he settled upon. That said, his publishing house and his magazine, which were both incorporated while the spelling was MacLean, retained that spelling. His brother Hugh C., the owner of a rival publishing house, died a MacLean. M-H records, b.36, f.75th-Anniversary, *Newsweekly*, 52:39 (16 September 1962), 13-16

the clergy. Instead, he briefly tried his hand at teaching before opting for a career in journalism. The latter proved to be far better suited to him, both in terms of personal satisfaction and financial remuneration. After two months work at W.F. Maclean's Toronto *World*, he landed at the Toronto *Mail* late in 1882.⁵⁵ There he made the acquaintance of that paper's pioneering advertising manager, T.W. Dyas – the very man who had recently sent Ansom McKim to Montreal and established the Mail Advertising Agency in Toronto. Dyas took Maclean under his wing, and the young journalist proved to be a quick study. In 1887, the two became business partners and established a trade paper entitled *Canadian Grocer & General Storekeeper*, edited by Maclean and financed by Maclean, Dyas, and two others.⁵⁶ The venture succeeded, and over the years Maclean gradually bought out the others' shares. From this beginning, he slowly accumulated nine other titles, and by 1908 these were the basis for the MacLean Publishing Company. That year he created a new business paper, the *Financial Post*, and over the next twenty years he added to his holdings a handful of new trade papers and four consumer magazines: *Maclean's*, *Mayfair*, *Canadian Homes & Gardens*, and *Chatelaine*.

One notable aspect of Maclean's success was his willingness to emulate the practices of American publishing houses. In the 1890s, while tending to a side business in New York, Maclean made the acquaintance of S.S. McClure and Frank Munsey. McClure and Maclean kept in touch over the years; Munsey and Maclean became life-long friends.⁵⁷ Munsey frequently counselled MacLean on business matters over the years, with stock market tips as well as advice on publishing.⁵⁸ In return, Maclean provided Munsey with valuable advice and contacts involving Imperial politics. At the height of Randolph Hearst's attacks on the British war effort in 1917,

55. Chalmers, 20-21

56. M-H records, b.3, MacLean Publishing Company, Board of Directors and Shareholders, *Minutes*, vol.3, 10 May 1929; R. Neil Matheson, 'Thomas Winning Dyas,' *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol.12 (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1990), 285-287

57. M-H records, b.54, f.SS-McClure, several letters

58. M-H records, b.54, f.Mail-&-Empire, F. Munsey to J.B. Maclean, 7 May 1906

Maclean arranged for Munsey to meet with Prime Minister Robert Borden – then a member of the Imperial War Cabinet.⁵⁹ Munsey's name appeared regularly in the pages of *Printer & Publisher* as an authority on press matters.⁶⁰

Maclean's connections with the American publishing aristocracy paid dividends for his staff. Like his mentor Dyas, he developed an extensive advertising department within his publishing house. Each paper was assigned a 'business manager' who would be responsible for its finances, from subscriptions as well as advertising. Then, a host of solicitors were employed to scour the country for advertising contracts. By 1905, the sales staff of the advertising department numbered 26. To encourage them in their work, Maclean offered his in-house staff a commission of 10% on new business. He also held annual 'conferences' that brought them all to Toronto for pep talks given by himself and imported American speakers.⁶¹ About this same time, he also developed a pool of talent that would be responsible for creative services such as copywriting and illustration. In effect, Maclean created his own private advertising school, drawing upon the successful practices of both Dyas and his American counterparts. Among the men who passed through this office in the decade after 1900 were William G. Colgate and Don Tuck – both of whom became prominent in agency and institutional work. But the first of their number were W.A. Lydiatt and John C. Kirkwood.

William Arthur Lydiatt's contribution to Canadian advertising was universally acknowledged

59. Ibid., b.50, f.R-Borden, J.B. Maclean to R. Borden, 7 July 1917; in the same letter, Maclean wrote that Munsey 'is my most intimate friend, and I was with him during the final stages of negotiations and the taking over of the paper.' Maclean refers to the *New York Sun*, which Munsey purchased in 1917.

60. J.B. Maclean, 'Sketch of Frank A. Munsey,' *Printer & Publisher*, 7:2 (February 1898), 4-5; *Printer & Publisher*, 7:3 (March 1898), 19-25; 'The Agency Question,' *Printer & Publisher*, 7:11 (November 1898), 6-7; *Printer & Publisher*, 17:1 (January 1908), 30-31; 'Northcliffe and Munsey,' *Printer & Publisher*, 18:2 (February 1909), 26-28

61. M-H records, b.52, f.HT-Hunter/1904-1912, H.T. Hunter to J.B. MacLean, 3 March 1904; 'Annual Conference MacLean Publishing Co,' *Printer & Publisher*, 18:1 (January 1909), 26

by his peers.⁶² A Torontonion by birth, he spent six years in the industry before landing a job in the advertising department at *Printer's Ink* sometime in the late 1890s. At that point, the magazine was still published by the pioneering agent George Rowell. Lydiatt made the most of his time there, working as a solicitor and copywriter for the magazine, and contributing to the agency's annual directory of American newspapers.⁶³ He then returned to Canada where he joined the MacLean Publishing Company as a solicitor. While Lydiatt was capable in sales, MacLean noted that his copywriting skills were far superior to those of anyone else on staff. Lydiatt was then set up in his own office as the company's 'Advertising Specialist,' or head copywriter. He filled this position until 1903; then, he was lured away by the Ben Hampton Advertising Agency in New York. Lydiatt considered his time in the United States to be purely temporary, and apparently never planned to settle there. Rather, he looked upon his stints with Rowell and Hampton as valuable training, which he intended to put to good use upon his return to Toronto.⁶⁴ His expectations were fulfilled in spades.

Through the 1910s, Lydiatt opened an advertising agency specializing in market analysis, established his own newspaper directory, and bought an existing trade journal serving Canadian adworkers. Each of these moves could have been inspired by his work with Rowell, and he admitted as much with regards to the journal.⁶⁵ However, Lydiatt was also driven by a desire to elevate the trade on all fronts. Through his agency he offered new types of service geared to advertisers rather than publishers; through his directory he offered new types of information on markets in Canada; and through the trade journal – which he named *Marketing* – Lydiatt hoped to educate all adworkers in

62. Lydiatt won the first 'Gold Medal' from the Association of Canadian Advertisers for his contributions to the trade. He beat out J.B. Maclean, John Murray Gibbon of the CPR, and C.T. Pearce, then president of McKim Limited; *Marketing*, 46:44 (1 November 1941), 1.

63. 'W.A. Lydiatt,' *Printer & Publisher*, 27:2 (February 1918), 23-24

64. *Ibid.*, 24; J.C. Kirkwood, 'Who is Lydiatt?' *Economic Advertising*, 11:2 (February 1918), 4-5

65. 'W.A. Lydiatt,' 24

new ideas in advertising practice. In his own words, Lydiatt believed that 'there ought to be a co-operative effort to educate some firms to the value of advertising. There ought to be a sustained co-operative effort to awaken an interest in the selling opportunities of the Canadian market.'⁶⁶ He lived by what he said. He was a charter member of the Toronto Ad Club, and he was the first secretary of the Association of Canadian Advertisers – a trade association representing corporate advertising managers – in 1916.

The career of John C. Kirkwood repeatedly crossed with Lydiatt's, but his legacy was far more fleeting. Although he contributed to all of the same trade papers and club movements, he never actually found a secure position within the trade itself. As a result, he lived his life in near constant anxiety. Born in 1878, Kirkwood was the son of a dry goods merchant plying his trade in Brampton, Ontario. Throughout his life, Kirkwood was torn by his desire for genteel respectability on the one hand and fabulous wealth on the other. At 18, he opted for respectability – like J.B. Maclean, he wanted to be a teacher – but a budding university career was cut short by illness. He returned to the family business only to discover a new passion: writing. While drafting ads for the store he was seduced by the power of words, and soon dreamt of a career in journalism – perhaps with a magazine of his own. Pages of his journal were filled with business projections and possible titles. Towards this end, he took a sales job with a Philadelphia publishing house, but then stopped short.⁶⁷ When he discovered the money to be made in advertising itself, his plans rapidly and dramatically changed once again:

I have ... learned that advertising agencies receive on business placed by them 15%.

... If in the growth of the agency it could handle \$1,000 per week, there would be \$150 per. ... There is practically no end to the work that a good agency could not

66. W.A. Lydiatt, in 'W.A. Lydiatt,' 23

67. M-H records, b.53, f.JC-Kirkwood, clipping, Owen Sound *Sun-Times*, 21 October 1942; b.54, f.HC-Maclean/1, J.C. Kirkwood to J.B. MacLean, 26 September 1940

secure.⁶⁸

Visions danced in his head of the fabulous riches to be made in advertising. Within months, he was working for a Philadelphia advertising agency, as a solicitor.⁶⁹

Now an experienced adworker, Kirkwood wanted to return to Canada. To do so he entered the employ of J.B. Maclean as an advertising solicitor in 1903. He did not enjoy the work. Since he was attracted to advertising by his interest in words, solicitation never held the same appeal for him:

... soliciting is wearisome and distasteful. Writing adv[er]t[isement]s – or doing work of a[n] ... informing nature – or talking or teaching – is pleasant and commands my best energies.⁷⁰

His meagre interest in solicitation was further undermined by a constant fear that hard work could always go for naught.

I work with full fidelity, with all diligence, with skill. I have a 'prospect.' I work on it expectantly, get a good deal of encouragement, and am just within an inch of winning an order when some unforeseeable and insurmountable difficulty or obstacle arises that kills the chance, and makes all my time and effort of no avail.⁷¹

He was soon given the opportunity to change jobs. With Lydiatt's departure from the company, Kirkwood was promoted to the position of 'advertising specialist.' Advertisers soon began to clamour for his touch, and it was decided that he would train a small corps of writers on staff to handle the increased demand for specially-written copy. As such, he became the first head of a full-fledged

68. NAC, MG27 III E3, Kenneth P. Kirkwood papers, v.7, John C. Kirkwood notebook, 28 September 1902, 51-52

69. Ibid., 18 July 1903, 111

70. Ibid., 19 July 1903, 112

71. Ibid., 19 July 1903, 123

'Department of Advertising Service' within the company, and was paid \$20 per week for his services.⁷² He had finally found security, status, and a substantial salary by the day's standards.

Still, Kirkwood's life would remain unsettled for the rest of his life. He had not yet found wealth – not on the scale that Kennedy enjoyed – and this led him away from the MacLean Company in 1905. By that point, he had already lived in nine cities in Canada and the United States. Over the next twenty-five years, he travelled between Canada and Great Britain four times more, to work as a solicitor for the London *Daily Mail*, to open a Toronto branch of J. Walter Thompson Company, to write copy for the St James Advertising Agency of London, England, and to write columns for Lydiatt's *Marketing*. He regretted leaving MacLean soon after he left; he regretted it to the end of his days.⁷³ 'Had I but stayed,' he noted in a speech in 1938,

I too might have been a contributor to the glorious growth of the MacLean Publishing Company, amf [sic] might own a stately city mansion, a fine country home, a 100-acre farm in Muskoka, and be a member of the Granite Club, the Hunt Club, other clubs, and might have my name frequently in the news and society columns of Toronto's newspapers.⁷⁴

The note struck here, and throughout Kirkwood's private writings, is that of deep personal anxiety. Every move to a new job was underscored by his belief that it would prove to be the perfect situation for himself, balancing both the desire for respectable, meaningful work, and a substantial income. More often than not, it was soon followed by disappointment and rationalizations.⁷⁵ Contemplating

72. Ibid., 4 April 1903, 75-76; 20 June 1903, 83; 17 January 1904, 146-147; 2 March 1904, 157-159

73. Ibid., 29 August 1905, 187

74. M-H records, b.53, f.JC-Kirkwood, J.C. Kirkwood, 'My Goods Friends,' typescript enclosure in J.C. Kirkwood to J.B. Maclean, 31 January 1938

75. See for example Kirkwood papers, JCK notebook, 23 April 1905, 177; 1 January 1911, 290-299; v.24, f.24-3, J.C. Kirkwood to K.P. Kirkwood, 15 March 1918; J.C. Kirkwood to K.P. Kirkwood, 9 May 1919; v.24, f.24-7, J.C. Kirkwood to K.P. Kirkwood, 24 May 1925; J.C. Kirkwood to K.P. Kirkwood, [1932]

the questionable reputations of a series of Toronto businessmen, he almost gave up hope that his dream was possible:

I do not mean to argue that all unusual earnings and incomes come from ignoble occupations, or by departures from truth and honour, but I do mean to say that, in too many cases – perhaps the majority – unusual earnings and income are possible only at a cost of that which is best in man's nature.⁷⁶

Ultimately, what kept Kirkwood's sense of himself rooted was his Presbyterian faith in God and his sense of duty to his wife.⁷⁷ His wife, it should be stated, rarely shows up in his private writings. How she felt about their constant travels can only be left to speculation. His own thoughts on the matter were perfectly clear, however. When his son entered university in 1921, he told him to see it through. Remembering his own four weeks at Queen's, he wrote:

It has been a lament to me ever since that I went into my earning life a sort of advertiser, and that I have been an advertiser ever since. I want you to avoid my course. I would like to see you equipped by a university training for a different profession. If you have the base of a sound education, the future can take care of itself.⁷⁸

His son took this advice, and became a career diplomat with the Department of External Affairs.

The life of Bertram Brooker was in many ways a fun-house mirror reflection of Kirkwood's. Kirkwood needed advertising; he identified strongly with his trade, and sought within its confines both personal status and wealth. By contrast, advertising was almost incidental to Brooker's world. Brooker was a deeply philosophical man who tried to fashion an aesthetic conception of 'being,' *in*

76. Ibid., JCK notebook, 23 August 1905, 192

77. Ibid., v.24, f.24-3, J.C. Kirkwood to K.P. Kirkwood, 9 August 1916

78. Ibid., v.24, f.24-6, J.C. Kirkwood to K.P. Kirkwood, 24 June 1921

1010.⁷⁹ To do so, he shifted restlessly between several media of expression in the popular and fine arts. Throughout his lifetime, he tried his hand at choral singing, poetry, acting, playwriting, screenwriting, sculpture, painting, pen and ink drawing, and novel writing. He was no mere amateur, and he recorded two important firsts for the Canadian artistic scene: the first exhibition of abstract art in Canada by a Canadian artist, and the first Governor-General's Award for fiction, given to his novel *Think of the Earth* in 1937.⁸⁰ Advertising – copywriting – was simply the most lucrative medium of expression open to him. Like an actor playing a part, Brooker sometimes gave the impression that he was merely playing at being an advertising executive, even to the extent of adopting pseudonyms when writing for the trade press, and having his alter-egos argue amongst themselves.⁸¹ His son remembered him as someone who strictly separated his life at the office from his life at home.⁸² That said, it was a career in journalism and advertising that supplied his sole source of income throughout his life.

Brooker was born in Croydon, England, in 1888, and moved with his family to Portage La Prairie, Manitoba, when he was eight years old. As a youth, Brooker wilfully dropped out of school to pursue a rigid course of self-education based upon modern greats in literature, philosophy, and economics. His first job as a writer came reporting for a string of Manitoba weeklies, and ultimately he won a position at the *Winnipeg Free Press*.⁸³ During this time, he also began to ponder the

79. David Arnason, 'Reluctant Modernist,' *Provincial Essays*, 7 (1989), 77-85

80. Bertram Brooker, *Think of the Earth* (Toronto: Nelson, 1936). A fuller discussion of Brooker's various contributions to the arts may be found in *Provincial Essays*, 7 (1989), which contains seven essays on the artist and his work, and Carole Frances Luff, 'Progress Passing Through the Spirit: The Modernist Vision of Bertram Brooker and Lionel LeMoine Fitzgerald as Redemptive Art' (Carleton University: unpublished M.A. thesis, 1991).

81. See for example The End Man [B. Brooker], 'The Copy End,' *Marketing*, 23:13 (26 December 1925), 392; Mark E. Ting [B. Brooker], 'Hoist the Sales,' *Marketing*, 30:4 (16 February 1929), 110

82. University of Manitoba Archives, MSS16, Bertram Brooker papers, b.10, f.18, V. Brooker to D. Reid, 11 October 1972

83. Dennis Reid, *Bertram Brooker* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1979), 7-8

nature of the trade underlying the publication of newspapers. Intrigued, he combined his philosophical and business interests, and drafted a handful of articles on the theory of advertising. These appeared in *Printer's Ink* and *Judicious Advertising* under the pseudonym Richard Surrey. His ambition drove him to larger pastures, but a fondness for Canada led him to Toronto rather than Chicago or New York.⁸⁴ There he continued to bounce between jobs, alternating between editorial and advertising positions at *Marketing* and the *Toronto Globe*. He did freelance copy work in addition to his day jobs. By all accounts, he was a celebrated copywriter.⁸⁵ However, Brooker's insatiable curiosity never allowed him to rest on his laurels. As will be discussed in later chapters, Brooker grappled with every innovation that arrived on the advertising scene. Many Canadian adworkers might have done the same, but Brooker went a step further and published his impressions in leading trade journals. He then drew together all of his articles on copywriting in a book published by McGraw-Hill in 1929, *Copy Technique in Advertising*.⁸⁶ His expanding facility in the visual arts allowed him to add illustration and layout to his repertoire, and he published a volume on these subjects in 1930.⁸⁷ When the Depression started, he left the freelancing and publishing scenes for a position at J.J. Gibbons Limited.⁸⁸

John J. Gibbons did for the Canadian agency field what J.B. Maclean did for its publishing houses: he revamped it with practices and management techniques then current in the United States.

84. Brooker papers, b.1, f.7, E. [J. Somers] to B. Brooker, 25 July 1925; b.1, f.16, Brooker diary, 10 March 1920

85. Six years after his death, one Toronto agent fondly remembered him as the 'grand old man of the business.' Duke University Special Collections Library, J. Walter Thompson Company Archives (JWTA), Newsletters Collection: News Bulletins Series, b.1, *OK! (with corrections)*, 3:6 (August 1961), 2

86. Richard Surrey [B. Brooker], *Copy Technique in Advertising* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1930)

87. Richard Surrey [B. Brooker], *Layout Technique in Advertising* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1930)

88. Brooker papers, b.1, f.17, Account Book, December 1927 to October 1930; *Canadian Advertising Data*, 3:11 (December 1930), 14, 17

In the process, he helped to bring the Canadian advertising trade into the modern era. Born in 1878, Gibbons joined a short-lived Toronto agency in the mid-1800s. Still in his teens, he trained as a solicitor, and in this role he was hired away by the *Toronto News* to become its special representative in New York.⁸⁹ The opportunity allowed him to discover the inner workings of the progressive American agencies. These agencies not only placed their client's announcements, they also offered a wide range of supporting services such as copywriting and illustration. Gibbons embraced these ideas, and in 1900, as noted in the previous chapter, he returned to Toronto to open a new office featuring these services. To do so, he established the first copy and art departments to be found at any agency in Canada, and he staffed them with experienced personnel raided from newspapers, advertisers, and other agencies.⁹⁰ His agency set the pace in Toronto for the next two decades, selling the wares and services of Neilson's Chocolates, Northern Electric, Pear's soap, White Star Steamships, Canada Life Assurance, Packard Motor Cars, and many, many others. By 1921, he was providing service to one hundred firms from Canada, the United States, and Great Britain.⁹¹ One might note that his staff at this time was either well selected or well trained; several started successful agencies of their own in Toronto before 1930.⁹²

A success in business by the age of 25, Gibbons's energies spilled over into several other fields. While he joined all of the usual luncheon clubs, he also was active in several charities. Among these were the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, the Canadian Red Cross Society, and the Canadian Social Hygiene Council.⁹³ In all of these organizations, he was called upon to assist with advice on publicity and fund-raising ventures. A doting profile written in 1936 suggests

89. 'People Who Do Things,' *Saturday Night*, 51:10 (11 January 1936), 16

90. 'Advertising Arena,' *Printer & Publisher*, 11:6 (June 1902), 13; 'Advertising Arena,' *Printer & Publisher*, 11:11 (November 1902), 18

91. NAC, MG27 II D7, George E. Foster papers, v.17, f.1570, J.J. Gibbons to E.O. Osler, 4 August 1915; *Lydiatt's Book* (1922), 227-243

92. See Appendix I.

93. *Who's Who in Canada 1940-1941* (Toronto: International, 1941), 568

that this assistance was freely given.⁹⁴ No doubt. Still, certain of Gibbons's voluntary associations were ruthlessly pragmatic, as was his membership in the Ontario Motor League. As a one-time president of this body in the 1920s, Gibbons would have lobbied government for better roads throughout the province. This could only have helped such clients as Packard Motor Cars and B.F. Goodrich, and several dozen other auto-related manufacturers whose business he might have sought. A more prestigious client awaited in Ottawa, however. In 1914, Gibbons won the first advertising contract ever awarded to an agency by the federal government. That year, following the outbreak of war, the minister of Trade and Commerce, Sir George Foster, hired Gibbons to boost the merits of Canadian apples to Canadians. Gibbons undertook this work at cost, but there is little doubt that his firm gained prestige by the association. It was envied by American agencies unable to win similar contracts.⁹⁵

There are three common themes that run throughout these six men's lives. Again, it must be noted that they cannot possibly represent an entire trade in all of its complexity. Even among themselves, there were sturdy corporate men such as Maclean and Gibbons, and inveterate individualists such as Kennedy and Brooker. That said, the prominence of these men within the industry, and the respect they received from their peers, put these men in a position to shape and reflect the trade in which they worked. Three themes stand out. First, it is immediately apparent that each of these men fit the demographic profile drawn above. Kennedy and Maclean were perhaps ten years older than the first generation of 'modern' adworkers in Canada, but their approach to the trade and their impact upon that generation made them kin with it. Second, American know-how looms large in each man's life. The prior expansion of the advertising trade in the United States had created a large body of expertise. Maclean, Gibbons, and Lydiatt recognized this fact, and exploited

94. 'People Who Do Things,' 16

95. Foster papers, v.17, f.1570, J.J. Gibbons to G.E. Foster, 23 July 1915; George French, *20th Century Advertising* (New York: Van Nostrand, 1926), 558-562

it for their own immediate gain. In the process, they also contributed to the development of modern advertising practices throughout the Toronto trade; Maclean's ad department and Gibbon's agency became popular training grounds for adworkers, and, in the 1920s, Lydiatt's *Marketing* would gain an equal status both for its readers and its employees. With the possible exception of Kirkwood, each man measured his success against American models. Kennedy was the only one of this group to seek his fortune in the United States, but he would not be the last Canadian to do so. That the other five ended their careers in Toronto demonstrates the continuing bonds that they each of them felt for Canada. Third, there is in all of their careers a search for mainstream social respectability. Gibbons's volunteer work and Kirkwood's soul-searching are exemplary here, but so too is Kennedy's desire to place the trade on a 'scientific' foundation through institutional research. Men such as Maclean, Gibbons, and Lydiatt made heavy investments in their trade. They expected their dividends to be paid in social respectability as well as wealth.

Women Adworkers

The division of labour within the advertising trade intensified following Gibbons's arrival, and this development created a space for women to enter the field. It was a pattern familiar to many employers between 1900 and 1930. As large-scale corporate enterprises became more common, there was an increasing need for staff to handle the bureaucratic routine of day-to-day administrative tasks.⁹⁶ Employers quickly discovered that young men did not want these positions because they offered little promise of future advancement. Women, however, proved willing to take them, even though they were paid less than their male counterparts.⁹⁷ Within the advertising trade, the average

96. G.D. Taylor and P.A. Baskerville, *A Concise History of Business in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford UP, 1994), 338

97. Graham S. Lowe, 'Women, Work, and the Office: The Feminization of Clerical Occupations in Canada, 1901-1931,' *Rethinking Canada* 2ed., ed. V. Strong-Boag and A.C. Fellman (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1991), 269-285

woman's salary for Canada was 50-60% less than the average man's.⁹⁸ A standard entry salary for a woman in advertising was \$780 per year in 1920; by contrast, John C. Kirkwood received \$1040 when he began at MacLean Publishing in 1903.⁹⁹ By the late 1920s, a select handful had parlayed these clerical positions into careers as full-fledged agents. They were the exceptions, however. Most remained members of agency support staff.

As previously noted, the female presence within the advertising trade was characterized by young, unmarried women. In 1921, women accounted for 187 of the 1,129 members in the advertising workforce, or 17%; ten years later they represented 20%.¹⁰⁰ Unlike their male counterparts, most women did not advance through the corporate ranks into more lucrative posts. Judging by the statistics available, most women hired by agencies entered as young girls, and left upon marriage.¹⁰¹ In 1921, there were 75 women working in the Toronto ad field; of these, 41 were 16-24 years of age, while another 20 were 24-35.¹⁰² Ten years later, the same story held. Of the 132 women across Canada in essential agency jobs, 43 were 16-24 and another 50 were 25-34; 90% of the entire population were unmarried.¹⁰³ The average salary for these women was \$30.00 per week in Canada in 1931, and those in Toronto could expect a bit more; the average there was \$37.00.¹⁰⁴ There were 666 women adworkers in all occupations. Of these, 481 held positions as clerks, stenographers, or running office equipment.¹⁰⁵ Only one owned her own agency: Margaret

98. *Census 1931* Vol.7, T29

99. Elsinore MacPherson, 'Careers of Canadian University Women' (University of Toronto: unpublished M.A. thesis, 1920), 46; NAC, MG27 III E3, Kenneth P. Kirkwood papers, John C. Kirkwood papers, notebook, 4 April 1903, 75

100. *Census 1931* Vol.7, T56

101. This judgment is supported by other historians; see for example Mary Vipond, 'The Image of Women in Mass Circulation Magazines in the 1920s,' *The Neglected Majority*, ed. S.M. Trofimenkoff and A. Prentice (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1977), 116-124.

102. *Census 1921* Vol.4, T5

103. *Census 1931* Vol.7, T53

104. *Census 1931* Vol.7, T29, T34

105. *Census 1931* Vol.7, T58

Pennell.

Pennell began in the trade as many other women did, working in a media department.¹⁰⁶ She took full advantage of her opportunity. Much of the work conducted by a media department was involved routine clerical chores which required no decision-making authority.¹⁰⁷ That said, those who took it up could develop invaluable experience, since these data were integral to the preparation of campaigns. Hired by J.J. Gibbons as a checker in 1907, Pennell soon switched to data collection and gained a reputation for her insights into media buying.¹⁰⁸ By 1920, the editor of *Marketing* acknowledged her expertise in this line, and she became a frequent correspondent on issues related to Canadian periodicals.¹⁰⁹

In 1927, Pennell left Gibbons to establish her own agency, Margaret Pennell Advertising. Toronto at that point had thirty-one agencies competing for national accounts.¹¹⁰ To position her agency within the field, Pennell rooted her sales pitch in her gender. Her agency's slogan: 'Advertising to Women by Women.'¹¹¹ This tactic appears to have worked with several manufacturers whose products traditionally appealed to female consumers. She picked up a dozen accounts within the textiles industry, and her most noted client produced canned fruits, E.D. Smith & Sons.¹¹²

106. Roxanne Labrie, 'Whither goest thou,' *Marketing*, 88:39 (26 September 1983), 27; Tim Falconer, 'A Club of Their Own,' *Marketing*, 98:46 (15 November 1993), 48

107. Roland Marchand and Jennifer Scanlon have examined the role of women in the American trade by focusing on copywriting, but as Marchand points out, women were far more likely to occupy positions among the clerical and research staff than among the creative and executive staff; Marchand, 33-35; Scanlon, *Inarticulate Longings: The Ladies' Home Journal, Gender, and the Promises of Consumer Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 169-196.

108. *Marketing*, 26:3 (5 February 1927), 97; Pennell's achievement was matched by Olive M. Newton at Advertising Service Company Limited; *Business Woman*, 2:8 (September 1927), 8.

109. See for example Pennell, 'The Circulation of Canadian Daily Newspapers,' *Marketing*, 29:4 (April 1920); Pennell, 'Securing National Advertising,' *Marketing*, 31:6 (June 1922), 29-31; *Marketing*, 25:6 (18 September 1926), 158

110. *Lydiatt's Book* 15ed. (1927), 312-332

111. advertisement, *Marketing*, 28:11 (26 May 1928), 416

112. *Lydiatt's Book* 15ed. (1927), 312-332

After clerical work and media buying, copywriting offered women their next best chance at a career in advertising, though not necessarily at agencies. As Pennell clearly knew, their advantage was their gender itself. It was widely presumed that most consumer goods were purchased by women. Commentators in the trade press estimated that anywhere from 70% to 90% of household spending was done by a homemaking female.¹¹³ To reach them through advertising, a 'female' tone of voice was considered best. An American ad man confessed in *Economic Advertising* that:

There are too many advertisements written by men and not enough advertisements written by women. The woman knows where lies the human element of the thing that goes into the home, better than any man that lives. It has taken me a long time to admit that.¹¹⁴

It was a view that the magazine's editor endorsed.¹¹⁵ Department stores were a step ahead of the agents on this score. Having long employed female clerks in their departments catering to women, they valued the expertise they 'naturally' brought to the job.¹¹⁶ It was only logical to have women write the inserts for their daily advertising. One such copywriter was Byrne Hope Sanders, who began a distinguished career in marketing writing puffs for Eaton's Toronto store in the 1910s.¹¹⁷

Agencies were slow to follow the retailers' lead, but by 1920 they were beginning to catch

113. Paul Johnson, 'The Letters of a Young Man to His Dad: Letter Number Five,' *Economic Advertising*, 1:6 (February 1909), 11; Charles C. Nixon, 'Are Women's Magazines Justified?' *Economic Advertising*, 7:6 (June 1914), 53-54; Margaret Brown, 'Women Join Movement to Boost Canadian Made Products' *Marketing*, 24:12 (12 June 1926), 416; see also Marchand, 33-35; Scanlon, 169-196.

114. William Thompson, 'Human Advertising,' *Economic Advertising*, 3:2 (February 1910), 14

115. 'The Woman's Viewpoint,' *Economic Advertising*, 6:12 (December 1913), 3,5

116. Sarah Smith Malino, 'From Across the Counter: A Social History of Female Department Store Employees, 1870-1920' (Columbia University: Ph.D. dissertation, 1982); Susan Porter Benson, *Counter Cultures: Saleswomen, Managers, and Customers in American Department Stores, 1890-1940* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois, 1988), 124-176

117. 'Mary Etta MacPherson,' *Business Woman* 3:1 (January 1928), 7. Joy L. Santink argues that Eaton's was at the forefront of this move to hire women, in the 1890s; Santink, *Timothy Eaton and the Rise of His Department Store* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1990), 189-191.

up. When the agencies first adopted creative departments, they did so to enhance their service to advertisers. Copywriting was sold as a form of technical knowledge best deployed by agents with sales experience as well as literary talent; women were thought to be unqualified.¹¹⁸ By 1922, however, the number of women working the field brought anxious commentary from W.A. Lydiatt in the pages of *Marketing*.¹¹⁹ Among these women copywriters were Miriam Marshall, Laree R. Spray, and Margaret Ball. Marshall was hired by Toronto agent Thornton Purkis in 1920. When Purkis wanted the effervescent sparkle of a chatty young co-ed for a hand lotion campaign, he hired Marshall upon her graduation from the University of Toronto. She subsequently wrote at least two series of ads for Campagna's Italian Balm that appeared in the Toronto papers through 1920 and 1921.¹²⁰ On the west coast, Spray was a freelance journalist. Through the mid-1920s, a sideline in copywriting proved so successful that she opened her own office in Vancouver.¹²¹ Ball was employed as a copy expert by the Toronto branch of McKim Limited; she also undertook solicitations and media-buying. She left the agency field when she married one of the firm's directors.¹²²

Ad women played an active part of the Canadian Business & Professional Women's Club in Toronto, and contributed regularly to its newsletter *cum* magazine, *Business Woman*. The magazine first appeared in 1926, and addressed the interests of women in every rank of white-collar employment, from filing clerks to surgeons. It frequently ran stories on women in advertising, a fact which may reflect two members of its editorial board: Margaret Pennell, and Mabel Stoakley, the secretary-treasurer of R.C. Smith & Son, Advertising Agency. Its first editor was Mary Etta

118. A study of women graduates of the University of Toronto done in 1920 discovered that only two were in advertising. 3,751 women were contacted, 2,705 responded, and 135 had entered careers in business. MacPherson, 19, 37a

119. 'Can Men Advertise to Women?' *Marketing*, 16:8 (15 April 1922), 316

120. NAC, MG31 K27, Miriam Sheridan papers, v.3, f.3-31, C.W. Sheridan to M. Marshall, 23 October [1920]; v.5, f.5-4, M. Marshall to C.W. Sheridan, [20 September 1923]

121. 'Laree R. Spray,' *Business Woman*, 3:9 (September 1928), 6

122. *Business Woman*, 2:1 (January 1927), 10; *Marketing*, 27:9 (29 October 1927), 351

MacPherson, who left to edit MacLean's *Canadian Homes & Gardens*; she was succeeded by Byrne Hope Sanders, who eventually left to edit another MacLean magazine, *Chatelaine*. Also among its contributors was Margaret Brown, who was then secretary-treasurer of *Marketing Magazine*.¹²³

By the end of the decade, then, women had found a small but growing place within the advertising trade. Their mood seemed hopeful, and 41 ad women met in April 1933 to create their own luncheon club in Toronto.¹²⁴ Pennell was its first chair. Prior to that meeting, a writer in *Business Woman* suggested that 'Woman's Day in Advertising is Just Dawning.'¹²⁵ Estella M. Place noted the marked advances women had made, not just in agencies, but in periodicals and in corporate advertising departments as well. They were no longer restricted to clerical work, but handling every branch of the trade. Indeed, the 1931 census reported that there were 9 women in Canada working on their own account in the advertising field.¹²⁶ Even Lydiatt recanted for his earlier, alarmist attitudes towards women's entry into the business. In 1927, he ran a highly laudatory article on American agency executive Minna Hall Crothers. Crothers's career was the mirror image of Pennell's. She too had risen from media buyer to agency principal, and had recently become the president of the Federation of Women's Advertising Clubs in New York.¹²⁷ The unsigned article may well have been the handiwork of Margaret Brown, who had gained a regular by-line at *Marketing* during Brooker's tenure as publisher. When Lydiatt retired some twenty years later, he passed control of the magazine to Brown.

Despite this rosy outlook, women still only represented 20.2% of the workforce employed by agencies in 1931, 72% of them were clerks and stenographers, and their average salary remained

123. Tim Falconer, 'A Club of Their Own,' *Marketing*, 98:46 (15 November 1993), 48

124. Labrie, 27

125. *Census 1931* Vol.7, T40; Estella M. Place, 'Woman's Day in Advertising is Just Dawning,' *Business Woman*, 4:5 (May 1929), 8, 19, 20, 29

126. *Census 1931* Vol.7, T50; see also Minna Hall Simmons, 'Women in Advertising,' in French, *20th Century Advertising*, 189-200

127. *Marketing*, 27:13 (24 December 1927), 506

far below that of the men.¹²⁸ It had taken them sixty years to get a foot in the door of the trade. Some have noted it took another sixty years to get the respect they deserved.¹²⁹

The Toronto Ad Club

While career paths within the advertising trade became increasingly segmented, adworkers had several problems in common. Primary among these were the criticisms they faced from a group ostensibly outside their trade but crucial to its success: the general public. Disdain of advertising was widespread. Much of the problem could be traced to the trade's own excesses: the competition for billboard space in cities and countryside alike, the relentless postering of urban walls and streetcars, and the 'shrieking headlines, shrieking borders, shrieking exaggerations' of the advertising found in the periodical press.¹³⁰ In 1904, a movement began in the United States to correct this problem, and Canadians signed on. In particular, a group of Toronto adworkers – the Toronto Ad Club – took it upon themselves to legitimate the function of advertising in the public mind through a series of campaigns run from 1912 to 1914. Then, for one week before the outbreak of war, Toronto was at the centre of the advertising trade – not just in Canada, but the world.

The public's disdain could be traced back into the previous century, and to the practices characterized by one man in particular: Phineas T. Barnum. Barnum was an impresario of popular culture who established his career with showcases of hoaxes and freaks. In time he adapted his talent to the promotion of opera singers and spectacles, but it was his early successes and his later work in circuses that stuck in the public mind.¹³¹ Although he used print advertising liberally, he was

128. *Census 1931* Vol.7, T56, T58

129. Labrie, 27; Jerry Goodis with Gene O'Keefe, *GOODIS: Shaking the Canadian Advertising Tree* (Markham: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1991), 1

130. Richard Surrey [B. Brooker], 'The Copy Outlook for 1924,' *Marketing*, 20:1 (12 January 1924), 10-12

131. A.H. Saxon, *P.T. Barnum: The Legend and the Man* (New York: Columbia, 1989); Raymond Fitzsimmons, *Barnum in England* (London: Godfrey Bles, 1969)

not a pioneer in the field; he did nothing to advance that art. Rather, his expertise was widely diffused in the art of total publicity, using every media and ploy possible to generate interest in his events.¹³² Jackson Lears has suggested that the novelty of Barnum's approach was his ability to translate existing commercial practices onto a mass scale. Certainly, Barnum himself paid tribute to the guileless ways of the medicine men and their ancient creed of *caveat emptor*. This he revealed in a celebrated autobiography. Through the late 1800s, it found a ready audience and sold in the millions, on both sides of the forty-ninth parallel and in Europe as well.¹³³ *Saturday Night* held Barnum to be the epitome of the successful publicist, while *Economic Advertising* endorsed an article which argued that Barnum's story should have been recommended reading for anyone entering a career in advertising.¹³⁴ Even after World War II, economist Harold Innis consulted the autobiography in his work on advertising and communications.¹³⁵ Barnum's name was an icon of successful publicity on both sides of the border.

That said, the moral quality of Barnum-as-icon became clouded after 1900, when the advent of progressive and social gospel idealism cast a shadow over his legacy. Consumers and businessmen alike grew dubious of the charlatantry of certain commercial practices then common, and in the advertising field these included the wilful trade in hokum and hoaxes pioneered by the patent

132. Frank Presbrey, *The History and Development of Advertising* (New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1929), 211-226

133. P.T. Barnum, *Struggles and Triumphs: or, Forty Years' Recollections* (New York: American News Company, 1871); published in Canada as *The Life of Barnum* (Paris, Ontario: J.S. Brown, [1890?]); Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York: Basic, 1994), 265-267.

134. 'Advertising as a Fine Art,' *Saturday Night*, 1:1 (3 December 1887), 7; Elbert Hubbard, 'The Vice of Being Too Virtuous,' *Economic Advertising*, 8:5 (May 1915), 13

135. University of Toronto Archives (UTA), B91-0029, Harold Innis papers, b.8, f.1, bibliography on advertising; Innis, 'The Newspaper in Economic Development,' *Journal of Economic History*, 2:Suppl. (December 1942), 1-33; Innis, 'A Note on the Advertising Problem,' *Commerce Journal*, NS:3 (April 1943), 65-66; Innis, 'Technology and Public Opinion in the United States,' *The Bias of Communication* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1991), 172

medicine men.¹³⁶ Barnum by his own hand had associated himself with them, and in his autobiography had boastfully exposed his own hoaxes. By the 1920s, Barnum's life was no longer an inspiration to the rising young man in advertising, but a cautionary tale, a relic of a past generation lacking in civilized business ethics.¹³⁷

This sea-change in the attitude of adworkers was spurred in no small part by the work of two American magazines. In 1904, the *Ladies' Home Journal* commissioned a number of tests on well-known patent medicines. The results confirmed what many had long suspected. Many were simply alcohol and water containing little of medicinal value; a select few contained morphine, cocaine, and opium.¹³⁸ The magazine printed its results in a series of articles extended over a two year period. In 1905, it was joined on its crusade by *Collier's*.¹³⁹ If previously the public had been indulgent towards these manufacturers, they were no longer. American legislators responded to public outrage with the Food & Drug Act of 1906. This legislation forced manufacturers to state the composition of the product clearly on the label of each product. It also restricted the claims that could be made in their advertising.¹⁴⁰ In Canada, similar legislation followed in 1908, inspired by the same wave of concern as it spilled over the border with the magazines and medicines themselves.¹⁴¹

136. Lears, 213-215; Marchand, 7-9

137. 'Too Proud to Advertise,' *Marketing*, 16:10 (15 May 1922), 432; Richard Surrey [B. Brooker], 'The Copy Outlook for 1924,' *Marketing*, 20:1 (12 January 1924), 10-12; C.T. Solomon, 'Advertising Needs Men of Business,' *Canadian Magazine*, 17:4 (April 1927), 17, 43-44; A.J. Denne, 'This Thing Called Advertising,' *Canadian Magazine*, 67:5 (June 1932); Karl Bernhardt, 'A Critique of Marketing Techniques,' *Marketing Organization and Technique* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1940)

138. James H. Young, *Toadstool Millionaires: A Social History of Patent Medicines in America before Federal Regulation* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1961), 212-225; Denis Goulet, *Le Commerce des Maladies: La publicité des remèdes au début du siècle* (Quebec: Institut québécois de recherche, 1987), 27-28

139. Young, 212-225; James P. Wood, *The Story of Advertising* (New York: Ronald, 1952), 327-334

140. Young, 226-244

141. Canada, House of Commons, *Debates* (21 February 1907), 3464-3465; (15 June 1908), 10551-10553; (10 July 1908), 12622-12628; Proprietary Medicines Act, 7-8 Edward VII (1908), Ch.56

Adworkers in all three sectors were exceptionally defensive in the wake of these events. Agents trying to build up respectable, permanent businesses did not appreciate a lingering public sentiment that dismissed them as little more than snake-oil salesmen – despite that fact that admen such as Kennedy, McKim, and Gibbons actually handled clients in this line. Nor did the manufacturers of non-medicinal products appreciate having their publicity associated with the questionable tactics of the circus promoters and medicine men. In the 1910s, some insisted that their ads not even appear on the same page with them.¹⁴² Publishers, whose revenues had suddenly increased with the growth of national advertising, had good reason to pay them heed. They could not afford to fan any further public reaction against advertising.¹⁴³ Clearly there was an opportunity to co-operate on behalf of the trade as a whole.

The Toronto Ad Club fit the bill quite nicely. A small group of Toronto adworkers met in March 1911 to discuss the possibility of forming an organization that would unite men – no women – from each sector of the local periodical industry. A positive response led to a more formal meeting the following month. By May the club was an established fact with 50 members, and by November it boasted five times that.¹⁴⁴ Among these were almost every noteworthy publisher, advertising manager, and agent on the local scene. The editors of both *Economic Advertising* and *Printer & Publisher* gave it their enthusiastic support, as did the publishers of every Toronto daily.¹⁴⁵ Its first executive included John P. Patterson of Norris-Patterson, and J.F. MacKay of the *Globe*. Its first president was the advertising manager of Ryrrie Brothers Jewellers, and he had the counsel of his counterparts from Office Specialty Manufacturing Limited, Coca-Cola of Canada Limited, and the

142. B.H. Bramble, 'A Space Buyer on Objectionable Advertising,' *Printer & Publisher*, 25:9 (September 1916), 17-20

143. E.H. Macklin, 'Patent Medicine Advertising,' *Printer & Publisher*, 22:5 (May 1913), 51

144. 'Toronto Ad Club,' *Economic Advertising*, 4:6 (June 1911), 31; 'Missionary Work,' *Economic Advertising*, 4:12 (Dec 1911), 9-11

145. *Toronto World*, 8 April 1912

Dominion Express Company. According to *Economic Advertising*, the selection of an advertiser for president was deliberate; pride of place in the club was given 'very properly' to the 'buyers of advertising' – a fascinating admission coming from a writer so closely connected to both an agency and a publication.¹⁴⁶ Other members included magazine publisher J.B. MacLean, and agents J.J. Gibbons, Robert Baker, W.A. Lydiatt, and John C. Kirkwood.

The club's purpose was laid out in its constitution. Briefly, members sought to achieve four main goals:

1. To develop the science and art of advertising.
2. To encourage the interchange of creative ideas in advertising.
3. To establish a realization of the greater importance of advertising.
4. To promote sociability among the advertising fraternity.¹⁴⁷

One activity greatly advanced their realization of the first, second, and fourth goals: the institution of a weekly luncheon and lecture series at McConkey's Palm Room, a downtown Toronto taphouse. Here, business and pleasure frequently intermingled as visiting speakers from the United States shared the stage with the club's favourite entertainer, Jules Brazil. Brazil, billed by *Economic Advertising* as the 'Toronto midget,' was adopted by the club to be its official 'mascot.' Despite this dubious honour, he was a respected pianist and band leader, and a professor of music at St Michael's College.¹⁴⁸ It was he who planned the music of the massed bands at the carnival in 1915. Beyond the luncheons, the executive encouraged the formation of branches in other Ontario cities, and put out a weekly newsletter to keep everyone in touch.¹⁴⁹

146. 'Toronto Ad Club,' *Economic Advertising*, 4:6 (June 1911), 32-33

147. 'Ad Clubs and Their Usefulness,' *Economic Advertising*, 4:5 (May 1911), 13

148. A.L. McCredie, 'The Story of the AACA Convention in Dallas,' *Printer & Publisher*, 21:6 (June 1912), 1

149. 'Toronto Ad Club,' *Economic Advertising*, 4:6 (June 1911), 31; 'Toronto Ad Club,' *Economic Advertising*, 4:10 (October 1911), 42-43; 'Toronto Ad Club,' *Economic Advertising*, 4:11 (Nov 1911), 42-3; 'Missionary Work,' *Economic Advertising*, 4:12 (Dec 1911), 9-11

Upon its creation, the club joined a movement that had begun seven years before in the United States. The Associated Advertising Clubs of America had formed in 1904, and was a federation of groups similar to the Toronto Ad Club. From the outset, its chief concern had been for the 'professional' standing of the trade's practitioners. One of its early presidents, the advertising manager of Coca-Cola Incorporated (USA), stated:

We have no advertising universities, and only in a few instances are any of our colleges endeavouring to teach even the fundamentals of publicity. Therefore, the advertising clubs have been organized to meet this need of education; hence a good, effective advertising club in any city is an educational institution and a potent influence toward its commercial up-lift.¹⁵⁰

This influence would be exercised in two key ways. First, individual clubs were expected to foster ethical practices within their own areas by recruiting new members and championing the merits of scrupulous business practices. Second, many clubs also offered night classes to aspiring newcomers in the hopes that the next generation could be trained properly before they learned the bad habits of the previous generation. Then, once a year, they would all meet at a general convention to discuss matters of common import. The entire movement was rooted in a belief that co-operation and mutual education would elevate the trade as a whole.¹⁵¹ Apart from these noble goals, the Associated Clubs had no specific programme.

Everything changed in 1911, when the Associated Clubs became a truly national organization. For the first time, it incorporated members from every region of the United States.¹⁵² The annual convention, that year held in Boston, buzzed with 2,000 excited delegates, including twenty from the

150. S.C. Dobbs, 'What the Advertising Clubs Can do for Advertising Men,' *Printer's Ink*, reprinted in *Economic Advertising*, 3:4 (April 1910), 12-13

151. French, ch.10

152. French, 122-123

newly-founded Toronto Ad Club. They viewed their new-found solidarity as a sign – a sign that they were destined for some greater task than they had known. They were not disappointed. From the convention floor there arose a new standard, a new cause that would give them a definite purpose and direction: ‘Truth in Advertising.’ Delegates resolved to re-make themselves as the vanguard of a new era of business ethics; they would throw the fraud and the fake from their midst, and elevate their trade to a new level of respectability in the public mind. One year later, O.C. Pease of A. McKim Limited, Toronto, remembered the discussion of the seminal resolution as a ‘riot of enthusiasm.’ He explained:

More than two thousand keen, virile men had gathered together for one purpose, to advertise advertising - and it could hardly be otherwise. Ribbons and buttons and banners, party calls, slogans, and songs proclaimed their vigorous allegiance to the cause. That the flood of enthusiasm which was created at that time has lasted up until the present may be judged by the never-ceasing war that has been carried on all over the continent against misrepresentative and fraudulent advertising.¹⁵³

‘Truth in Advertising’ became the delegates’ new badge, and every session thereafter was dominated by its discussion.¹⁵⁴

At its core, Truth in Advertising was a philosophical rationalization of the place of advertising in a capitalist economy. Advertising was not a subject discussed by economists, for many of the same reasons that the general public held advertising in disdain.¹⁵⁵ As such, it fell to the practitioners themselves to explain what role their trade had within modern business. In essence, they

153. O.C. Pease, ‘The Usefulness of Conventions,’ *Economic Advertising*, 5:5 (May 1912), 19, 21

154. ‘The Boston Convention,’ *Economic Advertising*, 4:8 (August 1911), 39-45; George French, 122-125

155. Ronald Fullerton, ‘Karl Knies’s Theory of Advertising,’ 8th Conference on Historical Research in Marketing and Marketing Thought, Kingston, Ontario, May 1997

argued that advertising was 'news,' information about products and services that allowed the consumer to make wise decisions in the marketplace based upon all the facts necessary. Such a theory rested heavily upon a classical understanding of economics, whether interpreted by Smith, Mill, or Marshall. In its simplest terms, as the quantity and quality of the information reaching consumers was augmented, the better their decisions would be, and the better the economy would perform. 'True advertising,' then, would lead to wiser consumers and by necessity more scrupulous business practices.¹⁵⁶ Advertising could only sell the consumer a product once; after that, it was up to the manufacturer and retailer to ensure that satisfaction with the goods advertised became translated into a repeat customer. By the logic of the marketplace, the charlatan and the fake would be slowly weeded out.

Truth in Advertising found practical expression in two different forms: legislation and 'Vigilance Committees.' The laws which had resulted from the magazine muckraking before 1910 had only regulated the content and description of food and drugs. They had done nothing to address the integrity of advertising in general. Inspired by the Boston convention, *Printer's Ink* sought to redress this omission and initiated a push for legal sanctions specifically targeting fraudulent advertising. A model statute was drafted, and ad clubs were encouraged to press for its adoption by state legislatures. By 1914, variations of the statute were enacted in 15 states.¹⁵⁷

In Canada, *Economic Advertising* endorsed the model statute in 1913, but it took concrete cases rather than principles to prompt the government into action.¹⁵⁸ Through 1912 and 1913, a number of speculators exploited the boom in Prairie settlement by selling land at grossly inflated

156. Jackson Lears talks of this tendency in terms of a 'plain speech' tradition within American advertising; Lears, 53-63

157. W.A. Olsen, 'The Death Knell of Untruthful Advertising,' *Economic Advertising*, 7:10 (January 1914), 38-40

158. 'Eliminating the Fraud and Fake,' *Economic Advertising*, 6:3 (March 1913), 3, 5; see also 'An Advertising Censor Wanted,' *Economic Advertising*, 3:11 (November 1910), 4-5

prices. Their sales strategy relied heavily on newspaper advertising in Eastern cities. Overly generous descriptions of the land for sale took advantage of the fact that most readers had never been west, and did not have the means to do so. When these schemes were exposed, Western political and business leaders were greatly embarrassed, and sought means to restore confidence in their communities. Ad clubs in Calgary and Edmonton approached a capable young Conservative member of Parliament, R.B. Bennett, to carry the *Printer's Ink* statute to Ottawa.¹⁵⁹ This he did, and he received an attentive hearing from his Conservative colleague, the minister of justice, C.J. Doherty. A bill was rapidly prepared.¹⁶⁰ The bill made it possible to prosecute

Every person who knowingly publishes ... any advertisement for either directly or indirectly promoting the sale or disposal of any real or personal movable or immovable property ..., containing any false statement which is of a character likely to or is intended to enhance the price or value of such property¹⁶¹

The bill passed with little comment and minor revisions, defended in the Commons by Bennett and Doherty with equal fervour.¹⁶² The editor of *Economic Advertising* had 'nothing but praise' for the new legislation.¹⁶³

The second manifestation of Truth in Advertising was the formation of Vigilance Committees. These were connected with member clubs of the AACA, and they were intended to monitor local

159. Canada, House of Commons, *Debates* (8 May 1914), 3466-3469. James Gray writes of Bennett's years as a Calgary M.P., and, while he does not mention this episode, it fits a pattern common to his interests during this time (namely, western commerce and corporate law); see Gray, *R.B. Bennett: The Calgary Years* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1991), 113-149

160. 'The False Advertising Bill,' *Economic Advertising*, 7:6 (June 1914), 5; 'New Law,' *Printer & Publisher*, 23:6 (June 1914), 53

161. Canada, Senate, *Debates* (15 May 1914), 464

162. The bill became s.406a of the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1906. Canada, House of Commons, *Debates* (7 May 1914), 3397-3398; (8 May 1914), 3466-3473, 3480-3481; 4-5 George V (1914), ch.24, s.1.

163. 'The False Advertising Bill,' *Economic Advertising*, 7:6 (June 1914), 5

advertising. The Toronto Ad Club was no exception.¹⁶⁴ Volunteers would keep a watchful eye on suspected frauds and abuses, and advertisers would be investigated if the committee thought action was necessary. That said, there was little they could do even if they did find proof of fraud. Offending companies were simply asked to change their ways, and threatened with public exposure if they did not. The passage of the false advertising bill lent the moral authority of the state to these efforts, but in the long run its contribution was questionable. No advertiser was convicted under the statute over the next fifteen years. Prosecutors found it difficult to prove intent, and the law rapidly fell into disuse.¹⁶⁵ In 1916, the Associated Clubs re-organized the committees into the Better Business Bureaux.¹⁶⁶ The Toronto Vigilance Committee disbanded, and a new office on the Bureaux model was not instituted until 1928.¹⁶⁷

The last act of the Truth in Advertising movement was played out in Toronto the Good itself. In 1914, the city hosted the annual convention of the Associated Clubs. Soon after its formation, the Toronto Ad Club became intoxicated dreaming of the potential benefits the event would bring. For a group seeking greater recognition from the Canadian corporate élite, nothing could better demonstrate their resourcefulness than successfully fêting 2,000 American businessmen. For a group seeking to elevate their public profile in general, nothing could better demonstrate the scope of their vision and abilities. The first step was to win the Associated Clubs' approval, and they threw themselves into the task. First, they convinced all of the other ad clubs in Canada to back their cause. Then, with a bankroll of \$17,000, 54 men descended on the 1912 convention in Dallas,

164. 'What's Doing In the Clubs,' *Economic Advertising*, 7:1 (January 1914), 28; 'What's Doing In the Clubs,' *Economic Advertising*, 8:1 (January 1915), 23

165. *Marketing*, 20:4 (23 February 1924), 127; *Marketing*, 26:9 (30 April 1927), 386; Alexander Wilson, 'Advertising and the Law,' *Marketing*, 30:9 (27 April 1929), 285-287, 306

166. 'How Better Business Bureaus Protect Legitimate Enterprise,' *Marketing*, 28:2 (21 January 1928), 66-67

167. *Marketing*, 29:3 (4 August 1928), 84

Texas.¹⁶⁸ To set themselves apart from the Americans, the entire contingent adopted an Anglo-Celtic theme: they all wore kilts and sporrans to the general meetings and formal events (see Illustration 2.1). To heighten the effect, they were heralded by a rousing set of marches courtesy of two pipers and a drummer from the 48th Highlanders regiment, once again directed by Jules Brazil. While there, the diminutive Brazil struck up a friendship with a 'giant' from Dallas, and the two performed acrobatic stunts together, much to the delight of the crowd.¹⁶⁹ It was a masterful display of publicity, worthy of Barnum himself, and it stunned their American hosts.¹⁷⁰ Following a repeat performance at the 1913 convention, the Ad Club handily won the nomination for 1914.

When the Associated Clubs arrived in Toronto in June 1914, it marked a significant intersection for Canadian adworkers: the apogee of the Truth in Advertising movement, and their elevation to a recognized place in the North American publishing trade. On the first score, delegates hammered out a wide-ranging set of guidelines concerning the ethical behaviour of practitioners. The results provided some concrete statements that helped to clarify the ideal notion of Truth in Advertising advanced three years before.¹⁷¹ On the second score, the ad workers of Toronto were ecstatic simply to host the event. It signalled for them their acceptance and integration into an international body of advertising practitioners. The highlight in this regard was the convention's decision to revise its name from the Associated Advertising Clubs of America to the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World to reflect the contributions of their Canadian members.¹⁷²

168. *Toronto World*, 8 April 1912

169. 'Conventionotes,' *Economic Advertising*, 6:7 (July 1913), 37

170. A.L. McCredie, 'The Story of the AACA Convention in Dallas,' *Printer & Publisher*, 21:6 (June 1912), 1

171. These guidelines can be found in George French, *Advertising: The Social and Economic Problem* (New York: Ronald, 1915), 244-258

172. 'The Toronto Convention,' *Economic Advertising*, 7:7 (July 1914), 1

Illustration 2.1

H.C. Hocken, left, and F.G. O'Brien, in their kilts, on their way to Dallas with the Toronto Ad Club, in 1912. The *Toronto World* ran this photo three years later following local municipal elections when Hocken, then the editor of the Orange Lodge *Sentinel*, became the newly elected mayor of Toronto.

Toronto World, 14 January 1915



Advertising Advertising

Organization, education, legislation, celebration. These things were worthy endeavours, yet they did little to address directly the core problem faced by adworkers: public antipathy. Ad clubs had fostered a sense of trade unity, night classes provided skills to specific individuals, and legislation made the fakers' job more difficult. All of these, however, were matters internal to the trade itself. The Toronto Ad Club constantly fretted over how they might reach the general public, but it took the Canadian Press Association to arrive at an inspired solution. In retrospect, the solution was embarrassingly obvious. They would have to advertise advertising.

The campaign that resulted was a product of the combined efforts of the Press Association and the Toronto Ad Club. In the fall of 1911, a group of publishers within the Press Association wondered how they might encourage a greater use of their advertising columns. Until then, they had largely relied upon direct marketing – individual advertisers were approached by their own solicitors or advertising agents. Now they had a new idea. Nothing would better demonstrate the effectiveness of advertising than actually using advertising itself. With this idea in mind, the publishers approached their agent members of the Ad Club for their co-operation. The agents readily agreed.¹⁷³

Since the main objective was known, planning centred around the theme of the ads themselves. The campaign was intended for the daily papers, so it was thought best to make the most of their exposure. Copy would address all readers in general rather than just the advertisers whom the publishers wanted to cultivate. That way, the ads could accomplish two things at the same time: they could educate readers in the function and purpose of advertising, and they would have the demonstrative value that the publishers originally had in mind. The major theme, then, became obvious. The campaign would address all of the reasons why advertising was valuable to consumers

173. William Findlay, 'Advertising Our Advertising,' *Printer & Publisher*, 20:12 (December 1911), 37-38

in their day-to-day lives. It would address its questionable reputation head-on, then shower the reader with a description of all of the benefits that modern advertising practices had made possible. In showing this, the value of advertising to advertisers would be amply shown.¹⁷⁴ For the historian, the twenty ads that they created provide a remarkable snap-shot of the trade's self-image at this time.

The series was exceptionally self-conscious, both in its tone and its sensitivity towards a diffident public. Each ad was written in the same sober, dignified voice that conjured an almost reverential aura around the subject at hand. At times, the copy read uncannily like a sermon rather than a typical newspaper advertisement (III.2.2). This was probably intended. One of the agents' goals was to overcome their lingering association in the public mind with circuses and patent medicine makers. The dignified tone was reinforced by the composition of the ads. The type was clean and modern, balanced and symmetrically laid out, and framed by an elegant border (although swastikas framing two of the ads jar the eye of a later reader). A generous use of white space was evident throughout the series, and no illustrations appeared.¹⁷⁵

The memory of the past was tackled first. 'For centuries the principle of "Let the Buyer Beware" – "Caveat Emptor" – ruled the world of business.'¹⁷⁶ 'Barnum's "dog-faced boy" is said to have drawn \$200.00 a week'¹⁷⁷ No more. The haggling, trickery, and inflated prices that had characterized the marketplace 'until a decade or two ago' were receding before the bright white light of advertising. If once the merchant could set a different price for every customer that entered his store, now his prices were stated for everyone to see in the pages of the daily press. Advertising

174. 'Advertising Advertising Throughout Canada,' *Printer & Publisher*, 21:4 (April 1912), 37-39

175. Findlay, 'Advertising Advertising,' 39; '95 Daily Newspapers,' *Printer & Publisher*, 22:11 (November 1913), 62-63

176. 'Let the Buyer Beware,' *Toronto World*, 13 August 1912

177. 'My Business is Unique,' *Toronto World*, 12 April 1912

Illustration 2.2

The first advertisement in the 'Advertising Advertising' campaign, placed in the *Toronto World*, 12 March 1912.

Behold an Advertisement!

I CAME into being as the spoken language came: slowly, gradually, and to meet an urgent need. I have been worked for evil, but mostly I have worked for good. I can still be worked for evil, but each day it grows more difficult so to do.

I am at once a tool and a living force. If you use me wisely, I am a tool in your employ. If you misuse me, my double edge will injure or destroy you. If you do not use me, I am a force that works ever against your accomplishment of the aims and purposes that animate your business.

I speak a thousand tongues and have a million voices.

I am the ambassador of civilization, the handmaiden of science, and the father of invention.

I have peopled the prairie, and with my aid commerce has laid twin trails of gleaming steel in a gridiron across the continent and stretched a network of copper into the far corners of the globe.

I am the friend of humanity—for I have filled the commoner's life with a hundred comforts denied the king of yesterday.

I have brought clean food, healthful warmth, music, convenience, and comfort into a hundred million homes.

I laugh at tariffs and remake laws.

I have scaled the walls of the farmer's isolation and linked him to the world of outer interests.

I build great factories and people them with happy men and women who love the labor I create.

I have made merchant princes out of corner shopkeepers and piled the

wealth of a Monte Cristo into the laps of those who know my power.

I am a bridge that cancels distance and brings the whole world to your doors, ready and eager to buy your wares.

I find new markets and gather the goods of the world into a handful of printed pages.

I fathered the ten-cent magazines and the penny paper.

I am either the friend or the foe to Competition—so he who finds me first is both lucky and wise.

Where it cost cents to hire me yesterday, it costs quarters to-day, and will cost dollars to-morrow. But whosoever uses me had best have sense: for I repay ignorance with loss and wisdom with the wealth of Croesus.

I spell service, economy, abundance, and opportunity; for I am the one and only universal alphabet.

I live in every spoken word and printed line—in every thought that moves man to action and every deed that displays character.

I am Advertising.

Advice regarding your advertising problems is available through any good advertising agency or the Secretary of the Canadian Press Association, Room 503, Lumsden Building, Toronto. Enquiry involves no obligation on your part—so write if interested.

was the enemy of obfuscation, the essence of candour itself.¹⁷⁸ Viewed in these terms, it was the merchant or manufacturer who failed to advertise that deserved the public's critical gaze. 'Be Suspicious,' one ad declared, '... of an article with no reputation, no backer, no guarantor.'¹⁷⁹

One ad in particular nodded to the uproar behind the food and drug laws. While the magazines had exposed the fraudulent practices of the patent medicine makers, Upton Sinclair had similarly revealed grotesque conditions within the meat packing industry.¹⁸⁰ Here again, advertising could play the valiant knight combatting the evil dragons of yesteryear:

'KEEP OUT!' used to hang as a sign on every factory door. The old idea of secrecy in business made it seem a crime to show outsiders processes, materials, and methods of manufacture.

Now the white light of publicity is being let in by those who depend on public favour for business profits and business growth. ...

Today, many canning factories, packing houses, bakeshops, and public kitchens welcome visitors, concealing nothing.¹⁸¹

Advertising had assisted this process by describing the inner workings of modern businesses and production methods in terms that would reassure the reading public. In so doing, it had participated in the development of great enterprises because untold thousands of people now knew something about the firms with which they dealt; 'The public rewards with its favour and money those who tell it the truth.'¹⁸² For the advertiser, an investment in advertising was not money lost, but capital

178. 'Keep Out!' *Toronto World*, 19 April 1912; 'Count Your Blessings,' *Toronto World*, 24 April 1912

179. 'Be Suspicious,' *Toronto World*, 29 March 1912

180. Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle* [1906] (New York: New American, 1961); Young, 239

181. 'Keep Out!' *Toronto World*, 19 April 1912

182. 'Keep Out!,' *Toronto World*, 19 April 1912

earned through the confidence and goodwill of his customers.¹⁸³

In the day-to-day lives of readers, advertising represented nothing less than a boon to their entire standard of living. This could be illustrated in several ways. The simplest was through the sheer convenience that advertising provided to the consumer. In its purest form, advertising was information, 'news of merchandise,' that allowed consumers to know about new goods, compare prices between stores, and plan shopping trips that would make an efficient use of their time.¹⁸⁴ 'Leisurely, in the comfort of your own home,' one ad stated, 'you can plan and decide upon the purchases in view.'¹⁸⁵

The copywriters placed advertising at the forefront of the revolution in consumer goods. Everywhere one looked, there were new foods and convenience items that were only dreamed of a century before, things such as tinned fruits, breakfast cereals, electric lights, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, refrigerators, and gramophone players. 'Would you be willing to go back to the standards of living that prevailed in 1812?' one of the advertisements asked.¹⁸⁶ The question was only rhetorical, the answer perfectly obvious: of course not. And, as another ad suggested, 'You Can Thank Advertising' for the changes.¹⁸⁷ Only its 'power' had made it possible for scientists and engineers to convey news of their inventions to thousands of people swiftly and economically. This allowed them to capitalize on their ideas, and to bring new products into homes of even modest income. Without advertising, such men would languish in obscurity, their beneficent creations would never have graced the world. 'Science, invention, commerce, are all indebted to its aid. It has raised the standard of living, elevated business ethics, and put us within reach of more real comforts, more

183. 'Let the Buyer Beware,' *Toronto World*, 13 August 1912; 'A Modern Force in Business,' *Toronto World*, 26 March 1912; 'When the People Refuse to Pay,' *Toronto World*, 30 April 1912

184. 'A Hermit for Five Years,' *Toronto World*, 26 April 1912

185. 'Your Best Shopping Guide,' *Toronto World*, 16 April 1912

186. 'Count Your Blessings,' *Toronto World*, 24 April 1912

187. 'You Can Thank Advertising,' *Toronto World*, 15 March 1912

real blessings, than we ever enjoyed before.¹⁸⁸

On the question of cost, here too advertising proved a boon. Advertising reached thousands of readers every day in the newspapers of the country. If this readership could be effectively translated into interested consumers, into demand for a product, then it logically followed that sales would increase.¹⁸⁹ When that happened, the fixed costs of production would be spread out over greater numbers of units, and the retail price to the consumer would subsequently drop.¹⁹⁰ As such, advertising was not simply a guiding light in a storm of corrupt business practices, not just a convenience for the shopper and a friend to the inventor, but it actually represented an economic utility, a value-added service within the marketplace. When combined with the notions that supported the Truth in Advertising movement – that advertising should make the consumer purchasing decision more efficient – there formed a powerful argument for the existence of the trade within an open capitalist economy. This remained a standard weapon in the adworkers' arsenal whenever the integrity and purpose of their occupation was attacked.¹⁹¹

Underlying all of these arguments there was an ambivalent conception of the extent of the adworker's influence over readers.¹⁹² On the one hand, the ideal reader was the ultimate authority on all matters related to the marketplace. Advertising could only sell a product once. After that, the consumer would know the product first hand and either become a repeat customer or not, and 'No

188. 'Count Your Blessings,' *Toronto World*, 24 April 1912

189. 'Better than Ringing Door-bells,' *Toronto World*, 10 May 1912

190. 'Lowering the Cost,' *Toronto World*, 7 May 1912

191. See for example Bertram Brooker, 'Crazy Consumers ...!' *Marketing*, 27:8 (15 October 1927), 279-280, 300; A.J. Denne, 'This Thing Called Advertising,' *Canadian Magazine*, 67:5 (June 1932), 16, 49-50.

192. Daniel Pope and Roland Marchand have found the same was true of the American adworkers; Pope, 250-251; Marchand, 52-87.

advertising will offset the bad effect of a dissatisfied buyer.'¹⁹³ On the other hand, adworkers betrayed a tremendous sense of self-confidence in their ability to make that first sale. Through careful planning, clever copy, attractive layout, and well-selected media, adworkers claimed an ability to generate interest in any product imaginable. If the product failed, it was the manufacturer's fault, not theirs. If the product succeeded, it could not have done so without the 'force' at their command. Like Adam Smith's deistic invisible hand, advertising was an intangible entity acting in the marketplace. It pointed the way for devout consumers, elevated the worthy businessman, and crushed the fraud and the fake.¹⁹⁴ And it was the adworkers who had unlocked the secret of this force, harnessed its power, and kept it at their beck and call. Every ad in the series closed with a reminder that 'Advice regarding your advertising problems is available through any good advertising agency ...' (III.1.2).

This reminder brings us back to the ultimate point of the exercise: the campaign itself was intended to increase the total volume of national advertising. By the end of the series, a clear message had been delivered to the country's retailers and manufacturers. Advertising was imperative for commercial success in the twentieth century. No business was sufficiently unique that it created its own demand. Readers had to be told about what was for sale. Advertising was more efficient than any other means yet invented to do this. It was now a highly respectable trade, and had a proven track record. The main thing to remember was to advertise constantly, in season or out, lest the competition get ahead. A product was never sold 'once and for all,' since there were always new

193. 'You Are on the Bench,' *Toronto World*, 2 April 1912; Michael Schudson has argued that agencies now target some advertisements at past customers of a product in order to reinforce positive associations with their purchasing decision; Schudson, *Advertising, The Uneasy Persuasion* (New York: Basic, 1984), 27.

194. 'A Modern Force in Business,' *Toronto World*, 26 March 1912; 'Keep Out!' *Toronto World*, 19 April 1912

consumers entering the market, be they maturing children, newlyweds, or recent immigrants.¹⁹⁵ In short, advertisers were counselled to advertise their products through the daily press ceaselessly.

The series was warmly received by everyone involved. Nine copywriters were selected from five Toronto agencies to produce twenty ads.¹⁹⁶ Among this group were W.A. Lydiatt (then at Gibbons), W.G. Colgate (Gagnier), Don Tuck (Norris-Patterson), John C. Kirkwood (J. Walter Thompson, Toronto), and A.J. Denne (McKim, Toronto).¹⁹⁷ The finished ads were offered to every publisher belonging to the Press Association. The space would have to be donated by the participating papers, but the copy work had been done *gratis* by the agents and the cost of the plates would be covered by the Press Association. In total, 93 dailies accepted, as did some 400 weekly papers, and the ads appeared through the spring of 1912.¹⁹⁸ According to accounts written by people involved, the campaign went some way to achieving their desired ends, namely: raising public awareness of the role of advertising in the commercial world, and cultivating potential advertisers.¹⁹⁹ The American counterpart to the Press Association, the American Newspaper Publishers Association, followed its effects closely and then initiated a similar campaign there.²⁰⁰ Over the next two years, the Press Association and Toronto Ad Club designed and placed three more campaigns, each building on the first. The last ad ran in August 1914.²⁰¹

A number of things came to an end that summer. After the convention of the Associated

195. 'A Modern Force in Business,' *Toronto World*, 26 March 1912; 'My Business is Unique,' *Toronto World*, 12 April 1912; 'Better than Ringing Door-bells,' *Toronto World*, 10 May 1912; 'When a Man Marries,' *Toronto World*, 23 July 1912

196. 'Advertising Advertising Throughout Canada,' *Printer & Publisher*, 21:4 (April 1912), 37-39

197. 'Men and Media,' *Economic Advertising*, 5:4 (May 1912), 48

198. 'Report of the Recognition Committee,' *Printer & Publisher*, 21:7 (July 1912), 36-37; 'Cashing In,' *Printer & Publisher*, 22:9 (September 1913), 62-63

199. 'An Advertising Advertising Campaign,' *Printer & Publisher*, 23:3 (March 1914), 57; 'Report of the Advertising Committee,' *Printer & Publisher*, 23:8 (August 1914), 40-41

200. 'Report of the Recognition Committee,' *Printer & Publisher*, 21:7 (July 1912), 37; NAC, MG28 I 6, CPA records, v.1, 'Minute Book 1882-1910,' 5 June 1913

201. 'CPA Gives Facts,' *Printer & Publisher*, 23:10 (October 1914), 46-47

Clubs, the energies of the Toronto Ad Club began to dissipate. For three years, much of its energies had gone into winning and planning the convention. Once it was over, it seemed there were no projects of a similar scale to engage their imagination. The Dominion government had already passed the false advertising bill into law, the Canadian Press Association adopted a standard of advertising ethics in June, and in August a newly-formed group of advertisers pledged themselves to the cause of Truth Advertising.²⁰² The Advertising Advertising campaign was now in its third year, and showing evidence of success. There seemed little left to do. Then, as summer itself was coming to an end, Britain declared war on Germany, and Canada followed suit. The Toronto Ad Club effectively collapsed, and Vigilance Committees lost members as Recruiting Committees were formed.

Conclusion

Mr McKim saw only the single elements that make the success of any commercial enterprise. He conceived the business of advertising on precisely the same plane as the business of selling dry goods, or hardware, or railroad supplies. He was a merchant among merchants

*Printer's Ink*²⁰³

Canadian advertising came of age in the period between 1900 and 1914. For the manufacturer or retailer seeking wider publicity, there were a host of firms in the marketplace offering 'expert' advice, from the freelance copywriters to the print shops and full-service agencies. Within the latter group, the range of services was itself expanding to include everything from the traditional core of

202. 'CPA Adopted Objectionable Ad Standard,' *Printer & Publisher*, 23:8 (August 1914), 72-74; 'Canadian General Advertisers Organizing,' *Printer & Publisher*, 23:10 (October 1914), 54

203. *Printer's Ink*, quoted in *Printer & Publisher*, 16:9 (September 1907), 37

media-buying and plate-making to the newest techniques in copywriting and illustration. It was a potentially confusing situation for the neophyte advertiser.

Out of this seeming confusion there emerged a core of agents – one generation – who led the efforts to reduce confusion and make the trade a respectable occupation. These men operated the full-service agencies. If once the agents could have operated on shoe-string budgets, that was no longer possible. It was their shops that were developing more sophisticated business practices and advertising services, and the size of their staffs, plants, and credit grew in step with the rapid pace of change. It was their shops that had the most to lose financially if they did not secure their position within the publishing industry. Publishers had run profitable papers long before the advent of national advertising, and advertisers had not yet been convinced that they needed to advertise to reach their customers. As such, it was the agents themselves who most felt the need to regularize the set of *ad hoc* practices of the previous century and to craft them into a coherent whole.

The generation that dominated the agency scene until 1930 was composed of salesmen and managers who had succeeded in turning a particular set of business skills into a business unto itself.²⁰⁴ These skills revolved primarily around two things: their understanding of the relationship between media and markets, and their ability to sell this expertise to companies who sought publicity for their products or services. Nonetheless, it was the latter skill which built reputations within the industry. Given the necessary amount of time and money to conduct research, anyone could put together a list of newspapers. The reputations of men like McKim and Gibbons were built on their track records as salesmen and their fiscal responsibility. They sought out the companies with promising products, they conceived the possibilities of marketing their wares, and – with nothing but ideas to go on – they talked these companies into spending thousands of dollars annually on newspapers' white space. For those who set up in the trade before 1914, advertising at its core was

204. Lears, 97-98

a business and not a site of cultural production.

The secondary role given to other tasks within the agency system were reinforced by three trends which emerged after 1910: the increasing division of labour, the employment of women, and the creation of new positions entitled 'account executives.' First, the very fact that copy and art departments were not considered necessary components of agency service until the 1910s speaks volumes. Copy was the voice of the ad, that aspect of the process which actually sold the product to the consumers. And yet, for the first twenty years of their existence, most agencies did not offer copy service. It was the specialty of freelance writers outside of the system whom the agents considered an economic menace to their trade. When after Gibbons agencies did begin to adopt this service, it did not displace the role of the salesmen within the agency itself. Rather, copywriters were the hired help.

Second, the research work of the media department was considered simple enough that it was routinized with the rest of the clerical work of the agency. As a result, men stopped entering this line in preference for one of the skilled jobs: sales, media buying, or creative services. While this allowed women to enter the agency business, employers did not hire them out of any principle of equality, but because these jobs were considered the least skilled aspect of the agency's tasks. The fact that women such as Margaret Pennell rose above this mentality speaks as much of her talents and perseverance as it does of the broad-mindedness of her employers and clients.

Third, as the first generation of agents retired into their presidential suites, solicitations were taken up by a new generation of salesmen referred to as 'account executives.' It was their responsibility to generate new business for the firm. They would also serve as the link between clients and the growing army of agency staff that produced their campaigns. As such, account executives held a coveted position within the agency, since they managed the agency's communications with the client. The personal connections and business experience this work

provided made account executives the logical members of the agency staff to either succeed the founders into management, or to open new agencies of their own. Account executives were behind most of the new agencies after 1920, including those established by James Fisher, Thornton Purkis, and F.H. Hayhurst.

Among the core group of agency staff – the account executives, media-buyers, and copywriters – there slowly emerged a conception of their trade as a respectable career path, if not a full-fledged ‘profession.’ Through their associations, codes of ethics, and reformist tendencies, they stood squarely in the midst of an era which saw numerous occupational groups make similar attempts at professional status. If nothing else, the developing organization of the trade allowed them to enjoy an increasing degree of status in the eyes of those with whom they worked. By then too, they were counselling the country’s political leaders during federal election campaigns. Account executives dealt with company presidents, and handled advertising appropriations worth tens of thousands of dollars. By the 1920s, they were extremely well paid for their services, and gained entrance into the most prestigious clubs in the country.

These developments were still in their early stages before World War I, however. Then, agents still laboured under an unfavourable reputation created by their forebears in the nineteenth century. The Toronto Ad Club gave them a forum to demonstrate their growing expertise and respectability. If once the agency field had been characterized by hustlers such as the disingenuous Robert Moore, now there was the diplomatic J.H. Woods and the innovative J.J. Gibbons. The ad club allowed them to interact with their peers in periodicals and industry on a weekly basis, without the complications of business interfering.

The Truth in Advertising movement and the Advertising Advertising campaign allowed the agents to make this expertise and respectability concrete. Hand in hand with publishers and corporate advertising managers, the agents drafted codes of conduct which established the ideal behaviour

expected from every sector of the trade, in their dealings with each other and with the public at large. Then, the agents articulated a view of the trade as a whole, and the role of advertising within the economy, through the copy written for the Advertising Advertising campaign. Taken together, these two projects revealed that everyone within the trade was looking at their common occupation from a new perspective, as an integral part of modern business practices rather than as a secondary and occasional undertaking. As its importance increased in this manner, and more people saw the field as a place to pursue a life-long career, arguments and rationalizations provided these workers with the intellectual framework to cast their trade and themselves in a respectable light. Advertising was not important or respectable simply because they said so, but because it played a structurally important role in the functioning of a modern capitalist economy. For industry and the public alike, it was a progressive and enlightening force which made the world a better place to live.

All of these trends were closely interlinked with those in the United States. Through trade papers, employment, personal contacts, and the Associated Clubs, Canadian adworkers constantly looked to the Americans for new ideas and confirmation of their own abilities. Active business partnerships dated back to Robert Moore and John Styles in 1860. By contrast, the first British agency to set up shop in Canada, Sells Limited of London, arrived in 1913, and failed the following year.²⁰⁵ Geography certainly played a role here, but there was another reason for the Canadians' enthusiasm for American publicity. It worked. The commercial culture of the United States appeared to be the most dynamic on earth, the most advanced in the art of advertising. Men such as Munsey, Ayer, and Rowell amply demonstrated this fact. And as such, a long string of Canadian adworkers looked south to get their advertising education, from Dyas and Maclean to Gibbons and Lydiatt, and beyond.²⁰⁶

205. *Printer & Publisher*, 22:8 (August 1913), 64

206. Wallace Clement, *The Canadian Corporate Elite: An Analysis of Economic Power* (Ottawa: Carleton UP, 1986), 297-298

At the same time, the Canadians were self-consciously not American. Nothing could have revealed this more clearly than their adoption of Scottish regalia and bagpipes to give themselves a distinctive 'ethnic' identity. The United States may have provided commercial inspiration and a sense of validation for their own efforts, but for English-Canadian adworkers, the British connection gave them their sense of identity. When Toronto hosted the Associated Clubs in 1914, *Economic Advertising* published a special convention number with its first-ever illustrated cover. Flanking the badge of the association were two flags: the Stars and Stripes, and the Union Jack.²⁰⁷

Whether or not the public's perception of their occupation was improved during this period remains a contentious point. One year after the convention, as the adworkers' energies were channelled into the war effort, they organized the patriotic parade and carnival to raise money for a Red Cross ambulance. It too was an impressive display of organization and publicity, combining the talents of agency staff, the YMCA, the Boy Scouts, the marching bands of two regiments, and the goodwill donations of some thirty Toronto businesses. Despite all of the potential good that could have come of this event, *Economic Advertising* believed the whole affair had been a little ill-advised:

Considerable diversity of opinion has been expressed ... and not a few have had no hesitation in claiming that such displays tend to cheapen advertising and lower its dignity.

We refer especially to the clown and circus stunts with which the recent entertainment abounded²⁰⁸

Apparently, their public profile as a trade was much more fragile than it appeared. Within the publishing industry, too, there were continuing problems. Eliminating the fraud and the fake would take much more thought and effort than simply passing resolutions at annual conferences of their

207. cover, *Economic Advertising*, 7:6 (June 1914)

208. 'The Dignity of Advertising,' *Economic Advertising*, 8:5 (April 1915), 7

peers. It took fifteen years of negotiations and economic intimidation among all three sectors of the industry. To this we now turn.

Chapter 3 : The Industry Takes Shape, 1900-1921

The advertising agency is indeed a problem
A.R. Coffin, 1908¹

In 1890 periodical publishing was the job of publishers. Daily newspapers, weeklies, and magazines had their struggles with Ansom McKim and the newer, upstart advertising agents, but it was they – the publishers – who held the reins of power within the industry. By 1905, this situation was no longer as clear as it had once been.

Between 1890 and 1914, a legion of new agents appeared on the scene in Canada. When they did, they created a host of new problems for the publishers with whom they did business. Ostensibly, the emergence of the agencies was conditioned by a felt need within the marketplace for middlemen connecting advertisers with publishers. By supplying this need, however, the agents were quite forthrightly drawing their income out of a system which had previously operated without their presence. With or without them, advertisers and publishers would have done business together. Thus, it would become a constant feature of industry discussions to ask just what function the agent performed. The agents would be called upon constantly to justify their participation in the transactions of the others.

This became most pronounced once the volume of foreign advertising increased, and made it a significant revenue stream even for the smallest of publications. Facing ever-rising costs, publishers looked for new ways to maximize their earnings from every source, and discovered that in the past they had greatly underestimated the potential value of foreign advertising to their papers.

1. A.R. Coffin in *Printer & Publisher*, 15:3 (March 1906), 11

This realization came hand-in-hand with a concern that the agents – as the prime source of this type of business – were exploiting the situation by demanding too much in the way of commission. The papers dealt with these problems in two steps. First, in a committee of the Canadian Press Association (CPA), the weekly papers performed a cost analysis of the industry to determine a fair price for advertising space in their papers. Second, they turned their sights upon the agencies to determine the value of its services to the papers.

In performing these tasks, the Press Association became a truly business-oriented organization for the first time. Until then, it had largely been a social club bringing together publishers and editors. The benefits of membership in the Press Association were defined by the annual summer excursions that were arranged with the co-operation of the railways. With the efforts of the new committees, these genteel excursions fell by the wayside, and the winter business meetings, which had previously been dominated by the planning of the summer excursion, took their place. At first this change brought a decline in the membership. Nonetheless, given the new vigour of the business meetings and the sweeping reforms that were proposed, the numbers lost were soon more than regained.²

The efforts of the Press Association did not go unheeded by the agents. Until 1905 they were a disparate group of businesses. Some had heavy capital expenditures tied up in personnel and plant, others were composed of little more than a clever writer with a rented office. Some were underwritten by publishers, some by major manufacturing firms, and others by print shops. For those independent agencies which had invested in advertising with an eye on the future, the challenges put forth by the Press Association were a serious concern, since it threatened everything that they had been building. Those which had earned a degree of respect from the major papers formed the Canadian Association of Advertising Agencies (CAAA) to represent their concerns.

2. Paul Rutherford, *A Victorian Authority* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1986), 111

The Press Association agreed to meet with the CAAA soon after its formation. On their own, the publishers had already decided what the value of agency service was. Together with the CAAA, the Press Association hammered out an agreement that would ensure that the agencies provided full value on every dollar. In exchange, the agencies would get a promise that only a very narrowly defined type of advertising agency would qualify for a commission on business placed in CPA papers.

This agreement, like the committees on rate cards and agency commissions, was pioneered by the smaller papers of Ontario. With less circulation and fewer local advertisers upon which to draw, it was these papers that were most keenly aware of their increasing reliance on foreign advertising. In the meantime, the metropolitan dailies were in a much stronger position, and during World War I they tried to remove their obligation to pay agency commission altogether. In so doing, they antagonized the power behind the agencies: their clients, the advertisers. Shut out of the publisher-agency agreements, a select group of Canadian businesses which advertised nationally formed the Association of Canadian Advertisers (ACA) in 1914. For them, the power of the press was in need of redress. First, the advertisers balked at the denial of commission to the agencies, since it forced the agencies to seek their income from the advertisers instead. Second, while the publishers had been dictating terms to the agents, the equally contentious issue of reader circulation had been completely ignored by the Press Association. Advertisers and agencies wanted guaranteed figures, which the papers had consistently refused. The ensuing struggle pitted the advertisers against the four largest newspapers in Toronto.

This was the situation faced by the publishing industry as it entered the twentieth century. Three problems stood out. First, partizan pressmen had to bury their political differences long enough to co-operate for the good of their business. Second, the function of the advertising agencies within the publishing industry had to be identified. Third, with this knowledge in hand, publishers, advertisers, and agencies had to find some common ground on the question of who would pay the

agencies' way. The answers which the Press Association, the CAAA, and the advertisers arrived at by 1921 established the basic structure of the industry for decades to come. The answers also entrenched the fact that the publishers were no longer the independent editor-businessmen they had been in the previous century.

I

The Canadian Press Association

For their part, publishers thought very highly of themselves as the moulders of public opinion in Canada. As Paul Rutherford has argued in his book, *A Victorian Authority*, through the late 1800s publishers in Ontario and in Quebec developed a trade consciousness.³ In part, this meant shucking off the more blatant forms of partisanship that marked the origins of much of the press in Canada. In 1859, William Gillespie of the Hamilton *Spectator* talked several of his Ontario counterparts into meeting at Kingston, where he proposed the formation of a body that would discuss issues of importance to publishers. It would network publishers regardless of their political stripe, and assist them in recognizing the problems that they all faced. The result was the formation of the Canadian Press Association, a body which for its first twenty years was more of an annual social gathering than an active service organization for its members. Too, it did not from the start enjoy the active participation of any Toronto publishers - which bespeaks the fierce independence and rivalry of the editors and publishers there. For less combative publishers, however, membership in the association carried certain benefits, particularly if one kept the collective and long-term interests of the industry in mind. As causes and issues changed over time, so too did political alliances within the legislature; papers often suffered from these turns as their political allies either changed course or took up new causes which the paper could not support.

3. Rutherford, 190-227

In May 1892, John Bayne Maclean began *Printer & Publisher* to provide the kind of forum that the association did not: a regular exchange of information and viewpoints of interest to those who owned and operated the press of Canada. Maclean began the paper at the association's suggestion, which accorded it official status.⁴ *Printer & Publisher* was the fifth title in this growing empire. Its pages documented changing trends in Canadian publishing, and kept readers abreast of new developments in the United States. Most importantly, it provided a forum for anyone who wanted to disseminate progressive ideas concerning the industry. It especially encouraged contributions from those who worked the advertising side of the business. Along with special columns for printers, typesetters, and publishers, the journal regularly had a column of news and gossip for admen, called 'The Advertising Arena.'

Given this outlook, *Printer & Publisher* was very well placed to report on the changes that took place in the industry after 1900. Although it always tended to side with publishers rather than advertising agents when disputes arose between the two groups, it proved to be an exceptional journal of record, publishing verbatim (if selected) minutes of the meetings of the association, as well as reproducing *in toto* the text of agreements and statements made by the various organizations involved. Moreover, it was always quick to solicit and publish opinion from as many voices as possible, often obtaining comment from major players.

A second journal started in 1908 that specifically addressed the advertising field. *Economic Advertising* was the brainchild of T. Johnson Stewart and T.J. Tobin. It was the fourth such magazine attempted in Canada.⁵ Like its predecessors, it was put out by a new advertising agency (Stewart and Tobin had just formed The Letter & Copy Shop) which was keen to draw attention to

4. 'Report of the Committee on Resolutions,' *Printer & Publisher*, 2:3 (March 1893), 11

5. So far as I have found, the only previous journals were *Canadian Advertising*, published in 1893 by the Central Press Agency; *Business* (1895-1905) by J.S. Robertson; and *Publicité-Publicity* (1905-192?) by J.L. François.

itself and educate prospective clients in the proper use of printer's ink. Although its opening editorial stated that it would provide a forum open to the entire industry, its masthead pronounced that it was 'A MONTHLY MAGAZINE published in the interests of CANADIAN ADVERTISERS,' and its content was aimed primarily at advertisers and advertising agencies.⁶ Articles explored trends in copywriting, typeface, illustration, and layout, and tended to favour experimental or progressive ideas over the status quo. From time to time, writers looked at other periodicals in Canada to assess their readership and relative merits as advertising media. Still, Stewart and Tobin could not afford to alienate other publications, since these provided their magazine's primary source of advertising revenue. Canadian newspapers and magazines used the journal as a means to reach those who placed advertising.

Losing Control of the Rate Card

The role of the advertising agency became a contentious issue after 1890. Until then, its role had never been given serious consideration. Agents handled 'foreign' advertising, and 'foreign' largely meant advertising from Great Britain and the United States. Few Canadian publishers could solicit this business themselves, and as such the agency represented an economy within the industry. However, when Canadian agents began placing business for Canadian firms, relations between publishers and agents rapidly soured, for two reasons. First, publishers wondered if this was not an invasion of their own jurisdiction; the existence of Canadian agencies clouded the whole notion of 'foreign' advertising. Second, agents engaged in a broad assortment of questionable business practices as the competition among them intensified.

As a greater number of companies adopted widespread publicity for their wares, national advertising became an increasingly important source of revenue for publishers. The shift occurred

6. editorial, *Economic Advertising*, 1:1 (September 1908), 3-4

sometime in the decade between 1895 and 1905. Although no statistical information on the volume of advertising exists for this period, the publishers of Canada's trade journals clearly felt that something was afoot. There is a decided change in their discussion of advertising as a trade. When the first issue of *Canadian Advertiser* appeared in 1893, its subtitle declared that it was 'an aid to all interested in advertising.' Nonetheless, its lead article only addressed retailers, the traditional source of local advertising. Manufacturers, the core group of foreign advertisers, were nowhere mentioned in its twenty pages.⁷ The reverse was true of *Economic Advertising* when it began fifteen years later. Its editors purposefully set out to attract a readership composed of manufacturers, and rarely ran articles on retailing.⁸ In the meantime, between the appearance of these two journals, *Printer & Publisher* began a regular column on advertising that addressed both retailers and manufacturers, and carried gossipy news on agencies. Through the last half of 1902, three different commentators noted the increased volume of advertising placed in newspapers.⁹ On the strength of increased foreign advertising, total advertising revenue overtook subscriptions as the primary source of income for most Canadian dailies by World War I.¹⁰

Newspapers were greatly encouraged by the growth of this expanding source of revenue. Nonetheless, a perception formed that they were not benefitting as fully as they might.¹¹ There were two reasons. First, the agents had introduced themselves as middlemen, and in the process broke down the traditional links between publishers and advertisers. This was not simply a matter

7. *Canadian Advertiser*, 1:1 (June 1893)

8. editorial, *Economic Advertising*, 1:1 (September 1908), 3-4

9. W.A. C[raick], 'Brief Interviews with Advertising Men,' *Printer & Publisher*, 11:7 (July 1902), 17; C.G.H., 'American Advertising,' *Printer & Publisher*, 11:10 (October 1902), 17; 'Advertising Arena,' *Printer & Publisher*, 11:12 (December 1902), 14

10. Jean de Bonville, *La Presse Québécoise de 1884 à 1914: Genèse d'un média de masse* (Quebec City: Université Laval, 1988), 326-329; Minko Sotiron, *From Politics to Profit: The Commercialization of Canadian Daily Newspapers, 1890-1920* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1997), 10-22

11. Bonville, 124-126

of usurping the role of the paper's advertising manager in the solicitation of business. The paper also lost its personal contact with an important component of its support structure. If the agency was given sole control of a company's advertising budget, the agency could decide which paper got its business and which did not. Agencies did not cultivate business relationships on the basis of partizan affiliation.

Second, agency commissions cut into publishers' profits. Before 1890, there were precious few agencies in Canada. An advertiser that placed its business direct – that is, without the benefit of an agency – paid full card rates for the space it used. When an agent was involved, an advertiser paid the exact same rate for the space, but the publisher remitted a percentage of the bill to the agent for the latter's commission. When the number of agencies increased after 1890, the amount of commission paid out by publishers must have followed suit. Although the volume of foreign advertising was increasing, publishers had to face the fact that much of this new business was subject to a commission – that there would always be a disjuncture between the gross value of their pages and the net value that they earned from them.

This trend became most pronounced after 1900 when agents began to solicit long-time advertisers who had previously placed direct. In such cases, the agent not only usurped the role of the paper's advertising department, but usurped its place in an existing relationship with an advertiser. The most notable instance in this regard involved the Canadian Pacific Railway. Its advertisements had been placed direct for some time, and its publicity and advertising men were well known among the newspaper fraternity. When one agency began to court the railway's favour, then, the publishers fell into a jealous rage. There was a whisper of infidelity in such transactions.¹²

These issues concerned economics and influence, but publishers thought there were jurisdictional issues at stake here as well. Some publishers wondered if Canadian agencies should

12. editorial, 'Commission to Agents,' *Printer & Publisher*, 15:12 (December 1906), 12

have been cultivating Canadian accounts at all, since to do so obscured their original purpose. It was the role of each paper's advertising department to develop local accounts; it was the role of agents to develop supralocal accounts. Once the agencies began to solicit Canadian companies, it was only a matter of time before agents billed commission on advertising placed for companies located in the same city as the paper itself. This was a particularly sore point with the Toronto papers, where many new manufacturers had flourished under the National Policy. Publishers there felt that such stalwart Toronto firms as Gooderham & Worts could hardly be considered 'foreign.'

Underlying this jurisdictional question was another economic consideration. Publishers had traditionally given foreign advertisers more favourable rates than they did to local advertisers. This practice was rooted in the notion that the foreign advertiser was not dependent on any one paper to conduct its publicity. Publishers were expected to offer them inducements simply to win their business. By comparison, local advertisers had little choice; they needed to communicate with a specific, regionally-defined market, and as such had little leverage when contracting space with their local papers. Agencies, having handled foreign advertising in the past, naturally expected to pay the lower foreign rates on all of the business they placed, no matter where it originated. As a result, the cultivation of Canadian accounts by Canadian agencies represented a double loss to publishers. Not only would they have to pay commission on this business, but it would also be placed at cheaper rates than had previously been charged.

The most talked about example of this practice was the solicitation of bank advertising during 1907. W.A. Craick, then editor of *Printer & Publisher*, made it very clear that this kind of advertising was essentially local, and not foreign, in nature. He suggested that the agencies themselves tended to think the same way:

It has been pointed out ... that those agencies, which are endeavouring to secure commissions on this class of business, do not demand the commission, but adopt the

role of supplicants, pleading for something, which they evidently feel some doubt about their being entitled to. This being the case, it only needs some firmness on the part of the publishers to ensure them against being despoiled of their rights.¹³

In the past, individual branches had advertised at the discretion of their local managers.¹⁴ Craick argued that, insofar as the initiative was not taken by someone at the head office, then the ad should be considered the same as that placed by any corner grocer.

Agencies responded to the publishers' qualms over the local-foreign debate and the solicitation of existing advertisers on much the same grounds. In both cases, the hiring of an agency by the advertiser signalled its ambition to attain a national presence. Although the agencies had not, strictly speaking, developed these advertisers as new users of newspaper advertising, the agencies would make them more effective users of newspaper advertising than could the newspapers themselves. And as the agencies repeatedly pointed out, effective advertisers became repeat advertisers. Besides, no firm was going to ignore unexplored markets just to maintain its status as a local advertiser with its hometown paper.

Ansom McKim directly answered Craick's concerns over bank advertising. He did not dispute the fact that ads placed by local managers were in fact local advertising. However, he pointed out that his agency had been hired by a certain bank's head office to create a systematic and rational advertising campaign that would blanket the entire country. In essence, he argued that the adoption of agency service by the banks would lead to more effective advertising than they had provided in the past:

... many local managers look upon local advertising as of little or no value except as a matter of patronage and are willing to put in almost anything to fill the space,

13. *Printer & Publisher*, 17:2 (February 1908), 30

14. 'Advertising Methods of Toronto Banking Institutions,' *Printer & Publisher*, 11:11 (November 1902), 16-17

leaving it to stand six months or a year without change. ...

But the head office of these banks ... have come to look upon advertising as an important factor in a bank's development along modern lines, and ... they want the advertisements written up, set up in type, and submitted to them so that they may know what the bank is saying in its many advertisements. They want to know that their own general plans are being carried out all along the line¹⁵

As such, he continued, the business had 'naturally drifted' from the local men to the national office, and by implication into its proper hands, the agents. This, in turn, would foster a greater appreciation among all financial executives for the power of advertising, and therefore lead to larger ad appropriations in the future. Really, McKim insisted, everybody benefitted.

One concrete example of the enhanced nature of financial advertising under the agency system was the publication of annual reports. It was a point of honour for banks, trust companies, and insurance houses to issue annual statements of their income and operating expenses. Such statistics pointed out the volume of new investment of each house over the previous year, its rate of growth, and its relative position in competition with other institutions. Until the turn of the century, it was customary to place these statements only in those papers which were read by businessmen, papers such as the Toronto *Monetary Times* or the Montreal *Moniteur du Commerce*. McKim pointed out that agencies had successfully expanded this annual rite to include metropolitan dailies. By having the reports set and checked in plate form, the possibility of embarrassing misprints was eliminated, and the ads could then be placed in any number of papers with complete confidence.¹⁶ This in itself was a clear advantage, both in the peace of mind it provided to advertisers, and in the convenience afforded to papers which no longer had to set the ads themselves. The Sun Life Assurance Company

15. Ansom McKim, 'Bank Advertising,' *Printer & Publisher*, 17:3 (March 1908), 60-61

16. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 2ed. (1899), 30

of Canada was one of the larger financial institutions in Canada. It placed all of its advertising direct in financial papers and Protestant denominational organs such as the *Christian Guardian* and *The Congregationalist* until 1905. That year, the company broke its custom and added eleven metropolitan dailies to its list, all in Montreal and Toronto. The next year, the Desbarats Advertising Agency was hired to place the reports, and it recommended a list of dailies that covered the country. Between the financial papers and the dailies, Desbarats's list covered almost 40 papers for a total cost of \$427.50. The next year, the list of dailies was expanded again for a total cost of \$865.11; by 1911, the list of 55 dailies alone cost \$2011.¹⁷ To return to McKim's point, then: even though individual papers may have lost some money in the short term by surrendering agency commissions where they previously charged gross rates, the agencies had expanded the list of papers which received financial advertising, and the frequency with which it was placed.

Despite the protestations of McKim and Desbarats, publishers clearly did not like the patterns emerging within their own industry. The situation was not improved by the questionable business practices that agencies developed, especially their incessant haggling over prices and their tendency to rebate portions of their commissions to advertisers. These practices could all be traced to the same source: the intense competition among agencies for clients. As noted in the previous chapter, the first full-service agency did not appear in Canada until 1899, and any agency worth its salt could put together a list of papers that suitably covered the client's distribution network. As such, an agent's reputation was rooted in his ability to get the cheapest possible rates for the clients he represented.¹⁸

These problems did not affect all papers to the same extent. The largest of the big-city dailies could afford to stand up to the agencies in a way that smaller papers could not. It was incumbent on the agency to maximize the exposure of the client's ad. If a paper had a large circulation in a

17. SLA, Sun Life Advertising Committee, 'Advertising Register 1904-1911,' 10, 16-17; b.84 f. 'Early Advertising Ideas,' Desbarats AA, estimate for advertising, 23 February 1911

18. A.R. Coffin, 'The Advertising Agency,' *Printer & Publisher*, 15:3 (March 1906), 11-15

region where a foreign advertiser had good distribution, then the agency was in no position to argue over rates. Further, any paper located in the larger cities could afford to refuse contracts from agents; they had hundreds of local merchants and manufacturers to draw upon. Rural and small town weeklies were not so lucky. With fewer local advertisers, and slight circulation, foreign advertising could make or break a paper.¹⁹ Any agent familiar with local business conditions held a great advantage when contracting space with weekly publishers.

With few face-to-face meetings between big-city agents and small-town publishers, contract negotiations would be conducted through the mails. The exchange of correspondence between the two parties, dickering over rates, was often described as endless.²⁰ J.J. Gibbons claimed he often had to exchange fifteen to twenty letters per publisher before a rate could be agreed upon. One publisher was particularly fed up with McKim, whom he described as 'a most voluminous writer. He writes more than any person since the man who wrote Deuteronomy.'²¹ In the mildest form of this practice, agents began the process by sending a contract to the paper at a rate far below its stated card rates. A.R. Coffin, a newspaperman in Truro, Nova Scotia, described such exchanges as the following:

The agency will ... send out the \$50 contract offering the newspaper \$5. The cut rate newspaper reasons that it is too big a hoist up to \$50, so \$40 is quoted back. Next the agency comes up to \$10. Then the newspaper says, 'Give us \$40.' The contract passes back and forth several times more, with folios of correspondence until perhaps a rate of \$25 is finally agreed on.²²

Coffin believed this pattern repeated itself wherever agencies operated. More calculating agents

19. *Printer & Publisher*, 10:11 (November 1901), 15

20. W.J. Taylor, 'Newspaper Advertising,' *Printer & Publisher*, 14:12 (December 1905), 22-23

21. *Printer & Publisher*, 13:12 (December 1904), 12-13; *Printer & Publisher*, 14:2, (February 1905), 20

22. *Printer & Publisher*, 15:3 (March 1906), 1

included full payment with the first contract sent. Given the slow nature of the postal system, some publishers in need of ready cash would accept a pittance rather than risk losing the contract altogether in a long-drawn-out negotiation.

Another means of inducing lower rates was possible if there were two or more papers in the same market. Again, with sole control of the advertiser's business, the agent was in a position to choose which paper would be used. All other things being equal, the agent could start a bidding war for the contract.²³ Papers were asked to ratchet down their own rates or surrender the contract to their competitor. Even then, it was not below an agent simply to lie to one publisher about the others' rates. In this situation, only the active co-operation of the publishers could prevent their undoing.²⁴

A third means of getting lower rates was more underhanded. When papers drew up their cards, they offered lower rates on extended contracts. The longer the ad was to run, the lower the rates would be. Generally, contracts were placed in one of three categories: three months or less, three months to six, and six months to a year. It was not unknown for advertising agencies to sign on for a year's contract at long rates, only to withdraw the ads after six months or fewer. When this happened, advertising managers naturally insisted that the agencies pay in full at the short rate which applied. Agencies naturally insisted that they had a contract at long rates.²⁵

A fourth method of lowering rates involved payment in kind with the goods advertised rather than cash. Most frequently, this meant that the publisher would be offered a sample of the goods to be advertised, but it was rarely a quantity of goods whose value was commensurate with the value

23. 'Co-operation Among Local Publishers,' *Printer & Publisher*, 4:4 (April 1895), 4

24. Mr Wood, in *Printer & Publisher*, 14:2 (February 1905), 19

25. A.R. Coffin, 'The Advertising Agency: Its Relationship to the Newspaper,' *Printer & Publisher*, 15:3 (March 1906), 14

of the space to be used.²⁶ Other times, such contracts offered a simple trade of services, the advertisers' for the publishers.' The shadiest form of in-kind payment came with stock promotions, when promoters offered a quantity of shares in exchange for advertising space and perhaps some favourable publicity.²⁷ Among the certificates for gadgets and gold mines that publishers were offered, few would have paid off as handsomely as the stocks that George Brown refused in 1876. Alexander Graham Bell had to pay in cash like everyone else.²⁸

Although these practices were associated with the agencies, some publishers conceded that they were not wholly blameless. When a publisher truly wanted the advertiser's business, more often than not he would undercut his own rates to get it. Sometimes this was done in the hopes of winning that client's long-term patronage with a short-term loss, sometimes it was done simply to prevent the advertiser from going to the competition. The minutes of the Press Association indicate that this was a common practice. How common is impossible to gauge, but one agency executive estimated that some 90% of publishers in Canada did not maintain their cards.²⁹ In the retail trades, this practice was known as price-cutting; to H.J. Pettypiece of the *Forest (Ontario) Free Press*, it was simply 'deadhead advertising.' The description was apt. 'Deadhead' was a term usually used in connection with subscribers who did not pay.³⁰ The weak financial position created by such advertising not only threatened the offending paper, but also drew business away from the paper attempting to operate on a rational basis.³¹ The strategy could easily backfire. Even if it did win repeat business, the agent would expect to receive the same rates on every subsequent contract with every client. To

26. 'The Advertising Agencies,' *Printer & Publisher*, 6:2 (February 1897), 14-15; *Printer & Publisher*, 11:3 (March 1902), 4

27. 'Payments for Space in Stock,' *Printer & Publisher*, 10:4 (April 1904), 18

28. Hector Charlesworth, *Candid Chronicles* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1925), 296

29. Anonymous, in A.R. Coffin, 'The Advertising Agency,' *Printer & Publisher*, 15:3 (March 1906), 12

30. P.D. Ross, *Retrospects of a Newspaper Person* (Toronto: Oxford UP, 1931), 32

31. H.J. Pettypiece, 'Deadhead Advertising,' *Printer & Publisher*, 12:2 (February 1903), 15-16

add insult to injury, the agency's commission would still be raked off the top of the final price, further cutting into the paper's profit.³²

Ansom McKim grew tired of the publishers constantly knocking his trade. In 1897 he drafted a warm but thoughtful letter to *Printer & Publisher* outlining his opinions on the agency 'problem.' McKim argued that the agents were businessmen. Like any other businessmen, they would seek the best price they could get. If the publishers stood by their cards, they would not have problems. Since they did not, it was incumbent on the agents to seek a lower price.

I can never forget the lesson I had on this point two years ago, when I quoted a fair cash price to a cigar manufacturer for six inches in a list of about 150 papers for a year. He thought the figure too high, so took my list and sent out an offer to each paper of a box of domestic cigars for the six-inch space, on a good local page. Sixty-five papers accepted the offer, and so it is, there are about 200 papers in Canada that will accept almost anything -- from cigars to mining stocks -- for advertising space if it comes direct from the advertiser, yet when an offer comes from an agent at, say, half their rate payable in cash, they feel that they have been insulted.³³

Thus, if there was fault to be assigned in the matter, it was the publishers and not the agencies who were to blame. Perhaps with a bit of mischief, he signed the letter 'your very obedient servant, A. McKim.'³⁴

Even with mutually satisfactory contracts and rates, agency relations with the publishers were

32. The practice of price-cutting was common among all branches of trade at this time. See Michael Bliss, *A Living Profit: Studies in the Social History of Canadian Business, 1883-1911* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), 33-54; David Monod, *Store Wars: Shopkeepers and the Culture of Mass Marketing, 1890-1939* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1996), 230-285

33. 'The Advertising Agencies,' *Printer & Publisher*, 6:2 (February 1897), 14-15

34. 'The Advertising Agencies,' *Printer & Publisher*, 6:2 (February 1897), 14-15

soured by other means. Most notably, agencies could be decidedly slow in their payments to publishers. This was less true of the major agencies such as McKim and Desbarats than it was of the smaller agencies. McKim, who had one hundred clients by 1900, could maintain a healthy cash flow on the strength of his own billings. Further, it was incumbent on him to keep his accounts with the publishers up to date lest they refuse to carry any of his future placements.³⁵ Smaller agencies, lacking anywhere near the same stable of clients, could become financially stretched between major billings. Angry publishers found little recourse in advertisers; advertisers insisted that they were not responsible for the contracts signed between publishers and agencies. At the same time, some agencies claimed that they could not be held responsible for contracts with publishers if the advertisers defaulted on the agencies. In both situations, the publishers lost.

Once the agencies were convinced that they had obtained the lowest rates possible from the publishers, they still had one means left to lower the ultimate rates paid by their clients. They could rebate part of their commission to the advertiser.³⁶ In case after case, it was known that agents were rebating two-fifths of their commission to their clients. In effect, then, an agent would sell the publisher's white space to the advertiser at a 10% discount from the publisher's card rate. Sometimes an agent would rebate even more. On a particularly large contract placed for a department store in 1907, it was known that the agency handling it only kept the first 5.75%. The remaining 19.25% was handed to the client.³⁷

Rebating was the agency equivalent of deadhead advertising. The agencies had several ways to justify it. First, an agency might undercut its own rates to land a desirable client if it thought that client would stay with the agency well into the future. A short-term loss was acceptable if it provided a long-term gain. Second, it should be remembered that not all agencies were created equally. Few

35. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 2ed. (1899), 30-33

36. *Printer & Publisher*, 13:2 (February 1904), 9

37. *Printer & Publisher*, 16:2 (February 1907), 8

had the staff and expenses of McKim. Rather, some agencies were little more than one-man operations – former reporters or aspiring writers who tried to cash in on the growth of advertising. With little more than a single office and perhaps a stenographer, they could afford to surrender part of their commission. Canadian poet Wilson P. MacDonald fell into this camp. Rebating allowed these agents to become competitive with the established firms. By attacking the practice, established agencies demonstrated their capacity for principled business dealings.

The practice of rebating did not please publishers. If the agency did not tell the advertiser how the final billing was structured, then the advertiser would not know what the publisher's actual rates were and to what extent the agency had included a rebate. This would have protected the agency's own position in the marketplace. If it was known that an agency rebated a lesser portion of its commissions to advertisers than other agencies, then it risked losing some of its business. Nonetheless, the cumulative effect of discounting and rebating greatly depressed the revenue achieved on publishers' rate cards. There appeared to be no connection between their printed cards and the actual rates paid by advertisers. Each advertiser that knew of a rival who had gained favourable rates naturally demanded similar treatment.

Taken altogether, the publishers gradually came to feel that they had lost control of a vital part of their business. While revenue from subscriptions and the great majority of local advertisers remained securely within the purview of the paper itself, foreign advertising had been appropriated by an aggressive group of middlemen who were, for all intents and purposes, new to the Canadian scene.³⁸ They had created a barrier between the publishers and the largest advertisers in the country, they had diminished the potential revenue to be earned by the expansion of foreign advertising, and they had sullied relations between the various sectors of the industry with a number

38. McKim acknowledged these perceptions in his directory; see 'The Business of the Modern Newspaper Advertising Agency,' *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 2ed. (1899), 33-34

of their business practices.

Taking Control of the Rate Card

In 1904 a majority of publishers within the Press Association decided that it was time to reclaim control of their industry from the agencies. Their actions at this time appear to have been spurred by two developments: first, there was a significant increase in the basic costs of producing a newspaper. From 1891 to 1904 the wholesale price index for wood, wood products, and paper had risen 25.7% alone.³⁹ Second, the patience of the weekly publishers finally came to end. By that year there were at least six agencies open in Toronto, and the competition among them was intense; it was during this time that agencies began to solicit advertisers who had previously placed contracted with publishers directly.

Weekly members of the Press Association had complained about the agencies for years. However, their meetings generally ended in shrugs. Despite McKim's talk of steadfast behaviour, no paper could afford to take unilateral action to correct publisher-agency relations. Most agencies would have simply taken their business elsewhere. What was required was co-operative action, since it was their competition and mutual suspicion that had created the situation in the first place. That course was more easily prescribed than followed. Members were very reluctant to craft a mutually binding agreement through the association. To do so would drastically alter the character of what was essentially an informal businessmen's club. Commiserating over their mutual problems was one thing, but no one expected the association to tell its members how to run their businesses. Nevertheless, the surge of activity in advertising after 1900, coupled with rising costs, brought the weekly publishers to the table in earnest in February 1904. At the sectional talks of the weekly men during the annual meeting, the usual discussion of advertising took place, but with a difference.

39. HSC 2ed., K38

After years of discussions and articles in *Printer & Publisher*, J.F. MacKay of the *Toronto Globe* moved that a committee be struck to:

deal with all advertising matter, to draft rules for dealings between advertising agencies and newspapers, to suggest what are fair rates for various classes of papers, to ascertain when possible what agencies divide commissions, and deal with any other matter which the members of the association might wish to refer to them.⁴⁰

The motion passed. The resolution was divided into two parts, separating the issue of agency relations from that of rates and giving them to different committees.

It was the second issue that promised the most immediate results, since advertising rates were a matter internal to the members of the association itself. The committee immediately began an investigation of members' rate cards, and assessed income against costs, taking into consideration a judicious margin of profit. It quickly discovered that local advertising was set on a reasonably sound basis. Most local advertising was still in the hands of the papers themselves, and publishers generally knew what rates their markets could bear. Since these rates were higher than foreign rates, and not subject to agency commission, the handling of this trade had not been seriously affected by the changes of the previous fifteen years.

The same could not be said of foreign advertising. The last time that the Press Association had discussed rates seriously was in 1891. Then, a suggested minimum scale was adopted based upon the circulation of the paper, the frequency of the advertisement's insertion, and the length of the contract (see Appendix II). As we have noted, however, many things had changed during the intervening years, and not least of these was inflation. While publishers had modified local rates over the years, near-constant haggling with agencies made it difficult to do the same with foreign rates. As we have noted, the effect of discounting and rebating had served to depress the retail value of

40. *Printer & Publisher*, 13:2 (February 1904), 9

publishers' white space. The committee discovered that many weekly publishers were accepting rates below the cost of production; the ad was run at a direct loss to the publisher.⁴¹ As a result, the committee made two recommendations: that the minimum rate card be revised for weekly papers, and that rival publishers end the self-destructive competition that had led to their current situation.

The recommendations were highly problematic. In 1891, the minimum rate card had been drawn up as a guideline and nothing more. It was intended to show publishers the relative costs of running a paper and what it took to turn a moderate profit. It was never intended to set an industry-wide price floor, and nothing was done to enforce it. Rather, publishers remained free to set their rates as they pleased. In 1904, the situation was very different. The revised card was not drawn up simply as a guide to publishers, but in response to a serious economic problem facing them as an industry. The only way that they could avoid mass failures was to obtain widespread adoption of the minimum rates. As a result, publishers were reticent to embrace the committee's recommendations. First, members' pride was on the line, since most cherished their independence.⁴² Second, the legality of a minimum rate established by a chartered trade association was highly questionable. If it appeared that Ontario publishers were uniting to raise the price of their white space, they risked criminal charges under Canadian combine laws.⁴³ Canadian publishers knew that American legislation prevented any similar action by their counterparts there.⁴⁴ To avoid the first problem, the committee made its consultations with publishers as inclusive as possible. The initial draft was created with the help of 'leading publishers of weeklies' in the association. Then, several drafts were circulated among the membership before a final card was agreed upon in September 1904. They did not deal with the second problem as successfully. Members were simply informed that this was a

41. Bonville, 124

42. Rutherford, 190-227

43. Bliss, 33-54, 139-142; Tom Traves, *The State and Enterprise: Canadian Manufacturers and the Federal Government, 1917-1931* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1979), 73-100

44. *Printer & Publisher*, 17:3 (March 1908), 35

recommended minimum which in no way restricted them from having different rates (Appendix III). The committee suggested that upward revisions would be helpful.

From the sidelines, the advertising agencies were sceptical of the utility of this one reform. On the face of it, agencies stood to gain a great deal. If the publishers' rates went up, then their commissions would rise in step. However, when *Printer & Publisher* interviewed J.J. Gibbons to get his impressions on the new rates, the ranking Toronto agent gave him a rather ambivalent response. Speaking as an agent, he believed that the Press Association's concern over card rates was a red herring. Yes, the elimination of discounts would probably improve the conduct of the trade. If every agency knew that its competitors were getting the exact same rates, then the ceaseless bartering would come to a quick end. However, that was a moot point if the paper's rates were out of proportion to its actual circulation. No agent would be willing to pay more for a paper's white space than he thought it was worth. If the Press Association was serious in its reform efforts, Gibbons suggested that the executive add another clause to the schedule of rates. Under section 5, he believed that publishers should have been forced to submit a signed declaration of their circulation figures to the Press Association each year.

Despite Gibbons's doubts, the committee reported back to the general meeting of the association in February 1905 that the new minimum rates had been 'cordially received' by publishers and agents alike. With slight revisions, the new minimum rates were approved (Appendix III).

Judging by the minutes of subsequent meetings, there is every indication that member publishers gradually introduced these rates over the next year as their existing contracts with agencies and advertisers expired. That said, it took a great deal of perseverance to implement them effectively. Agents did not actually expect publishers to enforce them, and continued to press for discounts. E.J.B. Pense commented at one meeting that 'the agents are hardly fair to the

newspaperman, especially if they think him weak.'⁴⁵ The solution was simply to stick by the rate, no matter the short-term cost. Often, this meant declining a contract altogether if the agent or advertiser would not see the new card. Those publishers who eventually succeeded in maintaining the price floor found this could be arduous task. One Mr Jackson stated that McKim had dropped his paper entirely for a time; Pense indicated that he had lost at least one agency's business for two years before it returned.⁴⁶

Beyond the immediate gains that some publishers made in revenue – no small matter – the CPA executive had demonstrated its practical value to its membership. As H.B. Elliot, publisher of the *Wingham Times* pointed out, 'This is one of the acts that will make country publishers feel that there is good to come from being members of the association. We must have something practical to keep our members interested.'⁴⁷

Elliot could also have drawn attention to the publishers who were not members. If in a two-paper town one was a member and the other was not, the non-member was still in a position to undercut the prices of the member paper. An understanding executive allowed members caught in this situation to act as they saw fit without comment. Meanwhile, all members were encouraged to recruit new members to the association. The more completely it covered the province, the more complete would be their success with the agencies.

A second result of the minimum rate reform was the partitioning of the Press Association. Since the new rate card had only concerned the weekly men, only weekly men sat on the committee. The utility of this arrangement became obvious to all. The business of newspaper publishing was becoming sufficiently complex that daily and weekly publishers had very different concerns; the place of advertising within the industry had simply drawn this trend into stark relief. As such, it was

45. *Printer & Publisher*, 15:2 (February 1906), 25

46. *Ibid.*, 20, 25

47. H.B. Elliot, in *Printer & Publisher*, 13:12 (December 1904), 12

decided at the annual meetings in 1905 to create permanent 'sections' within the association, with their own chairs, committees, and reports. While this began as a convenience, to allow daily and weekly men to concentrate on matters relevant only to themselves, it was the first step to the eventual dissolution of the association in 1920.

Having set a floor, the next task was to get all of the publishers to insist on it in contract negotiations. For this to happen, all of the members would have to be circumspect in their own affairs. Just as importantly, the association would have to attract more publishers into its fold. At the time, the association only represented about one-third of all Ontario publishers. Until more joined, or at least sympathized and co-operated with the advertising committee's minimum rates, the effort would largely be in vain.⁴⁸

Agency Commissions – Round One

The next order of business for the weekly publishers was the question of agency relations. Given the litany of grievances that publishers had long held against the agencies, this was much more contentious ground. The stand taken on rate cards by the publishers had the potential to settle most of the problems caused by discounting. Now attention focused on the nature of the commission and the agency's second great sin, rebating. The discussion settled on two questions: why was commission paid, and what was an appropriate amount? To its credit, the association recognized that the industry had entered a new era thanks to the tremendous growth of foreign advertising. In time, it also recognized that this phenomenon, and not the agencies themselves, was the source of their concerns. In its report on rates, the previous committee had stated that 'the process of evolution which is going on will some day land the much-abused advertising agency in a position where it can

48. *Printer & Publisher*, 14:2 (February 1905), 13

be logically defined.⁴⁹ And so it became the task of the new committee to take the first step.

Canadian agents positioned themselves within the periodical publishing industry as the servants of the press. In the past, they had done so by developing supralocal business that publishers could not develop themselves. Insofar as McKim's agency had actually emerged from a newspaper advertising department, this must have seemed self-evident. As such, the payment of commission had not been an issue. Commission represented the cost of selling the publisher's white space, and the rate was the same as it had been for his own staff.

Rebating impelled publishers to rethink this situation. Publishers coping with rising costs, who believed they deserved a greater share of the foreign advertising largesse, were displeased that agents could afford to surrender part of their commissions to clients. If this money was not going to finance agency operations, then the agencies were billing the publishers under false pretences. The solution was clear. If agents could prosper on the equivalent of 15% commission, then they should only receive 15% commission. The remaining 10% would remain where it belonged, with the paper.⁵⁰

Few publishers suggested the outright abolition of the existing system, despite their condemnation of the agencies. The experience of Frank Munsey gave them all food for thought. Munsey was an American magazine publisher, a maverick businessman poured in the mould of Horatio Alger. Through the 1890s, he had pioneered a series of marketing innovations for magazines, while at the same time building up a respectable middle-brow readership for his main title, *Munsey's*. His success set national standards for the industry as a whole.⁵¹ When Munsey spoke on the 'agency question,' then, publishers listened. At a meeting of the Sphinx Club in 1898, Munsey

49. *Printer & Publisher*, 14:2 (February 1905), 13

50. *Printer & Publisher*, 14:2 (February 1905), 22

51. Harold S. Wilson, *McClure's Magazine and the Muckrakers* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1970), 60-65

declared that the commission system was little more than ritual bribery. Although agents claimed to be the publishers' representatives, in practice they represented the advertisers, and they used the promise of contracts as a club to beat down publishers' rates. As a result, Munsey declared that after 1 January 1899, he would no longer pay commission to any agency. Agencies which did place business in his pages would have to seek their pay from their clients.⁵²

The speech caused a sensation in the advertising fraternity, both in the United States and Canada. *Printer & Publisher* ran a report of the 'remarkable address' in its next issue, and offered to send a full transcript to anyone who asked. It also ran comments from the advertising managers of three leading papers, including T.W. Dyas at the *Mail & Empire*. Each of them thought that Munsey's outburst was rather extreme. J.F. Mackay of the *Montreal Herald* and C.W. Taylor of the *Toronto Globe* agreed that their own staff were quite capable of covering the local field, but they appreciated the contracts that agencies brought from outside. Dyas went one step further. He thought that his own men were capable of covering the whole country, but agency business from outside Canada was gladly accepted. One wonders how his former apprentice, McKim, took the news.⁵³

Industry observers watched Munsey's experiment closely. His partisans must have been bitterly disappointed. Munsey's revenues dropped precipitously, and in less than a year he admitted defeat. This episode was the final proof for most major publishers that the commission system was with them to stay. That said, publishers agreed that there were several problems within that system. The minimum rate card eventually settled the problems of discounting. To alleviate rebating,

52. 'The Agency Question,' *Printer & Publisher*, 7:11 (November 1898), 6-7; James W. Young, *Advertising Agency Compensation, In Relation to the Total Cost of Advertising* (Chicago: University of Illinois, 1933), 38-39

53. 'Opinions of Canadian Advertising Managers,' *Printer & Publisher*, 7:11 (November 1898),

attention turned to the rate of commission itself.⁵⁴

In the United States, key publishers had already lowered their rates of commission. They were led by the titles of the Curtis Publishing Company. Cyrus Curtis took over the *Ladies' Home Journal* in 1883 hoping to exploit the commercial value of its advertising space. To do so, he contracted one agent, J. Walter Thompson, to handle all of his advertising. Under Curtis's direction, the *Ladies' Home Journal* became the highest circulating magazine in the country; with Thompson's help, it became one of the most profitable. When other agencies began to clamour for access to its pages, Curtis was well positioned to demand concessions.⁵⁵ After the Thompson contract expired, the company agreed to carry ads from other agencies, but it would only offer a 10% commission. Agencies accepted its terms. Following its lead, other publishers made similar moves. The Quoin Club was a cabal of magazine publishers in New York City, whose titles included such industry leaders such as *Harper's*, *Delineator*, *Cosmopolitan* and the recently chastised *Munsey's*. By common agreement, they adopted the 10% commission in 1904.⁵⁶

In Canada, the initiative was taken by the publishers of the metropolitan dailies. The first to do so were the daily publishers of Toronto, who conspired to drop their rate of commission down to 15%. By 1905, publishers in Montreal, Ottawa, Hamilton, and London had done the same.⁵⁷ As with the rate card, co-operation was essential for the success of change. Had any one paper decided to lower unilaterally the commission paid to agents, chances are that paper would have lost its foreign advertising. By lowering their rates simultaneously, rival publishers in each city agreed to compete on the basis of editorial content and circulation rather than with business practices which imperilled them all.

54. Daniel Pope, *The Making of Modern Advertising* (New York: Basic, 1983), 154-156

55. Daniel Pope, *The Making of Modern Advertising* (New York: Basic, 1976), 156-157

56. Young, 32-35

57. *Printer & Publisher*, 14:2 (February 1905), 20. In Nova Scotia, 25% was still the norm in 1906; *Printer & Publisher*, 15:3 (March 1906), 11.

The weekly publishers were not as successful. Revising the rate of commission could be viewed as a logical extension of the minimum rate card reform. Encouraged by its reception, they expected little resistance here. Certainly, there were numerous reasons supporting a lower rate of commission. One stood out above the rest: the occurrence of rebating. In arguments similar to those of the daily publishers, the weekly publishers noted that rebating above all else implied that the existing rate was out of proportion to the value of the services provided. However, the weeklies encountered opposition from the agencies that the dailies had not.

When J.J. Gibbons discovered the publishers' plans, he was quick to enter the fray on the agencies' behalf, and *Printer & Publisher* allowed him to voice his opinions. In defending the commission system, Gibbons defended the role of the agencies themselves in the publishing industry. First off, Gibbons was quick to assert that publishers were the primary beneficiaries of the job that agencies performed. Certainly, he felt that they had done 'more to create new business for the newspapers of Canada to-day than all other forces combined.'⁵⁸ They had done so by undertaking constant solicitation of non-advertising businesses, maintaining staff to produce ads that would get results, and by providing lists of judiciously chosen publications. Anything that was less than profitable, anything that was less than efficient, would not create repeat clients. Implicit here was a belief that the agencies could create more effective advertising, more economically, than could the publishers' own in-house advertising departments.

Looking south, Gibbons surveyed what had happened in the wake of the 15% commission. Many American agencies had simply not survived. Those which had survived had largely forsaken the weekly newspapers. All other things being equal, an agency could earn as much in commission buying space in one large metropolitan daily as it could in fifteen to twenty weekly newspapers. After reading Gibbons's article, A.R. Coffin admitted that 'we all know how much cheaper it is to

58. *Printer & Publisher*, 14:4 (April 1905), 20-21

handle one account of \$100 than ten of \$10 each.'⁵⁹ Had he a crystal ball, Gibbons might have added that even the Quoin Club would be forced to recant; over the next ten years, its members raised their rate of commission from 10% to 13% and then finally to 15% in order to protect the agencies.⁶⁰ Gibbons did point out, however, that a drop from 25% to 15% represented a forty-per-cent reduction in agency revenues. Few businesses either in or out of publishing could sustain an overnight decline of that magnitude.

Whether or not the weekly publishers were convinced by Gibbons's arguments, the rate of commission was not reduced. When the time came for its discussion at the 1905 meetings of the Press Association, there were too few members present to create a binding motion. That said, those members who were present put themselves on record favouring the 15% commission, and asked that members go out and 'endeavour to arrange with their competitors to bring the 15 per cent. rate into effect at as early a date as possible'⁶¹

At the same convention, a curious anomaly transpired. The owners of trade papers met separately and agreed to end commission on business placed by Canadian agencies. These publishers took the view that 'the agencies are the servants of the advertiser, [and] they should look to their masters for their pay.'⁶² One new agency in Montreal had made this principle the foundation of his business; by explicitly offering his services to the advertiser, he would refuse to accept any commission from publishers. M.A. James, then chair of the weekly section's advertising committee, saw in both of these cases a sign that the industry was developing towards a more sane, a more 'logically defined' role for the agency.⁶³

Whatever the merit of this assertion, the MacLean Publishing Company had its own reason

59. Coffin, 'The Advertising Agency,' *Printer & Publisher*, 15:3 (March 1907), 13

60. Young, 37-38

61. *Printer & Publisher*, 14:2 (February 1905), 22

62. *Printer & Publisher*, 14:2 (February 1905), 13

63. *Ibid.*, 13

to endorse the motion. J.B. Maclean did not deny the importance of agencies in the publishing industry, but he did insist that trade papers were categorically different from other periodicals. They were not read by the general public, but by manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, and dealers specializing in a particular field. Each ad that ran in a trade paper was specific to a particular readership. As such, Maclean believed that trade paper advertising could not be described in terms of traditional foreign advertising. Rather, it resembled the local advertising developed by newspapers (albeit the community of readers for such papers was national in scope), and should have been handled by his own advertising department.⁶⁴ In keeping with this belief, he paid an agency commission of 10% on business originating from outside Canada. Incidentally, this was the rate he paid his own solicitors after 1904.⁶⁵

By 1907, then, three different rates of commission had been adopted by the publishers of the Press Association. The dailies and the rural weeklies had both accepted the principle that the agencies existed primarily to serve publishers, and on this basis rationalized the maintenance of the commission system. Nonetheless, the dailies had united to lower the rate of commission from the traditional 25% to 15% to reduce the problems created by rebating. The weeklies, lacking the financial clout of the dailies, remained at the old rate. Meanwhile, the trade papers had rejected this characterization of the agency's service, and declared that the advertiser was the agency's chief client. As a result, they had moved to end the commission system altogether. The other publishers may well have envied the stand taken by their peers in the trade press. Nonetheless, simply lowering the rate of commission proved to be challenge enough.

64. *Printer & Publisher*, 26:4 (April 1917), 24

65. PAO, M-H records, b.52, f.HT Hunter/1904-12, H.T. Hunter to J.B. Maclean, 3 March 1904

II

The Canadian Association of Advertising Agencies

Whether they implemented a lower commission or not, the publishers had certainly put a scare into the agents. The widespread adoption of the minimum rates, coupled with a recruiting drive, demonstrated that the Press Association was determined to protect publishers' interests. The agencies decided that they would have to do the same. In the spring of 1905, the presidents of five Canadian agencies met in Toronto to form the Canadian Association of Advertising Agencies. Its principle task would be to represent the agency viewpoint before the Press Association.

Over the next five years, the CAAA engaged in a series of negotiations with the Press Association. The publishers' concerns continued to be dominated by the same priorities: decreasing questionable business practices while increasing their revenues from foreign advertising. The agencies proposed that both of these ends could be met by building up the competitive advantage of the 'legitimate' agencies. The publishers found this compelling, and the negotiations then focused on what exactly characterized a 'legitimate' agency.

Agency Legitimacy

The composition of the original CAAA is worthy of note. Ansom McKim, Eduoard Desbarats, J.J. Gibbons, and Frederick Diver had founded the oldest established agencies in Canada, and those which were held in the highest regard by publishers. The fifth man, J.H. Woods, headed a Toronto agency which had only been open for one year, but he had established a sound reputation as a newspaperman at the *Toronto Mail & Empire* before that. Each agency was an independent company incorporated only to solicit advertising contracts. Not all agencies could make the same claim, and when the CAAA sat down with the Press Association, it sought to eliminate these other agencies from the field.

At some point after 1900, certain manufacturers began to establish in-house 'agencies.'

Whether they hired an agency or placed business direct, advertisers paid full card rates for the space they used. Many companies who placed direct resented this fact, and thought they deserved some form of discount equal to the agency commission. They then found a way to circumvent the rules by establishing 'agencies' of their own. More often than not, such an agency was little more than the advertising department of the company in question, reconstituted as a separate company and given its own letterhead. Its personnel and duties remained unchanged, but technically it qualified for the commission.⁶⁶ Hal Donly of the *Simcoe Reformer* stated that there were numerous firms using this ploy in 1906. Publishers condemned the practice, but no one ever publically identified the companies in question. Business was business.⁶⁷ That said, one such agency might have been Eddy Advertising Service, established in 1913. Although it was operated by the grandson of E.D. Eddy, an Ottawa lumber baron, it was underwritten by the grandfather's company. Given that the Press Association refused to do business with at least three other agencies for precisely this kind of connection, its willingness to turn a blind eye here can only be seen as pragmatic.⁶⁸

When publishers accepted this arrangement, the agencies – the independent agencies – cried foul. The main justification for the commission system was the agents' role in developing advertisers. Clearly, companies with in-house agencies were very active advertisers. They simply did not wish to pay gross rates. If this practice caught on, the independent agencies would be driven out of business. Then there would be no one within the industry with a structural interest in the development of new foreign advertisers. The independents asked the publishers to accept business

66. 'A Queer Agency,' *Printer & Publisher*, 1:6 (October 1892), 8; 'Fake Advertising Agencies,' *Printer & Publisher*, 2:10 (October 1893), 5

67. *Printer & Publisher*, 15:2 (February 1906), 20

68. NAC, CPA records, v.2, Recognition Committee, 'Minute Book 1910-1919,' 25 February 1913; 'Newspapers Sue Agency for Non-Payment,' *Economic Advertising*, 10:2 (February 1917), 24; on the Eddy family, see James Gray, *R.B. Bennett: The Calgary Years* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1991), 131ff.

from advertisers and their in-house agencies only at gross rates.⁶⁹

This put the publishers in a difficult position. Most sided with the independents, and demanded gross rates from the in-house agencies. Nonetheless, the in-house agencies were not coming to the publishers demanding full service; they came with complete campaigns, with contracts, schedules, and plates ready-made. Unlike the local advertisers who relied upon the publisher's advertising department, the in-house agencies made few demands on the publisher's resources. Not surprisingly, then, there were publishers who took this business at net rates. While they respected the claims of the independents in principle, the lure of a sure contract was too much to resist. W.A. Craick was unapologetic about the practice. In a *Printer & Publisher* editorial, he suggested that the in-house agency system should be the future of advertising. Only with capable, in-house staff could an advertiser be sure that its company's advertising appropriation was well spent on carefully selected media. His implication was clear: since the independent agencies' fees increased with the quantity of advertising placed, rather than the suitability of the papers used, they could always be tempted to pad their lists.⁷⁰

In its make-up and mandate, the newly-formed Canadian Association of Advertising Agencies reflected this debate. As a group, the five men at its first meeting included no representatives of an agency owned by either a publisher or advertiser. And, in a circular issued to the publishers under McKim's letterhead, they announced that they were coming together:

... for the purpose of discussing with the newspaper publishers several important questions of mutual interest, especially the question as to what constitutes a legitimate

69. J.J. Gibbons, 'The Arrangement between the Agents and the Publishers,' *Printer & Publisher*, 17:2 (February 1908), 32f-32g; F.A. Rowlett, 'The Advertising Agency,' *Economic Advertising*, 1:2 (August 1909), 10; see also CPA records, v.2, Recognition Committee, 'Minute Book 1910-1919,' 16 November 1916

70. 'The Manufacturers and the Press,' *Printer & Publisher*, 15:1 (January 1906), 25

advertising agency to whom the agents' commission should be allowed.⁷¹

We may also note that they were intent on gaining detailed statements of circulation, and any other reforms that would place advertising on a more secure foundation in Canada.

Credit Recognition

While the agencies struggled with the notion of legitimacy, the publishers were equally concerned with the agencies' credit ratings. In the heady days of the pioneers, men such as Robert Moore had not taken any responsibility for the financial position of their clients. If the client did not pay Moore, then Moore did not pay the papers. Publishers found this situation intolerable, and believed it was the agent's legal responsibility to pay their bills on receipt, period. Despite extracting promises and posing threats, little changed.⁷² Papers could only refuse the business of those agents who proved themselves unreliable. By then, of course, money was already lost.

It took the powerful Montreal *Star* to develop a reliable screening system. Basically, the *Star* established credit requirements for all agencies that wished to place ads in its pages. Since the *Star* was the largest anglophone paper in country, it was an essential component of most agency lists. Once its requirements were known, agencies were forced to operate according to its dictates, or they would lose access to its pages. Since the latter option would not please most of their clients, the agents had little choice but to seek recognition from the *Star*.⁷³

Newspapermen held the *Star* in high regard.⁷⁴ Other metropolitan dailies soon copied its recognition procedures, and all of these emphasized agencies' credit. Weekly publishers probably found it difficult to do the same. The average weekly had a tiny staff and scant resources; it would

71. *Printer & Publisher*, 14:6 (June 1905), 14

72. See, for instance, 'Atlantic Pulp Directors,' *Printer & Publisher*, 11:10 (October 1902), 17

73. Bonville discusses the *Star*'s power in relation to other Montreal papers; Bonville, 220-222.

74. See for example 'The Man Who Made the Montreal Star,' *Printer & Publisher*, 4:4 (April 1895), 6-7; *Printer & Publisher*, 19:6 (June 1910), 37; Bonville, 220-222.

have had little time or money to spend investigating every agency entering its door. Agencies brandishing the recommendations from the major dailies offered compelling reassurances of their merit, but unless the weekly got in touch with the recognizing papers, there was no way to verify the agencies' claims. The dailies did not make their lists available in any systematic fashion.⁷⁵

Once again, publishers sought to overcome their common difficulties by co-operating through the Canadian Press Association. If the association itself established a recognition committee, the cost of the work could be equitably distributed among them. In this regard, the daily publishers were a step ahead of the weeklies. Their section established a credit review committee in 1906. It exercised no power. Its only purpose was to draw up a list of agencies which appeared to be fiscally responsible. At the same time, the committee would also note which agencies were owned by manufacturers. Publishers were free to use this information in any way they wished.

The gradual accretion of such reforms within the Press Association must have created a sense of anxiety among the agency men. Whether or not all publishers were responsive to the new ideas informing the association's activities, these ideas certainly affected the papers with the largest circulation in English Canada. The role of the agent was being discussed as never before, and this new committee had begun to examine what was and was not a legitimate agency. Little wonder, then, that the CAAA formed when it did. Soon after, it met with the daily men of the Press Association to air their respective problems.

The Daily Section Agreement of 1907

The first meeting of the two associations took place in Toronto on 4 March 1907. At that date, both sides presented their own slate of concerns regarding the state of the industry; they also presented suggestions calculated to improve their mutual relations. One wonders how volatile the meeting

75. 'Annual Meeting of the CPA,' *Printer & Publisher*, 19:6 (June 1910), 25

might have been: Craick, reporting soon after, felt that 'The very fact that there was a meeting and that the proceedings were amicable, augurs well'⁷⁶ However dark his fears, his cautious optimism was not misplaced. The next meeting, held 1 April, resulted in an agreement that laid out the standards expected of both parties in all of their dealings. If adhered to, it had the potential to resolve many of the problems that had emerged over the last eighteen years between the two parties.

There were at least two models for this type of agreement. The Billposters' Association was a collection of Canadian and American companies that produced, mounted, and maintained advertising posters and billboards. Much like the publishers, the billposters had set common rates that diminished the possibility of price-cutting among their members. Every advertiser would pay the exact same rates for the exact same service no matter which billposter he hired. United as they were, the billposters met the agencies with great determination. Every agent placing business with a member of the association had to sign the same contract, which stipulated the duties of both parties. Among other things, rebating was strictly forbidden.⁷⁷ The other precedent was the Quoin Club. It offered agencies an agreement very much similar to the billposters'. If the agents agreed to its terms, the publishers would quote only gross rates to advertisers placing business direct, and refuse business from non-signing agencies.⁷⁸

The agreement between the daily section and the agents accomplished, in essence, two things. First, it consolidated all of the reforms of the previous three years in one document approved by both sides. Second, it tried to introduce means to enforce the terms of the agreement.

The first portion of the agreement dealt with rates. Although there is no great statement of principles to preface the agreement, one could have been drafted quite easily; the subtext champions

76. editorial, *Printer & Publisher*, 16:3 (March 1907), 23

77. J.J. Gibbons, 'The Arrangement between the Agents and the Publishers,' *Printer & Publisher*, 17:2 (February 1908), 32f-32g

78. *Ibid.*, 32f-32g; F.A. Rowlatt, 'The Advertising Agency,' *Economic Advertising* 1:2 (August 1909), 10

the primacy of the publishers within the periodical industry. Publishing was their livelihood, they knew the costs of running a paper, and as such the rates they established were to be held sacrosanct. It was the duty of advertising agencies to accept card rates and to quote these rates with absolute fidelity to the advertiser. To avoid any misrepresentation of a single paper's rates, agencies agreed to quote each paper's rates separately on the lists that they submitted to clients. Discounts, rebates, and any other form of price cutting would not be tolerated. Any uncompleted, long-term contract would be charged at short rates. All of these conditions amounted to a defence of the price floor.

In return, publishers would protect the role of the independent agencies in the newspaper field, and by extension, reaffirm their acceptance of the commission system. The agreement set out a strict definition of what they would recognize as a legitimate agency:

'Advertising Agency' shall mean a person, firm, or company who or which is not a salaried employe of any advertiser, and who or which has an office or offices properly equipped for carrying on as his or their principal business a general advertising business, and who is, by experience and in the possession of financial resources qualified to carry on the business of an advertising agency, and who or which has at least three bona fide new general advertisers or clients, whose advertising is to be placed in Canadian newspapers.⁷⁹

The Press Association would maintain the credit recognition committee. Using this definition, it would determine the legitimacy of each agency in Canada. Only recognized agencies would qualify for commissions. While this definition would not necessarily discourage publishers' advertising departments from competing with the independents, it would discourage the in-house agencies of manufacturers. Any savings they might have sought through the commission system were now eliminated.

79. *Printer & Publisher*, 16:4 (April 1907), 13

The emphasis placed on the acquisition of three new accounts may have been imposed at the behest of either side. From the publishers' viewpoint, this clause highlighted the major principle underlying the commission system: that agencies existed to create new business. That said, the wording provided the agencies with a certain amount of protection as well. It created a barrier to the formation of new agencies. New agencies frequently sprang from existing agencies, when hired staff decided to establish their own shops. When they did, they often took key clients with them. In 1903, J.J. Gibbons lost one of the largest accounts in the country when the advertising manager of the McClary Manufacturing Company resigned to open his own agency, and subsequently carried the contract with him. There was nothing he could do in this situation, but Gibbons tried to prevent costly mutinies from his own firm by placing a special clause in employee contracts. It stipulated that, upon leaving his employ, they would not 'for a period of five years ... solicit, execute, or accept any work from any client of his.'⁸⁰ Those who refused to sign it were not hired. Under the terms of the agreement, a new agency would be able to place business with members of the association, but it would not be eligible for commission until it signed three clients which had never before advertised. Without a commission, the new agent would have to rely upon its clients or its credit resources for financing until it gained recognition. Once this was achieved, however, the publishers would reimburse it for back commission.⁸¹

At no point was a value specified for the agencies' commission. The daily section hoped that the entire association would eventually co-sign the agreement. In that case, given the difference in commissions paid among the two sections and various classes, it was more practical to leave the rate of commission off the table. Had they waited for the weekly section to declare its position on

80. NAC, Kenneth P. Kirkwood papers, v.7, JCK notebook, 8 January 1905; on Gibbons and McClary, see 'The Advertising Arena,' *Printer & Publisher*, 18:7 (July 1909); Bertram Brooker, 'Forty Years of Canadian Advertising,' *Marketing*, 21:10 (15 November 1924), 274, 278

81. J.J. Gibbons, 'The Agreement between the Agents and Publishers,' *Printer & Publisher*, 17:2 (February 1908), 32f-32g

commissions, then the other gains made in the rest of the agreement might have been lost.

The agreement did not apply to local advertising. Once again, the publishers emphasized that the agent's field was foreign advertising, and not locally operated businesses which the papers considered their private domain. Nonetheless, they did concede that the agencies had played a role in developing local advertisers into major, supralocal accounts. For the sake of the agreement, the two sides crafted a precise definition that would set a mutually satisfactory standard. The first step was a change in terminology. The word 'general' was substituted for the word 'foreign,' which effectively dispelled the undesirable connotations attached to certain clients who advertised outside of their local market. The clause stated:

A general advertiser, no matter where his place of business or head office may be located, is one who advertises in three or more journals in three or more towns or cities in the Dominion, but whose product or merchandise does not constitute the major portion of any local retail store.⁸²

In essence, the two sides tried to pinpoint the difference between the artisan shops of the previous century, and the large corporate enterprises that had recently gained a national presence. A tailor who made and sold his own wares in his own shop was a local advertiser; Penman's Limited was a general advertiser. Even then, this definition was extremely generous. Any agency worth its salt should have been able to place its clients' ads in three towns. This clause would only prevent retailers and small-scale artisans from placing their ads in a neighbouring town's paper and claiming the status of a general advertiser.

Section 13 also made another concession to the agencies. It allowed certain local advertising to be placed by them at net rates. There were two special cases that may have inspired this point.

82. 'Agreement between the Canadian Press Association and the Canadian Association of Advertising Agencies,' s.13; see Appendix IV

The first was the disagreement over the nature of bank advertising. Publishers agreed to accept such advertising from the agencies at net rates if the agencies agreed to pay full local rates for this matter rather than the lower rates offered to general advertisers. The agreement stated:

A branch store or office devoted wholly or the greater part thereof to the business advertised, and which is in competition with businesses already in existence and paying local rates, is to be classified as a local advertiser and comes under local rates, with commission to any qualified and recognized advertising agency.⁸³

The second case involved the incursion of Toronto's department stores into smaller markets. Timothy Eaton and Robert Simpson had dramatically increased the profitability of retailing through a number of innovations. Most importantly, they had increased stock turnover dramatically by reducing their resale margins on staple goods as far as possible. This put the unit cost of these goods far below the average market price found at many smaller stores. Until the 1890s, this chiefly affected storekeepers in downtown Toronto, but with improvements in transportation this reduction in prices soon cast its shadow over outlying regions.⁸⁴ Knowing this, department stores placed their advertising in papers outside of Toronto, where they competed with the local merchants. Sensitive publishers were met by a moral dilemma. Local merchants complained that the metropolitan department stores drew revenue out of their community. If the department stores put local merchants out of business, few advertisers would remain to support the paper.⁸⁵ Publishers grouched that department store advertising would have been unnecessary if every local merchant actually supported its local paper. Ultimately, the publishers sided with the department stores, but placed upon them the same restriction as they had upon the banks: they would have to pay local rates whether they used an agency or not.

83. *Ibid.*, s.13; Appendix IV

84. Bliss, 38-40; Monod, 195-229; Joy L. Santink, *Timothy Eaton and the Rise of His Department Store* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1990), 203-222

85. W.G. Colgate, 'The Problem of the Local Advertiser,' *Printer & Publisher*, 17:12 (December 1908), 24-25; editorial, *Economic Advertising*, 7:4 (April 1914), 9

In the advertising field, if nowhere else, there would be a level playing field for the local merchants.

Enforcement proved to be the most difficult aspect of the publisher-agency agreement. There was no positive mechanism in place to maintain compliance other than enlightened self-interest. Instead, the publishers held aloft an economic club that threatened each agency with de-recognition if found in violation of the agreement on two separate occasions. Without recognition, of course, an agency could not claim commission on business placed. This should have been sufficiently forbidding.

This tit-for-tat punishment was mirrored in the regulations for publishers. Any publisher found in violation of the agreement on two separate occasions would be removed from the agreement. On the face of it, this does not seem like much of a threat. The offending publisher would likely lose no revenue by his actions. However, the publisher would no longer be entitled to the list of recognized agencies, and the recognized agencies would not have to curb their less desirable practices when dealing with him. In short, the delinquent publisher was threatened with inconvenience.

The agreement only applied to Canadian agencies. The Press Association did not have the wherewithal to investigate agencies based in Great Britain and the United States. Fortunately, there existed in both countries an organization which performed the same task as the association's own recognition committee. In Great Britain, the Incorporated Society of British Agents was an agents' group which restricted membership to those agencies which upheld its standards of practice. In the United States, the American Newspaper Publishers' Association had a committee whose recognition standards were very similar to the Canadians' own. The Press Association adopted the recommendations of both of these lists. That said, they were only recommendations. Foreign agencies refused to accept the standard contract form that emerged from the agreement, and as such

Canadian publishers dealt with them as they saw fit.⁸⁶

A Weekly Section Agreement?

When it was first signed, the agreement only bound the agents and the 'Class C' dailies. Within the daily section, papers were classified according to the size of the markets in which they published. 'Class A' was reserved for the largest market, Toronto. 'Class B' was for Hamilton and Ottawa, and 'Class C' described a number of cities the size of London, Berlin, and Kingston. That the smaller-circulation papers should have pioneered this reform points again to their relative vulnerability. Just like the weeklies, the Class C dailies would have had a limited number of local advertisers upon which to draw, and would have benefited greatly from a steady supply of general advertising. Where they differed was in their fewer numbers and greater organization. By February of the following year, the Class B papers accepted the agreement and fell in line. Only one Class A daily joined at this time – the *Mail & Empire* – but the association had great expectations that every paper across the country would eventually accept its terms.⁸⁷

Even before the agreement was struck, the weekly men were working on parallel reforms. They had established a recognition committee of their own in February 1906, with requirements identical to those of the dailies.⁸⁸ The following year, they decided to replicate the agency agreement as well. Hal Donly was appointed to draft a committee to meet with the agents. This he did, and they met the agents in Toronto that September. To their dismay, nothing substantial was accomplished. Despite the ground-breaking agreement signed by the dailies five months before, both the publishers and the agents tried to introduce new conditions which were not in the dailies'

86. J.J. Gibbons, 'The Agreement between the Agents and Publishers,' *Printer & Publisher*, 17:2 (February 1908), 32f-32g

87. *Ibid.*, 32f-32g

88. *Printer & Publisher*, 16:2 (February 1907), 18

agreement. These proved to be an obstacle.

The publishers wanted agencies to stop using papers outside of the agreement. The agencies, represented by Ansom McKim and J.H. Woods, steadfastly refused. In practice, this condition would have transformed the agents into recruiters for the Press Association. But if the CPA wanted to achieve unanimity among publishers, it would have to recruit on its own behalf. Space buying was a key element of agency expertise. The appearance of rational and unbiased selection highlighted the agencies' claims to a specialized knowledge of advertising, markets, and periodicals. The agents would never jeopardize the integrity of their space-buying practices by limiting their selection in so political a fashion.

The agents also introduced novel demands. First and foremost, they asked that publishers provide proof of their circulation. This demand was rooted, again, in the agencies' desire for rational and unbiased media selection. As the situation stood, agencies had no sure means of verifying the figures they received, and it was a hallowed tradition among many publishers to exaggerate their own figures while dismissing their rivals' as pure poppycock. Commentators argued that audits would only undermine the honest publishers. Nothing would prevent the 'circulation liars' from continuing to overstate their figures, and the verified figures would always suffer by comparison. The agencies responded that the publication of verified figures would end such comparisons once and for all. Agencies would naturally be attracted to papers unashamed of their circulation and consequently willing to provide hard data. Publishers would be forced to compete in terms of documented readership rather than ballooning estimates. This need not have had a negative effect on the papers with smaller circulations. Oftimes agencies would look at the quality of the editorial content, and select a paper that appealed to an elite if smaller readership rather than a paper with greater circulation in the same centre.

A second demand tabled by the CAAA involved the form of the rate cards themselves. Each

paper had its own card, and established rates according to its own understanding of size of space, contract duration, and placement. This made it time-consuming for agencies to draft cost comparisons among papers. Space in particular was difficult to assess, since each paper had its own page size and standard type. The agencies asked that publishers adopt a standard measure to gauge the value of space, and that they frame their rate cards on a standard periodization.⁸⁹ Given the growing popularity of typograph and linotype machines, the industry was moving towards greater standardization anyway. This suggestion was the only one from the meeting with the agencies that was adopted when Donly reported back to the full weekly section.⁹⁰

Frustrated in the short term, the weekly publishers achieved most of their goals the following year. In 1909, the daily and weekly sections combined their recognition committees into one joint committee on advertising. In so doing, the weeklies effectively signed on to the dailies' agreement. The Press Association appeared to have achieved the unanimity it had long sought.

The effect of the publisher-agency agreement, and the recognition procedure that it established, cannot be underestimated. Although it has never received attention in the Canadian historiography on the publishing industry, this committee -- in its attempts to protect publishers -- vaulted the advertising agencies into a new realm of respectability.⁹¹ By agreeing to its terms, the recognized agencies gained a stamp of approval from one of the most powerful instruments of public opinion in Edwardian Canada. Its ownership requirements ensured that major advertisers would have no economic advantage over the agencies when dealing with the publishers. Its credit requirements eliminated competition from freelance copywriters and fly-by-night operators, but it also impeded the entry of new agencies. The list of recognized agencies issued by the Press Association in the 1910s

89. *Printer & Publisher*, 16:2 (February 1907), 8

90. *Ibid.*, 15-16

91. Stephenson and McNaught, Bonville, and Sotiron make no reference to this agreement at all; its creation lies outside the time period covered by Rutherford's *A Victorian Authority*.

severely reduced the number of agencies receiving commission on business; in Toronto alone, it fell from 25 in 1905 to 8 in 1910 (Table 1.3). This new environment gave the recognized agents a degree of stability which allowed them to consolidate their experience, capital, and list of clients, while expanding their knowledge and services. After that point, there were clearly defined requirements which every new agency had to meet before gaining access to the lucrative trade in national advertising. In return, the papers ensured that the agencies would remain dependent upon them, and not advertisers, for their income. If publishers no longer had direct access to national advertisers, it was in their interest to retain some influence with those who controlled the purse-strings to advertisers' appropriations. This would become increasingly important over the next ten years as alternative media arose to compete aggressively against the periodical press.⁹²

That said, the onus would remain upon the agents to justify their rate of commission. As the publishers continued to debate this issue over the next decade, it intersected with another, equally important: how to validate the circulation figures claimed by publishers. To resolve both of these questions required the active participation of the advertisers themselves.

III

The Association of Canadian Advertisers

While the publishers and the agencies hammered out their agreements, the advertisers were more or less ignored. Certainly, they had no place at the table, and the agreements did nothing to acknowledge the claims of advertisers in the contracts drafted between the others. In part, this situation was rooted in the agencies' strict insistence that the publisher-agency relation and the advertiser-agency relation remain discrete, an attitude that Robert Moore had made explicit in the 1860s. Moreover, the advertisers as such had no representative association. The Canadian

92. CPA records, v.2, Recognition Committee, 'Minute Book 1910-1919,' 7 December 1917

Manufacturing Association brought manufacturers together, but mainly to lobby government on matters related to the tariff and foreign trade.⁹³ Retailers and financial institutions created their own trade organizations to do similar work. In September 1914, the advertising managers of twelve major companies formed the Association of Canadian Advertisers (ACA) to rectify the situation. The ACA was the brainchild of B.H. Bramble, the advertising manager of Goodyear Tire & Rubber.⁹⁴ At its organizational meeting, the goals of the new body were clearly set out, namely: to investigate the circulation claims of all periodicals, to convince publishers to use uniform rate cards, to eliminate 'unclean' advertising, and to maintain useful statistical records on media outlets in Canada.⁹⁵

Over the next five years, the ACA grew to represent a formidable body of advertisers. There were 77 by 1919, working in both manufacturing and tertiary industries. A partial list would include Canada Life Assurance, Canadian Kodak, Chevrolet, Columbia Graphophone, Dunlop Tire & Rubber, Imperial Oil, Massey-Harris, McLaughlin Carriage, A.&F. Pears, the Steel Company of Canada, and Tuckett Tobacco.⁹⁶ Most members had their headquarters in Toronto or Montreal, but a handful came from Hamilton, and a scattering of others came from Winnipeg, London, Ottawa and the better-known company towns, Windsor and Oshawa. The association itself established its head office in Toronto, but meetings were divided equally between there and Montreal.

Circulation Audits

Above all else, the ACA wanted publishers to guarantee the integrity of their circulation figures. This question concerned the agencies as well. Years before, J.J. Gibbons had asked publishers to

93. S.D. Clark, *The Canadian Manufacturers' Association: A Study in Collective Bargaining and Political Pressure* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1939)

94. Tom Blakely, 'Industry's Marquis of Queensberry,' *Marketing*, 88:39 (26 September 1983), 23-24

95. *Printer & Publisher*, 23:10 (October 1914), 54

96. W.A. Lydiatt, *Lydiatt's Book 1920 7ed.* (Toronto: W.A. Lydiatt, 1920), 272-273

initiate annual audits through the Press Association. Two problems had always stood in the way: the mutual suspicions of the publishers themselves, and the question of who would pay for the audits.

First, the publishers themselves were wholly responsible for the doubt that had crept into the declaration of circulation figures. Agencies provided value to their clients by maximizing their advertising appropriations. Discounts and rebating offered one set of strategies in this regard by lowering total costs. A second strategy demanded a judicious selection of media to cover a client's distribution network as efficiently as possible. This entailed the choice of only one paper in each town; generally, agencies would select the paper with the highest circulation. As such, each paper's efficiency as an advertising medium would be judged upon its circulation figure in conjunction with its rate card. The more accurately this figure could be supplied, the more effectively the agencies could do their job. However, the competition among publishers led them to overrate their own figures while underrating those of their competitors. Hal Donly pointed to the ridiculous, if unfortunate, effects of this competition:

It may happen that the circulation statement of one daily newspaper in a certain large city is questioned by the publisher of a rival paper in the same city. It is probable that, previous to this, no advertiser has ever doubted the circulation statement of either paper. Publisher Number One promptly retaliates by casting reflections on the veracity of Publisher Number Two. Publisher Number Two replies by having his circulation records audited, and Publisher Number One immediately does likewise – with the result that the statements of both papers are found to be correct.⁹⁷

Nonetheless, Pandora's box had been opened. Agents and advertisers alike demanded that publishers provide proof of their statements.

97. Hal Donly, in *Printer & Publisher*, 24:11 (November 1915), 25

Second, circulation audits did not come cheaply. The task was exacting and time-consuming, and required the services of a trained accountant to supply a degree of reliability. As such, the cost of the audit would add to publishers' expenses without adding value to the final product. Some papers did so, and publicized this fact in the trade press. Once again, the *Montreal Star* had led the way. It began voluntary audits in 1890s, and publicly advocated legislation which would have made them legally necessary.⁹⁸ Few other papers were willing to undertake the cost involved. But publishers did not simply balk at the *amount* of these costs. They also questioned who was responsible for paying them: the advertisers, agents, or publishers? If the advertisers and agencies did not accept circulation figures as stated, publishers reasoned that it was the advertisers and agencies' job to have them audited. The advertisers replied that publications which failed to supply credible figures would not be used.

The ACA sat down with the advertising committee of the Press Association in 1915. The advertisers wanted to see if any common ground could be found to conduct joint audits. They found none. The two parties disagreed over two points: how to apportion costs, and the nature of the information to be provided in a standard circulation report. As a result, the CPA unilaterally issued its own standard report, less detailed than the ACA desired, and asked its members to use it exclusively when asked for their figures.⁹⁹

Undaunted, the ACA began to make plans of its own. Before any action was taken, however, an organization with many of the same priorities formed in the United States. The Audit Bureau of Circulations was the product of similar discussions south of the border, but there all three sectors agreed to underwrite the operation of one central auditor; this auditor would operate on a non-profit basis. Each company would join as an individual member (rather than as part of their trade

98. 'The Circulation Question,' *Printer & Publisher*, 5:5 (May 1896), 10

99. 'Views on the Auditing of Canadian Circulation,' *Printer & Publisher*, 24:8 (August 1915), 22; 'Finding Out What We Get For Our Money,' *Economic Advertising*, 9:10 (October 1916), 32

association), and would pay annual fees relative to the size of its business and the type of service it desired. The Audit Bureau's board of directors represented each sector of the industry. As a result, the bureau could claim a relative degree of autonomy from each of them, and provide a service that was mutually satisfactory. It set up shop in Chicago, Illinois.¹⁰⁰

Canadian companies were offered membership in the Audit Bureau from the outset. For publishers, its fees were geared to the size and class of the paper. A daily with 50,000-100,000 in circulation was asked to pay \$15.00 per week. By contrast, Canadian advertisers were offered a choice of memberships with a substantial difference in fees: \$200.00 provided access to all of the bureau's reports on North American periodicals, while \$50.00 provided access only to those published in Canada. To better serve its Canadian members, the bureau also set up a special advisory board that included publishers such as George F. Chipman of the *Grain Growers' Guide* and William Findlay of the *Ottawa Free Press*, as well as John Murray Gibbon of the Canadian Pacific Railway and B.H. Bramble, the driving force behind the ACA. When the number of Canadian members began to grow after 1916, the American members gave them a permanent vice-presidency on the bureau's executive.¹⁰¹

Publishers viewed the Audit Bureau with great apprehension. Soon after its formation, the bureau requested an endorsement from the Press Association. The Advertising Committee quickly discounted the idea. The bureau's membership fees were a tacit admission that publishers were at least partially responsible for the cost of audits. If the ACA went ahead with its own scheme, Canadian publishers would have been able to avoid such fees altogether. Despite the association's qualms, thirty-six publishers signed up for the bureau's service before the end of the year. Among

100. 'Views on the Auditing of Canadian Circulation,' *Printer & Publisher*, 24:8 (August 1915), 22

101. *Ibid.*, 23; 'Finding Out What We Get for Our Money,' *Economic Advertising*, 9:10 (October 1916), 32

these, ever a leader, was the *Montreal Star*.¹⁰² Others more cautiously waited to assess its operations. The ABC earned their trust; it rapidly gained a reputation for high-calibre service. By 1924, most Canadian magazines were members, as were most of the major daily newspapers. The country weeklies, still reliant on local advertising more than national advertising, held off.¹⁰³

When the Audit Bureau opened shop, the ACA was little more than a list of companies with common goals. Only sixteen managers had participated in the ACA's organization; fifty-five participated in its first real business meeting a year and a half later. The original executive was composed of the advertising managers of companies producing packaged foods, soaps, tobacco, shoes, electrical appliances, and tires. The small number of industries involved reflects just how few companies in Canada advertised nationally at that time, but the war was also a factor which hampered recruiting. Unlike the publishers, this small band immediately set out to co-operate with the bureau. Each would acquire the ABC reports on its Canadian members, and encourage other periodicals to join. In the meantime, they would have their own staff investigate those which did not.¹⁰⁴

At the same meeting, the ACA formed a Circulation & Rates Committee to undertake the collation of data. It crafted its own standard form for the declaration of circulation, then targeted about 250 publications in Canada that ACA members used regularly. By October 1916, only nine months into its mandate, it had the co-operation of 128 papers, of which 71 had joined the Audit Bureau. Among these were the *Toronto Star Weekly*, Montreal's *La Presse* and *Gazette*, and the country's leading general magazine, *Everywoman's World*.¹⁰⁵

102. 'Finding Out What We Get For Our Money,' *Economic Advertising*, 9:10 (October 1916), 32; W.A. Craick, *A History of Canadian Journalism II: Last Years of the Canadian Press Association* (Toronto: Ontario, 1959), 107

103. advertisement, *Marketing*, 20:12 (14 June 1924), 378-379

104. 'Views on the Auditing of Canadian Circulations,' *Printer & Publisher*, 24:8 (August 1915), 23; 'ACA to Combine Reports with ABC,' *Economic Advertising*, 9:2 (February 1916), 32-34; Craick, *History of Canadian Journalism II*, 121

105. 'Finding Out What We Get For Our Money,' *Economic Advertising*, 9:10 (October 1916), 31

The combined pressure of the ACA, agencies, and Audit Bureau forced the publishers to relent and accept the idea of regular and standardized audits. Despite the stand taken by the Press Association, *Printer & Publisher* endorsed the Audit Bureau in May 1916. For a good dose of peer pressure, it also ran a list of prominent papers which had recently applied for membership.¹⁰⁶ The Circulation & Rates Committee of the ACA viewed this situation with great satisfaction, and reported:

The publisher who now either refuses or fails to meet such a requirement can reasonably and safely be classed with those who do not desire the details of their circulation known, for reasons which are of no advantage to their advertisers.¹⁰⁷

Failure to co-operate was taken a sign that the publisher owned a paper with little or no advertising value.

The Audit Bureau settled most of the questions surrounding circulation figures. The next problem addressed was the commission system. Here, the advertisers were not so successful. The implementation of independent, standardized audits was essentially a fine-tuning of the industry. A change in the commission system would involve a radical overhaul of the industry's structure.

Agency Commissions – Round Two

When the ACA formed, it did so in the midst of a heated debate over the commission system in the United States. The Association of National Advertisers was the ACA's American counterpart. When it formed in 1910, it set out to abolish the commission system.¹⁰⁸ The stature of its members gave weight to its opinions, and not surprisingly the debate excited comment in Canada as well. In the

106. *Printer & Publisher*, 25:5 (May 1916), 24

107. *Ibid.*, 32; see also 'Association of Canadian Advertisers hold Third Annual Meeting,' *Economic Advertising*, 9:10 (October 1916), 7, 9

108. The ANA originally formed as the Association of National Advertising Managers. It changed its name in 1914.

same year that the ANA formed, the Press Association hired its first full-time manager, John M. Imrie. Imrie at this time was the editor of *Printer & Publisher*, and he too sought to reform the system as it then stood. Like most of J.B. Maclean's men, Imrie was highly attuned to American trends, and he used the editorial columns of the magazine to champion the abolition of the commission system in Canada.¹⁰⁹

What had changed since 1907? Some commentators suggested everything. Through the 1910s, it was commonplace for people within the industry to assess the changes that had overcome publishing during the previous twenty years. More often than not, agencies were central to their analyses. The space brokerage pioneered by George Rowell was characterized as a nineteenth-century business practice. It was old-fashioned, prone to corruption, inefficient. The newer 'full service' agencies were identified with the modern world of the twentieth-century businessman. That said, it was becoming ever more apparent that these highly-touted services were provided to advertisers, not publishers. J.J. Gibbons and Norris-Patterson Limited made no pretence to hide this fact; they advertised it to the trade. A group of newer agencies arrived in Toronto in 1912 that took this development to its logical conclusion: they operated on a fee-for-service basis rather than the commission system. Selling Service Limited in Montreal emphasized this aspect of its operations in its very name.

In the past, when agents had met with publishers, it had been politic for agents to frame their demands in terms of their clients' needs. Their clients, of course, were the advertisers, whose money financed a growing proportion of the industry's operations. Given that the commission system was rationalized by treating the publishers as the chief client, these tactics seem curious at best. More curious events were to come. During World War I, the ACA defended the commission system against four Toronto publishers who wished to abolish it. Within five years, their respective positions

109. *Printer & Publisher*, 16:2 (February 1907), 15

would completely reverse. These two confrontations put in place the final pieces of the industry's structure.

Cost Accounting

When John Imrie was hired by the Press Association, they wanted a man who could recruit new members into the fold. Imrie threw himself into the role, and latched upon a scheme that would demonstrate the benefits of membership in the association. The key was cost accounting. If the association took an active hand in its promotion, then the progressive business practices of the association would become manifest, and more papers might come on-side for the agency agreements. In 1911 Imrie began conducting workshops across Ontario for the benefit of smaller publishers. The response was most encouraging, and over the next two years he eventually led more than forty workshops, in every province of the Dominion.¹¹⁰

Cost accounting was a great revelation to the Press Association. In the past, few publishers had kept strict records. The paper's income was the publisher's income; expenses would be met as money became available. Since they relied upon subscriptions to cover their costs, most publishers should have been able to project the amount of revenue available to them from year to year. That did not change until the 1890s, when the volume of general advertising increased. General advertising was not 'annual' in the same sense as subscriptions. A publisher could not count on advertisers to buy the same amount of space from year to year, or even from month to month. As such, the paper's revenue became much less predictable, and its accounting became much more complex. Despite this, most publishers were slow to modify their traditional accounting practices. As late as 1920, an accountant with the Audit Bureau found that barely 10% of its members

110. Craick, *History of Canadian Journalism II*, 65

(Canadian and American) had a cost system in place.¹¹¹ To remedy this situation, the Press Association made the education of its members in cost accounting a priority. The weeklies and smaller dailies in particular found this assistance invaluable.

Beyond its ability to create order out of chaos, the new system enlightened publishers about their own rate cards. It bears repeating that haggling, discounting, and rebating began at a time when general advertising was considered bonus income. Only after the volume of this trade increased did publishers respond to the 'price-cutting evil,' but when they did so action was taken by a committee of the association. Stricter accounting brought the problem home for individual publishers. If before they had suspicions regarding their cash flow, now they knew exactly how much it cost to run each section of their papers. With this knowledge in hand, they could establish profitable rates.

The power of this knowledge was recognized by the Press Association. If individual publishers undertook effective records keeping, then publishers as a whole would be strengthened in their discussions with advertisers and agents. Publishers could demonstrate exactly where each dollar went.¹¹² This would prove valuable during World War I. Apparently, the uncertainties of a wartime economy was no time to spend money on ephemera, and when anxious managers sought ways to cut costs, advertising budgets were often the first to go. The result was near disastrous for publishers. Many companies renewed annual contracts for advertising in the fall. Hostilities opened just as publishers would have been arranging their yearly budget projections. Rather than renewals, they faced widespread cancellations and deferrals. The Press Association estimated that \$1,250,000 in contracts were suspended in September; the MacLean Publishing Company suffered a 21%

111. E.W. Hedland, *Newspaper Cost Accounting* (New York: National Association of Cost Accountants, 1926), 3

112. Craick, *History of Canadian Journalism II*, 65; 'Advertising Agencies,' *Printer & Publisher*, 25:10 (October 1916), 22

decrease in ad revenues in December alone.¹¹³ Printers, pressmen, and other staff faced temporary layoffs, and the papers themselves slimmed on a diet of hard news with little advertising.¹¹⁴ Through a combination of over-saturation and war-time economies, 170 daily and weekly papers closed during the first two years of the war, more than a third from Ontario (see Table 1.1).¹¹⁵ While this situation gradually eased as the economy grew with wartime production, the publishers were pinched again by the rapid inflation in the cost of labour, paper, and ink. With cost accounting procedures in place, publishers were better able to justify frequent increases in card rates.

Views on Commissions

Commentary on this question came from many sources. At the CPA annual meetings in 1912, the chair of the Advertising Committee, W.J. Taylor of the Woodstock *Sentinel-Review* stated openly that his committee looked forward to the time when the commission would be abolished.¹¹⁶ Taylor believed that the burden of agency costs should be borne by those who benefitted from agency service, the advertisers themselves. As the system stood, it punished companies that created their own advertising and placed their business direct. Such companies bore all of the costs of copywriting, illustration, and plate making, but received no discount on rates because they were not recognized advertising agencies. On the other hand, companies that hired an agency to do these tasks for them would have the cost of the service built into the cost of the space. A uniform rate for all space-buyers, be they agencies or advertisers, would create a more just system.

Economic Advertising at this time was owned by Norris-Patterson, and edited by one of its

113. 'CPA Gives Facts re: General Advertising,' *Printer & Publisher*, 23:10 (October 1914), 46; M-H records, b.56, f.Financial, 'Summary December Advertising,' 19 January 1915

114. See for example M-H records, f.Financial/1914-15, H.V. Tyrrell to [D.] Madigan, 24 August 1914; O.J. Hutchison to H.V. Tyrrell, 17 August 1914

115. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 9ed. (1915); 11ed. (1917)

116. *Printer & Publisher*, 21:7 (July 1912), 39

staffers, Don Tuck. Tuck reported a suggestion from the Cleveland Advertising Club which agreed that agency commissions should be abolished in favour of uniform rates for all space buyers. However, the club also believed that agencies provided one valuable service to publishers, namely, the assumption of credit risk when placing a client's advertising. This deserved some compensation, and as such it thought a discount relative to the value of the service provided was justifiable. It thought 5% or less would be a fair rate. One notable American agency, N.W. Ayer & Son, endorsed this arrangement, as did one Toronto agent, Thornton Purkis.¹¹⁷

Tuck did not reject the idea, although he had serious reservations. The main complaint of American advertisers stemmed from their belief that agents *did* in fact represent the papers. A commission was nothing more than a kickback offered by publishers to secure advertising revenue. This recalled an old accusation: that agents did not recommend certain publications in the best interests of their clients, but to maximize their own gains. Certainly, there was evidence that some newspapers were offering 'secret commissions' to agencies which placed advertising with them. The ANA wanted a guarantee that agents worked on their behalf, with no suspicion of divided loyalties. The Cleveland proposal would only enshrine these divided loyalties by having both sides pay the agency.¹¹⁸

Another alternative, popular in the United States, did not require a significant alteration in existing practices. Some advertisers insisted that agencies rebate the entire commission to the client. Then, the advertiser would assess the value of the agency's services, and pay it accordingly. In this way, the commission system was not abolished, but subverted. The agency would still receive a commission for services rendered to the publishers, and the advertiser would not have to pay for agency service on top of the publishers' card rates. However, the agency would be entirely

117. 'Publisher Should Not Pay For Service,' *Marketing*, 15:8 (15 April 1921), 254-258

118. 'Agency Commission,' *Economic Advertising*, 5:3 (March 1912), 7-11

dependent on the advertiser for its income.¹¹⁹

The situation in Canada was different. Here, Tuck felt that many agencies still had a difficult time convincing companies that they offered services other than space-buying. ANA members were willing to pay for agency services because they actually acknowledged the value added by agencies. In Canada, advertisers were reluctant to pay for copywriting, illustrations, and other such services. They had great difficulty placing a value on such things. P.C. Larkin was a notable example. Larkin introduced the pleasures of Ceylonese tea to Canada in 1892, and advertised his product widely. That said, he had a decidedly old-fashioned approach. Once he adopted the brand name 'Salada,' his company ran the same ad for thirty years: a rectangle two columns wide by three inches deep, which emphasized the name in thick black type. What little copy there was usually drew a trite yet topical connection between the tea and the reader. There were no illustrations. A puzzled writer in *Marketing* magazine noted in 1928 that its sales had doubled every decade since 1900.¹²⁰ With stories such as this on the Canadian scene, it was difficult to convince some advertisers that agency service was a necessary component of modern business. Tuck closed with an interesting prescription: Canadian advertisers had to be educated to understand that agencies did much more than sell space.¹²¹ Of course, this was the stated object of his paper.

The 'Newspaper Napoleons'

In 1916, Canadian publishers and advertisers were given an opportunity to test their beliefs in action. That year, the ACA challenged the power of the four largest papers in Toronto, and thereby sent a message to the entire Press Association. For six years, John Imrie had agitated for an end to the commission system, as had W.J. Taylor, the chair of the advertising committee. At the annual

119. 'Agents for the Advertisers,' *Printer & Publisher*, 24:7 (July 1915), 34

120. 'Salada Sticks to Same Style Copy,' *Marketing*, 28:4 (18 February 1928), 110.

121. 'Agency Commission,' *Economic Advertising*, 5:3 (March 1912), 7-11

meetings in 1916, their ideas were endorsed by the general meeting. A 'promotion department' was created to proselytize the new faith among each sector of the industry. A new editor at *Printer & Publisher*, John C. Kirkwood, questioned the wisdom of this move, and predicted:

a merry war between the agencies and the CPA and the publishers who compose the CPA. In a trial of strength, both sides are likely to suffer losses; and the din and field of battle may even cross the border into Uncle Sam's land, for there are several advertising agencies over there who give business to Canadian publishers; and conceivably they may sympathize with their brethren in Canada.¹²²

Kirkwood was right, for there was a battle. But the agencies were not the main contestant. Rather, the publishers were straight-armed by the organized advertisers.

Sometime in 1915, the *Star*, *Telegram*, *Globe*, and *Mail & Empire* unilaterally broke the agency agreement. They had one purpose in mind: they would no longer grant agency commissions on business originating in Toronto. To do so, they rejected the definition of general advertising contained in the agency agreement, and declared that general advertisers located in Toronto would thereafter be treated as local advertisers. Kirkwood found their arrogance inexcusable, and dismissed them as a band of 'Newspaper Napoleons.'¹²³ Essentially, each of them was counting on the fact that none of these businesses could afford to ignore Toronto. Agencies could still claim commission from the city's other papers, but these paper's lesser reputations and circulations would have rendered them less desirable as advertising media. That said, these four papers could afford a temporary boycott from general advertising; their income from traditional local advertisers was significant in itself.

122. 'Split Developing in Canadian Press Association,' *Printer & Publisher*, 25:7 (July 1916), 31

123. During this debate, the organization of the Canadian Press wire service had stalled because this same group refused to divide costs equally with their counterparts in Western Canada; M.E. Nichols, (CP) *The Story of the Canadian Press* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1948), 74-79, 124-130.

In the short term, the Toronto papers achieved a swift and dramatic increase in revenues. All publishers were faced with wartime inflation. At the same time, none of them expected readers to accept an increase in the cover price of their papers, nor would advertisers gladly accept an increase in card rates. The solution was to maintain all rates as they were, but to eliminate the commission on business placed by agents. At a stroke, they would increase revenues from general advertising by 11 to 33% without increasing the price of their space. In practice, however, the agencies would be forced to turn to their clients for support, and this would increase costs for the latter.

In the long run, the Toronto papers could have divided the agents and advertisers and quashed any opposition. By singling out Toronto businesses, companies headquartered in other cities and towns remained unaffected by the change in policy. If outsiders had remained neutral, then the 'Newspaper Napoleons' might have created a useful precedent for other publishers to follow. In time, this might have led to the gradual abolition of commission on all forms of advertising.¹²⁴

The ACA was not sympathetic. Advertisers felt that they were being forced to carry the increasing costs of the publishing industry. As far as they were concerned, subscription prices should have been raised commensurate with increases in card rates. They had not. While advertising costs had risen steadily, cover prices had not changed in twenty years.¹²⁵ As a result, the main issue of commissions was complicated by a secondary concern over rising rate cards.

The ACA threw down the gauntlet in the fall of 1916, and demanded that the commission system be re-instated. To back up their demands, they began a boycott of the four papers involved. Most turned to the *Toronto News* and the *World*, but some took the opportunity to explore other

124. 'The Fight Between Toronto Dailies and ACA,' *Printer & Publisher*, 26:4 (April 1916), 23-26

125. 'The Association of Canadian Advertisers,' *Printer & Publisher*, 25:11 (November 1916), 28

advertising media. Bill posters, street cars, and direct mail services gained an unexpected boost over the next year.¹²⁶ Both Kirkwood and Tuck saw cause for alarm in this situation. If other media covered Toronto as well as the newspapers, then newspapers might lose their competitive advantages. Although the resistance of some advertisers began to fade after a year, many held on. And after two and a half years, the newspapers re-adopted the definition of 'general' advertising contained in the agency agreement. It was a definition that most other papers in Canada – indeed, most of the papers in North America – had adopted a decade before.¹²⁷

A couple of points can be made here. First, despite all of the talk about progress and change, the role of the agents was still subject to debate. Second, the advertisers were no longer simply buying space. Once they were organized, they were quick to assert their power in the publishing industry. That their first target was the four largest Toronto papers may reflect the ACA's geographical location more than a strategic flexing of their fiscal muscle. That they were successful, however, speaks volumes about where the power in the media lay.

Agency Commissions – Round Three

The Press Association dissolved into three smaller associations in 1920. When it did, the agreements signed by the various sections of the old association and the advertising agencies were no longer operative. The Canadian Daily Newspaper Association began to draft a new agreement. Once again, the newspapers and the advertisers launched into the discussion with many of their old concerns. However, when it came to agency commissions, their roles would be completely reversed since the boycott of the Toronto papers.

Since then, W.A. Lydiatt had purchased *Economic Advertising* and transformed it into

126. 'The Fight Between Toronto Dailies and the ACA,' *Printer & Publisher*, 26:4 (April 1917), 25; 'A Dangerous Situation,' *Economic Advertising*, 10:3 (March 1917), 3

127. 'Trouble in Toronto Terminated,' *Economic Advertising*, 12:10 (December 1918), 21

Marketing Magazine. When the commission question was re-opened, Lydiatt fanned the flames of disenchantment with the agencies. This did not make him popular with that segment of the industry. 'One of your missions in life,' an agent told Lydiatt, 'is to drive a wedge of dissatisfaction between the advertising agencies and their clients.'¹²⁸ Although this was his method, it was not his goal. Like Imrie ten years before, Lydiatt took advantage of continuing discontent to advance reforms. Unlike Imrie, he did not seek the abolition of the commission system, but a strict enforcement of the conditions which composed the original agreement drafted in 1907.

Two problems had emerged to beset publisher-agency relations. One was an old demon, while the other had developed more recently. First, it was widely known that the agencies were rebating. This did not sit well with publishers, who were pressed to justify every minute increase in subscription and advertising rates. Second, the publishers had begun to use the lure of higher commissions to secure contracts. Publishers' dependency on general advertising was driven home during the 1910s, if not by the boycott then by the number of papers which had simply disappeared.¹²⁹ The rise of Canadian mass magazines had not helped the situation. As such, the competitive nature of the publishing industry led, in essence, to bribery – sometimes referred to euphemistically as 'special' or 'secret' commissions.¹³⁰ In the past, advertisers had accused agents of placing ads only where they got the highest returns. Now the publishers frankly counted on this practice, and made the first move. Publishers justified their actions by arguing they had a right to run their businesses as they saw fit. So long as the agents remained in their employ, then the advertisers had no say in the rate of payment. Not surprisingly, these publishers were not named in *Marketing or Printer & Publisher*.¹³¹

128. 'Move to Clean Up Agency Situation,' *Marketing*, 15:7 (1 April 1920), 213

129. Interim, 'Les Journaux qui disparaissent,' *La Clé D'Or*, 1:10 (Décembre 1926), 273-4

130. CPA records, v.2, Recognition Committee, 'Minute Book 1910-1918,' 19 April 1918

131. 'Move to Clean up Agency Situation,' *Marketing*, 15:7 (1 April 1921), 214

Lydiatt also had problems with the rate of the commission itself. The rate had always been based on tradition more than any close analysis of the cost of selling white space. Over the years, the cost of putting out a publication had increased dramatically. Whether or not the same could be said of the agencies was in doubt. This had become painfully evident during the war, when the price of newsprint had gone up, on average, \$80.00 per ton. To make ends meet, publishers had increased their card rates. Since agency commission was based on these rates, the agencies received a proportionate increase in their returns. How, Lydiatt wondered, could this be justified? The agency offered the same service regardless of the cost of newsprint. In his eyes the commission system had lost any tangible bearing in the operations of the industry. It no longer reflected the cost of selling space relative to other costs.¹³²

The agents, either from ignorance or brash impertinence, were completely insensitive to these concerns. In the fall of 1920, certain agencies agreed to seek a hike in the rate of commission paid on business placed. Through the CAAA, they then notified publishers of their intentions through a circular letter.

That same week, the ACA responded with a bulletin of its own. Two years after having broken the Toronto publishers on the issue of commission, the advertisers themselves began to question this self-same system. In 1916, the ACA was little more than a list of companies. By 1920 it had established its own Agency Relations Committee, and gained a lot more experience with the workings of the industry. This experience offered the advertisers an important lesson: marketing strategies did not have to rely solely on print media. For a variety of reasons, advertisers became increasingly aware that newspapers were not the alpha and omega of successful publicity. However, so long as the agencies were paid by the publishers rather than themselves, they could expect the

132. 'The Agents' Toll,' *Marketing*, 15:6 (15 March 1921), 194

agencies to favour print over other media, such as billboards, street cars, and direct mail.¹³³ In short, the ACA had arrived at the same position that its counterpart in the United States, the ANA, had adopted eight years before. They wanted the agencies to be placed under agreement to themselves, and to remove any possibility of divided loyalties from the structure of the system. Toward this end, the ACA bulletin posted in 1920 asked members to consider the following resolution:

RESOLVED that we authorize the Agency Relations Committee to lay before the three Press Associations a suggestion with regard to advertising payments; this suggestion being, that the Association of Canadian Advertisers would be favourable to the said Publishers billing the Advertiser at the present net rates ... instead of the gross rates as at present, leaving it to the Advertiser to reimburse the Agency according to what he judges to be the value of the service rendered.¹³⁴

As previously noted, this had been a common practice in the United States for some time.

When the CAAA got a hold of the resolution, it leapt quickly into the fray. In a second circular to publishers, the ACA resolution was printed alongside a slate of criticisms which focused on the advertisers' motives rather than the logic of their arguments. Indeed, their principal claim alleged that the ACA was simply attempting to bastardize the existing system. Rather than acknowledging the changed conditions of the industry, the agencies parroted once again the notion that they were in the service of the publishers, and as such should be paid by them. If publishers agreed to bill advertisers at net rates, they would be giving a commission to firms which did nothing

133. *Who's Who in Canadian Advertising* 2ed. (Toronto: W.A. Lydiatt, 1915), 34-70

134. 'Move to Clean Up Agency Situation,' *Marketing*, 15:7 (1 April 1921), 213

to develop new business. In essence, the advertisers were asking for nothing more than the right to institutionalize commission splitting, which the publishers had opposed for thirty years.

The proposed system would also destabilize the agencies' financial structure. If the agencies' rate of pay was not fixed by an industry standard, but left to the discretion of individual advertisers, then every contract would be viewed on a strictly cash basis; quality and type of service would be pitted against the cost of delivery. The entire industry would be set back to the competitive days of the 1890s. Then, margins had tumbled as agents haggled for clients, and clients demanded the lowest rates possible. Agents found this difficult to conceive in a trade that had become reliant on creativity and talent rather than sheer negotiation. The fragile shell of professionalism that the agents had so diligently tended was now in danger of being smashed.

Finally, the CAAA closed with a threat. The circular commented in alarmed tones that:

The ACA wants the paper to allow the full commissions to the advertiser direct, and the advertiser will then determine how much of the commission he will pass on to the Agencies; the advertiser paying only for the work it does for *him*.¹³⁵

Were this new policy implemented, the CAAA warned, no one would develop new advertising business if no one was paid by the publishers to do so. How hard the publishers laughed at this assertion before tossing the circular away cannot be told. That agencies would have stopped pursuing new clients must have seemed like a patent absurdity. But the publishers could have had an equally gay time with the notion that the proposed system would give commissions to advertisers. With the gradual adoption of cost accounting, publishers had learned to incorporate commissions only after they had ensured a rate that covered their own costs. Billing the advertisers at net rates would cause no more hardship to the publishers than billing the agencies at gross rates.

Considering the fact that the agents were then negotiating for higher commission rates from

135. *Ibid.*, 214

the publishers, the ACA proposal might be seen as a strategic attempt to head off further increases in their costs. Despite his own preferences, Lydiatt acknowledged that no system yet proposed would be perfect, and, like it or not, the existing system did create successful advertising. Further, it would prove difficult to change the Canadian system if the United States and Great Britain did not make similar changes. Canadian publishers would face stiff opposition if they refused commission to native agencies while continuing to grant it to those off-shore.

In the end, the status quo was preserved. The agencies did not get a hike in the rate of commission as they had wished, but neither did the advertisers see the whole commission system abolished as they had wished. Instead, each of the three new press associations signed agreements with the CAAA which enshrined all of the rates and practices which had been negotiated over the previous twenty years.

Conclusions

The advertising agency that had emerged in the 1890s had complicated the business of periodical publishing. In the discussions over minimum rates as much as those dealing with legitimacy, rate of commission, and the chief client, agencies were central to the problem at hand. Through the 1890s, the agencies had gained an upper hand on publishers. With dozens of new papers opening in every province west of the Maritimes, agencies with a healthy list of clients were in an exceptionally strong position to set their own terms. Through a variety of means, both above and below board, they did so. They were only reined in when these same publishers united to assert control over their own rate cards, and by extension their own businesses and industry.

That said, the publishers' ideological model of the newspaper was still decidedly Victorian. Despite their experiments with modern forms of industrial co-operation and organization, they held fast to the sanctity of editorial independence. By co-operating on matters concerning agency

relations, publishers believed they were setting the ground rules for a fair competition of intellects in the editorial pages of their respective papers. If they were successful in enforcing this view with the agents, they met a less sympathetic opponent in the advertisers themselves. The creation of the ACA and the Audit Bureau sounded the death knell for the old school of journalists. Thereafter, the delicate balance between subscriptions and advertising would quickly tip in favour of advertising. Populist papers such as the *Toronto Star* and the *Telegram*, and inoffensive, middle-of-the-road journals such as the Southam holdings, based their success on high circulation figures and the bottom line supplied by advertisers. Overtly idiosyncratic papers such as W.F. Maclean's *World* eventually failed. The labour press, including such papers as the *Industrial Banner*, had to struggle without the support of Canadian advertisers.¹³⁶

The advertising agency emerged after 1920 both stronger and weaker. Insofar as its services were legitimated and protected by the three new press associations, it was far stronger than it had been in 1900. On three different occasions, it had been within the publishers' power to shut the agencies down, or, at the very least, minimize their importance within the publishing industry. Perhaps the most crucial moment was the agreement forged in 1907. By defining a legitimate agency as one with no business interests other than the solicitation of advertisers for the press, the Press Association had tried to ensure that the agencies would remain dependent on the press for its income. Nonetheless, it also created a stable environment in which agents such as Gibbons, McKim, Desbarats and their peers could invest in personnel and plant with some assurance that they would not have their revenue base undercut by publishers' or advertisers' in-house ad departments.

Canadian observers habitually noted that the industry here was ten to twenty years behind developments south of the border. Perhaps the brokerage agencies of the 1860s and 1870s had provided their American predecessors with a similar sense of security. Agencies such as Ayer,

136. Ron Verzuh, *Radical Rag: The Pioneer Labour Press in Canada* (Ottawa: Steel Rail, 1988)

Thompson, and Lord & Thomas, which had exclusive control of dozens of publications, had no competition for their lists. Their only concern was developing a sufficient number of advertisers to make the investment they had made in their lists profitable. In the meantime, secure in the knowledge that they had something to sell and that the profits were theirs to keep, the agencies developed an array of services to solicit and maintain clients. It cannot be a coincidence that these three emerged from the nineteenth century among the leading agencies in the United States. Agencies in Canada may have had exclusive claim to certain publications (for example, Desbarats was the sole agent for *Canadian Magazine* in the late 1890s),¹³⁷ but none had such a broad number at their command. McKim probably carried a list of papers with which he worked on a regular basis, a list he might have developed while working for the *Mail*. However, there is no reason to believe that they would have refused business from his competitors. Thus, the benefit of the 1907 agreement: it eliminated competition from in-house agencies which had an 'unfair' credit position based upon their parent companies' resources, and from freelancers who had an 'unfair' price advantage based upon their limited overhead. The agencies that remained were independent and service-oriented. To be sure, there was still competition among them. By protecting their access to the top publications, however, the agreement tried to ensure that this competition would be rooted in the provision of better service (and consequently more advertisers) rather than lower prices and falling margins.

If the agreement made the agencies more secure, it also weakened their ability to manoeuvre within the market. In the nineteenth century, the agents had operated in an unrestricted free market. Regardless of their capital or talent, men such as Robert Moore could open agencies, engage enormous contracts, and close in the wink of an eye. Agents knew they could badger small town publishers for endless discounts and advantages, because they held the ends of the advertisers' purse strings. That all changed after 1907. Publishers, unwilling to let outsiders exploit their partizan

137. *Canadian Magazine*, 8:5 (March 1897), 466

rivalries, closed ranks and forced a code of conduct on the agents. They also made it extremely difficult for fly-by-night operators to enter the field. When new agencies applied for recognition from the Press Association in the 1910s, those with marginal credit were asked to post bonds with the association. When the Hamilton Advertisers' Agency was established in 1913, its bond was set at \$5,000.¹³⁸

H.E. Stephenson and Carlton McNaught argue the advertising agent was the catalyst behind the transformation of the publishing industry at the turn of the century.¹³⁹ It would be more precise to argue that the agents were in the right place at the right time, that the agents recognized an opportunity existed within the industry, and stepped in to exploit it. The opportunity in itself was created by the increased volume of national advertising, and this could only be provided by the advertisers themselves.¹⁴⁰ Further, it was the publishers who confronted the organizational problems created by the increased volume of advertising, and it was they who rationalized its effects on the industry and established a workable framework to contain it. When the advertisers finally took stock of their role, they dramatically re-oriented the reform process to assert their roles as the chief clients -- of the agencies and the publishers alike. The agencies were sidelined, destined to play whatever role they were given, insofar as the structure of the industry was concerned. Where the agencies would exercise the most influence was not in its structure, but in its content, in the advertisements themselves.

138. CPA records, v.2, Recognition Committee, 'Minute Book 1910-1919,' 4 July 1913

139. H.E. Stephenson and Carlton McNaught, *The Story of Advertising in Canada: A Chronicle of Fifty Years* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1940); the thesis is implicit throughout their book, but see especially pages 18-35 and 337-353.

140. Bonville, 360-361

Chapter 4 : Copywriting, Psychology, & the Science of Advertising

The advertising business was born in vagueness and raised on dreams. It is just beginning to emerge from cloudland. Correctly speaking, it emerged about a dozen years ago; but few advertising men, even now, have accumulated sufficient data to unhesitatingly guarantee their service.

T.J. Stewart, 1910¹

Sam Slick pulled his cart up before the shop where Zeb Allen waited, leaning in the doorway. Slick was a pedlar, from Connecticut, a specialist in clocks. Allen was a Bluenose, a Nova Scotian shopkeeper in the dry goods line. In Slick's eyes, he was also a 'rael genuine skinflint.' They got to talking.

Slick ventured that after a year's travels through the province, he would soon be done, and out of the clock line. Zeb laughed: 'Most time, ... for by all accounts the clocks warn't worth havin,' and most infarnal dear too; folks begin to get their eyes open.' Slick responded in a 'confidential tone' that the goods he had been selling this trip out were indeed half-rate, poor stuff, he was ashamed of them. They were nothing like the goods he had carried years before. Trouble was, you couldn't get their like anymore. Had Zeb ever seen them?

'No,' said Mr Allen, 'I can't say I did.'

'Well,' continued he, 'they *were* a prime article, I tell you -- no mistake there -- fit for any market; it's generally allowed there ain't the beat of them to be found anywhere. If you want a clock, and can lay hands on one of them, I advise you not

1. 'Why Advertising is Not Guaranteed,' *Economic Advertising*, 3:10 (October 1910), 7

to let go the chance; you'll know 'em by the 'Lowell' mark, for they were all made at Judge Beler's factory. Squire Shepody, down to Five Islands, axed me to get him one, and a special job I had of it, near about more sarch arter it than it was worth; but I did get him one, and a particular handsum one it is, copal'd and gilt superior.

I guess it's worth ary half-dozen in these parts, let t'others be where they may. ..."²

Did the pedlar have it with him, the shopkeeper asked? Sure enough he did, right bundled to save it from the hazards of the trip. Slick might unwrap it to afford the curious man a gander, but it was unavailable at any price. Zeb pressed on, and the clock was brought out. Just as the other described it, it was varnished and gilt, and stamped prominently with the 'Lowell' name. Zeb was hooked.

... [He] offered to take it at the price the Squire was to have it, at seven pounds ten shillings. But Mr Slick vowed he couldn't part with it at no rate, he didn't know where he could get the like again ..., and the Squire would be confounded disappointed; he couldn't think of it. In proportion to the difficulties, rose the ardour of Mr Allen; his offer advanced to £8, to £8 10s., to £9.

'I vow,' said Mr Slick, 'I wish I hadn't let on that I had it at all.'³

Nonetheless, he consented to part with it, under protest, and would deal with as he could the crestfallen squire of Five Islands.

As Slick pulled away from the store, he turned to his travelling companion: 'that 'ere fellow is properly sarved; he got the most inferior article I had, and I just doubled the price on him.'⁴

Caveat Emptor.

2. Thomas C. Haliburton, *The Clockmaker* [1836] (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1958), 152-153

3. *Ibid.*, 153

4. *Ibid.*, 153

The travelling companion was the author himself, Thomas C. Haliburton, thinly veiled.⁵ Haliburton's stories of Slick were written as a satirical commentary on Nova Scotia life in the 1830s, but they contained within them a grain of truth about 'human natur' that captivated readers for generations. And who better to be the vehicle of these tales of 'human natur' than a pedlar? The pedlar, dependent on sales for his livelihood, had to know when to push and when to pull his clientele, when to agree and when to argue, when to open and when to close the deal. At these skills, Haliburton's Slick is a master.

Commercial transactions gave Haliburton a fine setting to explore the foibles of humanity. In his dealings with Zeb, Slick exploited at least two of the seven deadly sins: pride and avarice. He did so in a way that allowed Zeb to believe that he was in control of the proceedings. He flattered his intelligence, agreed with him in his assessments, and feigned to take him into his confidence on this account. Zeb's own pride gave him the opening. From there, Slick drew out his avarice by stating that a neighbour was getting a good deal, and by establishing the scarcity of the product, its unlikelihood of being found again. There was a bargain afoot, just beyond Zeb's reach. This entire show was given a degree of verisimilitude by the reference to the trademark -- 'When an article han't the maker's name and factory on it, it shows it's a cheat, and he's ashamed to own it,' Slick asserts on the very first page of the book.⁶ The trademark becomes the sign of the maker's credibility and the clock's merit, a sign that anyone 'in the know' would recognize immediately. Through his confidence, Slick lets Zeb into a charmed circle. He offers a tip of friendly advice -- offered without the taint of commercial gain because Slick has nothing to gain by doing so. In short, Slick has managed Zeb's decision-making process by supplying the 'consumer' with information that he knows will prompt the right action, that is, a decision to purchase the clock. Slick has created desire.

5. Fred Cogswell, 'Haliburton,' *Literary History of Canada: Canadian Literature in English*, eds. C.F. Klinck et al., (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1965), 97

6. Haliburton, 1

By 1890, advertising copywriters thirsted for precisely this kind of knowledge and power. They wanted the same degree of control over the purchasing power of the consumers who read their ads as the old-time pedlar had enjoyed. Following the emergence of the full-service agency, there came a raft of literature that was intended to unlock the secrets of successful copy. There had been copy before then. Indeed, there had been some very successful copy written, and some of it had gained international notoriety. For the most part, however, this copy had hinged upon gimmicky strategies: slogans, reiterated statements, or short poems featuring the product's name. They were the handiwork of people not trained in advertising, who simply used their common sense to intuit how the public would respond to their appeals. That changed when adworkers started to question if there were not higher principles that could be gleaned from the more successful campaigns. Why did reiteration work? What made some slogans more effective than others? What made any ad copy effective? In short, the adworkers wanted to develop a theory of advertising. They wanted to systematize its content just as surely as they had systematized its structure through rate cards and agency agreements.

These theories came from many quarters. Initially, they came from two sources, publishers and agents. Publishers in particular found it useful to extol the benefits of copywriting, since it helped to generate interest in the product — white space — they had to sell. Once the agencies began to provide copy services, however, they extolled their own variety of expertise. What set the full-service agencies apart from the in-house agencies, print shops, and space brokers was their supposed ability to create advertising that generated a noticeable response from readers. In their attempts to sell this service to potential advertisers, they had to articulate their view of copywriting — they had to demonstrate their expertise in this line of service.

After 1900, a third group, university-trained psychologists, entered the discussion. Psychology as an academic field separate from philosophy developed between 1870 and 1920,

precisely the years of advertising's rise to prominence. In retrospect, it seems inevitable that the new tools of experimental psychology, centring upon laboratory tests of live human subjects, would be turned upon the human response to advertising. And so they were. The results of these experiments were published in a number of journals and books, some aimed at the people who worked in advertising, and some that were strictly for an audience of fellow academics. All of them, from the modest theories of Harlow Gale to the full-blown mind control theories of John B. Watson, promised means to improve the efficiency of advertising.

Between roughly 1908 and 1914, adworkers grappled with the results of these studies. At the end of the day, Canadian adworkers decided that the specific findings of the psychologists were not so important as the approaches to copy they advocated, either implicitly or explicitly. In many respects the specific findings of the psychologists sounded remarkably like the sort of things that Sam Slick knew intuitively. However, their approach to the questions raised by advertising copy exposed an angle that copywriters had not previously explored in depth: in privileging the cognitive responses of readers, the psychologists made consumers the centrepiece of their theories on advertising.

Copy before 1890: Three Styles

There were no schools of thought regarding advertising in the 1800s. There were styles. When theorists emerged in the 1890s, three styles stood out among the pre-agency ads to offer them focal points for discussion: the traditional announcement, the Barnum style, and the Powers style. Most advertising through until the 1880s took the form of a politely phrased announcement. As discussed in Chapter One, the contracts received by James Poole at the Carleton Place *Herald* were all substantially the same, little different in tone or approach, whether from individuals or businesses. Advertisers made it known that their goods or services were available, and readers were simply asked

to give the advertiser their kind consideration.⁷ From this basic announcement, the other two styles developed in widely different directions, each privileging a different aspect of the basic function of the advertisement.

The Barnum style looked to advertising to gain attention for its message. The end goal was rapid and widespread publicity, and this imperative overruled everything else, including a sense of traditional propriety and plain-spoken truth.⁸ Barnum himself described advertising as a catalyst, intended to induce a response that would multiply in the public at large:

... I saw that everything depended upon getting people to think, and talk, and become curious and excited over and about the 'rare spectacle.' Accordingly, posters, transparencies, advertisements, newspaper paragraphs — all calculated to extort attention — were employed, regardless of expense.⁹

Translated into cold type on a printed page, the enthusiasm was manifest in an expansive use of space, brash layouts, a liberal use of ornamentations and cuts, and a disorienting variety of typefaces. Not simply a polite announcement, these ads were more like proclamations shouted by the town crier. These were techniques developed among the patent medicine men. Barnum himself acknowledged that he did not originate them; he simply took them as far as they could go.¹⁰

Barnum coupled these techniques with an understanding of his target market and their expectations. This understanding allowed him to identify attractions that maintained high attendance

7. Bertram Brooker, 'Forty Years of Canadian Advertising,' *Marketing*, 20:13 (28 June 1924), 447-448; Frank Presbrey, *The History and Development of Advertising* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1929), 244-252; William Leiss et al., *Social Communication in Advertising: Persons, Products, & Images of Well-Being* (Toronto: Methuen, 1986), 123-124

8. Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1994), 53

9. P.T. Barnum, *Struggles and Triumphs: or, Forty Years' Recollections* (New York: American News Company, 1871), 76

10. Barnum, 125-126; Neil Harris, *Humbug: The Art of P.T. Barnum* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973), 53-55

at his museum and his shows. One such item was an ingenious piece of taxidermy, a monkey's head invisibly grafted to the body of a fish. Barnum billed it as final proof of the existence of mermaids.¹¹ It was one of his most notorious hoaxes, exposed only after thousands had seen it, and late in life he felt the need to justify his actions:

I used it mainly to advertise the regular business of the Museum I might have published columns in the newspapers, presenting and praising the great collection of genuine specimens of natural history in my exhibition, and they would not have attracted nearly so much attention as did a few paragraphs about the mermaid which was only a small part of my show.¹²

If these trades had done nothing but insult the intelligence of the people they claimed to serve, their reputations would have been questioned long before the turn of the century. Barnum and the medicine men offered their audiences something that they wanted: entertainment, amusement, diversion. In his celebrated autobiography, Barnum half boasted, half justified his actions as follows:

... it was my study to give my patrons a superfluity of novelties, and for this I make no special claim to generosity, for it was strictly a business transaction. To send away my visitors more than doubly satisfied, was to induce them to come again and bring their friends.¹³

This too was a lesson well-learned from his predecessors in the patent medicine line.¹⁴

The Powers style stood in direct opposition to the Barnum style; it sought to inform rather than bamboozle. John E. Powers was the advertising manager of a Philadelphia department store owned by John Wanamaker. A pioneer of the department store concept in the United States,

11. Harris, 62-67

12. Barnum, 130

13. Barnum, 125

14. Thomas P. Kelley, Jr, *The Fabulous Kelley: Canada's King of the Medicine Men* (Don Mills, Ontario: General, 1974)

Wanamaker was known for his use of innovative marketing techniques to attract customers. Among other things, he made it a point to state clearly the price of each item in his store, and to offer that exact price to all of his customers. There was to be no haggling over prices, and no favours based on a customer's standing with the clerks. Wanamaker expected no less in his print advertising. Powers was hired to write up daily puffs for the local papers. Powers's copy style did not play -- at least, not overtly -- to the curiosity or desires of the readers. Rather, his copy offered readers brief, factual notes on each item, and then advanced reasons why the item would be useful. These reasons could include the vanity of the reader, but could just as frequently appeal to their sense of frugality or convenience. Writing in a catalogue, Powers stated of one line of paint that 'This isn't much of a paint, but it is cheap, and good enough for hen houses and things like that.' Perhaps not surprisingly, the paint sold very well to people with hen houses and things like that.¹⁵ In time, Powers's style became legendary for its brazen honesty, and earned the sobriquet 'reason-why.'¹⁶

The difference in tone between Barnum and Powers could not have been more stark. To the extent that the Barnum style tended to play to the gullibility of its audience, there was a degree of condescension in its view of humanity. The public were rubes, at best co-authors in their own illusions. Wanamaker was more inclined to look upon the public as customers. Customers, seen within the intellectual framework of classical economics, had interests of their own which they sought to maximize in every commercial transaction; they were not to be misled, but assisted in the formation of their purchasing decisions. For writers such as Adam Smith, Richard Cobden, or John Stuart Mill, the essence of the commercial transaction was not mystification but clarification; for the economy to run efficiently, the consumer had to have access to relevant information to arrive at a

15. John E. Powers, cited in J.K. Fraser, 'Wanted -- A Plainer Advertising Diet,' *Marketing*, 29:12 (8 December 1928), 378

16. Presbrey, 302-309; Daniel Pope, *The Making of Modern Advertising* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 133-135, 237-242; Stephen Fox, *The Mirror Makers: A History of American Advertising and Its Creators* (New York: Morrow, 1984), 25-27

proper decision. The Powers style suited this outlook admirably.

The differences between the two styles can be overstated. The department stores had a great deal in common with spectacles such as Barnum's American Museum or London's Crystal Palace. The emerging consumption patterns of an industrialized, urban society which led to the acceptance of the one led just as easily to the acceptance of the other.¹⁷ Both were dependent on high-volume traffic to maintain profitability, and both were dependent on novelty and consumer satisfaction to maintain repeat business. In their architecture as well as their layout, department stores focused on display no less than the spectacles. In this sense, they could go the spectacles one step better: the customers could sate their tactile desires by actually handling the objects on display, and purchasing them.

With that in mind, it is worth noting the advertising practices of Canada's largest department store, T. Eaton Limited. Timothy Eaton began his career as a small shopkeeper in rural St Mary's, Ontario. Unable to make a go of the business, he pulled up stakes and moved to Toronto in 1869, where he bought out the store and inventory of a small shopkeeper in the city's core. Eaton's fortunes rapidly changed. With the timely adoption of retailing practices common among his American counterparts, his small dry goods business developed into a thriving department store.¹⁸ Following twenty years of near continuous growth, the retailer established an advertising department to handle all of the store's newspaper advertising.¹⁹ When he did so, he wrote a memo to its newly appointed head, Mr Beaupre, and informed him of the direction their announcements were to take:

17. William Leach, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture* (New York: Pantheon, 1993), 153-190; T.E. Coles, 'Department Stores as Innovations in Retail Marketing in Germany,' paper given at 8th Conference on Historical Research in Marketing and Marketing Thought, Kingston, Ontario, 24 May 1997

18. Joy L. Santink, *Timothy Eaton and the Rise of His Department Store* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1990); Mary Etta Macpherson, *Shopkeepers to a Nation: The Eatons* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1963)

19. Santink, 119-121

Tell your story to [the] public[,] what you have & what you propose to sell --

Promise them not only bargains but that ev[er]y article will be found just what it [is] guarantee[d] to be --

Whether you sell a first-rate or a 3rd rate article the customers will get what they bargain for --

If you humbug do it right -- let it be a genuine humbug -- that no-one but yourself will see through & that they will conjecture -- use no deception in the smallest degree -- no -- nothing you cannot defend before God or man[.]²⁰

The first three paragraphs encourage a keen sense of honesty. Like Wanamaker, Eaton appears to have sought simple, straightforward descriptions of his goods, even if that meant calling a third-rate item third rate in his ads. This was simply shrewd thinking on Eaton's part. Because he sold a wide range of goods, he could afford to do this; it was the customers' choice whether they wished to pay less for a product of lower quality or more for a product of higher quality. Either way, Eaton cultivated a reputation for honesty among his clientele, and earned the business of a wide spectrum of Toronto society.²¹

Eaton's reference to humbug may seem out of place given the rest of his advice. But at heart, he was still the small-town shopkeeper; he had no objection to Beaupre using what Sam Slick might have called the 'soft sawder.' Here, Eaton seems to refer not to trickery but to puffery, salesmanship. He wanted Beaupre to describe their goods honestly, but at the same time he wanted

20. PAO, F229, Timothy Eaton records, Ser.162, b.1, f.O-38, T. Eaton to [Mr Beaupre], ca.1890. Joy Santink quotes this memorandum in her history of the store, but curiously drops the reference to humbug; see Santink, 120

21. Macpherson, 29-30; Santink, 120-124

the goods to be desirable to the people who would shop in his store. If in doing so Beaupre had to suggest that the goods possessed qualities beyond what was empirically observable, then so be it. So long as the qualities that Beaupre described could bear up under the scrutiny of their customers - - so long as they did not inspire 'conjecture' -- then they were within the bounds of truth, and justifiable, and could rightly be deemed a 'genuine humbug.' In the 1910s, the Truth in Advertising movement would settle upon the same definition of 'truth.'

The First Writings on Advertising

During the 1880s, numerous writers surfaced who were willing to advise neophytes in the mysterious world of advertising. This writing appeared from two sources, publishers and agents, and both did so for essentially the same reason: to demonstrate their expertise in the arts of publicity. At this time, it was customary for advertisers to write their own copy. As competition began to escalate between publishers for advertisers, and between agencies for clients, copywriting became a means for both groups to court the advertisers' favour. Publishers could argue that they offered more than just a good advertising medium; the advertising placed in their care would be well written and designed, to ensure maximum notice. The full-service agencies, after having established their ability to place the client's ads in suitable media at the lowest procurable prices, could use the talents of an experienced copywriter as a trump card during solicitations. The promise of well-crafted copy might suffice to close a deal.

Publishers included columns on advertising in their papers or magazines. Agents, however, saw a market in the publication of trade journals specifically addressing issues connected to advertising. In the United States, this became a cottage industry in the 1890s. The man who pioneered the space brokerage style of agency, George Rowell, established *Printer's Ink* in 1888. Its early success spawned numerous imitators, some little more than newsletters boosting the fortunes

of their parent company. Nonetheless, they all attained a degree of notoriety within the trade, and among the more reputable could be included *Profitable Advertising* (1890), *Fame* (1896), *Judicious Advertising* (1896), and *Mahin's Magazine* (1901?).²²

Canadians were caught up in this trend. Each new paper that arrived on the newsstands of the nation found room within its first few pages to state its advertising policies and rates. Quickly thereafter it would also explain why it and it alone should have been entrusted with the thoughtful merchant's advertising. Hugh Graham's *Montreal Star*, barely out of its swaddling clothes in January 1869, offered the following advice on its editorial page to its publicity-seeking readers:

The value of an advertising medium may be determined by the extent of its circulation. Wide publicity is the requisite of the general advertiser, and the cheap popular journal suits him, with its circulation of thousands, rather than the more pretentious morning daily with a tithe of its number of readers.²³

Fighting words, but they conveyed a promise that Graham would keep in the years to come. The emerging penny press in Britain, the United States, and Canada sought to capitalize on an increasingly literate public by offering papers that would capture the attention of the same middle- and working-class market pursued by Barnum. Rather than emphasizing commercial, financial, and political news, the penny press explored sensationalism in news, human interest stories, and fiction. This brand of journalism was pioneered in Canada by Graham's *Star*, and followed by John Ross Robertson's *Toronto Telegram* and *La Presse* of Trefflé Berthiaume. Over time, an ability to read the public's mood and tastes would have become second nature to any good editor; he would know the value of different size type, how to write an eye-catching headline, and how to make stories

22. Presbrey, 320-321

23. *Montreal Star*, 10 January 1869

topical for their readers.²⁴ Certainly the partizan press knew how to spin each story to the cause of their benefactors.

Perhaps, then, this is part of the reason why many advertising agents emerged from newspapers in the earliest days of the industry. After 1900, agencies began to attract reporters who sought jobs as copywriters. Men such as Moore, McKim, and Desbarats had gained entry into the trade from the ranks of the newspapers' business offices, not the editorial rooms. As noted in Chapter Two, they had carved out a niche by providing business services, not creative services. Once agencies began to augment their space-buying with copy-writing, however, reporters formed a ready pool of talent. They were well-trained to pump out short descriptive passages, in street-level language aimed at the average reader. Further, they were also accustomed to working on a daily schedule, and such hours were needed by agencies handling the accounts of local advertisers. Hence, men such as J.H. Woods, J.A. MacLaren, and Bertram Brooker tried their hands at copy-writing. In 1869, however, this trend was still in the future. The *Star's* discussion of advertising made no comment on copy. Instead, it made only a veiled reference to the market served by the paper, and its efficacy in reaching it. What was offered was advice on media buying, and nothing else.

Much had changed by the time E.E. Sheppard began *Saturday Night* magazine in 1887. Sheppard ran a column for eight weeks discussing the best means of conducting advertising.²⁵ Without fail, the means described always came back to the magazine itself. Here too, the prospective advertiser received advice on media buying, though this time the medium was a pretentious weekly and not a popular daily. Why should advertisers choose *Saturday Night*? The answer was clear: to reach extremely worthy readership.

24. James H. Imrie, 'Putting the Brakes on American Competition,' *Economic Advertising*, 7:6 (June 1916), 11; S. Roland Hall, *The Advertising Handbook* 2ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1930), 268

25. *Saturday Night*, 1:1-8 (December 1887-January 1888); Morris Wolfe, *A Saturday Night Scrapbook* (Toronto: New Press, 1973), 1

Had he [the advertiser] taken the trouble to ascertain just which papers his customers read, he might very easily have dropped the others, profiting thus by a direct reduction of the amount expended, without in any way lessening the volume of his business. There are some people, like Barnum, whom it pays to advertise in everything from a comic weekly to a poultry journal, but the average advertiser should pick his advertising medium with the same caution that a thief picks a pocket or a woman a set of false teeth.²⁶

Hence, by using *Saturday Night*, the wise advertiser would save money he unnecessarily spent by advertising promiscuously in every medium available.

Although, unlike the *Star*, Sheppard's advice did broach the content of the advertising itself, its primary focus was on advertising's mechanics, its layout and design. Newspapers had discovered that readers sought their favourite items – the news, editorials, or commercial intelligence – in the same part of the paper day after day. The same was true of advertisements. Sheppard suggested that readers would seek out the ads for their preferred stores in the same spots in every issue. The effectiveness of this practice could be further heightened if the advertiser rewarded its readers for their efforts; for example, by changing the copy in the ad with each insertion to stimulate their curiosity. If the same ad were run without changes over a long period of time, then readers would eventually pass it by. People read the papers for news; they expected no less novelty from their ads. If the advertiser already placed varied copy, then Sheppard suggested that the copy be written around timely appeals, such as seasonal needs. Blankets were a good bet for winter, gifts at Christmas.²⁷

The first trade journal of Canadian advertising – entitled, aptly enough, *Canadian Advertiser* – appeared in 1893. By this time, the flood of literature on copy had begun in the United States, and

26. 'Advertising as a Fine Art,' *Saturday Night*, 1:1 (3 December 1887), 7

27. 'Advertising as a Fine Art,' *Saturday Night*, 1:3 (17 December 1887), 3; *Saturday Night*, 1:5 (31 December 1887), 6

this Toronto magazine rode the tide, with twenty pages chock full of advice on copy, type, and layout. Its discussion of media was far more catholic than that of Graham or Sheppard, covering shop windows, posters, and show cards as well as publications. As such, it probably was the product of a print shop or agency rather than a newspaper or magazine; its editor claimed to be an experienced journalist working with an 'advertising expert.'²⁸ In its first substantial article, it boldly declared that 'The art of advertising may be acquired by much study; for advertisers are not born, they are made.'²⁹ This would have come as quite a shock to P.T. Barnum. Although he credited advertising for his success, he claimed not to have a system when composing it. Rather,

I often seized upon an opportunity by instinct, even before I had a very definite conception as to how it should be used, and it seemed, somehow, to mature itself and serve my purpose.³⁰

Canadian Advertiser would have none of this. Barnum might have been a success with such slipshod tactics, but the advertiser of the 1890s could no longer do the same. 'There are certain essential elements which form the basis of this art,' it asserted, 'and these must be thoroughly absorbed into the advertiser's brain before he can become a master in his art.'³¹ The magazine would be a fountain of wisdom kept fresh by the outpourings of experts. The age of the agencies and freelance copywriters was dawning.

Canadian Advertiser began with the usual advice on the mechanics of advertising, but it also went well beyond this, and ventured boldly into the realm of copy style. After some familiar commentary on the value of timely themes and well planned designs, it addressed the problems that

28. No one connected to the magazine is named, but its address is that of the Toronto *World* building, the home of Frederick Diver's Central Press Agency. *Toronto City Directory 1893* (Toronto: Might, 1893).

29. 'The ABC of Advertising,' *Canadian Advertiser*, 1:1 (June 1893), 4

30. Barnum, 121

31. 'The ABC of Advertising,' *Canadian Advertiser*, 1:1 (June 1893), 4

arose when searching for the proper tone of voice. Above all else, the editor advocated simplicity:

... all advertisements should be in as few words as possible, and the language should be plain, business-like and straight forward. All highfalutin, bombastic vaporings must be avoided, and every advertisement must appear to be truthful³²

These words echo those of John E. Powers, and Eaton's advice to Beaupre. Short, simple, practical: this was the essential message. There was a new consciousness underlying this advice that was not evident in the *Star* or *Saturday Night* columns. They had addressed the necessity of thinking through the placement, themes, and design of advertising. *Canadian Advertiser* pushed its analysis one step farther, and added a literary perspective to the writing of copy. An atmosphere could be created by the very words selected by the copywriter, and this atmosphere had to be used to good advantage. The editor insisted that the advertiser not talk about itself and its business. Instead, it should focus attention as much as possible on the people reading the ad, and address them in a familiar voice, the 'conversational style which speaks directly to the reader and never says 'we' where it can say 'you.' 'Such an advertisement,' it argued, 'talks to the consumer, mentions his wants and tells him where they can be satisfied.'³³

Again there are echoes here, but this time of Sam Slick. It was the pedlar's talent to simulate the spontaneity of a sincere interchange, to win the confidence of his marks, and exploit this to make a sale. *Canadian Advertiser* understood this ploy. Advertising had to recreate in type the same sense of easy familiarity that customers expected from their local shopkeepers – obviously, since it was for the local shopkeeper that most advertising was then written. Advertising, the editor stated, 'tells the reader just what the clerk or his master would tell the consumer across the counter.'³⁴ The intent of this passage was clear. The shopkeeper had a reputation to uphold, and his roots were firmly

32. Ibid., 4-5

33. Ibid., 4-5

34. Ibid., 5

planted in the community. He had to cultivate the good will of his clientele, and to do this he had to be as trustworthy in his advertising as he was in his store. Contemporary portrayals of the itinerant pedlar suggested that their trade flourished due to more underhanded practices.³⁵ The shopkeeper's advertising could no more resort to these than the bombastic publicity style of the medicine makers and circus promoters. Though more cautious, however, the shopkeeper's final intent was not so much different. Once cultivated, the confidence of the clientele was still to be turned to advantage. With the cool tone of reason, the carefully written ads of the shopkeeper 'often creates wants where those who possess them were not aware of their existence. It appeals to their common sense and convinces them by its logic.'³⁶ Trustworthy, if not necessarily truthful; plain spoken, but consciously contrived; providing service to clientele while cultivating their unbidden desires: this was the model advertising propounded by *Canadian Advertiser* in 1893. How long the paper lasted, or what its influence could have been, is unknown. Only one issue remains in a public library.

The most lasting and consistent source of advice on advertising which originated in Canada before 1900 was *Printer & Publisher*. J.B. Maclean's magazine did not focus solely on the concerns of owners and managers within the periodical industry. *Printer & Publisher* addressed this audience to be sure, but it always had columns addressed to the compositors and pressmen as well. This no doubt reflected the realities of the Canadian industry. Maclean always had the interests of small town publishers at heart, and most small town publishers were compositors and pressmen as well.

In this light, the magazine ran a column to assist compositors in the arrangement of advertising matter. In 'The Advertising Department,' the focus was on the mechanical composition of the ads themselves; nothing was said of the copy's literary style. When it began in 1898, its

35. Lears, 79-81

36. 'The ABC of Advertising,' *Canadian Advertiser*, 1:1 (June 1893), 5

anonymous author lamented the state of advertising in Canada, and boldly stated that publishers here were not treating this source of income as seriously as were their American counterparts. This was perfectly evident in their handling of the ads which they did carry. It was no wonder that many businesses believed that advertising was not worth the investment; much of it was arranged ineffectively, almost without thought. The new column offered to educate newspapermen in the basics of good presentation with practical examples.³⁷ Ten years later, a Toronto copywriter noted with pleasure the great strides that Canadian compositors and advertising men had taken in the interceding years. He credited the 'technical trade journal and the popular magazines' with having brought about this transformation.³⁸

Beyond the newspapers and trade magazines, agencies also began to issue pamphlets and books outlining their copy strategies. The most famous copywriter to emerge from Canada before 1900 was undoubtedly John E. Kennedy. As noted in chapter two, Kennedy was the mastermind behind the success of Fit-Reform Clothing in Montreal. Having conquered the largest city in Canada, he went south and eventually landed in Chicago, where he made the acquaintance of Albert Lasker. In 1903, Lasker was a rising young account executive with the Lord & Thomas Advertising Agency. Like most agents of his day he was a solicitor, but he quickly recognized the growing importance of copy within the trade, and he sought in vain for a means to conceptualize the task of writing. Apparently, trade journals offered him little solace. Kennedy, however, had precisely the information that Lasker had sought: a proven approach to copywriting, encapsulated in a simple formula. Advertising, Kennedy asserted, was 'salesmanship in print.'³⁹ In words that closely paralleled those of *Canadian Advertiser* ten years before, Kennedy argued that advertising had to convey the same

37. 'Advertising Department,' *Printer & Publisher*, 7:9 (September 1898), 8

38. William G. Colgate, 'The Advance in Ad. Composition,' *Economic Advertising*, 1:6 (February 1909), 13-19

39. Albert D. Lasker, *The Lasker Story: As He Told It*, ed. S.R. Bernstein (Lincolnwood, Illinois: NTC, 1987), 19-22

information to the masses that a salesman would do to an individual in order to strike up interest in the product and close the deal. As Stephen Fox has noted, there was nothing novel in Kennedy's ideas; they were essentially those of Powers twenty years before.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, Lasker was thunderstruck by this revelation, and immediately began to train all of the copywriters on staff at Lord & Thomas in Kennedy's ideas. Then, in the time-honoured tradition of all major agencies, he issued a publication boosting the firm's expertise – in this case, a series of pamphlets outlining Kennedy's approach.⁴¹

If the Powers style became formalized in the theoretical musings of Kennedy, the Barnum style was rehabilitated in the writings of Ernest Elmo Calkins. Calkins's approach to advertising emphasized the evocative possibilities of illustration.⁴² Towards this end, he pushed his creative staff to consider the effect of each advertisement taken as a unit. Beautiful imagery, balanced layout, and a decidedly literary approach to copy would combine to create unforgettable advertising by suggesting an atmosphere in association with the product. The ways in which these various elements worked together would not appeal directly to the reason, but to the emotive sensibilities and imagination of the gentle reader. Calkins counted on the notion that many readers leafing through their favourite periodicals were not always looking for edification, but rather diversion; advertising beautifully composed could arrest attention and tap into that open state of mind. Calkins and his partner Ralph Holden put these ideas to the test on many accounts. The most notable was Arrow Collars, for whom they created the image of the Arrow Collar Man – a staple of men's clothing ads for decades to come. The aestheticism of these ads was sufficiently notable that J.E.H. MacDonald advised his students at the Ontario College of Art to pay special attention to them.⁴³ Calkins was

40. Fox, 50-52

41. Ibid., 50-52

42. This contrast was noted by Fox, 42-49.

43. NAC, MG30 D111, J.E.H. MacDonald papers, b.3, f.3-7, lecture notes, 15 December 1922

a regular contributor to advertising trade journals, and in 1905 brought together his ideas in a volume co-authored by his partner Ralph Holden: *Modern Advertising*.⁴⁴

Behind these scattered sources of advice, from the regular press as well as the trade journals, pamphlets, and books, there did lie an understanding of human behaviour. Few would have called it 'psychology.'⁴⁵ That a person's curiosity could be aroused by novelty, or that the readers' eye could be attracted and held by a graceful composition, were strategies most would have considered common sense. The same knowledge of 'human nature' was part of the pedlar's kit, the marketing strategies of Barnum, and the editorial skills of the penny press. Copywriters wrote from personal experience about people they knew, and copied techniques from ads which had captured their own imagination. Kennedy and Calkins had merely formalized the assumptions and practices of generations of publicity men in the language of the advertising trade. This was the environment the academic psychologists entered in 1900.

Academic Psychology

Until the late 1800s, the academic study of the human mind and its operations took place within the halls of philosophy departments. Usually referred to as 'Mental and Moral Theory,' it was taught by men trained in the classic texts of such philosophers as John Locke and Immanuel Kant. Such works were grounded in the empirical tradition of the Enlightenment, but their primary data were drawn from the introspection of the philosophers involved. There was nothing tangible about their evidence. It gained its veracity through the sympathetic understanding of their readers, who were asked to look inside of themselves and ask if the author's words did not ring true. By the mid-1800s,

44. E.E. Calkins and R. Holden, *Modern Advertising* (New York: Appleton, 1905); for a more detailed discussion of Calkins, see Michele H. Bogart, *Advertising, Artists, and the Borders of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 205-211; Fox, 40-48

45. Indeed, the first use of the word 'psychology' that I have noticed appeared in 1904; J.J. Gibbons, 'Mr Post Answered,' *Printer & Publisher*, 13:9 (September 1904), 13

there were philosophers who believed this form of research had carried philosophers as far as they could go. They were rooted in nothing more than passing thoughts and in the assertions and counter-assertions of great thinkers. A new approach was desired, more positivist, founded upon real-world experimentation and testable results, something that would provide hard, demonstrable evidence of theoretical models. The first person to do this with regard to the processes of human cognition was Wilhelm Wundt, who in 1879 established a psychological laboratory at the University of Leipzig.⁴⁶

Wundt's new methodologies soon began to attract graduate students from across Europe and North America. Much to his dismay, not all of these students were content to apply themselves to the traditional fields of philosophical investigation. His primary objective was to provide a new foundation for the academic discussion of the human mind. In essence, his interest was pure as opposed to applied research. Before applications could be drawn out of the research done in his laboratory, Wundt believed it might be decades, perhaps centuries, before there were sufficient data to begin a proper synthesis along scientific lines.⁴⁷ For students such as John M. MacEachern, Harlow Gale, and Walter Dill Scott, that was simply too long to wait. Each of them attended to problems of applied psychology rather than the theoretical interests of their teacher. MacEachern, a Canadian hired by the University of Alberta in 1909, was drawn to industrial psychology and eventually became active in that province's state-run eugenics programme.⁴⁸ Harlow Gale and Walter Dill Scott, both Americans, chose to turn their tools upon the effects of advertising. Wundt

46. On Wundt and his contributions, see Edwin G. Boring, *A History of Experimental Psychology* (New York: Century, 1929), 310-344; George Humphrey, 'Wilhelm Wundt: The Great Master,' *Historical Roots of Contemporary Psychology*, ed. B.B. Wolman (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 275-297; G.A. Kimble and K. Schlesinger, *Topics in the History of Psychology* vol.1 (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Erlbaum, 1985), 11-12

47. Quentin J. Schultze, 'An Honorable Place: The Quest for Professional Advertising Education, 1900-1917,' *Business History Review*, 56:1 (Spring 1982), 17-20

48. Thomas M. Nelson, 'Psychology at Alberta,' *History of Academic Psychology in Canada*, eds. M.J. Wright and C. R. Myers (Toronto: C.J. Hogrefe, 1982), 195; on eugenics in Canada, see Angus McLaren, *Our Own Master Race* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1990).

tried to discourage them all from their unphilosophical approaches, but decided that their orientation to practicality was a particularly North American trait.⁴⁹

In 1896, using human subjects under laboratory conditions, Harlow Gale became the first academic psychologist to study the assumptions underlying nineteenth-century advertising practices. His interests covered both the mechanical composition of advertising and its content. On the mechanics side, Gale started with a relatively common question: what made an advertisement noticeable? On this point, Gale contrived experiments which tested the placement of advertising on a typical magazine page. Each subject was asked to sit in a dark room. Then, a card divided into four equal parts was illuminated briefly. After the light was turned off, the subject was asked which quarter of the page attracted their attention first. The test was repeated with a series of different cards, with a number of different subjects. Gale performed a similar experiment on the eye's attraction to colour, where different patches of colour were substituted for the four quarters on each page. The results should not have been surprising. Gale found that in most cases, subjects preferred the left side of the page to the right, and the top to the bottom. In other words, most people scanned the page as they would have read it. With colours on a white background, black attracted the most attention, followed by red and then orange.⁵⁰

Gale's work on content was similarly innovative. These experiments tried to identify those appeals which best captured the reader's interest. In these tests, Gale created a set of fictitious brand names for the same product, then had an ad set for each one, in the same style and type. Each ad featured a different talking point: the age of the firm, a celebrity endorsement, the price of the goods, a description of their virtues. Individual subjects were then asked to rank the products according to their impression of the ads. Gale then assessed the effectiveness of each ad according to its average

49. Schultze, 17-20

50. Harlow Gale, *Psychological Studies #1* (Minneapolis: published by the author, 1900), 39-69

score.⁵¹ Other psychologists adapted this technique, since it did offer a means of pre-testing ads before they were placed.⁵²

While Gale's work was picked up by other psychologists, it did not capture the imagination of the advertising trade in quite the same way that Walter Dill Scott's did. The medium selected by each man might explain this difference. Gale's work appeared as part of a series of research papers published by himself in Minneapolis. Scott's first appeared in a trade journal issued by a reputable Chicago advertising agency. The interest sparked by his magazine series led to their republication in book form, as *The Theory of Advertising*.⁵³

Scott's book is a short, accessible, and well-illustrated piece of writing. In fifteen concise chapters, he outlined what psychologists knew about the movement from reading to buying. He then explained how this movement could be directed by the knowledgeable copywriter. Like Gale, he began by focusing on the ways advertisements gained attention, but then he delved more deeply into human cognition. The key operation was the way in which ideas became associated. From laboratory experimentation, psychologists had shown to their satisfaction that three laws held in this process: first, that 'the idea next to enter the mind is the one which has habitually been associated with ... the one present to the mind.' Second, 'If two things have been recently connected in the mind, when one is thought of again it suggests the other also.' And third, 'If my present thought has been associated with a thousand different objects, that one will be suggested with which it has been most vividly associated.'⁵⁴ The application was obvious. The successful advertiser was one who

51. Gale, 59-67

52. E.K. Strong, Jr, 'Application of the 'Order of Merit Method' to Advertising,' *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods*, 8:21 (October 1911), 600-611; E.K. Strong, Jr, 'The Effect of Size of Advertisements and Frequency of their Presentation,' *Psychological Review*, 21:2 (March 1914), 136-152; Henry F. Adams, 'The Relative Memory Value of Duplication and Variation in Advertising,' *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods*, 13:6 (March 1916), 141-152

53. Walter Dill Scott, *The Theory of Advertising* (Boston: Small, Maynard, 1904)

54. *Ibid.*, 39-40

forged a vivid association in the minds of readers between an everyday need and his product. The task of the copywriter would be to make this association as vivid as possible, so much so that all other associations would be secondary to that of the product. Hence, every time a particular situation occurred in the life of the reader, she would immediately think of the product.

To create an effective association was one thing, to impel the reader to act was quite another. Scott described two means to do this. The first was the power of suggestion. Basically, Scott believed humans were highly suggestible creatures, and the mere idea of an action would usually bring it to fruition. He explained this process with reference to Ouija boards and hypnotism. In both cases, ideas were planted in the participant's mind to the total exclusion of all others. Under exceptionally focused conditions, participants could be induced to bring about a desired end with apparently no conscious participation on their part. To apply this idea in advertising, the copywriter would have to demonstrate the benefits of *using* the advertised product. The ad would not dwell upon the product in isolation, but would conjure in the mind of the reader an image of herself with it. At its best, the association would be so vivid that the reader would not link the activity to any competing product.⁵⁵ A most effective way to do this would be through the use of an apt illustration, and Scott devoted six chapters to perception, apperception, and mental imagery.

The second means was the 'direct command.' As Scott himself noted, this was a much more difficult method to use successfully because it directly confronted the reader's own inclinations. The reader who was told to 'Use Pears' Soap' or 'Drink Coca-Cola' could well answer 'no' and be done with it. Hence, any copywriter using this type of pitch would have to be extremely judicious in his choice of words; it would be necessary to cloak the ultimate purpose of the ad:

No one would be willing to admit that he had used Pears' Soap simply because he

55. *Ibid.*, 47-60, 208-228. This aspect of Scott's work is described in greater detail in David P. Kuna, 'The Concept of Suggestion in the Early History of Advertising Psychology,' *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 12 (1976), 347-353.

had read the command, 'Use Pears' Soap.' It is, however, quite probable that many persons have used Pears' Soap for no other reason. ...

We are perfectly willing to obey as long as we are unconscious of the fact. But let any one see that he has been commanded and his attitude is changed; he becomes obstinate instead of pliant.⁵⁶

Scott believed that this obstinacy was more likely among the upper classes than the lower. The lower classes were accustomed taking orders.⁵⁷

Both of these methods attempted to manipulate the conscious decision-making process of the reader. Scott believed that an idea implanted in the mind could prejudice the outcome – the decision – at a pre-conscious stage in that process. Suggestion did this by encouraging the reader to participate in the formulation of that pre-conscious idea. The constructed image of herself with the product was expected to condition her ultimate decision, and consequently influence her future purchases. By contrast, direct command attempted to implant the ultimate decision itself. Either way, the ideal advertisement would pre-empt the conscious thought patterns of the reader. By definition, anything less would be an unsuccessful advertisement in Scott's mind: 'Actions performed as a result of a conscious, deliberate determination would not be said to be suggested. Ideas gained by a conscious, voluntary process of reasoning would likewise not be said to be suggested.'⁵⁸ Hence, the ideal result of either method would find readers responding to advertisements as if under hypnosis.⁵⁹

It was this assured outcome that psychologists such as Gale and Scott hoped to achieve when they applied their expertise to advertising. In the introduction to his book, Scott set out the following

56. Scott, 68

57. *Ibid.*, 74-75

58. *Ibid.*, 52

59. *Ibid.*, 47-60; Kuna, 348-350

programme:

In this day and generation we are not afraid of theories, systems, ideals, and imagination. What we do avoid is chance, luck, haphazard undertakings We may be willing to decide on unimportant things by instinct or by the flipping of a coin, but when it comes to the serious things of life we want to know that we are trusting to something more than a mere chance.

Advertising is a serious thing with the businessman of today.⁶⁰

Scott then noted the enormous sums invested in the publishing industry and advertising. This industry needed the assurance provided by a scientific understanding of its workings. Without it, everything would be built on a foundation of sand. And psychology, according to Gale and Scott, was the science of advertising.

The work of Gale and Scott was developed more rigorously within a school of psychology known as behaviourism. Its most vocal proponent was John B. Watson, a psychologist at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. While studying rats, Watson developed an approach to laboratory results that differed significantly from Wundt's. The latter man undertook his experiments to test hypotheses concerning intangibles: cognition, reasoning, emotions, the mind. Wundt's experiments provided an important source of new information to philosophers, but this information remained harnessed to a mandate determined by metaphysical considerations.⁶¹ Watson, however, grew to distrust the entire realm of ideas generated through metaphysics, which he and his fellow behaviourists termed sheer introspection. 'Mind' was at best a mercurial concept; the only thing that scientists could claim with certainty was the existence of the brain. Similarly, the cognitive processes which fascinated Wundt seemed to have an existence divorced from anything material and

60. Scott, 1-2

61. John B. Watson, *Behaviourism* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1924), 3-5

verifiable. Rather than studying these, then, Watson argued that attention should be focused entirely on the human animal and his or her activities. Instead of a science of mind, he offered a science of behaviour, which accepted as its raw data only empirically observable phenomena. Watson called this new approach 'behaviourism.' With it, he expected psychology to discover the causal factors behind human behaviour as if humans were nothing more than matter in motion. The practical applications of such knowledge would be almost infinite.⁶²

Although Watson himself did not apply his methods to advertising in the 1910s, Harry L. Hollingsworth did. Hollingsworth too was a professor of psychology, at Columbia University in New York. Before 1914, he took up Gale's techniques and began testing generic advertising appeals divorced from any particular product or brand name. With the results, he hoped to discover what the most fundamental drives were behind consumer behaviour. If it were possible to categorize and rank these appeals according their effectiveness with particular products and particular markets, then all of the guess work would be taken out of copywriting, altogether.⁶³ Hollingsworth was indebted to Gale for his research methods, but he made clear his philosophical differences with Wundt's students while reviewing a book by Scott in 1912:

The chief difficulty with this type of 'applied psychology' is that ... it goes but a little way toward communicating the ability to set up these processes in others. ... The psychology evolved by the introspective method can never be in the true sense an applied science; it is at most an academic analysis illustrated by industrial instances.⁶⁴

62. Ibid., 3-5. On Watson, see David Cohen, *J.B. Watson: The Founder of Behaviourism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), 82-112.

63. Adams, 129-148; H.L. Hollingsworth, 'Judgments of Persuasiveness,' *Psychological Review*, 18:4 (July 1911), 234-256; H.L. Hollingsworth et al., *Advertising: Its Principles and Practice* (New York: Ronald, 1915), esp. Ch.4

64. Harry L. Hollingsworth, Review: *Influencing Men In Business* (1911), by W.D. Scott, in *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods*, 9:4 (February 1912), 110-111

On the other hand, Scott found Hollingsworth's first book on advertising to be a tremendous addition to the literature.⁶⁵ Beyond Hollingsworth, there were a number of others entering the field during the 1910s, both in journals and through books of their own, who were adopting the behaviourist stance. The most prolific among them were Edward K. Strong, Jr, Henry F. Adams, and Daniel Starch.⁶⁶

In Canada, there was no original work done in this branch of applied psychology. Before 1920, there were only three philosophy departments with trained research psychologists on staff: the University of Toronto, McGill University, and the University of Alberta. Of these, only the first two had psychological laboratories. Toronto's had been established within the department of philosophy in 1889. It was supervised by two men who had trained under Wundt, James Mark Baldwin and August Kirschmann. Neither took an interest in advertising. Then, through the 1910s, the lab fell into disuse.⁶⁷ At McGill, a lab was established in 1910 under the behaviourist William D. Tait, but his interests were also in fields other than advertising. The same was true of John M. MacEachern at Alberta.⁶⁸ Each of them was hired to teach basic introductory courses in psychological theory and research methods to undergraduates in philosophy. Their labs were as much teaching aids as research tools. The development of psychology as a separate field did not take place until the mid-1920s. Only then did it become possible for scholars to pursue the kinds of specialization that would

65. Walter Dill Scott, Review: *Advertising and Selling* (1913), by H.L. Hollingsworth, *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods*, 11:9 (April 1914), 249-250

66. H.L. Hollingsworth, *Advertising and Selling* (New York: Appleton, 1913); Daniel Starch, *Advertising* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1914); H.L. Hollingsworth et al., *Advertising: Its Principles and Practice* (New York: Ronald, 1915); Henry F. Adams, *Advertising and Its Mental Laws* (New York: Macmillan, 1920); Daniel Starch, *Principles of Advertising* (Chicago: Shaw, 1923); E.K. Strong, Jr, *Psychology of Selling and Advertising* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1925)

67. C. Roger Myers, 'Psychology at Toronto,' *History of Academic Psychology in Canada*, eds. Mary J. Wright and C. Roger Myers (Toronto: C.J. Hogrefe, 1982), 68-99

68. George A. Ferguson, 'Psychology at McGill,' *History of Academic Psychology in Canada*, eds. Mary J. Wright and C. Roger Myers (Toronto: C.J. Hogrefe, 1982), 36-45; Thomas M. Nelson, 'Psychology at Alberta,' *ibid.*, 192-219

have allowed for directed research in applied fields such as advertising.⁶⁹

Responses to Psychology

Stephen Fox, in his biographical history of the American advertising industry, *The Mirror Makers* (1984), argues that there are two schools of thought regarding the creation of advertising: hard sell and soft sell. To his mind, every approach can be fit into one school or the other. Hard sell corresponds to the Powers style, or the 'salesmanship in print' championed by Kennedy. It was characterized by its frank acceptance of the business transaction intended by the ad itself. As such, it spoke of quality, price, efficiency, convenience, health, and any other factors affecting the purchase decision which privileged practicality over sentiment. Soft sell was its polar opposite. Soft sell dodged the transaction and entreated the public to look favourably upon the advertised product, regardless of its utility or price. This corresponded to the ideas of Barnum and Calkins.⁷⁰

Reading Scott's book on suggestion and association, Fox argues that psychology appeared to endorse the soft-sell approach.⁷¹ It is difficult to believe that Scott and his peers actually had this in mind. The psychologists did not intend to engage in an on-going dispute among admen. Rather, as Merle Curti has argued, they sought to find the underlying principles which made *all* advertising work, not simply one style or another. The various theories regarding hard sell and soft sell were essentially sets of rules gleaned from the writers' experience; each set of rules necessarily excluded

69. Donald O. Hebb, 'Chancellor Hebb describes Psychological Research at McGill,' *The McGill You Knew: An Anthology of Memories*, ed. E.A. Collard (Don Mills, Ontario: Longman, 1975), 166-168; Stanley B. Frost, *McGill University: For the Advancement of Learning: vol.II, 1895-1971* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1984), 147-148; Michael Gauvreau, 'Philosophy, Psychology, and History: George Sidney Brett and the Quest for a Social Science at the University of Toronto, 1910-1940,' *Historical Papers 1988* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1988), 209-236; Paul Axelrod, *Making a Middle Class: Student Life in English Canada during the Thirties* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1990), 56-57

70. Fox, 63-65

71. *Ibid.*, 63-65, 70; Fox draws upon Scott's later, enhanced volume, *The Psychology of Advertising* (Boston: Small, Maynard, 1908).

the other.⁷² In place of these rules, psychology offered a process of developing entire campaigns in accordance with the needs of the imagined reader. The actual copy written might take any one of a variety of tones and styles. Despite his interest in the power of suggestion, even Scott endorsed the use of the 'reason-why' strategy with particular products. A key example was the piano trade. In the late 1800s, pianos became a widely regarded middle-class status symbol. An imposing piece of furniture and an indication of cultured accomplishment, the piano became an investment in prestige. Piano manufacturers knew this well, and tended to stress these non-material benefits of ownership.⁷³ Surely this was a suitable case for Scott's theories of suggestion; they could easily be used to justify the scores of ads featuring well-dressed, admiring visitors cooing over their hosts' new upright. But here was Scott's reply:

A piano is primarily not a thing to look at or an object for profitable investment, but it is a *musical* instrument. It might be beautiful and cheap, but still very undesirable.

The chief thing about a piano is the quality of its tone. Many advertisers of pianos do not seem to have the slightest appreciation of this fact.⁷⁴

An entire industry's product might well be endowed with the magic of prestige, but the individual manufacturer still had to offer some reason why its name stood above the rest. The cold reality of the hard sell could intrude into any advertisement. The appeal had to be tailored to the needs of the readership as well as their desires.

Nonetheless, Scott's desire for hypnotic certainty stood in direct opposition to Powers and his willingness to let the buyer decide. In its ideal form, the Powers style assumed that the reader

72. Merle Curti, 'The Changing Concept of 'Human Nature' in the Literature of American Advertising,' *Business History Review*, 61:4 (Winter 1967), 334-357

73. H.E. Stephenson and C. McNaught, *The Story of Advertising in Canada* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1940), 186-188; Frances Roback, 'Advertising Canadian Pianos and Organs, 1850-1914,' *Material History Bulletin*, 20 (Fall 1984), 31-43

74. Scott, *Theory*, 211; Scott's appreciation for the use of reason-why was more pronounced in his later book, *The Psychology of Advertising*, 186-187.

had all of the necessary information she needed to get through life. What the ad offered was news, news about a product that may or may not have been of use to her. The ad was simply a means to convey information about the product and reasons why she should buy it. If these reasons were pride or envy rather than efficiency or convenience – that is, if they appeared to be emotional and ‘psychological’ rather than purely rational – then so be it. That said, the ultimate decision regarding the product’s utility was necessarily hers to make, in full consciousness and with all the facts relevant at her fingertips. Implicitly, then, Scott’s theory of advertising stands as a critique of the reason-why approach. Powers privileged the conscious decision-making process over the existence of pre-rational ideas and behavioural conditioning. For many contemporary observers within the trade, the difference between the two styles appeared to be a difference between reason and emotion.

When *Economic Advertising* began in Toronto in 1908, it landed thick in the middle of this debate aroused by Kennedy, Calkins, and Scott. The theories of each one were readily available through numerous publications. Beyond the books and pamphlets each had authored, they were also represented in the Canadian and American trade press. Due to his citizenship, Kennedy’s activities were noted in *Economic Advertising*, and the same paper regularly printed articles by Calkins. Scott had an impact in other ways. Although he was never mentioned by name, the discussion of psychology mounted in the Canadian trade press and luncheon rooms after a revised edition of his book appeared in 1908.⁷⁵

Economic Advertising proved to be a rich source of progressive ideas. T. Johnson Stewart, the new journal’s editor, asserted in its opening column that:

The mission of this publication is to help advertisers and publishers alike to eliminate all waste in advertising. ... As a rule our merchants and manufacturers are investing too little in systematic advertising. ...

75. Scott, *The Psychology of Advertising*

Spasmodic advertising, it does not matter how big the investment, is not scientific, and cannot be economic. Haphazard advertising is nearly always wasteful.

The cause of advertising is damaged, not helped, by a too bulky appropriation.⁷⁶

Scott's manifesto echoed through these passages. If advertising had been unsuccessful in the past, then the fault lay with ill-conceived plans. Greater investments of money were not going to remedy the situation. Advertisers needed better-written copy and a more judicious selection of media. The key words for Stewart were 'systematic' and 'scientific.' Advertising plans had to be placed upon a basis that would allow for greater assurance of a profitable return.

On the matter of copy, Stewart hedged between appeals to emotion and appeals to reason. He believed that the reading public could well be swayed by both, but 'the majority of mankind' was generally won by an appeal to their sentiments. By way of example, Stewart did not point to any one advertising campaign but to the temper of a church congregation. 'You never knew a cool, logical preacher to have a crowded church. The popular preacher appeals to the emotions of men and women. Incidentally, he may be logical, but crowds who attend his services are not enticed by his nice reasoning.'⁷⁷ That said, Stewart still expected a sales pitch in the midst of this emotive copy. A painting may be extraordinarily attractive, but never sell anything. As such, Stewart seemed to favour a compromise position between Kennedy and Calkins: reason-why copy with a focus on human sentiment. 'That the selling argument will be more and more used by advertisers goes without saying,' he stated in one editorial, but this selling argument could not rely on the hard sell associated with Powers.⁷⁸ Rather,

The writer who can most vividly picture the little personal features of goods, their beauty, the good standing which will be produced by their possessor, their

76. 'Straight Talks: What's In a Name?' *Economic Advertising*, 1:1 (September 1908), 3-4

77. T.J. Stewart, 'Sentiment or Logic,' *Economic Advertising*, 2:5 (January 1910), 8

78. 'The Fundamental Essential,' *Economic Advertising*, 3:2 (February 1910), 6-7

exclusiveness, their distinction from common wares, has learned a lesson that has business value. Telling how long an article will last, how strong it is and how well put together, is all right, but all these are points of a material nature. While giving attention to this side, don't overlook the personal side – the pride side – sentiment.⁷⁹

Once again, like Eaton, *Canadian Advertiser*, and Kennedy before – indeed, like Sam Slick himself – Stewart urged the copywriter to think about the reader, and to demonstrate an understanding of her desires through the text. Stewart, however, put a remarkable new emphasis on the social stature imparted by goods. The advertiser was no longer selling something that offered to gratify practical or even personal desires. Now the goods carried a communicable symbolic value for those who did not purchase them as well.⁸⁰

For all the suggestions advanced in its pages, *Economic Advertising* did not fully endorse the adoption of psychological approaches to copy. Rather, it tended to use the new vocabulary supplied by psychologists only to relate the old wisdom of the trade. Where advertisers of the past had 'hammered home' their sales message by repeating the same slogan week after week, now they spoke of 'conditioning' the reader's mind through 'systematic' advertising.⁸¹ Similarly, an article in *Printer & Publisher* could now speak of 'creating desire' rather than putting over the sales message.⁸² For all of their talk of science, the new advertising intellectuals had to admit that there was precious little scientific about copywriting itself. The only 'scientific' aspect of their work was

79. 'The Advertising Value of Sentiment,' *Economic Advertising*, 2:5 (January 1910), 22

80. William Leiss et al. argue that this thinking became increasingly evident in actual advertisements after 1890; it represented the 'fetishization' of consumer goods observed by Marx. See their *Social Communication in Advertising: Persons, Products, & Images of Well-Being* (Toronto: Methuen, 1986), 270-280

81. T.J. Tobin, 'Advertised Goods Preferred,' *Economic Advertising*, 1:1 (September 1908), 27-29

82. 'Increasing the Value of the Advertising Columns,' *Printer & Publisher*, 19:5 (May 1910), 24-25

space buying, where circulation figures could supply a measure of mathematical assurance to their decisions regarding media. However, no one suggested that there was anything comparable to assist in the preparation of copy. The assurances they sought in that line of their work lay in some hazy future world. Systematic, longingly 'scientific,' but ultimately not psychological: this was Stewart's approach to advertising in 1909.

Stewart found a rival in George French, the editor of an American trade paper called *Profitable Advertising*. In 1909, French editorialized that all of the talk about the 'science of advertising' was essentially bunk. He took particular aim at the work of men like Gale, on the mechanics of composition. '[A] good advertisement, or a good piece of printing,' French believed,

depends for its beauty, its strength, its pulling power, upon the very same principles that make a good painting The painter goes about the preparation of his canvass exactly as the advertiser or printer should go about the task of 'laying out' his work.

This is composition in art; and it is composition that the advertiser must study.⁸³

These aspects of advertising had been studied by adworkers and compositors long before Gale and his ilk arrived on the scene. After all was said and done, French believed that psychology offered precious little in the way of new ideas. A better training in advertising could be afforded by a study of fine art, a belief that could have come straight from Calkins.

Although Stewart himself did not endorse the adoption of psychological theories, he felt compelled to respond to these comments. By lumping the entire notion of a 'science of advertising' together with psychology, French had attacked the conceptual basis of Stewart's journal. However,

83. George French, quoted in T.J. Stewart, 'The Science of Advertising,' *Economic Advertising*, 1:2 (October 1908), 38-39. French has been curiously overlooked in the history of advertising. Outside of his paper, he was also an experienced agency man, active in institutional work, and was a moving force behind the Association of National Advertisers (Presbrey, 544). He contributed numerous articles to *Economic Advertising/Marketing* after 1910, and became a regular columnist when he immigrated to Montreal in 1929.

because the science he so longingly sought did not yet exist, Stewart could only offer assertions and digressions in his response. In so doing, he made this frank admission:

The science of advertising is no more fallible than any other science extant.
 ... There is no ultimate and final knowledge. Nor has there been a single instance in the whole history of advertising, as far as we know, where the counsellor's predictions have been more than approximately correct.

But because we cannot predict the exact results of any advertising campaign we may plan and engineer, it does not follow that we are unscientific or that nine-tenths of all advertising is a gamble. Because we cannot altogether eliminate chance in any line of business, it would be utterly foolish to solemnly declare that all but a tenth of the business on the globe was speculative, pure and simple.⁸⁴

The references to the fallibility of science and the lack of ultimate knowledge, combined with his warm embrace of the scientific spirit, bespeak a writer familiar with the works of American pragmatists such as William James or John Dewey. And yet, in the very next paragraph, Stewart himself scorned the work of the empirical psychologists, dismissing it as nothing more than the 'vaporings of savants, who never wrote an ad., or never sold an inch of space in all their lives'⁸⁵ One wonders, then, why he would champion the spirit and not the reality of the contemporary science of advertising.

Part of the problem may have been the businessman's general suspicion of academia. Where the businessman was the man of action carrying heavy responsibilities for personnel, plants, and investments, the academic was a mere spinner of theories without much connection to the real world

84. Stewart, *ibid.*, 38-9

85. Stewart, 39

of commerce.⁸⁶ Although Walter Dill Scott had participated in a few profitable campaigns, Harlow Gale had not, and some of his methods came under close scrutiny.⁸⁷ In particular, his lab conditions were criticized for their inability to replicate a real-world reading experience. Subjects who were momentarily focused on a dimly-lit page in a dark room might have felt the sensation of reading on a subway train, but under no circumstance could this have substituted for anyone's notion of leisure-time reading. Had Gale allowed his subjects more than a fleeting glimpse of each page, his results may have been greatly different.⁸⁸

One example of Gale's deficiencies became evident among newspapermen in 1910. Based on his lab results, Gale found that his subjects' attention was first drawn to the upper right corner of each page. As a result, Gale believed that this was the optimum placement for any ad.⁸⁹ In practice, editors found they could fit more ads on each page if they used the top left corner for news and built up the advertising matter from the bottom right. That way, news was the first thing that most people saw as they turned the page. Then, scanning down, the last thing that fixed in their minds was an advertisement. This suggested that the optimum position was the bottom right corner. Describing this arrangement technique to the Canadian Press Association, J.R. Bone of the *Toronto Star* implicitly suggested that Gale's findings were, psychologically speaking, completely wrong.⁹⁰

In the end, then, one has to wonder if Stewart's adoption of the scientific spirit was not more of an outlook than a practical programme. Stewart's 'system,' as it appeared through his columns,

86. Michael Bliss, *A Living Profit: Studies in the Social History of Canadian Business, 1883-1911* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), 116-119

87. S. Roland Hall, *The Advertising Handbook* 2ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1930), 231-232; Carl Richard Greer, *Advertising and Its Mechanical Reproduction* (New York: Tudor, 1931), v-vii

88. Daniel Starch, *Advertising* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1920), 106-116; Henry Foster Adams, *Advertising and Its Mental Laws* (New York: Macmillan, 1920), 63-64, 88-90, 120-121, 221-224

89. Gale, 51-55

90. 'Annual Report of the Canadian Press Association,' *Printer & Publisher*, 18:5 (May 1909), 16

amounted to this: place emotive copy in well-selected publications as frequently as possible, whether the general business climate was good or bad. Advertise your goods with the right pitch, all the time.

Despite Stewart, there were many others in Canada interested in the new psychology. W.A. Lydiatt maintained a list of books that he considered required reading in his directory of Canadian periodicals. Of the eight books on his first list, in 1918, two were on psychology: Scott's *Psychology of Advertising* (1908) and Hollingsworth's *Advertising and Selling* (1913).⁹¹ After Woods-Norris Limited bought *Economic Advertising* from Stewart, it ran several articles on the potential applications stemming from academic discoveries. In their ads, Woods-Norris boasted that 'Proper analysis of the buying public' was a featured part of their service to advertisers.⁹² Nonetheless, the articles on psychology which appeared in their journal did not clarify what this service might have entailed. All of them discussed potential applications which remained in the dimly-perceived future. In February 1911, the paper reported on a speech by Charles S. Ricker, chair of Psychology at Harvard University. Ricker believed that in 'a few years psychologists will reduce to an exact science the method of composing advertisements so as to obtain answers.'⁹³ This of course was the dream of the behaviourists. They too dreamed of crafting ads that would completely override the consumer's conscious decision-making process. The effect of such articles might have sparked the imaginations of ambitious young copywriters and avaricious old advertisers, but they never offered them anything concrete in the way of methods. For that matter, neither did Scott or Hollingsworth.

Whether that glorious day ever arrived, however, was irrelevant in the short term. Herbert N. Casson, another Canadian working south of the border, felt that psychology already had provided

91. *Lydiatt's Book Sed.* (1918), 261

92. advertisement, *Economic Advertising*, 5:7 (July 1912), 34

93. Charles S. Ricker, 'Oracle on the Future Copywriter,' *Economic Advertising*, 4:2 (February 1911), 37

adworkers with the means to predict reader behaviour. This would allow them to provide their clients with the assurance that their money was not being wasted. Further, they could reassure themselves that their efforts were truly effective.⁹⁴ In the meantime, despite their fondest wishes, it was impossible for adworkers to guarantee the results of the campaigns they created. Stewart addressed this issue by arguing that Canadian advertising was still 'emerging from cloudland.'⁹⁵ The 'science of advertising' had provided the rudimentary tools to take the guesswork out of their trade. For anything more than this, trust and patience were the orders of the day. Once again, the adworkers' quest for professional authority and credibility was frustrated by unmet expectations.

Some were not willing to wait. Unlike his peers in academia, John B. Watson got the opportunity to put his ideas into action. Seven years after the publication of his behaviourist manifesto, he was hired by J. Walter Thompson Advertising in New York. Watson introduced research techniques to the agency that were designed to gauge consumers' impressions of specific products, in laboratory situations similar to those devised by Gale and Scott. These tests were among the first consumer attitude surveys. With them, agency staff could organize campaigns by building upon positive responses to proposed copy themes and countering negative ones. However, while such surveys might have provided basic data about the reading public, they did not offer prescriptions on how to write actual copy. It was one thing to know how a small sample of consumers felt about the client's product, quite another to know how to persuade millions of readers to buy it.⁹⁶

The true test of Watson's psychology came with his work as an account executive. JWT put him in charge of a handful of major clients, one of which was Chesebrough-Pond's, the manufacturers of a line of women's beauty products. Historian Deborah Coon has argued that the

94. Herbert N. Casson, 'Scientific Management in the Sales Department,' *Economic Advertising*, 4:12 (December 1911), 13-15

95. 'Why Advertising is Not Guaranteed,' *Economic Advertising*, 3:10 (October 1910), 7

96. Curti, 349

ads produced under Watson's direction were indeed consistent with his psychological manifesto. That said, none of the ads struck a new note in copy style or approach. The methods employed had been used for years, by other advertisers and other agencies. Advertisers did not need a psychologist to suggest that status envy, yearnings for romantic love, and celebrity endorsements might offer effective ways to sell beauty products. Once again, it appeared that the 'science,' or the theories spun in the name of science, had simply served to validate long-established techniques.⁹⁷

At the end of the day, copywriters did not find that their work had changed much in the wake of the academic psychologists. George French, no doubt familiar with the Watson's agency work, could comfortably repeat in 1926 the impressions he had had in 1909. The consumer attitude survey was a useful new addition to the agency's arsenal of weapons, but all of the rest of the theoretical posturing was still bunk. Whether the information available to creative staffs was intuitively held or survey-generated, they still had to assess it according to their own lights. The final ad would ultimately be the product of fallible human minds and hands.⁹⁸

The foremost Canadian writer on the subject agreed. Bertram Brooker was a freelance copywriter throughout the 1920s, and under the pseudonym 'Richard Surrey' he contributed numerous articles on copy style to *Marketing*, *Printer's Ink*, and *Advertising & Selling*. These articles revealed a fascination with the creative process behind copywriting. In one of his more notorious articles, entitled 'Shunning Shakespeare,' he exchanged barbs with an American counterpart

97. Deborah J. Coon, "Not a Creature of Reason: The Alleged Impact of Watsonian Behaviourism on Advertising in the 1920s," *Modern Perspectives on John B. Watson and Classical Behaviourism*, eds. J.T. Todd and E.K. Morris (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood, 1994), 37-63; see also Kuna, 353

98. George French, *20th Century Advertising* (New York: Van Nostrand, 1926), 59-60; T.J. Jackson Lears accepts Watson and his peers at their word, and misses the scepticism apparent in writers such as French or Stewart when he argues that the mainstream of American advertising embraced irrationalism in the 1920s; see his 'From Salvation to Self Realization: Advertising and the Therapeutic Roots of Consumer Culture,' *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1980* (New York: Pantheon, 1983), 1-38

over the choice of language used in ads aimed at popular audiences. Brooker favoured language that was expressive, clear, and precise. The tone of voice he adopted never spoke down to his readers, and if a particular word carried connotations that no other word could, he would use it no matter how uncommon the word may be. In short, Brooker favoured a highly literary approach to advertising without endorsing trivial embellishments.⁹⁹

Brooker believed that wording was crucial, because he believed that advertising's purpose was to graft meaning onto the products or services being sold. Each person's life was not guided necessarily by true or false facts. In contrast with the advocates of reason-why copy, Brooker did not believe that people worked out their best course of action in every situation according to a cold and sober analysis of the information on hand. Rather, everyone freighted their analysis with values, and it was these values that governed the individual's responses to particular facts. In Brooker's words, the key was 'significance – the *view* imposed on facts by the individual observer according to his particular position or relation to the facts observed.'¹⁰⁰ Stated thus, the truth of the claims made in any ad were irrelevant. It was the significance of the claims and the ways in which they were expressed that would carry the sale. Timothy Eaton might have called this a 'genuine humbug.' For Brooker, it was a matter of the appearance of truth carrying more persuasive power than truth itself. An ad for pipe tobacco clarified his point. In it, a notorious Hollywood vamp claimed that all of her leading men smoked the advertised brand. The public had largely dismissed the ad, however, because none of the leading men in her pictures had ever smoked a pipe.

You see, it may be true that she wrote it. It may be *true* that in private life
her fiancé did smoke a pipe. But these truths have little or no significance because

99. Richard Surrey [B. Brooker], 'Shunning Shakespeare,' *Printer's Ink*, (November 1925), 17-20; see also Surrey, 'What Should Copy Writers Read?' *Printer's Ink*, (15 March 1923)

100. Philip E. Spane [B. Brooker], 'Make Advertising Believable,' *Marketing*, 28:3 (4 February 1928), 75

both she and her fiancé *made signs* in thousands of movie palaces that make them out to have been of quite a different character.

You see, known character counts more than truth.¹⁰¹

Advertising appeared in a world that the copywriter could not control, where meaning was fluid and individually interpreted. The copywriter had to pay attention to the suggestive value of words and construct his ads in such a way that they triggered the reader's values rather than her reason. As such, both the reason-why and the behaviourist approaches to copy could be faulted. Both relied on a mechanistic view of 'human nature' that failed to account for the fact that 'Life is not *subject* to mathematics.'¹⁰²

Given such an interest in copy, it was inevitable that Brooker would look at the theories proffered by the psychologists. He did so in a book published in 1930, that brought together themes from several years' worth of articles and editorials. As part of his preparation, Brooker read every book on the psychology of advertising that he could get his hands on. His conclusion? No one else should ever have to do the same. To Brooker's mind, psychology had one great advantage: it asked copywriters to think about the consumer's needs and aspirations, the consumer's values. To write copy that would engage the reader's attention, it was not enough that the copywriter simply describe the product. It was not enough to relate the care in its manufacture, its unique qualities, its beneficial effects, or its price. These aspects of the product reflected the concerns of the manufacturer and distributor. To engage the reader's attention, the copywriter had to evoke something that would be of interest to the reader: the reader herself. Brooker demonstrated what he meant:

People need soap.

People *want* good complexions.

101. Ibid., 76

102. Ibid., 75

Why do they want good complexions?

To attract the opposite sex - to retain the love and admiration of their relatives and friends - to achieve popularity!

Do you see what happens when you start to *ask questions in the right order?*

You are led immediately away from your product and your own business to where the prospect lives.¹⁰³

Thus, in so far as psychological theories asked copywriters to think in terms of how their creations played with the readers, they were on the right track. Unfortunately, all they offered were abstractions, not concrete suggestions upon which to construct a campaign. Brooker returned to his theme to make his point:

Take Popularity for instance. It isn't enough for you to know that people want to be popular. You ought to know why people want to be popular.

Popularity is an abstract term, and that won't do in advertising.

You must discovery what they will *get out* of popularity in terms of *living!*¹⁰⁴

The advantage of psychology was not therefore a prescriptive set of rules governing the writing of copy. It was a habit of mind that led one to ask the right questions and to seek useful information before starting the creative process.

Brooker's writings on copy and advertising, for their depth of analysis, set him apart from most of his contemporaries in Canada. Nonetheless, he was not dismissed for his ruminations. He was in high demand. During the time that he wrote *Copy Technique*, he was a consultant with McKim Limited. The year that it was published, he was courted by J.J. Gibbons Limited and a new

103. Richard Surrey [B. Brooker], *Copy Technique in Advertising* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1930), 18

104. Surrey, 26

agency known as Cockfield, Brown.¹⁰⁵ Five years later he was hired by MacLaren Advertising, where he retired as a vice-president in 1955.¹⁰⁶

Conclusions

Psychology offered adworkers three things. In very practical terms, it offered a basic training for rookies in the advertising trade. Where men such as Barnum or Powers may have had an intuitive feel for the mind of the reading public, not everyone was as perceptive as they. Hundreds of people tried their hand at advertising once the industry took off after 1900. For many, without any practical experience in writing or sales, the sudden raft of psychology texts must have provided valuable guidance, a starting point from which to develop their own ideas. And for those who did have some experience, the works of Gale, Scott, Hollingsworth, and their peers appeared to confirm their best instincts. On these two points alone, George French was willing to accept that psychology had contributed something useful. For him, psychology had simply become a way 'to do systematically, and with certainty of successful results, that which we have been doing blindly and wastefully.'¹⁰⁷

Second, psychology forced all those who took it seriously to consider the readers. This may seem like an obvious point, but it was not necessarily so at the time. The style of advertising prevalent before 1880 was phrased like an announcement, and focused on the product. Such ads may have noted the recent arrival and therefore availability of the product, its quality, or its price; they may have noted the competence and efficiency of the manufacturer, or the cordiality and prestige of the retailer. Either way, the focus was on the product, its manufacture or its distribution. By examining the cognitive processes of the reader, psychology asked the copywriter to think in terms

105. University of Manitoba Archives, Bertram Brooker papers, b.1, f.9, B. Brooker to L. Fitzgerald, 17 [October 1930]; *Toronto Globe*, 24 November 1930

106. Dennis Reid, *Bertram Brooker* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1979)

107. George French, 'An Ad. Man's Qualifications,' *Economic Advertising*, 5:7 (July 1912), 41-43

of the prospective consumer. Although there were campaigns that had done this prior to Gale, the debates over the usefulness of psychology made the importance of the reader/consumer explicit. Again, this was something that could inform equally both the 'emotion' and the reason-why styles.

Finally, the trade's interest in psychology, particularly before World War I, meshed well with the larger movement towards the elevation of their work from a suspect commercial practice to a indispensable and professional component of modern business. In the publishers' demands for fixed rates of commission, and the advertisers and agencies' demands for audited circulations, there was both an economically motivated drive to reduce the risk of financial failure and a widespread attempt to eliminate the uncouth, the dishonest, and the unnecessary underside of the trade. They sought to place their respective tasks on a firm business basis. In their flirtation with psychology, they revealed a desire to systematize the content as well as the structure of their business. They all sought a scientific demonstration that what they did had an impact on the affairs of commerce, that what they did really mattered in the ways that they thought that it did. With the findings of the academic psychologists, even novice adworkers could gain a certain degree of assurance that they were experts in persuasion, and that their expertise was rooted in something tangible and verifiable.

Taken altogether, the Ad Club movement, the agency agreements, and the discovery of psychology were three manifestations of the same urge: the desire to gain a higher social status for the advertising trade. It would be a misnomer to call this professionalization. All three attempted to root the respectability of advertising deep within the world of commerce rather than the learned professions. Just as the agency agreements created a definite place for the agency within the publishing industry, and the Truth in Advertising movement provided a philosophical rationale for the role of their trade within the economy at large, psychological theories provided a scientific rationale for their copywriting techniques. Even if the changes undertaken were ignored or dismissed by the reading public, they became important to the maintenance of the trade's own self-respect.

Chapter 5 : Market Research & the Management of Risk

Advertising, of course, is no longer the haphazard affair of years gone by. It has been reduced to a science. It is in the hands of experts, men and women who have devoted years to the study of the popular appeal and who know how to construct announcements that will strike the imagination of the public.

Canadian Advertising Data magazine, 1928¹

Joseph Tetley & Company began importing a high-quality blended tea into Canada in 1889. When it did, the English company asked a Toronto agent to handle its introduction, someone who knew the Canadian market and how best to exploit it. Tetley asked T. Eaton & Company.² Eaton himself handled the correspondence with Tetley's, and with them he shared his growing knowledge of market conditions around Toronto. Tetley's tea, he felt, was of a very high calibre. Such teas had not previously been imported into Ontario in large quantities. Quite the opposite, Eaton felt that the country was 'full of rubbish' where tea was concerned. The general public could not recognize a good tea when it had one. How did Eaton know? He set up a table offering fresh cups of tea to all and sundry who were browsing through his Toronto store:

We have opened a little stand for brewing tea Our Canadian people have not this previous knowledge, and give some very funny expressions when they taste it. They enjoy the fragrance arising from it when infused, but cannot give any definite opinion

1. 'Advertising – 'The Common Language of Trade,'' *Canadian Advertising Data*, 1:1 (July 1928), 76

2. This episode is briefly described by Joy L. Santink, *Timothy Eaton and the Rise of His Department Store* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1990), 168-169.

whether they like the taste or not, having never tasted the like before.³

Here was a classic problem in marketing: how to introduce a new consumer product into an existing marketplace?

Tetley & Co. proposed one solution. They thought it wise to introduce a second-grade blend with a lower price alongside the flagship line. Presumably, they hoped to establish a foothold for the Tetley brand name in the existing market for lower-grade teas, and then gradually win converts to the higher-priced blend. Eaton opposed this strategy. Rather than forging a useful association for the Tetley name, the lower-grade tea would negate the effort spent marketing the higher-grade tea. If there was nothing outstanding about the tea, it would be difficult to cultivate any brand loyalty among consumers, let alone encourage them to try a more expensive version. Eaton was blunt in his response: 'If you still think it wise to put in lower qualities we would not care to invest much money in advertising, as the name 'Tetley's Tea' put onto lower grades would reduce it to the level of lower stuff.'⁴ 'The moment you drop the quality,' he added in a second letter, 'you lose the confidence of the people, and unless you have a superior quality to talk about it is next thing to useless to say a word about it.'⁵ In short, if Tetley & Co. followed their plan, Eaton would stock it, but decline any investment of his own money in its advertising and sales.

Eaton's alternative was very simple. The public had to be told that the Tetley brand name stood for a higher-quality tea. There were two ways to do this. First, the tea stand within the store itself would familiarize casual shoppers with the new tea, and the store gave out 10,000 trade cards and 20,000 leaflets for shoppers to take home.⁶ This could be continued. More important, however, would be advertising. Although he traditionally used the daily press to advertise his store, Eaton

3. PAO, T. Eaton records, Ser.6, b.1, f.POC-Tetley's Tea, [T. Eaton] to P.K. Read, 23 December 1889

4. Ibid., Eaton to Read, 23 December 1889

5. Ibid., Eaton to J. Tetley & Co., 26 December 1889

6. Ibid., Eaton to Read, 23 December 1889

proposed to place Tetley's ads in a group of magazines known as the Butterick quarterlies. These three magazines ran dress patterns that appealed to fashion-conscious women.⁷ With this one decision, Eaton consciously made women tea-drinkers the target of the campaign. Further, he proposed a simultaneous campaign based upon his experience at the tea stand. Although many of 'our Canadian people' were non-committal in their response to the tea, Eaton found that 'the English-speaking or Old Country people appreciate it very much, it reminds them too what they have been accustomed to drink in England.' Here was an opening. He would cultivate the patronage of English immigrants to Canada first while developing the tastes of the native born. To do so, he would again pass over the Toronto dailies in favour of a selection of weeklies 'largely in the country where Old Country people are located.'⁸

In the space of two letters, Timothy Eaton demonstrated why he was at the cutting edge of retailing in Ontario. He was conscious of the existing products with which the new product would have to compete. He was also conscious of the investment that would have to be made to create a niche for the product. In the tea stand, he had a means by which he could both introduce shoppers to the new item and survey their responses to it. From their responses, he devised a strategy that would overcome consumer resistance to an unfamiliar item, in a way that would start with a sympathetic audience. This strategy hinged upon a recognition that the market was not a monolithic mass, but divided by gender and ethnicity. To reach these markets effectively, he had at his command a knowledge of the relevant media. In his use of trade cards and circulars we might wonder if he was not also consciously targeting a specific class of consumers, a class which did not read newspapers and fashion magazines. Through the acquisition of the Butterick rights, he also achieved a degree of forward integration in his selling practices by controlling an important source

7. Ibid., Eaton to Tetley & Co., 26 December 1889

8. Ibid., Eaton to Read, 23 December 1889

of consumer information. As great as his understanding of retailing was, it is also readily apparent that Eaton had an exceptional grasp of marketing.

'Marketing' is a concept with a variety of meanings. At its core, however, is a concern for the movement of goods between the producer and the consumer. Its study is concerned with getting the goods to market. This can involve every aspect of that movement, including the obvious material components such as packaging, transportation, and retailing, but also such intangible components as the consumers' knowledge of a product and their attitudes towards it. A marketing strategy for any product will take into account every relevant aspect of the movement of the product to the consumer. Its goal would be to get the goods to the widest suitable market at the lowest per-unit cost. Seen in this light, advertising forms only one part of a larger process. It is asked to fulfil only the ideological aspects of the marketing strategy. That said, advertising is undeniably that strategy's most visible aspect.⁹

Twenty-five years after his handling of the Tetley account, a new group of service providers within the publishing industry would consider Eaton's technique out-moded – a relic of a previous, unscientific age of commerce. This group conducted market research, a new set of business services that handled precisely the same kinds of questions that Eaton had, but with far greater concern for method. A marketer might have wondered how representative the shoppers in Eaton's store were of the tea-drinking public. He might also have asked how Eaton knew that those who liked the tea were from the Old Country (by their accents, perhaps). For that matter, how did Eaton know that more new Canadians of British birth lived in areas outside of the city than in the city itself? And were there truly enough of them to drive sales until the rest of the population tried the new tea? These were the kinds of questions that a market researcher might well ask, and try to answer before

9. These definitions are based upon the those of the Definitions Committee of the American Marketing Association. 'Report of the Definitions Committee,' *Journal of Marketing*, 13:2 (October 1948), 202-217.

advising a client on how best to sell a product. Rather than working from impressions and assumptions, however, the marketer would offer something decidedly more concrete: facts. And such facts would be offered in the guise of cold, hard numbers.

The advent of market research offered adworkers something that psychology had not: a definite set of tools that could be used to create better advertising. The psychology of Scott, Hollingsworth, and Watson was always described in terms of its practical implications, but most times it was a stretch for adworkers to identify the value of psychological investigation in the creation of actual campaigns. It provided a way of rationalizing the cognitive processes of readers, but no way of interpreting how these affected any one person's reading of an actual advertisement. On the matter of winning attention, for example, Harlow Gale and J.R. Bone had arrived at completely different conclusions about the placement of an advertisement on a page -- and both had used 'psychological' reasoning. So long as this subjective element remained within the analytical framework of the psychological method, its ability to provide the advertising trade with a scientific foundation remained seriously in doubt.

By contrast, the authority of market research was rooted in something far more concrete: mathematics. Market research, or more precisely, the statistical data that market research created, appeared to be unquestionably sound to most adworkers. Such data did not represent intangible thoughts and brain patterns -- at least, not at first -- but quantifiable factors in the material world which affected consumer purchasing decisions. No longer would managers have to base crucial decisions on their impressions and guess-work concerning the market for their goods. Now, the market could be studied in depth and all of the relevant information could be placed at their fingertips. Theoretically, management would become a matter of calculation.

That said, the rationale and techniques of market research were slow to emerge. They did not spring forth fully formed, but developed in response to the needs of publishers and advertisers

after 1900. Nor were these groups entirely responsible for the techniques to which they laid claim. Rather, they drew upon developments in a variety of fields, encompassing such things as economics, statistics, sociology, and psychology.

Roots of Market Research Practice: Historiography

Tracking the introduction and development of market research is not as easy as tracing the impact of psychology. There was no breakthrough book of the stature of Walter Dill Scott's. Perhaps this is one reason why the field had not been examined with much rigour until relatively recently. Ronald Fullerton, an American business professor, has reviewed the history of marketing as presented in college textbooks and found that each shared the same assumption: that during the period between 1870 and 1930, American manufacturers were primarily concerned with production. It was their job to create goods for the buying public, and not much thought was given to how that public was composed or why it bought the goods it did. Such knowledge was the realm of wholesalers, who actually handled distribution. Until 1930, so the story went, a constant stream of orders obviated any need on the part of manufacturers to involve themselves in that process. This situation changed only with the Great Depression, when orders suddenly and dramatically stopped. Then, manufacturers took direct control of the distribution of their own goods to protect the integrity of their market share. Only after the catastrophic experience of the Depression did market research come to occupy a significant part of business planning and advance to the sophisticated level it has since attained.¹⁰

As Fullerton points out, this explanation of events offers a gross oversimplification of the times. While wholesalers did command a great deal of power in the commercial world, retailers and

10. Ronald A. Fullerton, 'How Modern is Modern Marketing? Marketing's Evolution and the Myth of the 'Production Era,' *Journal of Marketing*, 52 (January 1988), 108-125. This view is also evident in popular histories of the period; see for example Ted Herriott, *The Canadian Heritage Label Collection* (Mississauga, Ontario: Purpleville, 1982), 28-30.

manufacturers were rarely pleased with the arrangement.¹¹ One man who worked in the Canadian wholesale trade at the turn of the century, C.L. Burton, noted that this mediating role conferred a great deal of power on a few men:

... it is difficult to appreciate the power of the wholesaler who ruled our world within the lifetime of men like me.

The wholesaler told the manufacturer what to make. The wholesaler told the retailer what to sell. He was the kingpin of commerce. The public took what it was offered.¹²

Burton may have over-dramatized the extent of the wholesaler's power, but his concerns were those of a great many working in both retailing and manufacturing.¹³ Further, some firms questioned what value the wholesaler's services added to the goods traded. The wholesale system did reduce the cost of distribution by rationalizing the processes involved, but many wondered if the wholesalers were not acquiring an unearned profit from the labour of manufacturers and the salesmanship of retailers. As such, many firms sought means either to limit the middleman's power or to eliminate him altogether.¹⁴

Given these considerations, Fullerton dismisses the textbooks' version of marketing history out of hand. Not only were manufacturers developing marketing strategies in the 1800s, but the growth of full-service advertising agencies in itself signalled that increasingly sophisticated strategies were being devised. Further, Fullerton notes that there were economic recessions long before 1930. If a catastrophic event had been necessary to prod manufacturers into adopting marketing practices,

11. Fullerton, 113-121

12. C.L. Burton, *A Sense of Urgency: Memoirs of a Canadian Merchant* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, 1952), 41

13. For a comprehensive discussion of the Canadian scene, see David Monod, *Store Wars: Shopkeepers and the Culture of Mass Marketing, 1890-1939* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1996).

14. Vincent P. Norris, 'Advertising History – According to the Textbooks,' *Journal of Advertising*, 9:3 (1980), 3-11

there were several previous to the Great Crash when that could have occurred. Fullerton observes there was in fact a tremendous amount of innovation in the fields of marketing and salesmanship in the late 1800s.¹⁵

The situation was little different in Canada, as Burton's comments suggest.¹⁶ Until the late nineteenth century, retailers such as Timothy Eaton had been that part of the commercial world most familiar with the buying public. Consumers relied upon their local shopkeepers to inform them about new products and to point out the relative merits of competing items. In this way, the manufacturers of consumer items were heavily dependent on retailers, not only to stock their products, but to think well of them when shoppers came to call.¹⁷ That said, where manufacturers sought sales outside of their home market, their dealings with retailers tended to be mediated by wholesalers. With the wholesaler conducting distribution, there were two layers of commerce separating manufacturers from the ultimate consumer. Once the product left their factories, it appeared as though the manufacturers' responsibility for their products ended. Nonetheless, they too pursued various strategies to increase their control over the means of distribution.

Once the parcel post system was established in Canada, manufacturers of small articles could remove the middleman by making their goods available through the mail. Once again, however, the most noted success at the mail order business in Canada was not a manufacturer, but Timothy Eaton, who expanded his influence outside of Toronto and into the rural hinterlands of Ontario by distributing a catalogue of his goods. Eaton's success then provided a model for other businesses to follow.¹⁸

15. Fullerton, 108-125

16. A comprehensive discussion of this era can be found in Monod, 99-148; see also G.D. Taylor and P.A. Baskerville, *A Concise History of Business in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford, 1994), 313-316.

17. Monod, 54-98; Susan P. Benson, *Counter Cultures: Saleswomen, Managers, and Customers in American Department Stores, 1890-1940* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois, 1988), 75-123

18. Santink, ch.6

Using the mails might have helped the manufacturers, but it did not extricate retailers from the clutches of the wholesalers. Instead, their main recourse was to increase their sales volume to such an extent that they could demand better prices from the middlemen. Timothy Eaton found that the size of his turnover and the credit resources of his business placed him on a par with many wholesale firms. Knowing this, he was able to deal directly with manufacturers at comparable rates.¹⁹ This sort of direct dealing could potentially lower the unit cost of the product by eliminating the middleman. As such, it was also favoured by manufacturers, who extended it to Eaton's rivals in the department store line. Early in the twentieth century, smaller retailers began to combine into chains to provide themselves with the same purchasing clout that the department stores enjoyed.²⁰

For their own part, manufacturers seeking greater control over the distribution of their product found they could do so if they had a strong corporate identity. At a time when many common staples were sold unpackaged and in bulk, shoppers had no idea whose factory had produced the goods they bought. This state of affairs greatly helped the wholesalers. If consumers had no loyalty to the products of any one manufacturer, wholesalers could simply look for the lowest-priced source of any particular good. If the consumers did demand that a particular brand of that good be made available, then the manufacturer could exert a stronger hand over the price and output of his wares.²¹ J.F. Mackay noted in *Economic Advertising* that 'The business of the future is to be a war of brands. The customer will buy the goods he can identify by their trade-mark.'²² Hence, the conscious development of brand names and trademark symbols was a marketing device purposefully intended to bridge the gap between manufacturers and consumers. The 'Christie Girl' was a perfect

19. Santink, 74-75; Monod, 120-121

20. Monod, 121-123; Humfrey Michell, *The Co-operative Store in Canada* (Kingston: Jackson, 1916)

21. This provided the talking point in two of the Advertising Advertising ads: 'You Are on the Bench,' *Toronto World*, 2 April 1912; 'Who is Your Customer?' *Toronto World*, 14 May 1912

22. J.F. MacKay, 'Why These Imports?' *Economic Advertising*, 1:10 (June 1909), 12

example of this phenomenon. With her sparkling white dress and doe-eyed smile, she was 'the symbol of biscuit purity.' According to a puff in *Economic Advertising*, the Christie Girl was 'representative of the 300 girls employed in the brightest, cleanest and most modern biscuit factory in all Canada.' In this case, the trademark was an image of the ideal producer herself.²³ By 1905, trade journals and business textbooks were encouraging this trend, and spinning theories on the proper means of creating catchy and memorable names and logos for new products.²⁴ 'Kodak,' the name adopted by the American manufacturer George Eastman for his portable camera, was universally acclaimed in this regard.²⁵

To return to Fullerton's thesis, then: one could almost accuse him of establishing a straw man, but for the fact that all of the college texts he examines do share the same outlook. The explanation for this might be found in the fact that the authors of these texts draw upon the writings of the marketers who emerged in the 1930s, who *themselves* proclaimed that they were the first to offer systematized approaches to market research and planning. If the focus is placed on systemization, then perhaps the textbooks are partially right. However, it might be more accurate to suggest that the specialists of the 1930s were the first to theorize the practices of market research - - as opposed to the concept of marketing itself -- and hence felt as though they had made the first significant achievements in the field. Copywriting was initially the task of manufacturers, retailers, and editors, but was theorized by freelance copywriters and agents; similarly, marketing had been undertaken by manufacturers, retailers, and agencies, but was theorized by the new breed of market researchers and academics. Like the advertising agents, professional marketers saw a niche for a

23. 'The Christie Girl,' *Economic Advertising*, 1:11 (July 1909), 36, 38; see also Vincent P. Norris, 'Advertising History - According to the Textbooks,' *Journal of Advertising*, 9:3 (1980), 3-11

24. See for instance E.E. Calkins and R. Holden, *Modern Advertising* [1905] (New York: Garland, 1985), 47; 'What About Your Trademark?' *Economic Advertising*, 2:5 (January 1910), 15-16

25. C.M. Pasmore, 'Naming the New Product,' *Marketing*, 28:10 (12 May 1928), 358

particular type of business service, and stepped into it.²⁶

Statistics, demographics, and social planning

As previously mentioned, the function of market research is to provide concrete information for the preparation of marketing strategies. Without accurate information, there is always a danger that the best laid plans will *gang aglay*. While psychology had offered planners a perspective on the creation of advertising, it was quintessentially subjective in its orientation. Insofar as it asked copywriters to write from the consumer's perspective towards the product, it asked copywriters to think in terms of the *individual* consumer. The market, on the other hand, was composed of *millions* of individual consumers, each with their own needs and aspirations. Market research promised to condense this mass into a body of readily comprehensible information. More often than not, it did so by analyzing target populations in terms of quantifiable characteristics, and by describing the results via statistics. That said, it should be noted that market researchers were not the first to grapple with the statistical analysis of entire populations. Rather, the intellectual and practical antecedents of their trade can be found in the nineteenth-century development of statistical theory and social surveys. Canadians made few original contributions to these developments, but they engaged the new ideas just the same.

Initially, the collection and manipulation of statistics was intrinsically tied into the functions of the state. Through the late 1700s, various state agencies in Europe and North America began to collect data regarding their own fields of expertise. The most noteworthy undertaking in this regard was the institution of national censuses. By the 1860s, most European and North American governments had adopted the census as a means of tracking people, capital, and agricultural and

26. See for instance the regular column 'What's New in Marketing Research' in the *Journal of Marketing* when it first began publication, in 1937.

industrial production, through national and international economies.²⁷ The numbers produced by these inventories were understood to represent objective material realities; they were significant in and of themselves because they represented concrete, quantifiable objects within the territorial bounds of the state. With such knowledge in hand, policy makers believed they could rise above partizan politics, and fashion social strategies with predictable outcomes. Such ideas found their expression through the utilitarian philosophy of Jeremy Bentham as well as the positivist sociology of Auguste Comte. The ideal process of policy formation should have been reducible to a simple formula, a 'social calculus.'²⁸

By 1900, there was a popular explosion of interest in statistical information. For the general public, such numbers carried a fascination that went well beyond their utility in the planning process. They became a source of pride and consternation in the endless rivalries between industries, cities, and nations. The works of Michael Mulhall provide an fascinating case in point. An Irish journalist, Mulhall had a global curiosity which drove him to compile enormous collections of statistics. His books, with titles such as *The Dictionary of Statistics* (1883) and *The History of Prices since the Year 1850* (1885), passed through several editions and were eagerly sought by Victorian readers.²⁹ Such books had their counterparts in the Canadas, where titles such as Tiger Dunlop's *Statistical Sketches of Upper Canada* (1832) and Alexander Munro's *Statistics of British North America* (1862) could be

27. Theodore M. Porter, *The Rise of Statistical Thinking, 1820-1900* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1986), 16-39; George Emery, *The Facts of Life: The Social Construction of Vital Statistics, Ontario 1869-1952* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1993), 17-30

28. Porter, 16-39; Michel Foucault, 'Governmentality,' *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, ed. G. Burchell et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1991), 87-104; P. Corrigan and D. Sayer, *The Great Arch: English State Formation as Cultural Revolution* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 134-135

29. Michael Mulhall, *The Dictionary of Statistics* 4ed. [1883] (London: Routledge, 1899); *The History of Prices Since the Year 1850*, (London: Longmans, Green, 1885). On Mulhall, see *The Dictionary of National Biography*, v.22, eds. L. Stephen and S. Lee (London: Oxford UP, 1968), 1079-1080.

found.³⁰ This trend was also manifest in the annual publication of the *Canada Year Book*. First published at Confederation, it brought together in one convenient volume figures collected by several different government departments.³¹

During the progressive era, statistics became a powerful resource to those challenging the policy options of governments and corporate capital. The rationale undergirding the use of statistical investigation by churches, labour groups, public health advocates, and various other charitable societies was the same as that supporting the state's use of such figures. Nonetheless, these groups deployed their investigative tools in far different realms of modern life, where the statistical machinery of the state did not look.³² The pivotal person behind this movement was Charles Booth, a steamship owner in London, England. Distressed by the unending poverty of working-class London, Booth undertook a massive survey of the city's underclass to document its material and spiritual condition. The result was a seventeen-volume report, entitled *The Life and Labour of the People of London*, published in stages between 1889 and 1901.³³ The organization required by this undertaking put Booth at the forefront of survey research, a position acknowledged by the reproduction of his methods both in Britain and North America.³⁴ Limited studies were undertaken

30. Dunlop, *Statistical Sketches of Upper Canada* (1832); Munro, *Statistics of British North America* (1962); see also Carl F. Klinck, *Literary History of Canada: Canadian Literature in English* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1965), 142, 234.

31. Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *The Dominion Bureau of Statistics: Its Origins, Constitution, and Organization* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1936), 13

32. Emery, 17-30; Paul Craven, *An Impartial Umpire: Industrial Relations and the Canadian State, 1900-1911* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1980), 208-240; N. Christie and M. Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity: The Protestant Churches and Social Welfare in Canada, 1900-1940* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1996), 3-36

33. Charles Booth, *The Life and Labour of the People of London*, 17 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1889-1903); see also Kevin Bales, 'Charles Booth's survey of *Life and Labour of the People of London*, 1889-1903,' *The social survey in historical perspective*, ed. M. Bulmer et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991), 66-110; Rosemary O'Day, *Mr Charles Booth's Inquiry* (London: Hambledon, 1993)

34. Jean M. Converse, *Survey Research in the United States: Roots and Emergence, 1890-1960* (Berkeley, California: University of California, 1967), 11-53

in Canada, such as C.S. Clark's social survey of Toronto in 1898, but it would be another thirty years before a survey as comprehensive as Booth's was undertaken in Canada.³⁵

There was a key difference between the work of a government agency and a private citizen such as Booth or Clark. Bureaucrats had the resources and authority of the state behind them, where social reformers did not. Every department within the emerging bureaucracy of the nineteenth century state had to account for its activities throughout the year. As such, records-keeping became a matter of course in their day-to-day operations; a certain standard of competence and accuracy was to be expected. Further, these bureaucrats had the force of law behind them, which prompted compliance when dealing with private citizens and corporations. Social reformers could not make the same claim. The quality of their data collection procedures hinged upon their ability to manage and verify information given voluntarily rather than through bureaucratic procedures or official requests.³⁶

Within universities, statistics were incorporated into several disciplines in the emerging social sciences. In general, most academics adopted quantitative data analysis for much the same reason: they were each seeking a scientific *epistémé* for their work. As historian David Mackenzie has pointed out, statistics has ever been that 'discipline most frequently employed to 'harden' the 'soft' sciences.'³⁷ Further, many of the key academics involved in the adoption of statistical analysis were also committed to the social reform movements that were pioneering the use of surveys. At the leading edge of statistical theory itself were a group of British mathematicians who were active in the eugenics movement. Their work with vital statistics prompted a new line of research into the

35. C.S. Clark, *Of Toronto the Good: A Social Study* (Montreal: Toronto Publishing, 1898); Marlene Shore, *The Science of Social Redemption: McGill, The Chicago School, and the Origins of Social Research in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1987)

36. Converse, 54-86

37. Donald A. MacKenzie, *Statistics in Britain, 1865-1930: The Social Construction of Scientific Knowledge* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 1981), 1

application of mathematical concepts to real-world numbers. The most noted of this group were Francis Galton and Karl Pearson, who developed the first reliable theories regarding correlation in the 1890s.³⁸

Within theology departments, the combination of urban ministries and social survey work nurtured the development of social work and sociology programmes in Canada. This was particularly evident in the institution of settlement houses. Although their impact on the lives of working class clients may be questioned, such centres provided academics with living laboratories where continuing sources of data could be found.³⁹ Notable in this regard were Toynbee House in London and Hull House in Chicago. In 1893, the first settlement house in Canada was established by alumni, staff, and students from McGill University. The experience gained through this programme led to the creation of a Department of Social Study and Training at McGill twenty-five years later.⁴⁰

A similar combination of empirical research and practical application led to the formation of the first departments of psychology in Canada. E.A. Bott's rehabilitation work with returned soldiers during World War I led to the medicalization of psychology at the University of Toronto; Ronald MacEachern of the University of Alberta was involved in the eugenics movement in that province; and William D. Tait at McGill investigated the field of industrial psychology.⁴¹ As with those engaged in social work, the research and test methods employed in these studies frequently depended

38. MacKenzie, 15-50; Porter, 128-130; Helen M. Walker, *Studies in the History of Statistical Method* (Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins, 1929), 92-141

39. Martin Bulmer, 'The decline of the Social Survey Movement and the rise of American empirical sociology,' *The social survey in historical perspective*, ed. M. Bulmer et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991), 291-315

40. Shore, 24-67

41. George A. Ferguson, 'Psychology at McGill,' *History of Academic Psychology in Canada* (Toronto: C.J. Hogrefe, 1982), 36-45; C.R. Myers, 'Psychology at Toronto,' *Ibid.*, 68-99; Thomas M. Nelson, 'Psychology at Alberta,' *Ibid.*, 192-219; T. Copp and B. McAndrew, *Battle Exhaustion: Soldiers and Psychiatrists in the Canadian Army, 1925-1945* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1990); Allan D. English, *The Cream of the Crop: Canadian Aircrew, 1939-1945* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1996)

on information acquired through survey methods. In tandem with sociologists, psychologists contributed the most to the development of survey techniques after 1910. While statisticians concentrated on the mathematical manipulation of statistics and the integrity of their formulas, psychologists and sociologists developed their own theories on the ability to control factors affecting data at its source. In particular, these scholars problematized the wording of survey questions, and debated the relevance of sample size in the acquisition of representative data.⁴² On these questions, American scholars took the lead during the 1910s, using as their point of reference the pioneering work of Harlow Gale.⁴³

Gale's work provided one of the first links between the emerging social sciences and the emerging study of markets. The other link was forged in the field of economics, and here too American scholars took a leading role.⁴⁴ A number of political economists had begun to consider the role of distribution in the operation of national economies. Their attention eventually turned to the institutions which managed distribution – firms such as wholesalers, credit agencies, warehouses, railways, and retailers – and the functions that they performed. Although this topic rapidly gained acceptance at a number of universities after 1890, two in particular led the way: the University of Wisconsin and Harvard University.⁴⁵ At Wisconsin, economist Richard T. Ely began investigating the marketing problems faced by the state's farmers in the 1880s. At Harvard, the study of marketing came into its own after the foundation of the Graduate School of Business in 1908. The academic talent drawn to the new school – including Ely and F.W. Taussig – was greatly assisted

42. Alain Desrosières, 'The part in relation to the whole: how to generalize? The prehistory of representative sampling,' *The social survey in historical perspective*, ed. M. Bulmer et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991), 217-244

43. Converse, 54-86; Gale's work is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

44. Robert Bartels, *The Development of Marketing Thought* (Homewood, Illinois: Irwin, 1962), 47-49

45. D.G. Brian Jones, 'Origins of Marketing Thought' (Queen's: unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, 1987), 70-115, 116-152

by the financial backing of interested patrons. With money from Arch W. Shaw, the publisher of *System* magazine, the school established the Bureau of Business Research in 1911 to develop quantitative measurement techniques specifically geared to marketing problems.⁴⁶

Market research drew upon all of these movements, disciplines, and schools, a fact made starkly evident in the work of Paul T. Cherington. Cherington was hired by Harvard to teach 'commercial organization' -- what became known as 'marketing' -- when the graduate school opened in 1908. He was also actively involved in the research bureau funded by Shaw.⁴⁷ George French, who had regarded the theories of academic psychologists with scepticism, greeted Cherington's work with enthusiasm.⁴⁸ He was not alone. In 1912, the Associated Advertising Clubs of America asked the professor to produce a book on the role of advertising in the distribution process. Two books came of the arrangement: *Advertising as a Business Force* (1913) and *The Advertising Book - 1916* (1916). Each volume was an anthology of articles drawn from American trade papers; each article detailed the problems of a different manufacturer; and each author was a corporate manager or advertising agent.⁴⁹ That said, neither book focused on advertising. Instead, they wandered widely over the entire process of product distribution, from packaging, trade marks, and shipping, to sales staff, wholesalers, and retailers. In so doing, the articles revealed a wide knowledge of surveys, statistics, sociology, and psychology. The businessmen who had written these articles had adapted techniques from the social sciences, which may indicate the growing tendency of university graduates

46. Melvin T. Copeland, *And Mark an Era: The Story of the Harvard Business School* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1958), 209-216

47. Copeland, 209-216

48. George French, *Advertising: The Social and Economic Problem* (New York: Ronald, 1915), 164-166

49. Paul T. Cherington, *Advertising as a Business Force* ([Garden City, New York]: Doubleday, Page, 1913); *The Advertising Book 1916* ([Garden City, New York]: Doubleday, Page, 1916)

to be hired for management positions at this time.⁵⁰ All of them stressed the necessity of fully investigating the marketplace before problems could be met and plans could be drawn. One difference stands out between the two books, however. In 1913, research was described as a novelty; three years later it was an established practice at prestigious firms.⁵¹

Throughout the period under study, the most sophisticated statistical work in Canada remained within the federal civil service. Although academics and adworkers kept in touch with developments south of the border, private sector investment in market research was slow to come. Perhaps this was due to the relative lag in the growth of national distribution, perhaps to the continuing diseconomies of scale between the two countries. Whatever the reason, most adworkers remained spectators to the discussions highlighted by Cherington. Meanwhile, the Dominion government began integrating the statistical work of its various ministries into one department in 1912. To be sure, a cost-conscious government was seeking means to rationalize its expenses, but it also sought means to enhance the over-all expertise and productivity of its statisticians. As such, the new 'Dominion Bureau of Statistics' was given a mandate to explore new services. Robert H. Coats, its new chief, took these instructions to heart. The bureau aggressively developed a niche for itself within government operations, and cultivated relationships with several outside organizations as well.⁵²

The core responsibility of the new Bureau was that of the office from which it had evolved, the Census and Statistics Branch. To this was added responsibility for the collection of data on all of the country's resource industries, agricultural production, electric power, transportation and communication, external trade, employment, and prices. In short, the Bureau was given the

50. Alfred D. Chandler, Jr, *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 1977), 466-468; Paul Craven, *Making a Middle Class: Student Life in English Canada during the Thirties* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1990), 6-19

51. *Advertising as a Business Force*, 3-28, 500-502; *The Advertising Book*, 311-365

52. Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Report 1922, Sessional Papers #10* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1923), 5-7

responsibility to track every macroeconomic field and trend of any consequence to the Canadian economy. Coats explained this amalgamation of interests as follows:

... the fundamental purpose of statistical centralization lies in the fact that its great subjects, such as production, trade, finance, population, etc., are not separate and distinct, but are closely inter-related. ... The statistics of the country, therefore, must be framed to illustrate these relationships.⁵³

When he wrote this, Coats had in mind the legislator seeking to draft government policy. Nonetheless, there was an obvious dividend to be earned by serving the interests of the business community. It was not coincidental that the Bureau was housed in the Department of Trade & Commerce. It was Coats's hope in 1922 to get a monthly review of national statistics out. This, he believed, would be of 'a marked service to the business community.'⁵⁴ It began six years later as the *Monthly Review of Business Statistics*.

From a marketing standpoint, there was a major drawback to the Bureau's information, whether in the *Monthly Review* or elsewhere. All of its statistics regarding the business of the country, like those of its predecessor agencies, privileged production and transportation. It contained no data regarding retailing and consumption. Well into his tenure at the Bureau, Coats's definition of 'marketing' still hinged upon its origins in the distribution of agricultural products -- no small matter in the Canadian economy. Those who desired information on the potential markets for processed foods and manufactured goods, however, would find that the process of extracting useful information from the existing reports was somewhat frustrating. As a reporter for *Marketing* put it, Coats mind 'does not run to jam.' Rather, his bureau was engaged in a much larger project:

It is concerned with building up a logical, exhaustive, and perfectly co-ordinated

53. R.H. Coats, in *Ibid.*, 7

54. R.H. Coats, in *Ibid.*, 9; See also Doug Owram, *The Government Generation: Canadian Intellectuals and the State, 1900-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1986), 131-132

scheme or system of statistics from which jam manufacturers, and the 397 other types of manufacturers included in his classification of trades, can all dig for information with fair prospects of getting what they want.⁵⁵

Ultimately, the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, no matter how sophisticated its operations became or what information it gathered, could only supply marketers with the base statistics for their studies. As Coats clearly knew, every study he undertook had to be justified on the basis of its utility to the government. He could not initiate *ad hoc* projects at the request of every company that wanted industry-specific research done. Further, all of the statistics the bureau handled were of strictly material objects: people, farms, exports, investments, withdrawals -- basically, anything of a quantifiable nature. It could not measure the attitudes or intentions of farmers, workers, and consumers, any more than the publishers could their readers' by looking at circulation figures. This was not a failing, but simply a product of the Bureau's mandate and its position as a government department. That anyone would find fault with its output was an indication that other questions were beginning to be asked, and that a new field of business services was opening.

Periodicals: Demographics, Readership, and Market Segmentation

At the forefront of market research were North America's publishing houses. One might expect that manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers would have pioneered the advancing sophistication of research techniques designed to increase consumer spending. Some did undertake such work.⁵⁶ Nonetheless, after 1900 publishers were by far the most visible in their investigation of markets. In the wake of the revolution in American advertising of the 1890s, publishers sought ever more revenue from advertisers. As competition intensified among the hundreds of periodicals available -- be they

55. 'How The Census Can Help Us Sell,' *Marketing*, 15:22 (15 November 1922), 781

56. Cherington, *The Advertising Book*, 311-312

dailies, weeklies, magazines, religious and farm papers, trade journals, or otherwise – innovative publishers sought means to differentiate their products in the minds of advertisers. For those periodicals with the largest circulations, the task was simple: they could simply assert that advertising in their pages reached the greatest number of possible readers, and thus gave advertisers the greatest exposure possible for their money (Illustration 5.1). For those with less stellar circulations in terms of the mass market, there was an alternative strategy: a publisher could emphasize his paper's leading role in a specialized market rather than its secondary role in the mass market. Advertisers expected some demonstration to support such claims. The most effective means designed was to provide a demographic description of the readers of the periodical.

Publishers had always had a feel for the public who read their sheets. The relationship between an editor and his readers was crucial to the long-term financial success of any publication. No paper could afford to offend its readership for fear of cancelled subscriptions. From the subscriptions themselves, a publisher could get a general sense for the social standing of those his audience; certainly E.E. Sheppard had a high opinion of *Saturday Night* readers (III.5.2) If an editor was not familiar with the names themselves, their street addresses could be equally revealing. Further, every publication was geared to a particular constituency. Most newspapers had an editorial policy defined by party affiliation or social standing, magazines by religious faith or hobby. Editorial policies such as these were the means by which publishers established product differentiation among themselves in the competition for readers. They could just as easily point to the heritage of the periodical in question, the quality of its production standards, or the reputation of its editorial staff. Some did (III.5.3). Nonetheless, the characteristics which sold a periodical to subscribers were not the same which sold space to advertisers. Advertisers were not looking at the quality of the periodical *per se*, but at the quality of its readership.⁵⁷ Once publishers understood this equation,

57. 'The Gamble of Space Buying,' *Economic Advertising*, 4:10 (October 1911), 19-21

the strategies of their advertising solicitors changed dramatically.

The results of these changes were played out in the pages of the advertising trade journals and newspaper directories. *Economic Advertising*, like *Printer's Ink* in the United States, was aimed at the people who commissioned advertising: people such as company presidents, advertising managers, and advertising agents. This audience made the trade papers particularly useful to publishers who were trying to sell their space to these self-same people. Similarly, publishers advertised their periodicals in the newspaper directories issued by advertising agencies. McKim Limited had the longest-running directory in Canada, but at least five others appeared in various forms before 1930.⁵⁸ The number of periodicals in Canada increased dramatically between 1900 and 1914; the coincidental appearance during this time period of these directories and two advertising trade journals makes perfect sense. In Montreal, J.L. François founded a bilingual monthly entitled *Publicité-Publicity*, and likely expected to turn a tidy profit while at the same time promoting his new agency, l'Office de Publicité et du Rédaction Générale.⁵⁹ T. Johnson Stewart and T.J. Tobin, the publishers of *Economic Advertising*, no doubt had similar ambitions when they opened The Letter & Copy Shop in 1908.⁶⁰

Looking at the ads that publishers placed in these journals, then, one gets a very clear idea of how publishers tried to position themselves in the competition for advertising dollars. Before 1900, space-buyers sought the most circulation for the least money in each town where their goods and services were sold. Periodicals, then, could have effectively promoted themselves to national advertisers using little more than their localities and their circulation figures as talking points – as

58. Comprehensive directories were issued by Desbarats Advertising and W.A. Lydiatt. F.E. Fontaine's Canadian Advertising Agency created a list of periodicals published in French in North America. J.J. Gibbons Limited published regular pamphlets of its preferred lists of papers. *The Canadian Almanac* (Toronto: Copp Clark, [1908-1925]) ran a condensed list of newspapers and magazines based on N.W. Ayer & Son's annual newspaper directory.

59. 'Programme,' *Publicité-Publicity*, 1:1 (June 1905), 3

60. 'Straight Talks,' *Economic Advertising*, 1:1 (September 1908), 3

the ad for the *Montreal Star* so ably reveals. After 1900, publishers' emphasis on the quality of their periodicals lost ground to increasingly sophisticated descriptions of their readerships as markets.⁶¹ More often than not, these markets would be identified by four main characteristics: geographical coverage first, followed by language, social standing, then gender. This breakdown mirrored the concerns of advertisers, and moved from purely material considerations to ideological considerations in the segmentation of the market. The geographical coverage of the periodical would be the first concern, simply because no firm intentionally wasted advertising dollars by placing its notices in a field where it had no distribution (III.5.4, 5.5).

The language of periodicals was primarily a concern in the province of Quebec. There were precious few periodicals published in French outside of that province during the period under review (see Table 1.2). There, however, advertisers of products and services which were not language-specific (such as tinned foods, automobiles, or clothing, as opposed to books, sheet music, or recordings), and who wanted comprehensive coverage of the province, had to advertise in two papers in several regions. An enigmatic ad for *L'Evenement de Québec* asserted that 'QUEBEC is very definitely NOT a one-newspaper market!' but one wonders if its perceived competition was the English-language Quebec *Chronicle* or the French-language *La Presse* (III.5.5). After 1910, the scene became more complicated when recent immigrants began publishing newspapers and magazines in their own native tongues, neither English nor French; these papers appeared simultaneously in the West, Northern Ontario, and the two largest metropolitan areas, Montreal and Toronto.⁶² For the sake of economy and efficiency, space-buyers would have to gauge the prospective value of each

61. Jean de Bonville, *La Presse Québécoise de 1884 à 1914: Genèse d'un média de masse* (Quebec City: Université Laval, 1988), 326-329

62. Watson Kirkconnell, 'The European-Canadians in Their Press,' in Canadian Historical Association, *Report* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1940), 85-92; Victor Turek, *The Polish-Language Press in Canada* (Toronto: Polish Alliance, 1962), 17-39; Paul Rutherford, *A Victorian Authority: The Daily Press in Late Nineteenth-Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto), 41-42

Illustration 5.1

High circulation as a talking point.

From McKim Limited, *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 2ed.
(Montreal: McKim, 1899), 261.

OFFICIAL FIGURES

FOUR LEADING PAPERS OF CANADA

ONE MONTREAL PAPER EQUALS ALL THE
OTHERS COMBINED.

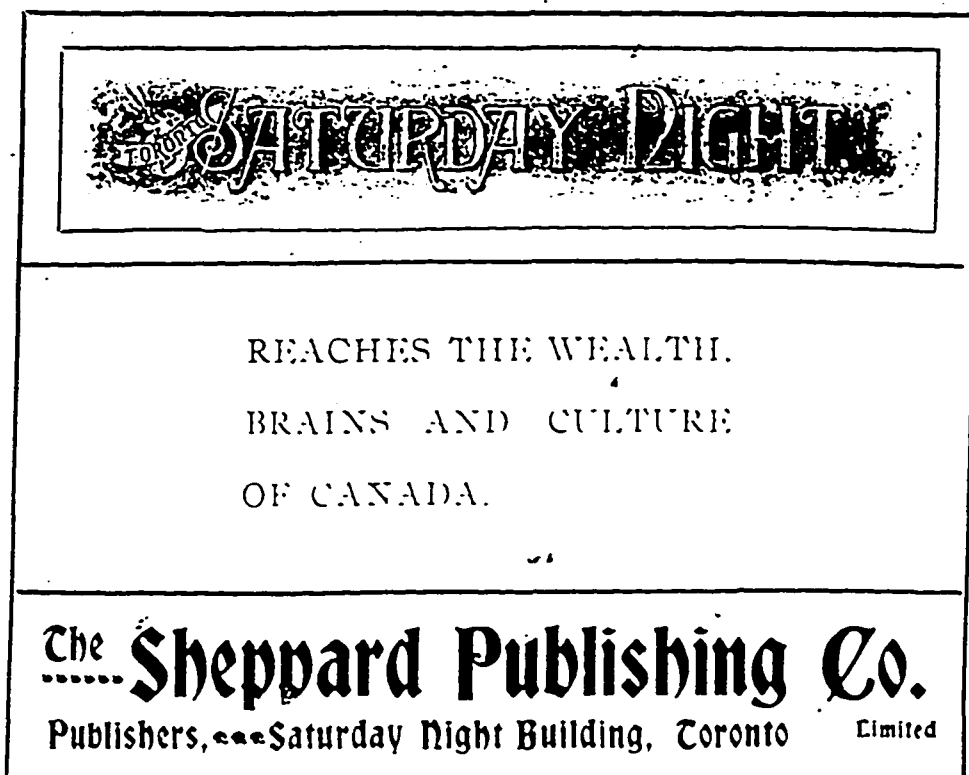
Montreal Daily Star	51,500	} 154,000
Montreal Weekly Star <small>(The Family Herald and Weekly Star)</small>	102,500	
Toronto Daily Globe	34,805	} 57,805
Toronto Weekly Globe	23,000	
Toronto Daily Mail	30,500	} 49,500
Toronto Weekly Mail	19,000	
Montreal Daily Witness	14,500	} 43,500
Montreal Weekly Witness	29,000	

In singling out the Star as the leading representative paper of Canada it is no disparagement of great papers like the Toronto "Globe" and "Mail", both of which readily concede the Star's superlative position.

Illustration 5.2

Elitism as a talking point.

From McKim Limited, *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 3ed.
(Montreal: McKim, 1901), 48.



The advertisement is enclosed in a rectangular border. At the top, the words "TORONTO SATURDAY NIGHT" are written in a decorative, stylized font. Below this, the text "REACHES THE WEALTH. BRAINS AND CULTURE OF CANADA." is centered. At the bottom, the publisher's name "The Sheppard Publishing Co." is written in a large, bold, serif font, followed by "Publishers, 222 Saturday Night Building, Toronto Limited" in a smaller font.

TORONTO SATURDAY NIGHT

REACHES THE WEALTH.
BRAINS AND CULTURE
OF CANADA.

The Sheppard Publishing Co.
Publishers, 222 Saturday Night Building, Toronto Limited

Illustration 5.3

Quality of the periodical itself as a talking point.

From McKim Limited, *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 4ed.
(Montreal: McKim, 1905), 89.



The "Old Home Paper"



Every village, hamlet and rural district surrounding the city of London receives its bundle of copies of its tried and favorite newspaper, the

London Advertiser.

See the look of contentment on the face of the gentleman reading his "Advertiser." It's because the news is better selected, better arranged and better in every way than any paper in the district. Clearly printed and turned out from the handsomest and most convenient newspaper office West-of-Toronto. Circulation can be proved by Messrs. A. McKim & Co., who have a sworn statement showing a daily average of 8,815 actual circulation for six months ending June 30, 1904.

LONDON ADVERTISER CO., LONDON, Ontario.

Illustration 5.4

Geographical coverage as a talking point.

From Canadian Advertising Agency, *French Periodicals*,
(Montreal: Canadian, 1912), 39.

Where do the Papers You use Circulate?

LA PRESSE, Canada's Largest Circulating Daily Paper makes it easy for advertisers to estimate its value as an advertising medium. :-:

Before you sign a contract for advertising in any newspaper, make sure first that sufficient copies are distributed in the field you desire to cover, to warrant the rate asked.

This can only be done by securing a sworn detailed statement like the one shown on this page.

When you have satisfied yourself on the quantity of the paper's circulation, and on the distribution of the quantity, you may then look to the matter of quality.

LA PRESSE has the largest and most concentrated circulation of any Canadian daily. The following figures will be sworn to for the benefit of those who do not consider this statement sufficient guarantee for their protection.

When you have been convinced of LA PRESSE'S superiority in quantity of circulation, we'll be glad to have a chance to prove the quality.

Here are the June 1913 figures:	
Montreal and suburbs	66,408
Province Quebec (Outside Montreal)	34,995
Total Province Quebec	101,403
Elsewhere in Canada	4,203
Total in Canada	105,606
French Section of New England States	21,632
Grand total	127,238

Don't accept bulk circulation figures from any newspaper. Publishers who refuse to show where their papers are distributed, do so because they are afraid of a show-down.

Don't be fooled by conversation and excuses, get the facts. You're entitled to them.

If you want any information about Montreal or Quebec Province as a market for your goods, write the Advertising Manager.

“La Presse”

MONTREAL, Canada.

Illustration 5.5

Language as a talking point, pt.1.

From *Marketing*, 30:7 (30 March 1929), 246.

QUEBEC
is very definitely
NOT
a one-newspaper
 Market!

Quebec advertisers
 and agencies . . . those who
know Quebec . . . testify by
 their week-in and week-out
 performance that

L'Evenement

THE ONLY MORNING PAPER
 IN QUEBEC

MUST be used to
adequately cover the Quebec
 Market.

*For particulars ask your Agency
 or write to*

R. SIMARD NAT. ADV. MGR. 1020 Castle Bldg., Montreal	E. CASTONGUAY MANAGER L'Evenement, Quebec
--	---

Illustration 5.6

Language as a talking point, pt.2.

'Jewish Daily Eagle,' *Marketing*, 30:7 (30 March 1929), 246
'Progresso Italo-Canadese' and 'Danish Review,' *Canadian Advertising Data*,
4:1 (January 1931), 49.

<p>THE Jewish Daily Eagle PRINTED IN YIDDISH DAILY EXCEPT SATURDAY</p> <p>The First and Largest Jewish Daily in the Dominion.</p> <p>If you want to reach the Jewish Speaking and Reading population of Canada this is the best medium for you.</p> <p><i>Read from Coast to Coast.</i></p>	<p>The Canadian Jewish Chronicle</p> <p>A WEEKLY PRINTED IN ENGLISH</p> <p>Features Jewish activities the world over. Read by the English Reading Jews of Canada.</p> <p><i>Reaches a very desirable class of readers</i></p>
<p>THE ONLY JEWISH MEDIUMS PUBLISHED IN MONTREAL For Advertising Rates write Advertising Manager THE EAGLE PUBLISHING COMPANY, LIMITED 4075 St. Lawrence Blvd. Montreal.</p>	

**PROGRESSO
ITALO-CANADESE**
Largest Italian Weekly
Newspaper in Canada
Your Advertisement in This Paper
Will Produce Results
Progresso Italo-Canadese Publishing Co.
14 CLINTON STREET TRINITY 5510

28,000 Danes

live in Alberta. Why
not get a share in
their business? Talk
to them in their own
language.

Advertise in
The Danish Review
The Danish paper with a circulation
229 11th Street, N.W., Calgary,
or any recognized agency

Illustration 5.7

Readers' aggregate income as talking point.

From *Marketing*, 14:4 (April 1920), 218.

ST. THOMAS

—the Railroad City—has one of the most highly-paid communities of wage-earners in all Canada. Approximately \$4,000,000 in wages is distributed annually by five steam railways alone in this thriving city of 20,000. Add to this figure the payrolls of the many thriving industries, and you have one weighty reason for not overlooking St. Thomas when planning your advertising campaign.

The TIMES-JOURNAL is the only daily newspaper published in Elgin County, of which St. Thomas is the county seat. It circulates into 95 in every 100 homes in St. Thomas. Also more than 5,000 copies go to subscribers in the surrounding area.

You can reach this fertile field effectively only by use of adequate space in the TIMES-JOURNAL? Is it on your list? If not take it up with your agency, or with us.

Use the Times-Journal Weekly too.

TIMES-JOURNAL

ST. THOMAS - - Member A.B.C. - - ONT.

A.B.C. audited circulation—9,000 plus

No Mortgages Published Now in Prince Edward Island

FORMERLY the weekly bulletins of the commercial and legal records were scanned by business men to see who were mortgaging their farms and real estate. To-day the records publish practically nothing but Mortgage RELEASES. The people have more money than ever with which to buy advertised goods, in the wealthiest Province per capita in Canada.

Charlottetown Guardian

DAILY—Covers Prince Edward Island like the dew

MEMBER A.B.C.

Standard rate card

Illustration 5.8

Saturation Coverage as a talking point.

From McKim Limited, *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 15ed.
(Montreal: McKim, 1920), 4.

**Cover Toronto
and you have covered
one-fifth of Ontario.**

One-fifth of Ontario's population is within the
borders of the City of Toronto.

THE EVENING TELEGRAM

(Published daily)

COVERS TORONTO

91,509 readers, (A. B. C. Audit)

This independent paper actually has more readers in Toronto each night, than there are homes or dwelling-places in the city. This fact is clearly shown in the A. B. C. Audit Report for the year just ended. In fact, no paper in Canada has such a large percentage of its circulation in its place of publication. When you buy Telegram space, you buy more Toronto readers than any other two Toronto dailies combined can offer, and, at the same time, you buy less waste circulation.

NATIONAL ADVERTISING RATES

Run of paper—to be used within twelve months.

Transient	25c.
1,000 lines	15c.
5,000 lines	13c.

REPRESENTATIVES

NEW YORK—Veree & Conklin, Brunswick Bldg.
CHICAGO—Veree & Conklin, Steger Bldg.
DETROIT—Veree & Conklin, 11 Lafayette B'v'd.

The Evening Telegram

TORONTO

CANADA

MEMBERS A. B. C.

Illustration 5.9

The income of elite readers as a talking point.

From McKim Limited, *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 5ed.
(Montreal: McKim, 1907), 6.

The Mail and Empire.

Established 1872

TORONTO, Canada

The Great Conservative Daily

Has the Largest MORNING Circulation in Canada

Morning Paper readers are always well-to-do people

Have you Analyzed

the character of the circulation of the various advertising mediums offered you? It's worth your while to do so. All you were mailing invitations you would select the names to be addressed. In your advertising invite those whose trade is worth having. Ask those you most want.

Wouldn't You

rather reach 1,000 homes with average annual incomes of \$1,000 to \$2,000 than 1,000 whose incomes average \$500 to \$600? Quality of circulation counts—There is a difference. The *Mail and Empire* reaches the best Homes in Toronto and Ontario every morning. Homes of prosperous, well-to-do people.

Mail and Empire Circulation is worth more per thousand than that of any other Medium in Canada

The Mail and Empire is the only paper in Canada having its own leased wire to New York City, reproducing fully and simultaneously the entire Financial Service of the New York Sun. The Mail and Empire is the acknowledged financial authority of Canada.

The Sworn statement of circulation furnished for this directory is for 12 months to April 30th, 1907.

The sworn statement for May and June shows:

Total number of copies 2,144,252. Days of issue 52

DAILY AVERAGE

41,236

Sworn detailed circulation statements published monthly and furnished on application

Illustration 5.10

Gender as a talking point.

From *Economic Advertising*, 4:3 (March 1911), 20.

Everything for Women

Or the Home, Should
be Advertised in the

Canadian Home Journal

Women buy 80 per cent. of the necessities and luxuries for the home. Then the only logical way to secure their trade is to advertise in a publication read by women.

Most women delight in reading good fiction or something about fashions, household duties, or children. That's why the "Canadian Home Journal" is read with interest by thousands of Canadian women, that have no time or desire to thoroughly read other publications.

Value of Advertisements Carried Doubled in One Year

In one year this magazine has climbed from the bottom to the top of Canadian publications, AND THE VALUE OF ADVERTISEMENTS CARRIED HAS DOUBLED. A shrewd advertising solicitor can secure advertising contracts, but a renewal is only given on results.

Every Large Advertiser Has Renewed Contract

This is surely a proof that they are obtaining
satisfactory results.

CANADIAN HOME JOURNAL
59-61 John Street - - - Toronto, Canada

Illustration 5.11

Departmentalization of the editorial content as a talking point.

From *Marketing*, 14:4 (April 1920), 213.

When you want to reach the Western Farmer use his Home Paper—

THE ALBERTA FARMER -- and -- Calgary Weekly Herald

largest and fastest growing weekly farm publication West of Winnipeg.
Circulation over 13,000 among the farm homes of the West,
which, on account of distance and mail service, can not be
served by a daily paper.

THE ALBERTA FARMER is a newspaper and magazine combined. In addition to a complete review of the week's news. It publishes a great variety of special articles, departments and features that appeal to all members of the farm household. It is read thoroughly, in many cases being the only publication received. It covers a rich, exclusive field. It carries influence. IT PRODUCES RESULTS.

During the past three years its circulation has doubled and
the volume of advertising carried has trebled. There is
a reason! INVESTIGATE!

Sample copy, rate cards, detailed sworn circulation statement, and full particulars regarding the field covered, on request.

The Herald Publishing Company, Ltd.

Calgary, Canada

Representative for Eastern Canada:

EDGAR J. GUY

Royal Bank Bldg., Toronto, Ont.

Representative for United States:

HENRY DE CLERQUE

800 Mallery Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

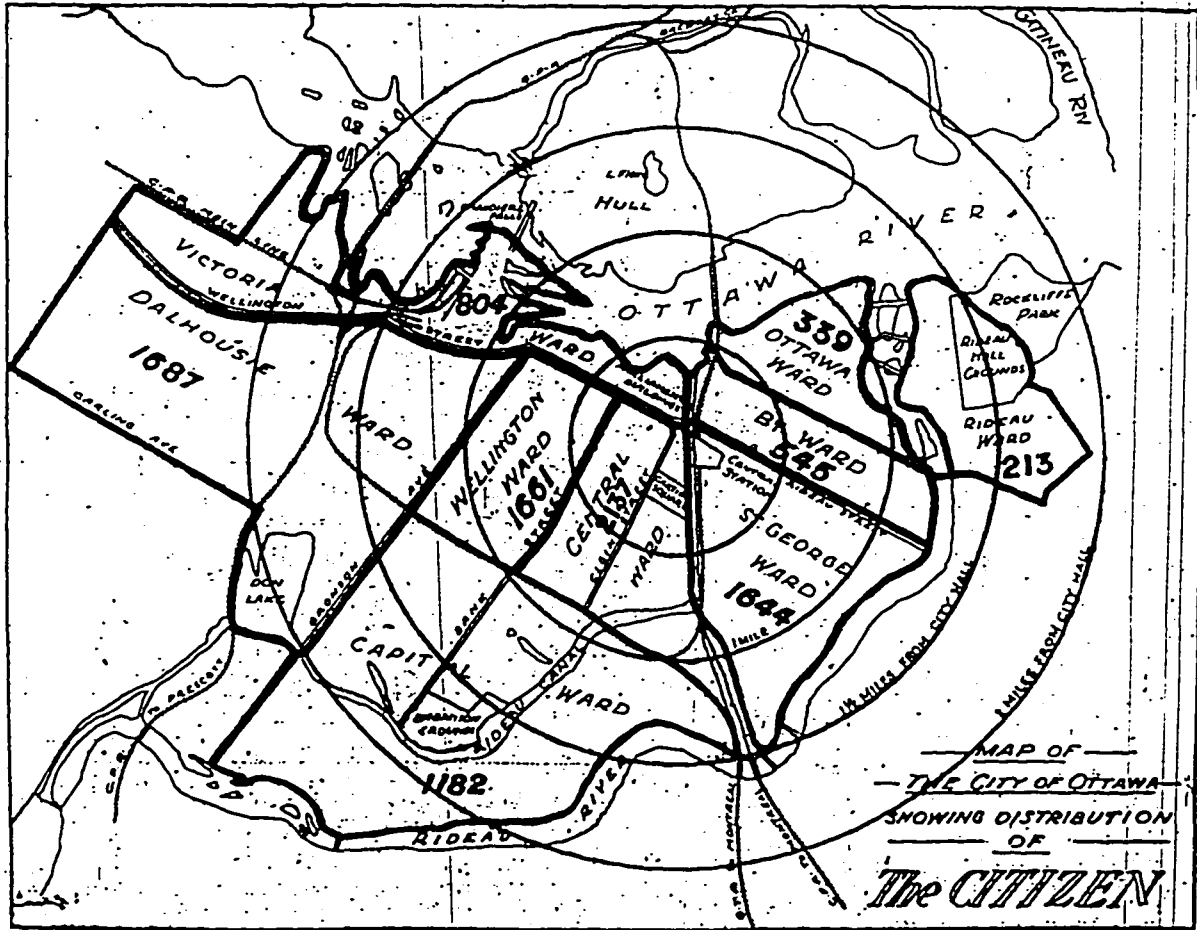
L. KLEBAHN

1 W. 34th St., New York, N.Y.

Illustration 5.12

Chart designed by the Advertising Department of the Ottawa Citizen, 1914.

From *Printer & Publisher*, 23:3 (March 1914), 67.



A novel method of showing analysis of city circulation.

Illustration 5.13

'It's all in the Service.'

From *Marketing*, 15:4 (15 February 1921), 134.

WASTE IN ADVERTISING can be easily averted by calling in a reliable agent at the inception of a new product. The agency should coöperate with the manufacturer from the choosing of the name to the determining of the selling policy.

Some services we perform for our clients

- 1—Invent suitable names for new products.
- 2—Design packages and containers.
- 3—Conduct market investigations and research work.
- 4—Prepare plans and estimates for all kinds of advertising.
- 5—Write copy and buy art work.
- 6—Set the advertising in type.
- 7—Provide electrotypes, stereotypes and mats for newspapers and magazines and dealer advertising.
- 8—Check up the advertisements.
- 9—Plan, write and place trade paper advertising.
- 10—Supply dealer helps and follow-up matter.
- 11—Design window and counter cards, etc.
- 12—Offer at all times expert advice and cooperation toward the solution of advertising and merchandising problems.

"It's all in the Service"

NORRIS-PATTERSON
LIMITED
ADVERTISING

TORONTO

MONTREAL

language group in each region and decide whether or not an ad was merited in ~~each~~ one. Every periodical, of course, was adamant that its readership was crucial for the advertiser's coverage (III.5.6).⁶³

Once the region and language of the target audience had been selected, social ~~standing~~ offered the most important means to narrow the target audience within a given region. Publishers treated the social standing of readers as an indication of their disposable income (III.5.7). Generally speaking, the more costly the goods to be sold, the narrower the market would be for them. Smart advertisers chose those publications whose readership most closely paralleled their perceptions of ~~the~~ their customers. Necessities – items such as soaps, razors, hosiery, and hair brushes – had a wide ~~potential~~ market that cut through class divisions. The makers of these products tended to prefer ~~those~~ mediums with the greatest circulation. Popular dailies such as the *Telegram* or *Star* would be ~~obvious~~ choices in Toronto; income would not be as important as saturation of the entire market (III.5.8). On the other hand, upmarket versions of these same items, say a gentleman's gift shaving kit with a hand-crafted leather case, or a silver brush and comb, would more likely be advertised in periodicals appealing to those whose income afforded them more luxurious amenities. Offering daily news ~~of~~ the financial markets and a conservative point of view concerning the world's events, the *Mail & Empire* assiduously courted the patronage of Toronto's financial élite. By not offering voluminous sporting news and other popular features, it chose not to compete for the mass audience fought over by the *Telegram* and *Star*. With these differences in mind, the *Mail & Empire* could advertise itself as the best medium in Toronto to reach a wealthy and highly desirable élite market, ~~effectively~~ and comprehensively (III.5.9).⁶⁴

Gender offered an alternative means of segmenting the market, and became increasingly

63. O.K. Thomassen, 'The Foreign Language Press,' *Marketing*, 26:7 (2 April 1927), 302

64. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 14ed. (1920), 14-15

important after 1900. Sometime in the 1890s, advertisers and publishers began to believe that in the typical urban family, composed of a breadwinning male and a homemaking female, the latter partner exercised the majority of daily consumer purchasing decisions (III.5.10). The food her family ate, the clothes they wore, the cleansers she used, and the furnishings they enjoyed, all were purchased during the homemaker's shopping excursions during the day, *sans* husband. This belief prompted copywriters and space-buyers to gear their advertising for these products at women rather than an all-inclusive mass readership. Hence, an ability to reach these women readers became a decided advantage for publications seeking advertisers' dollars. Literary magazines, with their cultivated notions of art and *belles lettres*, had long enjoyed a female readership schooled to appreciate such things.⁶⁵ Informed by the ideology of separate spheres, many newspapers developed sections based on the magazine model to generate a similar female readership. Editors already familiar with news from the public arenas of politics, high finance, and sports, now became acquainted with the collection of social news, recipes, fashions, and romantic fiction. Some vocal women were contemptuous of this narrow reading of their interests, but to little effect.⁶⁶ One of these women, Katherine Coleman, herself became the first woman editor in Canada when she was hired to create the women's page for the *Toronto Mail*, in 1889. The popularity of her writing, and the page in general, spawned similar pages at several other papers by 1900.⁶⁷

An emphasis on gender would accomplish two things. First, since the typical newspaper reader of the nineteenth century was thought to be male, women's sections would encourage an

65. Ann Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture* (New York: Anchor/ Doubleday, 1977)

66. Ted Ferguson, *Kit Coleman, Queen of Hearts* (Toronto: Doubleday, 1978), *frontis.*; Barbara M. Freeman, *Kit's Kingdom: The Journalism of Kathleen Blake Coleman* (Ottawa: Carleton UP, 1989), 49-73

67. Ferguson, 1-10; Freeman, 49-79; Kay Rex, *No Daughter of Mine: The Women and History of the Canadian Women's Press Club, 1904-1971* (Toronto: Cedar Cave, 1995), 3-21. At about the same time, children's pages were developed as well; for a brief comment, see N.L. Lewis, ed., *I want to join your club': Letters from Rural Children, 1900-1920* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 1996), 1-12.

overall increase in circulation by appealing to a previously ignored constituency. Second, it gave advertisers a higher profile for their advertising than they otherwise might have had. As the total volume of advertising increased, it was entirely possible for any one ad to be lost in the shuffle. Publishers discovered that they could draw attention to some ads by placing them in sections that featured news of interest to the most likely purchasers of those products. In effect, they mimicked the physical organization of Timothy Eaton's store, and departmentalized their editorial and advertising content. This technique was adopted even within the trade press. *Printer & Publisher* tended to run advertising of presses, paper mills, and office equipment at the front, where it placed its articles aimed at publishers, while the back half of the magazine aimed at printers was punctuated with ads for fine paper products and type foundries. The same kind of thinking gendered the modern newspaper. If it seemed that more men than women read the sporting pages, then those pages would be a good bet for the ads of items gendered 'male.' For the makers of items gendered 'female,' the women's section was a highly useful innovation. By 1910, then, the periodicals' ability to reach women, men, or both groups was a decided asset when approaching advertisers. Their pitches to space-buyers accentuated this aspect of their reach (Ill.5.11).

Periodicals could substantiate their readership profiles with statistical analyses. Drawing upon census data, it was possible to detail the local population by age, gender, marital status, native tongue, and ethnicity; from the census of occupations and the *Labour Gazette* they could estimate the relative proportions of the workforce by social standing, and the average disposable income of these groups; and drawing upon their own subscription lists and circulation data, they could calculate their own effective coverage of this population (Ill.5.12). This kind of analysis required no sophisticated training in mathematics or statistics. Nor did it require any survey techniques.⁶⁸ The raw data were

68. Richard Germain, 'The Adoption of Statistical Methods in Market Research: The Early Twentieth Century,' *Research in Marketing*, suppl.6: *Explorations in the History of Marketing*, eds. J.N. Sheth and R.A. Fullerton (Greenwich, Connecticut: JAI, 1994), 87-101

readily available. What it required was a fundamental shift in thinking, from selling the quality of editorial content to selling the quality of the readership. This method of salesmanship has remained a fixture of all media outlets to this day.⁶⁹

The first documented company to engage in this kind of statistical analysis was the leader in general magazines in the United States, the Curtis Publishing Company. In 1910, one of the company's advertising solicitors, Stanley Latshaw, came to believe that data on readers would improve his ability to attract potential advertisers. Without this information, he was selling something that was intangible and conceptually elusive: pure white space. With readership data in hand, he would be able to sell something that was far more concrete: real-life consumers, described in quantifiable, easy-to-grasp terms.⁷⁰ To generate and manage this new form of readership data within his own company, Cyrus Curtis created a research department in 1910. C.C. Parlin was its first manager. He became a recognized leader in the emerging field.⁷¹

Few Canadian publishers had the financial resources of Cyrus Curtis. Nonetheless, many soon adopted market research procedures. Clearly, as is evident in Illustration 5.12, the *Ottawa Citizen* had already gone beyond research and analysis, and had begun to experiment with new forms of graphic presentation as well. By 1914, this form of reader research was the topic of a debate in the pages of *Printer & Publisher*. Was it important for an advertiser to know, the editor asked, the socio-economic standing of a paper's readers? The answers he received from publishers – curiously, no advertisers were asked – indicated that they were extremely vexed over the whole issue. It also

69. See any current issue of *Marketing* on this score; see also Dallas W. Smythe, *Dependency Road: Communications, Capitalism, Consciousness, and Canada* (Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex, 1981), 22-51.

70. Robert Bartels, *The Development of Marketing Thought* (Homewood, Illinois: Irwin, 1962), 108-109

71. Cherington, *The Advertising Book – 1916*, 314; Converse, 87-127; Stephen Fox, *The Mirror Makers: A History of American Advertising and Its Creators* (New York: Morrow, 1984), 83-86

indicated that newspapermen right across the country had been contemplating it; respondents represented papers from Nelson, British Columbia, to Moncton, New Brunswick; from the major Toronto dailies to the smallest weekly paper in Iroquois, Ontario. Cost was their main concern. Few wanted to carry the expense of something that seemingly offered no value-added to their white space. F.S. Jawfs of the *Calgary Farm & Ranch Review* believed that research was 'interesting, no doubt, but this kind of thing has become a fetish with some publishers and advertising men.'⁷² That said, others viewed this information in the same light as they had copywriting services. If market data convinced the advertiser that the paper's white space carried greater value than he had previously thought, then research was an investment worth making. This was the thought of M.R. Jennings, then publisher of the *Edmonton Journal*. The editor of *Printer & Publisher* found such responses 'encouraging,' and fully endorsed the new practices.⁷³

Advertising Agencies: Demographics, Copywriting, and Media-Buying

The development of the demographic approach to readership offered advertising agencies two advantages over their traditional preoccupation with gross circulation figures. First, if the character of a periodical's readership could be identified with specific social categories, then copywriters would be better informed when selecting themes and approaches for their advertisements. Second, knowing the social composition of the readership for each periodical would aid immeasurably in the selection of media for their clients. The first agency to acknowledge these points was the J. Walter Thompson Company (JWT), in New York. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, the agency's namesake had been a leader in the development of magazine advertising. Until his arrival on the scene, most of the high-brow literary journals had refused to allow commercial notices in their pages. Thompson,

72. F.S. Jawfs, in 'Value of Quality and Locality,' *Printer & Publisher*, 23:3 (March 1914), 68

73. *Ibid.*, 68

using his widely-regarded personal charisma, overcame the publishers' deep suspicions of his clients' wares, and established a foothold for all advertisers to follow.⁷⁴ After the turn of the century, however, the agency under his command was slow to develop copywriting and art departments. The introduction of these services at Calkins & Holden and Lord & Thomas made them rising stars in the American agency field. Fortunately for JWT, the agency had two rising stars of its own – Helen Lansdowne and Stanley Resor. Where Lansdowne possessed an unrivalled talent for copywriting, Resor's focus was on administration and the value of statistical information.⁷⁵

Resor's fascination with statistics stemmed from the adman's understanding of human nature. According to Stephen Fox, Resor believed that human behaviour was not in the main guided by rational considerations, but ultimately by the unpredictable and irrational desires of each individual. This unpredictability caused problems for those who crafted ads. The defenders of reason-why copy and the partisans of intuitive/psychological writing both implicitly took the individual to be the target of the advertisement. If the copywriter selected a talking point which was irrelevant to most readers, then chances were the finished ad would fail no matter which approach to copy he or she chose. What was needed was a means to reduce the risk of this happening. Looking at the reader as individual, a universal appeal would likely be impossible to find. However, looking at the readership as mass, Resor believed it was possible to observe broad patterns in human behaviour and identify talking points that would appeal to a statistically predictable percentage of the readership. There was a body of academic work supporting this belief. Walter Dill Scott argued that:

Human choice has always been assumed to be unknown, to be the one indeterminable factor in the universe. In spite of all this we have come to see that human action is

74. Frank Presbrey, *The History and Development of Advertising* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1929), 272

75. On Lansdowne, see Jennifer Scanlon, *Inarticulate Longings: The Ladies' Home Journal, Gender, and the Promises of Consumer Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 169-196; on Resor, see Fox, 30-32, 78-82

governed by known laws and that by carefully studying the nature of society and the influences at work prophecies may be made with certain limits which are sufficiently accurate for all practical purposes. Under given political, social, and industrial conditions the number and character of crimes remains constant. ... The wise merchant knows to a certainty from the political, social, and industrial condition of the country that there will be increased or decreased demand for individual lines of goods. Despite all the uncertainty of human choice he knows that there are certain conditions which determine the number who will choose his commodity and take the pains to secure it.⁷⁶

Despite his stake in psychology, Scott had to acknowledge that other fields of investigation then emerging within the academy could reveal hidden truths of their own about human society. Demographics, as it had been developed by sociologists and criminologists, could supply a crucial new set of tools to the adworker's handbag.

While these considerations addressed copywriting, media buying was still a core function of the agency. Resor convinced JWT that it should conduct a statistical analysis of the United States population based upon its segmentation by region and the sophistication of retail distribution networks. Combined with a standard newspaper directory, such information would assist media buyers immeasurably. Instead of simply looking at papers' gross circulation numbers, they would now be able to assess each paper's influence against its relative reach within its community and the accessibility of retail outlets. The result was a book published under the agency's name entitled *Population and Its Distribution* (1912). In it could be found a condensed version of the American census returns organized by sales regions, combined with information on retail sales outlets similarly broken down (Canada was not included). Met by a keen audience of advertising personnel, the book

76. Walter Dill Scott, *The Psychology of Advertising* (Boston: Small, Maynard, 1921), 205-206

was periodically updated and reissued over the succeeding years. It was also copied by rival agents.⁷⁷ One of these was John Lee Mahin, whose advertising trade journal had first published Walter Dill Scott's articles on psychology in 1903. Soon after JWT's booklet appeared, Mahin began to issue an annual volume entitled *The Advertising Data Book*, covering much the same ground.⁷⁸

While this book took advantage of published statistical records, it was not long before JWT's staff required information that was not so readily available. To answer this need, Resor expanded the duties of his market research department, and hired Paul T. Cherington as its director. It was a good fit, since Cherington's views of the typical consumer were very similar to Resor's: fundamentally irrational and individualistic, but conforming to broad-based trends.⁷⁹ Under Cherington's command, the department conducted original research, principally through the use of the survey method; it drafted questionnaires, trained field staff, selected sample populations, and tabulated the results. This work served two main purposes: it isolated territories where sales efforts could be enhanced, and it tested consumer attitudes towards specific products. The first set of results was largely geared towards media buying and commercial travellers, the latter towards product design and copywriting. Results in hand, the agency's account executives could plan marketing campaigns tailored to the each client's product and the relevant features of its market. Only once such plans were in place would the creative staff begin work on the actual advertising.⁸⁰

It should be noted that many other American agencies undertook market research before

77. Fox, 30-32, 78-86; J. Walter Thompson Company, *Population and Its Distribution* 6ed. (New York: Harper, 1941), iii-iv, ix. JWT issued a study of Canada forty years later entitled *The Canadian Market* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1958).

78. J.L. Mahin, *Advertising Data Book* (New York: Mahin, [1910s]), cited in *Lydiatt's Book* 5ed. (1918), 261; see also J.L. Mahin, *Advertising: Selling the Consumer* ([Garden City, New York]: Doubleday, Page, 1914)

79. Paul T. Cherington, *The Consumer Looks at Advertising* (New York: Harper, 1928), 34-53

80. Descriptions of 'typical' research departments appeared in Norman Lewis, *How to Become an Advertising Man* (New York: Ronald, 1927), 76-89; Roland S. Vaile, *Economics of Advertising* (New York: Ronald, 1927), 19-36; Lloyd D. Herrold, *Advertising Copy: Principles and Practice* (Chicago: Shaw, 1927), 64-91

1920. Although definite figures are unavailable, the number of agencies involved was sufficient to trigger a rift in publisher-agency relations. The cost of market studies could be considerable, but most agencies did not bill their clients separately for this work.⁸¹ Rather, these costs were absorbed by the agencies, who charged it against their income derived from commissions. The same had been done with the introduction of creative services. Publishers balked at this arrangement, since this demonstrated yet again that the rate of agency commission was too high. If nothing else, it was definitely out of proportion to the services provided to the publishers themselves. The agencies responded that any service which increased the effectiveness of advertising would only improve the publishers' profit margins in the long run. In 1912, the magazine publishers in the Quoin Club acquiesced, and increased the rate of commission to cover the agencies' increasing costs.⁸²

W.A. Lydiatt and Canadian Market Research

One of the first to champion these techniques in Canada was W.A. Lydiatt.⁸³ Lydiatt's career in the trade began in the 1890s, and his resumé included stints at several leading firms in Canada and the United States. He was considered a crack copywriter, and was a charter member of the Toronto Ad Club. In 1913, Lydiatt believed there was a place in Canada for a new kind of advertising agency, one that would offer an approach to advertising service that was substantially different from anything else then available. Such an agency would not only counsel clients on media, space buying, and copywriting, but would also provide a wide array of statistics and advice on the potential market for a new product, the best means of packaging it, and the best means of distributing it.⁸⁴ The

81. Cherington, *Advertising as a Business Force*, 493-536

82. James W. Young, *Advertising Agency Compensation, In Relation to the Total Cost of Advertising* (Chicago: University of Illinois, 1933), 36-38

83. An agency by the name of 'Specification Data Limited' was open in Toronto from 1910 to 1915, but no records of its personnel or operations remain. See listings for 'Advertising Agencies' in *Toronto City Directory* (Toronto: Might, [1910-1915]).

84. *Lydiatt's Book* 1ed. (1914), 6

model for this kind of consultancy may have been Resor's activities at JWT, but Lydiatt may also have found inspiration in the person of J. George Frederick. Formerly the editor of *Printer's Ink*, Frederick had established a similar agency in New York in 1911.⁸⁵

Like most successful agents before him, Lydiatt publicized his firm through publications. Ironically, these proved to be the mainstay of his business by 1920. When he first opened shop, there were two trade journals serving the Canadian field and two regularly-published newspaper directories. With both of the traditional fields covered, Lydiatt worked on a new idea, one that would demonstrate his expertise as a consultant and his objectivity when handling media. The result was *Who's Who in Canadian Advertising*. This directory offered a 'complete list' of 'every' company in Canada that advertised nationally. This included American and British firms using Canadian periodicals, whether they had an office in the Dominion or not.⁸⁶ Beside the company names and their trademarked goods, Lydiatt also listed the agency used by each firm. He had nothing to fear by publicizing other agents; his main interest as a consultant was the provision of market information which the others were not then handling. Lydiatt could offer crucial market and merchandising advice to manufacturers, then refer them to an agency that was best suited to their needs in the field of copywriting and space-buying. Since he was not directly competing with other agencies, Lydiatt won their co-operation in the publication of his directory. Despite its comprehensive claims for inclusion, however, the directory reflected the selection process of an adworker actively engaged in the professionalization campaigns of the day. Freelance copywriters, in-house agencies, and agents handling only local accounts were not included. At the same time, agencies recognized by the

85. John C. Kirkwood, 'Who is Lydiatt?' *Economic Advertising*, 11:2 (February 1918), 4-6; 'W.A. Lydiatt,' *Printer & Publisher*, 27:2 (February 1918), 23-24; see also 'Men and Media,' *Economic Advertising*, 4:7 (July 1911), 47

86. *Who's Who in Canadian Advertising* 2ed. (1915), 1

Canadian Press Association were duly noted.⁸⁷

Besides *Who's Who*, Lydiatt also issued a newspaper directory of his own. The obvious title: *Lydiatt's Book: What's What in Canadian Advertising*. The first edition appeared in the spring of 1914.⁸⁸ To compete against the well-established directories published by McKim and Desbarats was a gamble, and Lydiatt's hook was to offer more information than either McKim or Desbarats combined.⁸⁹ For the most part, this entailed extensive sets of statistical data taken from the Canadian censuses of individuals and occupations. Among other things could be found population figures arranged by provinces, occupations, and religious faith; trade statistics on imports, building starts, and bank clearings; figures on agricultural production; and estimates regarding retail outlets in Canada organized by province and goods handled.⁹⁰ In short, he supplied much the same information as JWT's *Population and Its Distribution* or Mahin's *Advertising Data Book*. Lydiatt described his purpose as follows:

Advertisers are coming to appreciate the importance of statistics to the success of their advertising plans. The most successful advertisers, those who advertise with the least waste and greatest effectiveness, have learned to base their methods and their selection of media on a careful analysis of the statistics relating to their markets.

Statistics should show the advertiser where to find the people he wants to reach, the number of possible customers, and the likely sale for his goods in a given territory — how these markets can be reached with the greatest economy of

87. *Who's Who in Canadian Advertising* 2ed. (1915), 184-185; *Toronto City Directory* (Toronto: Might, 1915), 1624-1625

88. *Lydiatt's Book* 1ed. (1914)

89. The directory issued by the Canadian Advertising Agency under F.X. Lemieux had not tried to compete on the same terms; it concentrated solely on French-language publications in North America. Canadian Advertising Agency, *French Newspapers and Periodicals of Canada and the United States* (Montreal: Canadian Advertising Agency, 1913).

90. *Lydiatt's Book* 1ed. (1914), 15-70

advertising and selling expense.⁹¹

Combined with the requisite listings of periodicals, the statistics on population and distribution systems made *Lydiatt's Book* a dependable guide to the Canadian market. In 1917, Lydiatt incorporated the agency listings from *Who's Who* into *What's What*, and placed his book head and shoulders above the competition. It was the success of these directories that likely brought him to the attention of the Association of Canadian Advertisers, which hired him as their secretary in 1915; it was he who guided the association through its battle with the Toronto 'Newspaper Napoleons.'⁹² By the late 1920s, Lydiatt's Book had become an established authority, cited by account executives at JWT New York as well as academics in *The Encyclopedia of Canada*.⁹³

In February 1918, Lydiatt left the Association and closed his agency when he bought *Economic Advertising* from Norris-Patterson Limited.⁹⁴ Over the next ten years, his growing publishing house became an informal school of marketing for the Canadian trade. To handle all of the data collection necessary to update the directories each year, and to fill the journal with news stories and advertising, the magazine attracted a talented cast of adworkers to its staff. Among the most notable were Bertram Brooker, Val Fisher, John Landels Love, and Margaret Brown. Beyond these four, it also retained a number of contributing editors with wide reputations in the field, and among these could be counted John C. Kirkwood, then writing copy for an agency in London, England; Charles Stokes, the assistant advertising manager at the Canadian Pacific Railway; Herbert Casson, the Canadian-born efficiency expert; and George French, the former editor of *Advertising & Selling*. Brooker, it may be noted, took over the publication from 1924 to 1928, but he did not

91. W.A. Lydiatt, introduction, *Lydiatt's Book* 6ed. (1919), 5

92. This episode is recounted in Chapter 3.

93. Duke University, Special Collections Library, J. Walter Thompson Archives (JWTA), Series: Staff Meetings, b.6, f.1, Representatives Meeting (13 March 1928), 1-8; 'Advertising,' *The Encyclopedia of Canada*, v.1, ed. W.S. Wallace (Toronto: University Associates, 1936), 14-15

94. 'W.A. Lydiatt,' *Printer & Publisher*, 27:2 (February 1918), 23-24

alter the course set by Lydiatt. If anything, he enhanced the journal's discussion of statistical analysis.

Marketing Magazine: A Canadian School of Marketing

Lydiatt had great expectations for his new venture. He hoped to re-fashion the journal as a publication of educational value for all executives serious about their business. In an interview with *Printer & Publisher*, Lydiatt noted that *Economic Advertising* and *Publicité-Publicity* were too close to the agencies which owned them to make them truly reliable. Agencies depended upon the goodwill of the periodical press for their recognition status and their commissions; the agency-run trade papers had a tendency to emphasize the print media when discussing marketing strategies. Although the print media – and advertising in general – were an important factor in any effective marketing strategy, they were by no means the only factors to be considered. That said, one had to look long and hard to find any discussion of branding, packaging, or alternative media in the trade press as it then stood. What's more, manufacturers interested in boosting their goods but not yet convinced of the value of advertising were not likely to find much of interest in a trade paper focused solely on advertising. As a result, Lydiatt believed that his paper should address all aspects of 'the selling problem:'

Its aim should be to promote efficiency in selling – in all the things which enter in to the sale of manufactured goods. This phase of its editorial character should predominate. Advertising should be recognized as but one, even if a most important, means of selling.⁹⁵

Avid readers of *Lydiatt's Book* could have gained a further insight into the editor's opinions on marketing by scanning the reading list he had included in the 1918 edition of the directory. Among

95. W.A. Lydiatt, quoted in 'W.A. Lydiatt,' *Printer & Publisher*, 27:2 (February 1918), 24

the titles he described as 'the best books on advertising' were both of Cherington's books for the Associated Clubs, two books by the behaviourist psychologist Harry L. Hollingsworth, Walter Dill Scott's revised volume on advertising psychology, and John Lee Mahin's *Advertising Data Book* (the 'American Lydiatt's,' he noted).⁹⁶ His incorporation of these author's ideas entailed a significant re-orientation in the paper's editorial outlook. To make this change perfectly clear to his readers, Lydiatt changed the name of the magazine to *Marketing & Business Management*. Readers and staff alike shortened the title to *Marketing*.⁹⁷

The new editor's commitment to market research was most evident in his enthusiasm for the Dominion Census. The population statistics in *Lydiatt's Book* were all derived from the 1911 decennial census. In 1921, after the next national tally had been taken, Lydiatt decided to publicize the Dominion Bureau of Statistics and its handling of marketing-related issues. His reporter peppered R.H. Coats with questions on just one theme: 'How the census can help us sell.'⁹⁸ To the reporter's dismay, nothing notable had been changed from previous years. Despite all of the valuable statistical information related to population and production, the selling field remained the Bureau's weak point. The Retail Merchants' Association of Canada had approached Coats on this matter, and had lobbied for a census of retail and wholesale firms on the same level as the census of industry. Coats's replied that such a census would be too costly to initiate without a Parliamentary mandate – which the personal and industrial censuses had had.⁹⁹

96. *Lydiatt's Book* 5ed. (1918), 261

97. *Marketing*, 12:1 (March 1918)

98. 'How the Census Can Help Us Sell,' *Marketing*, 15:22 (15 November 1921), 781-785. A similar article appeared in *Printer & Publisher* the next year; see M.J. Patton, 'Government Sources of Information,' *Printer & Publisher*, 31:12 (December 1922), 48

99. 'How the Census Can Help Us Sell,' *Marketing*, 15:22 (15 November 1921), 781-785. A census of distribution was approved by the government for 1931; 'The Reasons for Taking Census of Merchandising in Canada,' *Canadian Advertising Data*, 4:7 (July 1931), 8; Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Seventh Census of Canada* vol.10: *Merchandising and Service Establishments* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1934)

Although the article was unsigned, the style is unmistakably that of Bertram R. Brooker. Four years after this interview with Coats, Brooker claimed that he had inspired a revision in one of the bureau's statistical series.¹⁰⁰ One of its tasks was the calculation of total bank clearings – the total value of all cheques written on accounts – on a regular basis. The figures should have provided an indication of aggregate consumer spending power. (Here again was a practice which typified the traditional demand for macroeconomic statistics). Late in 1924, Coats made arrangements to log all cash withdrawals from personal accounts as well. The resulting statistics, it was hoped, would more accurately reflect consumer spending power, both real and potential. In his annual report to the minister, Coats made this the most significant event of the year.¹⁰¹

Brooker's piece on the census highlights a curious aspect of *Marketing* magazine: while Lydiatt continuously cajoled businesses to adopt the marketing outlook, it was Brooker who wrote most explicitly on the subject. As noted in the previous chapter, he took a pragmatic approach to the function of psychology in the creation of advertisements. Essentially, he believed that psychology forced the copywriter to think about each product from the point of view of the consumer rather than the producer.¹⁰² Beyond that, it provided no sure rules; facts and ideas could not be fed into a 'psychological' black box from which completed ads would emerge. By contrast, Brooker believed that market research could provide the copywriter with something far more substantial: the details necessary to visualize the ideal consumer in the first place.

Brooker's articles on market research relied upon two core sources of statistical information: government-generated data and surveys. Despite its silence on distribution and consumption patterns in Canada, the census was still a rich source of information on the market itself: the people of

100. Bertram Brooker, 'Census of Merchandising in Canada Approaches Reality,' *Marketing*, 22:5 (7 March 1925), 117

101. *Ibid.*, 117; Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Annual Report 1924, Annual Departmental Reports #10* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1925), 5

102. Bertram Brooker, 'Markets Are People!' *Marketing*, 22:1 (15 January 1925), 6-7, 22

Canada. In an article entitled 'A Statistical Picture of the Average Canadian Consumer' (1924), Brooker demonstrated how population data and trade statistics on basic commodities could be used to generate 'per capita' numbers regarding individual consumption habits.¹⁰³ One concrete example was the tobacco industry, where taxation laws made available statistics on the number of cigarettes 'released from bond for consumption.' Assuming that the vast majority of smokers were males over the age of fifteen, Brooker divided the number of cigarettes released from bond by the male population over fifteen, and arrived at a figure he believed was the average per capita consumption of cigarettes in Canada. With that figure, a manufacturer could then use its own production figures to estimate its share of the market. This technique could be repeated wherever suitable trade statistics were available. For example, outside of the field of marketing, the Department of Labour had begun to reconstruct the Canadian working-class diet by calculating per family consumption of basic foodstuffs.¹⁰⁴

Survey research generated another set of data. Where census and trade statistics provided quantitative information on the aggregate volume of the market, survey returns offered qualitative information regarding the rationale behind select marketplace decisions. In 'Millions of Dollars to Unearth' (1924), Brooker identified two different means of conducting such surveys: dealer questionnaires, and reader contests in popular periodicals.¹⁰⁵ In the first instance, retailers would be asked for their impressions regarding consumer responses to a particular product or line of products; this method had the benefit of ensuring a representative sample size. By contrast, contests which asked readers to write their own advertisement for a given product, or some similar scheme,

103. Bertram Brooker, 'A Statistical Picture of the Average Canadian Consumer,' *Marketing*, 20:12 (14 June 1924), 394, 396, 438

104. *Ibid.*, 438; see also 'How the Census Can Help Us Sell,' 781-785

105. Bertram Brooker, 'Millions of Dollars to Unearth,' *Marketing*, 21:12 (13 December 1924), 318-319, 328

allowed the researcher direct access to the consumers themselves.¹⁰⁶ This method, however, was fraught with difficulties. Any ability to control the size of the sample was beyond the researcher. What's more, the tone of the responses could be coloured by the readers' expectations of what might constitute a winning entry – all based on notions derived from reading previous ads. At that point, researchers could suffer from consumer 'feedback' as their own ideas became endlessly recycled.¹⁰⁷ That said, it was believed that such contests did get readers thinking and talking about the products in question.

Out of this assortment of numbers and responses, Brooker believed that a composite picture of the target audience could adequately be drawn. However, where Lydiatt often championed the use of statistics as if they in themselves represented markets, Brooker was always quick to point out that statistics ultimately represented real human beings. In an article entitled 'Markets Are People!' he lamented the fact that too many managers and account executives forgot this fact when drafting their plans.¹⁰⁸ Referring to J.A. Hobson's thesis in *Work and Wealth* (1914), Brooker asserted that individuals were not rational economic actors; they did not fulfil Adam Smith's belief that all human actions were based upon a strict economic understanding of personal costs and benefits.¹⁰⁹ For this reason, he believed that no campaign could be structured upon an expectation of how consumers *should* respond to a product under ideal conditions. Rather, every campaign had to be based on an understanding of how consumers actually *did* respond to products in the real world.¹¹⁰ Nothing in

106. *Ibid.*, 328

107. These problems have been identified by Ellen Gruber Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlour: Magazines and the Gendering of Consumer Culture, 1880s to 1910s* (New York: Oxford UP, 1996), 51-79

108. Bertram Brooker, 'Markets Are People!' *Marketing*, 22:1 (15 January 1925), 6-7, 22

109. *Ibid.*, 6; J.A. Hobson, *Work and Wealth: A Human Valuation* (New York: Macmillan, 1914)

110. The End Man [B. Brooker], 'Knowing WHY the Public Buys,' *Marketing*, 27:11 (26 November 1927), 401-402; see also Langton Fife, 'Corset Campaign Brings Mailbag Trophy,' *Ibid.*, 399-400; C.M. Pasmore, 'Must Discover Consumer's Needs,' *Marketing*, 28:13 (23 June 1928), 455, 468

the marketplace could be taken for granted. The only secure means of building a sound marketing policy was to undertake sound research. And due to the ever-shifting nature of human wants, this research would have to become an on-going process.¹¹¹

The gospel of marketing research, bought home in the pages of *Marketing* magazine and countless other trade publications, books, meetings, and conventions, began to have an effect. Through the 1920s, several Canadian agencies developed research capabilities, either through their media departments or specially-created research departments. All of them were located in Toronto. One of the earliest to advertise these services was Norris-Patterson Limited, once the publisher of *Economic Advertising* and long interested in the scientific aspects of the field. In 1921, it offered to conduct 'market investigations and research work' for its clients (Ill.5.13). 'Waste in advertising,' it stated,

can be easily averted by calling in a reliable agent at the inception of a new product.

The agency should cooperate with the manufacturer from the choosing of the name to the determining of the selling policy.¹¹²

In 1925, they hired one of the associate editors of *Marketing*, John Landels Love, to head up their research staff.¹¹³

Love was not the only writer from *Marketing* to find work in this line. Lydiatt's own sabbatical from the journal, from 1924 to 1928, was prompted by the re-establishment of his own research agency. No records remain of this company, other than one lone mention in *Lydiatt's Book*. In 1925, he listed himself among the Toronto agencies.¹¹⁴ He did not the following year. Did he offer market research services? Given his efforts to encourage them over the previous twelve years,

111. Bertram Brooker, 'The Best Isn't Good Enough,' *Marketing*, 27:3 (6 August 1927), 79

112. advertisement, *Marketing*, 15:4 (15 February 1921), 131

113. *Marketing*, 22:12 (13 June 1925), 358

114. *Lydiatt's Book* 12ed. (1925), 275-293

it would be hard to believe otherwise. Did he find any clients? None were named in the directory. Did he fail due to a lack of interest? Unfortunately, it seems impossible to know. In 1926, however, he abandoned the agency for an up-market job-printing plant called Swan Service.¹¹⁵ In 1928 he returned to *Marketing*.

A more successful start-up was managed by Val Fisher. Fisher was an English adworker who had published a trade journal of his own in Britain, entitled *Advertising World*. Following a move to Canada, he joined *Marketing* as a contributing editor in 1924. At the same time, he undertook freelance research work for assorted clients. After two years at these two jobs, he left the journal to concentrate solely on research, and established the Canadian Business Research Bureau in Toronto. According to its ads, the bureau offered a wide array of sophisticated market studies. It remained in business until at least 1935.¹¹⁶

Last but not least, Brooker himself answered the call. Brooker left the journal in 1928 to nurture a budding career in the fine arts. Although a handful of companies offered him positions, he declined them all, hoping to keep his work time as unstructured as possible. The one agency he did consider was McKim Limited, which offered to pay him a retainer to have him as a consultant. He accepted this offer, and remained with McKim until 1930. Then, the instabilities of the marketplace prompted him to reconsider the notion of regular employment. When he did, he was quickly hired by J.J. Gibbons Limited, which asked him to set up a 'media and research department' in the agency's head office in December 1930.¹¹⁷

115. *Marketing*, 24:3 (6 February 1926), 76

116. 'Editorial Personnel for 1925,' *Marketing*, 21:10 (15 November 1924), 279; V. Fisher to editor, *Marketing* 29:13 (22 December 1928), 425; A.B. Blankenship et al., *A History of Marketing Research in Canada* (Toronto: Professional Marketing Research Society, 1985), 20-21; a sample of Fisher's work can be found in Fisher, *St Catharines, Ontario, and the Welland Ship Canal* (Toronto: Canadian Business Research Bureau, 1933), which was designed to promote investment in the city.

117. *Canadian Advertising Data*, 3:11 (December 1930), 14, 17

Canadian Universities

Canadian adworkers, unlike their American counterparts, were slow to cultivate links with academia. There was no research institute on a par with Cherington and Shaw's adventure at Harvard. This was no doubt due to the Canadian tendency to resist specialization in the humanities and social sciences.¹¹⁸ As previously noted, the academic study of marketing began among American economists in the 1880s. Canadian universities only began hiring full-fledged political economists - - with chairs separate from their colleagues in history and philosophy - - at the turn of the century. Then, professors such as Stephen Leacock at McGill and W.J. Ashley at the University of Toronto were largely pre-occupied with political history and theory.¹¹⁹ The introduction of statistical work in the field of economics was not accomplished until the 1910s with the arrival of scholars such as O.D. Skelton at Queen's.¹²⁰ At this early date, the economic and statistical interests of these men were not yet geared to the problems of individual businesses. In general, they shared the same preoccupations as their cohorts in the Dominion Bureau of Statistics: macroeconomic trends, fiscal policy, and a concern for production rather than distribution.¹²¹ An academic treatment of marketing problems would not appear in Canada until the publication of *Canadian Marketing Problems* by the political economy department at the University of Toronto in 1939.¹²²

118. Michael Gauvreau, 'Philosophy, Psychology, and History: George Sidney Brett and the Quest for a Social Science at the University of Toronto, 1910-1940,' *Historical Papers 1988* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1988), 209-236; A.B. McKillop, *Matters of Mind: The University in Ontario, 1791-1951* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1994)

119. A. Moritz and T. Moritz, *Leacock: A Biography* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1985), 86-90; Vincent Bladen, *Bladen on Bladen: Memoirs of a Political Economist* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1978), 19-24

120. Barry Ferguson, *Remaking Liberalism: The Intellectual Legacy of Adam Shortt, O.D. Skelton, W.C. Clark, and W.A. Mackintosh, 1890-1925* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1993)

121. Robin Neill, *A History of Canadian Economic Thought* (London: Routledge, 1991), 109-128

122. Hubert R. Kemp, *Canadian Marketing Problems: Ten Essays* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1939); see also Jane McKee, ed. *Marketing Organization and Technique* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1940); McGill School of Commerce, *Selling Tomorrow's Production* (Montreal: McGill University, School of Commerce, 1945)

In terms of research, the work of this first generation of academic economists was shaped by two concerns. First, driven by a desire to study their own country's economy in detail, they believed it was first necessary to undertake comprehensive historical research to lay a groundwork for more contemporary analysis. Second, given the dependence of the Canadian economy on agriculture and resource extraction, much of their work focused on these sectors. Marketing, if considered at all, was usually considered within the realm of agriculture.¹²³

One prominent exception emerged out of this general pattern. Humfrey E. Michell was an instructor in political economy at Queen's who began studying agricultural movements in the 1910s. His work, much like that of Richard T. Ely at Wisconsin thirty years before, led him to examine the nature of Canada's distribution systems -- including works on credit and retailing.¹²⁴ Unlike many of his contemporaries in Canada, however, Michell was eager to popularize his findings among a wide audience of businessmen as well as academics. In 1919, he moved to McMaster University (then still in Toronto), and found two different outlets for his ideas. The first was a political magazine aimed at a well-informed audience, *The Canadian Forum*. In tandem with Gilbert E. Jackson of the University of Toronto, Michell used quantitative analysis to write a monthly column on 'Industry and Trade.' It ran from 1920 to 1927.¹²⁵ Then, in 1923, he opened a private consultancy which offered 'business forecasting' services. In essence, by looking at patterns in trade and production statistics, Michell would predict how the Canadian economy would perform over given periods of time. Whether or not Michell thought of this work in terms of 'marketing' cannot

123. See for example Hugh J.E. Abbott, 'The Marketing of Livestock in Canada' (University of Toronto, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, 1923); for an overview of the period, see I. MacPherson and J.H. Thompson, 'The Business of Agriculture: Prairie Farmers and the Adoption of 'Business Methods,' 1880-1950,' *Canadian Papers in Business History*, ed. P. Baskerville (Victoria: Public History Group, U Victoria, 1989), 245-269.

124. See for instance H.E. Michell, *The Problem of Agricultural Credit in Canada* (Kingston: Jackson, 1914); *The Grange in Canada* (Kingston: Jackson, 1914); *The Co-operative Store in Canada* (Kingston: Jackson, 1916)

125. Neill, 124

be said, but his bureau was not considered an advertising agency by the editor of the *Toronto City Directory*. It was a failed prediction in 1927 that led to the end of his column.¹²⁶ After that, his academic work came back to the fore, and in 1931 he published an historical study of Canadian prices.¹²⁷

The J. Walter Thompson Company in Canada

Michell's public failure, and the fact that a prominent agency such as J.J. Gibbons Limited did not establish a research department until 1930, provides an important qualification to the discussion of market research in Canada: its quality and profile remained inconsistent throughout the 1920s. Publisher's advertising departments remained the one constant source of detailed market information, though this would be of a quality relative to the periodicals producing it. Shops such as Norris-Patterson and Canadian Business Research only performed contract surveys of a limited nature, and the Dominion Bureau of Statistics was only beginning to consider consumption a suitable field of data collection. Canadian firms that wanted something more, then, could do one of two things: conduct the work themselves, or hire an American advertising agency. Due to a lack of records, it is difficult to suggest how many companies chose the first option in the 1920s. Business professor W.H. Mahatoo surveyed the marketing practices of advertisers with a national presence in Canada in 1967. Of the 302 companies that participated, only nine had created research departments before 1934.¹²⁸

The second option became much easier to pursue during the 1920s, when several American agencies followed their manufacturing clients across the border. The first to do so was JWT, and

126. *Ibid.*, 124; Charles M. Johnston, *McMaster University*, vol.1: *The Toronto Years* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1976), 162, 206

127. H.E. Michell, 'Statistics of Prices,' *Statistical Contributions to Canadian Economic History*, vol.2. (Toronto: Macmillan, 1931)

128. W.H. Mahatoo, 'Marketing,' *Executive* (April 1968), 34-39. A member of the industry in 1957 offered no concrete numbers, but asserted there were 'very few' before 1940; see W.H. Poole, 'Marketing Research in Canada,' *Commerce Journal* (February 1957), 22.

its Toronto office was opened by J. Walter Thompson himself in 1911. Starting a long tradition, Thompson staffed the office with native Canadians already well-established on the local scene. In this case, the man appointed was John C. Kirkwood.¹²⁹ When Stanley Resor bought the parent company from Thompson in 1916, he sold the Toronto and London, England, offices to their Canadian account executives. Nonetheless, other American agencies had discovered opportunities in Canada. H.K. McCann of New York set up shop in Toronto in 1914. Eight years later, it was joined by Campbell-Ewald Advertising and Huber Hoge Limited. In 1923, these were joined by William H. Rankin, which entered the Canadian market via a partnership with a major Toronto agency, R.C. Smith & Son. Theodore F. MacManus Incorporated, McKinney, Marsh, & Cushing Advertising, Winsten & Sullivan Incorporated, and Williams & Cunnyngham Company all made similar arrangements after 1926.¹³⁰ The re-entrance of JWT – first in Montreal, then in Toronto - - capped off the decade late in 1929.

JWT makes an interesting study if only because its records have been preserved from this period. Clearly, Stanley Resor wanted to reclaim this lost part of JWT's international empire. This seems evident simply from a reading of the agency's executive meetings. Each week, account executives and creative staff in the New York head office held weekly seminars on topics of current interest. Almost every year from 1927 to 1932, one session was dedicated to Canada as a potential market for American manufacturers.¹³¹ Every time, the speaker spoke in excited tones about the large volume of trade between Canada and the United States as if he was the first to have discovered this fact. Nonetheless, by the time JWT established its Montreal office, it already had placed

129. 'New Advertising Agency,' *Printer & Publisher*, 20:11 (November 1911), 42

130. All but Winsten & Sullivan partnered with a Toronto agency; for details regarding partnerships and dates, see Appendix I. Winsten & Sullivan incorporated under the names of its Canadian partners in Montreal, Vickers & Benson: see *Marketing*, 26:5 (5 March 1927), 174.

131. JWTA, Series: Staff Meetings, b.1, f.4., 13 March 1928; b.1, f.7, 13 March 1929; b.2, f.3, 14 May 1930, b.4, f.9, 9 February 1932

branches in eight European capitals and two African cities.¹³²

That said, JWT did not completely abandon Canada between 1916 and 1929. Its American offices continued to place advertising in Canadian publications for their American clients. For this reason, it kept tabs on Canada as it would have done for any other foreign market.¹³³ That said, Resor was uncomfortable handling accounts there. Since the agency did not have a permanent presence in the country, it did not develop the same in-depth market data there as it had in the United States. For this reason, Resor turned down a Canadian campaign for Simmons mattresses, and was denied Canadian campaigns for two of its biggest American clients: General Motors divided their ads between Campbell-Ewald and McCann, while Fleischmann's Yeast gave its work to Huber Hoge.¹³⁴

Late in 1927, Resor suggested that JWT once again locate in Canada. His main concern was the agency's professional reputation; he wanted their re-entry founded upon the same solid market data that it was known for in the States. Within months of this meeting, Paul Cherington's research department began testing its media buying strategies by looking at the Ontario periodical market.¹³⁵ By coincidence or design, Resor was getting precisely the information that he wanted to see. A year after he first suggested it, Resor decided to open an office in Montreal.¹³⁶

After unforeseen delays, JWT Montreal was up and running in December 1929. It was managed by Robert J. Flood. American by birth, Flood was a trained accountant whose chief job experience was in transportation law before he joined JWT in 1929.¹³⁷ In the summer of 1929, before opening the new office's doors, he put together a research staff and initiated the first

132. JWTA, Series: Staff Meetings, b.1, f.5, 8 August 1928

133. See for example JWTA, Newsletter Collection, b.1, f.1923, *News Bulletin* (April 1923), 10; *News Bulletin* (August 1923), 16-17.

134. JWTA, Series: Staff Meetings, b.1, f.3, 20 December 1927, 2; b.1, f.5, 18 July 1928, 5-6

135. JWTA, Series: Staff Meetings, b.1, f.3, 20 December 1927, 2; b.1, f.5, 18 July 1928, 5-6; b.1, f.7, 13 March 1929, 2-4

136. There are no records documenting the reason why Montreal was selected first.

137. 'Who's Who in Advertising,' *Canadian Advertising Data*, 3:8 (September 1930), 9

Dominion-wide market survey ever conducted in Canada.¹³⁸ With the data from this and the periodical survey in hand, Flood then began selling the merits of the Canadian office to JWT's American clients, and won the likes of Fleischmann's back into the fold. He also won Canadian based contracts. Resor had turned away the Dominion Rubber Company in 1927; now Flood was successfully recruiting the likes of the Canadian Marconi Company.¹³⁹ The success of the operation seemed manifest, and in November 1930 Flood bought full page ads in the trade press to announce that JWT Canada had opened a second office in Toronto. Both branches would offer:

MARKET RESEARCH · COPY · PLAN · ART
 MEDIA · PRODUCTION · SALES ANALYSIS
 IN RADIO, NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES, DIRECT MAIL
 AND OUTDOOR MEDIUMS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.¹⁴⁰

The largest agency in the United States, probably the world, had arrived in Canada. And it had brought all of its weapons with it.

Cockfield, Brown & Company

Canadian agencies responded to this invasion in a number of ways. As previously noted, a handful did so by forming partnerships with American agencies. Essentially, these Canadian agencies would act in a manner similar to a branch office, placing ads in Canadian periodicals for clients of the American agency. In return, the Canadian agency gained access to its partner's media department and research expertise. Canadians were not necessarily junior partners in these arrangements. William Findlay became a vice-president of Lord & Thomas & Logan when his agency merged with

138. JWTA, Series: Staff Meetings, b.1, f.7, 4 January 1929, 7, and 27 February 1929, 3; Newsletter Collection, oversize box, *JWT News* (June 1930), 3

139. JWTA, Series: Staff Meetings, b.1, f.3, 20 December 1927, 3; *Canadian Advertising Data*, 3:6 (July 1930), 40-41

140. *Canadian Advertising Data*, 3:10 (November 1930), 19

the Chicago agency in 1930.

Agencies keen to maintain their independence chose a different option: they chose to compete with the Americans on their own terms. The most celebrated in this regard was Cockfield, Brown & Company. Cockfield, Brown was a new name in the late 1920s, but its principals had been active members of the trade for quite some time. Henry R. Cockfield had been the president of the Advertising Service Company of Montreal and Toronto, while G. Warren Brown had held the same positions at National Publicity Limited of Montreal. In December 1928, the two companies merged. Montreal was chosen for the head office, and a branch was maintained in Toronto.¹⁴¹

Warren Brown believed that the agency needed to have a research department if it was going to remain competitive. In 1927, speaking before a the Canadian Association of Advertising Agencies, Brown noted that ever more clients were demanding some degree of market planning counsel in addition to the usual gamut of agency expertise. Anyone reading through *Marketing* should have noticed this trend. Stories had appeared on a study of macaroni use by the Hamilton Advertising Agency, the market for home appliances by the Hoover Company of Canada, and the reactions of modern consumers to corsets by the Harold C. Lowrey Organization.¹⁴² Many of Brown's listeners did not appreciate this trend. Ironically, one of them was A.J. Denne, one of the partners who had purchased the original Toronto office of JWT in 1916. Denne argued that agencies would lose their focus if they strayed too far from media and creative services. He believed that marketing strategies were solely the responsibility of manufacturers.¹⁴³ He was in good company. The vice-president of General Motors in Detroit argued a similar point at similar convention soon after.¹⁴⁴ Brown may

141. 'The Announcement of Cockfield, Brown,' *Marketing*, 29:12 (8 December 1928), 379; W.H. Poole, 'Marketing Research in Canada,' *Commerce Journal* (February 1957), 21-22

142. 'Begin Campaign to Swell Macaroni Sales,' *Marketing*, 21:7 (4 October 1924), 189; 'Why We Employ a Canadian Agency,' *Marketing*, 23:7 (3 October 1925), 194; 'Corset Campaign Brings Mailbag Trophy,' *Marketing*, 27:11 (26 November 1927), 399-400

143. 'Advertising Agency Association,' *Marketing*, 27:8 (15 October 1927), 307

144. 'Convention Condensations,' *Marketing*, 29:2 (21 July 1928), 45

have privately agreed, but the trend appeared inevitable. An ability to offer market counsel was no longer just a useful advantage, but a necessary tool in the design of campaigns.¹⁴⁵ Evidently, Brown had already undertaken market research at National Publicity two years before its merger with Advertising Service.

The man hired to organize the research department at Cockfield, Brown was W.W. Goforth. Goforth was a professor of economics at McGill University, and a recent graduate of Toronto's programme in political economy. Goforth assembled a staff unlike that seen at any agency in the country up to that point. In the first year, he hired one of his former students then completing a law degree, two Harvard MBAs, one Oxford graduate with experience at National Publicity, and three former employees of the federal government's Tariff Board.¹⁴⁶ Other representatives with similar qualifications were hired in 83 towns across the country to collect data on a contract basis.¹⁴⁷ Beyond this group, Goforth also contracted expert help for specific projects, including professors such as Hubert Kemp and Gilbert Jackson from his alma mater.¹⁴⁸ Over the next four years, this group conducted research for a host of private companies and government agencies. Among these was a highly touted market survey for the federal Department of Fisheries on, not surprisingly, Canadian fish products. It was published under the crown imprint in 1932, and held up as an example of what objective, 'scientific' research could accomplish in the commercial world.¹⁴⁹

Henry King, the Oxford graduate on staff, later wrote that the agency had had the market

145. 'Advertising Agency Association,' *Marketing*, 27:8 (15 October 1927), 307

146. Henry King, 'The Beginning of Market Research in Canada,' *The Marketer*, 2:1 (Spring/Summer 1966), 4-5; reprinted in *Marketing Research in Canada*, ed. W.H. Mahatoo (Toronto: Nelson, 1968), 20-22

147. Daniel Robinson, 'Tapping the Consumer Mind: The Rise of Market Research Surveys in Interwar Canada,' paper presented to the 8th Conference on Historical Research in Marketing and Marketing Thought (Kingston: June 1997), 7-8

148. UTA, A65-0005, Department of Political Economy records, b.6, f.4, W.W. Goforth to G.E. Jackson, 26 February 1930; 3 March 1930

149. King, 21-22; Cockfield, Brown & Co., *Summary Report on the Marketing of Canadian Fish and Fish Products* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1932)

survey field to itself from the day it opened until 1932. That year, a renegade staff member from its Toronto office left to form Canadian Facts Limited, which specialized in radio audience ratings.¹⁵⁰ King's belief aside, it is readily apparent from the preceding discussions of *Marketing* and JWT that Cockfield, Brown never had the field to itself. As early as 1921, Norris-Patterson was already conducting research studies. Further, JWT's highly visible research operation opened the same year as Cockfield, Brown's – in the same city. Nonetheless, it is also readily apparent that Cockfield, Brown had the most sophisticated research department of any Canadian agency at that time, one that consciously mimicked the American model.¹⁵¹ One has to wonder if Brown and Cockfield were not perfectly aware of Stanley Resor's plans, and initiated the merger to protect their own interests.¹⁵²

Conclusions

No Sybilene sorceress of old with her leaves of divination ever had a more absorbed audience than has the modern society diviner with her tea leaves! Deep in the hearts of nearly all women, and a great many men, is an incurable desire to pierce the veil of the Future and to know what Fortune has in store. The tea cup seance is not taken too seriously by any, but its appeal is irresistible and the sibylline prophecies are listened to with an amusement that does not quite disguise the lurking belief that there may be 'something' in the pronouncements of the oracle.¹⁵³

So wrote J.D. Neill, the sales manager of Thomas J. Lipton of Canada, Limited, in 1924. Lipton made its name selling low-priced, prepackaged tea in the 1890s.¹⁵⁴ Thirty years later, it decided to expand its sales horizon with the introduction of a second line, a higher-grade tea to be sold at a

150. King, 21-22

151. Robinson, 7-8

152. The most comprehensive history of marketing in Canada published to date also discounts King's claim, but it does not cite the presence of JWT; see Blankenship et al., 18-20.

153. J.D. Neill, 'Tea Cup Lore Used to Introduce New Lipton Line,' *Marketing*, 21:8 (18 October 1924), 213

154. Alec Waugh, *The Lipton Story: A Centennial Biography* (London: Non-Fiction Book Club, [1950]), 50-59

premium price. Trouble was, that market was already occupied by Tetley Limited, among others. In its time of need, Lipton sought help in tackling this problem. But it did not turn to its distributor, as Tetley had approached Timothy Eaton. Rather, it turned to a market researcher.

The report that followed pleased the manufacturer greatly. Not only did it suggest that the market for a premium tea was still open to expansion, it also suggested that this market encompassed women from a wide variety of income brackets. With that, the planning wheels were set in motion. A strategy was sought that would appeal across all classes, though particularly to women. It had to justify the higher price of the tea, and distinguish it from its competitors. Further, the company wanted to do this without the aid of sales premiums – something that could be earned by saving coupons from every package – since it was thought that such a ploy would detract from the élite character of the tea. The final result of their brainstorming was a masterstroke of marketing. They would associate the tea with the ancient art of cup readings. The possibilities were tremendous. Little or nothing had to be said about the flavour of the tea. Rather, each and every leaf would be imbued with the power of magic, the fantastic possibility of seeing into one's own future.¹⁵⁵

Around this idea, the entire marketing strategy was planned. Print advertising would be used as a matter of course, but the company also prepared a 32 page booklet on how to read leaves. A copy would be included in every package. According to Neill, this was not a sales premium, so much as an entertaining and frankly informative extra provided for the benefit of the tea's fans. It would prove to be a winning formula. Before launching the full campaign, Neill tested its appeal with a cup reading tent at that year's Canadian National Exhibition. As hoped, it drew a broad range of curious fair-goers, and copies of the booklet on hand were eagerly snapped up. The print campaign, along with dealer display cases, trial size packages, and a special price offer to retailers,

155. J.D. Neill, 'Tea Cup Lore Used to Introduce New Lipton Line,' *Marketing*, 21:8 (18 October 1924), 213-214

began that fall.¹⁵⁶

One might wonder how different the Lipton experience was from that of Tetley. After all, Eaton too had done his research, if only through the booth set up in his store. Nonetheless, the differences were marked. Lipton, also an English company, had set up a permanent office in Canada to handle the local market. Where Tetley had delegated its marketing responsibilities to its distributor, Lipton's sales manager played a key role in its research and implementation procedures. Eaton's copy had relied on the intrinsic, material merits of the tea, while Neill allowed a supernatural aura to be woven around a mass-produced, pre-packaged product. At their core, however, was the greatest difference. Eaton's marketing strategy, no matter how successful, was ultimately based on his own experience and intuition. Neill was guided by a statistical understanding of the market discovered through planned research and fortified by testing in the field. The planned introduction of the higher-grade tea could have been stopped at two different points: if the original survey had discovered that the market was already saturated with other brands, or if the Exhibition test had gone terribly wrong.

Behind this change was an urgent desire to reduce the risk involved in the selling function of modern industry. Managers guiding multi-million dollar companies wanted to base their decisions on something more concrete than their own intuition. Market research provided them with this assurance. The psychological critique of classical economics had taught them that the unpredictable whims of consumer demand ruled the marketplace. Now they had within their reach the means to predict these whims, and to direct their production and selling accordingly.¹⁵⁷ Market research adopted the tools and theories of the emerging social sciences and put them to work in the commercial world. This was no more evident than at J. Walter Thompson and Cockfield, Brown,

156. *Ibid.*, 213-214

157. Chandler, 287-314

where the top academic economists of two countries found part-time work as corporate consultants. Statistics finally gave to advertising the scientific foundation that it had vainly sought in psychology. It also gave professionalizing adworkers the institutional alliance they had craved to secure a recognized level of social attainment and respectability.

It was not the agencies but the publishers who first developed these methodologies with advertising in mind. Then, they had in mind the systemization of media buying techniques more than the creation of advertising copy and art. Nonetheless, the broader possibilities of research soon became evident to everyone within the trade. The publishers had inspired a new way of addressing the 'selling problem.' Where psychology had asked the advertisers to think of readers as individual consumers making individual decisions, publishers armed with market research asked advertisers to think of readers as mass markets. Unlike individual consumers, these mass markets had identifiable divisions and common interests, identifiable aversions and desires. Grafting quantifiable measurement techniques onto this perspective, a new breed of market researchers was able to investigate these interests and desires, to select likely territories for sales campaigns, to pick the most effective media for particular products, and to pre-test campaign strategies on sample audiences.

That the largest agencies in Canada had developed research departments by 1930 should be taken as a sign of this change in outlook. Ultimately, it did not matter who conducted these studies, be it the manufacturer, agency, research bureau, academic, or publisher. Agencies believed that manufacturers had come to accept this new way of thinking about the buying public and subsequently sought the benefits of market research. The readers of mass manufactured newspapers and magazines would no longer be seen as a community of readers sharing a common political outlook, civic identity, or literary interests. They had become a mass of demographic numbers reconstituted as markets. Their hopes, fears, desires, and even their identities would become the grist of the marketing strategist and the advertising copywriter.

Chapter 6 : The Canadian Market, Magazines, & the New Logic of Advertising

It remains to be seen whether or not ... Canada will produce magazines or other publications which, in point of circulation, will cover the cities and large towns of the Dominion in the way that the 'Ladies' Home Journal,' 'Saturday Evening Post,' 'Munsey's,' and other American publications cover the United States.

W.J. Healy, November 1908¹

W.J. Healy had good cause to ponder this question. He oversaw the advertising revenues of the highest circulating periodicals in Canada, the *Montreal Star* and its weekend edition, the *Family Herald & Weekly Star*. Both had circulations over 100,000. No Canadian magazine came anywhere near them. With no competition from a strong consumer magazine in Canada, both papers dominated the field in national advertising, as well as the Montreal field in retail advertising. Magazine circulation was so fragile that most national campaigns began with a list of daily papers stretching from coast to coast and relegated magazines to a secondary role, serving specialized markets where needed.²

The fragility of native magazines had never provided an accurate view of the market for magazines in Canada. Readers above the 49th parallel had long purchased American magazines in quantities that far outstripped what Canadian publishers produced. After 1900, these quantities increased dramatically, as the annual number of magazines entering from the United States rose into

1. W.J. Healy, 'The Position of the Daily Paper,' *Economic Advertising*, 1:3 (November 1908), 21-22

2. A.J. Denne, 'How an Agency Plans a Campaign,' *Printer & Publisher*, 24:7 (July 1915), 25-26

the millions. Had any Canadian publisher tapped into this market, the periodical landscape might have suddenly and dramatically changed.

Five years after Healy's comments, this scenario came to pass, at least in part. After several false starts, Canadian magazines appeared which seemed capable of attracting a vast number of these readers. The change began with the adoption of reader profiles by publishers' advertising sales staff. As noted in the previous chapter, this event prompted a reconsideration of the relationship between magazines and their readerships. It did not occur overnight. Nonetheless, the conception of readers as patrons gradually lost ground to a conception of readers as consumers. When that happened, publishers re-oriented their magazines' editorial and financial structures around the concept of consumer markets. Every policy adopted by such magazines ultimately had to be justified by its service-value to advertisers. This transformation both reflected and reinforced the attempted professionalization of the advertising trade. The growing body of expertise developing within the social sciences — and particularly psychology, sociology, economics, and accounting — gave publishers the tools they needed to read the public mind and respond accordingly. No longer would their decisions be rooted in an intuitive sense of the readership and its tastes. Now, editors and publishers could root their decisions in market analysis.

After 1910, the time finally seemed ripe to win the Canadian trade in consumer magazines away from the Americans, and the trade in national advertising away from the newspapers. The booming economy spurred the growth of consumer advertising by Canadian companies. The population itself was expanding; at the same time, it was also becoming increasingly urban and dependent on store-bought goods. American publishers were cultivating a growing audience for consumer magazines and supplied ample examples of successful formats and formulas. Then, with the new market research tools developed by academics such as Paul T. Cherington, it became possible for publishers to identify emerging trends in the Canadian marketplace, and to respond to

them with topical magazines of their own.

Canadian Magazines before 1900

Magazines are about readership. Both before and after the transformation prompted by national advertising, magazines were ultimately dependent on their readers for their income. If before most of that income had been taken from individual subscriptions, after the emergence of national advertising it came from the advertising rates based on circulation figures. A publisher had to believe there was a market begging for his product before investing his capital in wages, paper, ink, and presses. In this, publishing was no different from any other business. The first step was to identify the market, the second was to assess its size, and the third was to assess its potential interest in the proposed product.

Before 1890, most of the periodicals that enjoyed any degree of longevity were those whose markets had called them into being. Every major trade association, religious group, professional body, voluntary society, students' union and political party in Canada had its organ. Sometimes these were owned and operated by the organization itself, and sometimes they were operated by private companies; some were weeklies, others monthlies or quarterlies. Despite these differences, they all existed to foster communication between members, or, to apprise them of upcoming events, past glories, and news of common interest that the daily press generally overlooked. Egerton Ryerson established the *Christian Guardian* at the request of the Methodist Church of Canada in 1829; the *Presbyterian Witness* was published by a private company owned by members of that faith. J.B. Maclean established *Printer & Publisher* on his own account in 1892, but soon won the official endorsement of the Canadian Press Association. Backed by an organization, a prospective publisher had a ready-made market for his product. If he won the confidence of the organization's executive board, all the better; he had a decidedly influential sales staff, and could use membership rolls to

target his subscription efforts.

Without such an organization, a publisher would have to work on assumptions about the market. Only his instincts could tell him if anyone would read the periodical he had in mind. Sometimes this was an informed opinion. More than two dozen trade papers were created before 1890, each serving a different commercial line or industry. In most cases, the publication of a trade paper preceded the formation of any relevant trade or industrial organization. Despite the lack of an institutional focus, the publisher banked on the existence of a community of interest shared by all those engaged in the same line. For example, the proliferation of small shops inspired more than one publisher to serve that market, with magazines entitled *Dominion Grocer*, *Canadian Dry Goods Review*, *Canadian Grocer & General Storekeeper*, and *Merchant*.

Others groups were courted in this fashion. Among them, farmers made an obvious target. Throughout the period under study they formed the largest occupational group in the Dominion.³ The first agricultural papers began to appear in the 1830s, and by 1891 every province but British Columbia boasted at least one established title.⁴ Some specialized in particular segments of the farm market, while others tried to cover the entire field.⁵

Apart from occupations, an equally comprehensive means of reading the market was by religious faith. Newspapers, weeklies, and magazines sprang up through the 1800s to serve almost every Christian group in the Canadas; Jewish newspapers appeared at the turn of the century.⁶ Papers of this genre enjoyed great popularity even without the stamp of an official body. Papers such

3. HSC 2ed., D8-D85.

4. Fred Landon, 'The Agricultural Journals of Upper Canada (Ontario),' *Agricultural Journal*, 9 (1935), 168; *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 1ed. (1892), 234. I am indebted to Ross Fair for this and other references on the agricultural press.

5. Dorothy Duke, 'Advertising Publications Published in Canada' (Ottawa: Department of Agriculture, 1962)

6. Gerald Tulchinsky, *Taking Root: The Origins of the Canadian Jewish Community* (Toronto: Lester, 1992), 150-152, 164

as the *Montreal Witness* offered a variety of news and literature written from a Christian standpoint without focusing on church news *per se*. More often Protestant than not, such papers tried to present a vision of a unified Christendom facing down the evils of drink, amusements, and 'pagan' living in general. The least charitable of the lot also chose to attack other religious groups.

Women too constituted a recognizable social group, either with or without associational ties, and their patronage was eagerly sought by publishers. The most common offerings belonged to a genre described by Ansom McKim as the 'domestic' or 'household' press.⁷ The key emphasis of these magazines was the gendered nature of homemaking. Editorial content was not determined by the shared biology of the intended readers, but on the basis of their common roles as wives, mothers, and homemakers. Articles discussed child-rearing, family health, home life, and home economics, as well as society news and fashion.⁸ Before 1900, such magazines included *Home Knowledge*, *Famille*, and *The Home Journal*. A second cluster of magazines intended for women were published by groups such as mission societies and the Women's Christian Temperance union.⁹ These were essentially the organs of voluntary societies, and not women's magazines *per se*.

It may seem odd to discuss all of these genres as a set. Some were little more than the newsletters of fraternal societies, others were the hardy press of the yeoman class, still others discussed the latest Parisian fashions in clothes and home décor. Nonetheless, all of them shared one important characteristic: they all chose markets based upon the readers' self-identified loyalties and

7. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 1ed. (1892), 235

8. Angela E. Davis, 'Country Homemakers: The Daily Lives of Prairie Women as Seen through the Woman's Page of the Grain Growers' Guide, 1908-1928,' *Canadian Papers in Rural History*, vol.8 (Ganonoque, Ontario: Langdale, 1992), 163-174; Norah L. Lewis, 'Goose Grease and Turpentine: Mother Treats the Family Illnesses,' *Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History* 2ed., eds. V. Strong-boag and A.C. Fellman (Toronto: Copp Clark Pittman, 1991), 234-248

9. Veronica Strong-Boag, 'Setting the Stage: National Organization and the Women's Movement in the Late 19th Century,' *The Neglected Majority*, eds. S.M. Trofimenkoff and A. Prentice (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1977), 87-103; Ruth Compton Brouwer, *New Women for God: Canadian Presbyterian Women and India Missions, 1876-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1990), 5-6, 28-29

roles within society. These periodicals appealed to readers as shopkeepers, as farmers, as homemakers, as students, as devotees, as volunteers, or whatever else they may have been. They then attempted to serve their readers based upon that identification. More often than not, the periodical disclosed information that would help its readers to become better within those roles. The farm papers were particularly clear on this point. To a man, editors sought ways to improve the agricultural production of their readers. In 1845, the first issue of one such paper declared:

The grand aim and object of the Editor of *The British American Cultivator* will be to create a stimulus for improvement amongst the productive classes, whereby the vast resources of British North America may be speedily developed, and her inhabitants made prosperous and happy.¹⁰

Articles discussing new ideas in crop management and animal husbandry were offered for the readers' consideration, written by those with practical experience in the field. The most recent advances in equipment were reviewed, and prizes were frequently offered for the finest specimens of the year's harvest.

In direct contrast to these periodicals, there existed another set whose editorial direction was inspired by leisure time activities. Rather than identifying potential markets of readers by institutional or demographic categories, these periodicals identified their markets by their common hobbies and passions. Reading itself was one such passion, and the genre with the longest tradition in this set was the literary journal. Such magazines offered a mix of articles, poetry, and fiction intended for a well-educated audience with sufficient leisure time to enjoy the quiet contemplation necessary for such pursuits. Among those active in 1891 were the *Canadian Revue*, *Canadian Magazine*, and *Saturday Night*. They had cousins in the humorous magazines of the era, such as *Grip* and *Loup-Garou*. Others could address any number of specialized pastimes. For those interested in fishing, hunting,

10. W.G. Edmundston, *British American Cultivator* (1845), quoted in Landon, 169

philately, or music, there were publishers in Canada eager to sell them a magazine. And just as the children had uplifting tracts and periodicals foisted upon them in school and in church, they were treated with illustrated story magazines such as *Pleasant Hours* and *Sunbeams* in their less studious hours.

In sum, publishers conceived readers on the basis of their shared identities or shared activities. They staked out their markets by appealing to the self-defined interests shared by these groups. In so doing, they produced their periodicals in the expectation that these groups of people in themselves would become the patrons of their magazines. The key for a privately-owned publishing house was to select a social group whose numbers were sufficient to keep the paper financially afloat. The publisher who chose to serve a market defined by identity had to understand that readership was a function of the size of the social category in question. While some farmers might have been interested in the *Canadian Pharmaceutical Journal*, probably few took a subscription. The same could be said of druggists and the *Canadian Poultry Review*. On the other hand, so long as there were individuals associated with that segment of the population, the publisher could assume that the readership for such a periodical would remain relatively stable.

By contrast, the publisher who chose a market identified by an activity enjoyed a much more open-ended appeal, at least potentially. Even if the druggist and the poultry farmer did not read each others' trade papers, both could enjoy a Bengough cartoon or a romantic poem by Pauline Johnson. Further, a reader's interest in humour or literature need not have prevented him or her from pursuing other interests – and by extension the magazines connected with them. Druggist and farmer alike could find something of interest in more than one literary magazine. The exceptions to this pattern were the domestic magazines and a certain core of agricultural papers which adopted domestic content. Before 1890, these periodicals definitely adhered to a function-based conception of their readership. After 1900, however, their primary subject matter – home life – became an ideal setting

for the development of lifestyle journalism and advertising. As such, the traditional appeal of these magazines was essentially subverted. The eternal verities of faith, hearth, and home that were endlessly repeated by Victorian editors were gradually replaced by the ever-shifting, modern codes of a new generation of fashion-conscious editors.

American Magazines in Canada

Canadian magazines were never the only choice enjoyed by anglophone Canadians. Throughout the nineteenth century, the market was dominated by British and American periodicals. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to state that the market was shaped by the presence of these periodicals, and that Canadian offerings merely filled limited roles not served by their imported counterparts.

It is difficult to assess the actual numbers of periodicals that entered Canada before 1930. The only agency which kept statistics on this subject was the Ministry of Customs. It was responsible for administering the country's tariff laws. Although newspapers and magazines could be imported duty-free until 1931, customs officials did track the annual value of these items entering the country.¹¹ With these figures, it is possible to gauge the volume of this trade by its aggregate value. Unit figures themselves became available with the creation of the Audit Bureau of Circulations in 1914. It isolated the regional distribution of every member's circulation, and treated Canada as a separate region. W.A. Lydiatt drew upon this source, and published a list of the top-selling American magazines in Canada each year after 1916. Nonetheless, this too failed to provide an overall picture of the number of magazines entering the country. It only revealed the sales figures for specific titles, albeit the biggest sellers in Canada.¹²

11. There was a 5% duty on 'Books, printed, and periodicals, pamphlets, etc.,' but this was only intended for bound items with preprinted content, such as children's puzzle books or annual directories; *An Act Imposing Duties of Customs*, 31 Victoria (1870) ch.44, schedule B.

12. *Lydiatt's Book* 5ed. (1917), 90

With these qualifications in mind, Table 6.1 may be presented. The annual value of American magazines entering Canada grew relatively slowly before the turn of the century. Indeed, the total value of American imports declined between 1889 and 1894. This period, however, was marked by the price war fought among the consumer magazines following the arrival of *Munsey's*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *McClure's* on to the American scene. Before Frank Munsey reduced the price of his publication to 10¢ in 1893, the average price per issue for a consumer magazine was 25-35¢. Hence, the *dollar value* of magazines entering Canada dropped during the 1890s – and bottomed out in 1893 – but the *aggregate number* of magazines probably increased. Where one dollar usually represented three or four magazines in the 1880s, it often represented ten by 1900. In terms of absolute numbers of magazines entering Canada, then, the figures for total value entering each year probably understate the true magnitude of the increased American presence. This consideration makes the figures for the period after the turn of the century all the more remarkable. From 1900 to 1921, the average annual rate of growth in the value of American magazines entering Canada was 16.4%.

British magazines provide an interesting contrast to the American imports. From 1900 to 1915, the value of British magazines entering Canada tripled. There are two possible explanations for this. First, the increased sale of American periodicals certainly indicated that Canadians had become magazine enthusiasts. No doubt, this benefitted all periodical publishers, whether American or otherwise. Second, the period from 1905 to 1914 also saw a significant increase in the number of British immigrants to Canada, who probably sought news of the home country. Either way, not even the war sustained this demand over the long run. The importation of British magazines fell off dramatically through the 1920s, despite a small gain in 1922. While the value of their imports

Table 6.1

**Total Dollar Value of Newspapers and Magazines entering Canada
for Home Consumption by Country of Origin, 1880-1931**

Year	U.S.A.	U.K.	others	total
1880	23,336	6,405	—	29,741
1881	46,160	38,516	—	84,676
1882	62,630	37,829	—	100,459
1883	53,663	40,246	1,157	95,066
1884	48,771	46,298	452	95,521
1885	64,307	39,919	86	104,312
1886	54,226	35,840	350	90,416
1887	58,888	32,675	109	91,672
1888	54,716	18,783	535	74,034
1889	55,050	22,763	886	78,699
1890	42,612	28,586	1,004	72,202
1891	37,599	17,431	1,487	56,517
1892	38,915	21,027	299	60,241
1893	36,136	22,537	822	59,495
1894	44,612	21,383	8,124	74,119
1895	52,893	23,543	842	77,278
1896	n/a	n/a	n/a	105,527
1897	100,011	21,618	1,009	122,638
1898	111,020	25,695	755	137,470
1899	102,000	28,151	727	130,878
1900	107,340	27,589	932	135,861
1901	113,444	36,775	1,352	151,571
1902	109,069	35,524	1,216	145,809
1903	124,035	34,327	1,109	159,471
1904	148,419	36,168	1,539	186,126
1905	182,620	40,959	1,575	225,154
1906	260,018	53,036	1,289	314,343
1907	232,284	38,147	779	271,210
1908	400,736	66,526	2,762	470,024
1909	567,123	66,821	7,539	641,483
1910	665,816	64,458	8,379	738,653
1911	787,893	75,576	6,800	870,269
1912	881,621	76,994	2,119	960,734
1913	1,052,558	81,523	4,786	1,138,867
1914	1,212,194	74,998	10,207	1,297,399
1915	1,339,730	82,137	3,981	1,425,848
1916	1,434,433	57,963	6,613	1,499,009
1917	1,448,408	49,647	7,531	1,505,586
1918	1,669,368	38,518	1,478	1,709,364
1919	2,010,310	44,129	290	2,054,729
1920	2,378,283	40,529	1,764	2,420,576
1921	2,625,625	43,705	3,255	2,672,585
1922	2,557,432	47,911	1,969	2,607,312
1923	1,950,556	25,767	2,297	1,978,620
1924	2,719,626	11,357	2,056	2,733,039
1925	2,758,566	9,280	8,037	2,775,883
1926	2,980,896	7,986	3,111	2,991,993
1927	3,252,607	9,942	4,425	3,266,974
1928	2,970,786	11,591	7,029	2,989,406
1929	2,827,261	23,709	9,086	2,860,056
1930	4,140,690	49,604	7,566	4,197,860
1931	3,807,385	58,387	11,241	3,877,013

Data from Canada, Department of Customs, *Tables of the Trade and Navigation of Canada* (Ottawa: Queen's/King's Printer, [1881-1932]), and
Canada, *Dominion Year Book* (Ottawa: Queen's/King's Printer, [1898-1931]).

stagnated, their share of the Canadian market in foreign periodicals was destroyed. In 1900 they held a 20.3% share, which compared respectably with the 79.0% held by the Americans. In 1921 the British barely scratched 1.6% out of a market smothered by the Americans' 98.2% share. French magazines played almost no role in these aggregate statistics, although they usually accounted for the third largest share. Total imports from countries other than the United States and Great Britain represented 0.7% of the total in 1900, and 0.1% in 1921. *Lydiatt's Book* never bothered to include information on European periodicals. Their reach as advertising media in Canada was negligible.

It might be interesting to speculate on the actual number of American periodicals in Canada. Given the aggregate value of imports from the United States, one could estimate that some 17,500,000 entered Canada in 1921 alone.¹³ This number compares favourably with the estimated total for the top ten American consumer magazines in Canada for 1921, some 10,692,000 (Table 6.2). The comparable figure for Canadian magazines for the same year was, roughly, 11,446,000 (Table 6.3). Such a comparison reflects favourably on the Canadian publishers, but it should be remembered that after these ten there was no other consumer magazine published in Canada with a circulation above 25,000. Even then, the list has been padded with one fraternal organ and one religious paper, both of which made valiant attempts at mainstream acceptance: *The Veteran* and *The Christian Guardian*. Without their 2,000,000 copies in annual circulation, the Canadian list would have lost its edge to the Americans. In terms of revenue, it lost regardless. The Canadian circulation of American magazines was strictly bonus revenue. Their costs -- barring paper, ink, and distribution -- were re-couped in the United States before any copies were shipped for export. The Canadian circulation of Canadian magazines had to cover the entire cost of production and distribution. As such, the \$940,000 earned by American magazines must have dwarfed the profit margins of their

13. Balancing the higher number of 5-10¢ magazines against the higher prices of the less popular magazines, 15¢ might be taken as an arbitrary figure for the average price of all of these periodicals. This is probably conservative.

Table 6.2

Ten Highest Circulating American Magazines in Canada,
and Estimated Value of Circulation,
1921

Title	price/ issue in dollars	issues/ year	average circulation/ issue	total annual circulation	total annual value in dollars
Ladies' Home Journal	.10	12	84,000	1,008,000	100,800.00
Saturday Evening Post	.05	52	64,000	3,328,000	166,400.00
Cosmopolitan	.15	12	62,000	744,000	111,600.00
Redbook	.10	12	56,000	672,000	67,200.00
Butterick Trio*	.15	12	54,000	648,000	97,200.00
Pictorial Review	.10	12	53,000	636,000	63,600.00
Women's Home Companion	.20	12	53,000	636,000	127,200.00
Collier's Weekly	.05	52	44,000	2,288,000	114,400.00
Good Housekeeping	.15	12	32,000	384,000	57,600.00
McCall's Magazine	.10	12	29,000	348,000	34,800.00
totals				10,692,000	940,800.00

* Butterick Trio was composed of three quarterly magazines: Delineator, New Idea, and Designer.

Circulation figures rounded to nearest 1,000.

Circulation figures taken from *Lydiatt's Book* 9ed., (Toronto: W.A. Lydiatt, 1922).

Cover prices taken from F.L. Mott, *A History of American Magazines*, vols.4 & 5
(Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP, [1957 & 1968]).

Table 6.3

Ten Highest Circulating Canadian Magazines in Canada,
and Estimated Value of Circulation,
1921

Title	price/ issue in dollars	issues/ year	average circulation/ issue	total annual circulation	total annual value in dollars
Everywoman's World	.20	12	106,000	1,272,000	254,400.00
MacLean's	.20	24	76,000	1,824,000	364,800.00
Canadian Home Journal	.20	12	55,000	660,000	132,000.00
Northern Messenger	.10	52	54,000	2,808,000	280,800.00
Jack Canuck	.10	52	49,000	2,548,000	254,800.00
Western Home Monthly	.15	12	43,000	516,000	103,200.00
Saturday Night	.10	52	36,000	1,872,000	187,200.00
Veteran	*2.00	12	34,000	408,000	68,000.00
Christian Guardian	*2.00	52	32,000	1,664,000	64,000.00
National Pictorial	.20	12	30,000	360,000	72,000.00
totals				13,932,000	1,781,200.00

* Magazine did not have newsstand sales; total annual value in dollars calculated by multiplying annual subscription rate by the average circulation per issue.

Circulation figures rounded to nearest 1,000.
Circulation figures and cover prices taken from *Lydiatt's Book 9ed.*
(Toronto: W.A. Lydiatt, 1922).

ten Canadian counterparts in 1921.¹⁴

Canadian Attempts at Consumer Magazines

There was one other major difference between the rise of the American consumer magazines and those in Canada. South of the border, a large number of national advertisers had emerged in the pages of the daily press before the magazines themselves came into being. Literary journals such as the *Atlantic* and *Harper's* had done nothing to develop this advertising. Rather, it was an outsider, the advertising agent J. Walter Thompson, who convinced them that advertising would not detract from the prestige of their editorial content.¹⁵ Even then they did nothing to alter the tone of their periodicals to encourage increased patronage from advertisers. Quite the opposite, they restricted the number of pages of advertising that could appear in each issue, and then relegated these pages to the very back of the magazine, presumably where they would do the least harm.¹⁶ Cyrus Curtis and Frank Munsey exploited this situation by offering manufacturers national advertising media willing to serve the advertiser's interests. Editorial content would no longer reflect a desire to attract an élite, intellectual audience connected by its interests in *belles lettres*. Instead, it aimed to attract the largest audience possible, an audience connected by its need to purchase the kinds of commodities that manufacturers advertised.¹⁷ The editorial content was no less topical or political, but it was far less pretentious in its literary reach. It was middlebrow rather than élite, and never pretended to be

14. Mary Vipond, 'Canadian Nationalism and the Plight of Canadian Magazines in the 1920s,' *Canadian Historical Review*, 58:1 (March 1977), 43-63

15. Stephen Fox, *The Mirror Makers: A History of American Advertising and Its Creators* (New York: Morrow, 1984), 29-34

16. Ellery Sedgwick, *The Atlantic Monthly, 1857-1909: Yankee Humanism at High Tide and Ebb* (Amherst, Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994)

17. Harold S. Wilson, *McClure's Magazine and the Muckrakers* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1970), 60-101; Jan Cohn, *Creating America: George Horace Lorimer and the Saturday Evening Post* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1989), 21-46

otherwise.¹⁸ To advertisers, the appeal of their circulation alone was perfectly rational and economic. Rather than placing ads in dozens of newspapers, an advertiser using one magazine such as the *Ladies' Home Journal* could confidently expect to reach a significant percentage of American homemakers in every region.

In Canada, many publishers hoped to recreate the success of their American counterparts, but they did not enjoy the same base of advertisers from which to draw their support. Even if a literary journal such as *Saturday Night* had wished to replicate the success of Munsey's, there were too few advertisers to support it if it chose to reduce its cover price. A weekly number of *Saturday Night* might carry 32 pages altogether in the late 1890s. By contrast, *Munsey's* and the *Ladies' Home Journal* regularly carried over 150 pages of advertising alone. As such, there seemed to be two routes open to Canadian publishers withstanding the American competition. The first option was to simply maintain the status quo, and shrug off the rising number of imports as a simple fad. The second option was to craft a Canadian magazine in a format popularized by the Americans.

Among those magazines which stood their ground was the *Canadian Magazine*. Like *Harper's* and *Scribner's* south of the border, *Canadian Magazine* was the monthly standard of a book publishing firm -- in its case, the Ontario Publishing Company of Toronto.¹⁹ Among other things, Ontario Publishing produced textbooks for the provincial school system. Whether its editors were attempting to live up to its educational reputation, or simply trying to compete with *Harper's*, the magazine was self-consciously literary from the outset. In the same year that *Munsey's* led the respectable consumer magazines into the 10¢ arena, the cover price of *Canadian* was a solid 25¢. Certainly, nothing was scrimped on materials. It was printed on heavy stock paper in digest size,

18. Wilson, 104-140; Cohn, 21-46; Jennifer Scanlon, *Inarticulate Longings: The Ladies' Home Journal, Gender, and the Promises of Consumer Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 11-48

19. It was the eighth magazine to use that name; A.H.U. Colquhoun, 'A Century of Canadian Magazines,' *Canadian Magazine*, 17:2 (May 1901), 141-149.

its pages included a smattering of half-tone photographs, and advertising was kept strictly to its back pages. This advertising was removed completely when year-end volumes were bound for sale. The cover itself epitomized tradition: a bold, solid black masthead framed by double lines – sturdy, balanced, and symmetrical. Like many of its contemporaries in Canada, its masthead and ornamentation remained unchanged from month to month, save for the date of the issue.

Through its first thirty years, the magazine changed remarkably little. Two competent editors, John A. Cooper and Newton MacTavish, guided it through the tremendous surge of American imports and the appearance of Canadian imitations. In essence, each editor clung to the tradition of *belles lettres* established by *Harper's* in the 1860s. In many ways, the Canadian market had only just become capable of sustaining this kind of magazine in the 1890s, both in terms of an audience sufficient to sustain it and contributors sufficient to keep it fresh. Nonetheless, it was its orientation towards an élite, highbrow readership that ultimately led to its decline. As a traditional literary magazine, it never cracked the top fifty periodicals sold in Canada. With a small, if loyal, readership, its appeal to advertisers was the potential prestige of that group – presumably men of affairs and professionals – and its longevity.²⁰

By far the easiest way to compete with the Americans was to follow the second route: to imitate them. As writer Fraser Sutherland has noted, this was usually done by taking American formats and filling them with Canadian content.²¹ One of the most enduring in this regard was a magazine created by John A. Cooper himself, entitled *Canadian Courier*. *Courier* was to *Canadian* what *Munsey's* had been to *Harper's*; a streetwise weekly magazine dealing with many of the same topics and issues as the older, more sedate monthly journal, but with a lighter touch. The prose was less academic, the cover and look of the magazine incorporated more use of white space to give it

20. advertisement, *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 3ed. (1901), 78

21. Fraser Sutherland, *The Monthly Epic: A History of Canadian Magazines* (Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1989), 113

an airier feel, and photographs formed a more integral part of the fare. Its twenty-four pages were printed throughout on a good quality bleached paper, and it was generously sized. Its appeal to advertisers was immediate, and Cooper soon had ads for various foods, office supplies, and home products, as well as the perennial advertisements found in the middle-brow magazines: insurance, banks, and books.²²

Beyond its content and materials, *Courier* also offered advertisers better service. In a major shift from the traditional journal, Cooper adopted one of the new techniques of the American magazines: he integrated editorial and advertising content on the same page. While newspapers had always done this, the literary journals had kept the two strictly separate. The new general magazines of the 1890s had begun to drop this practice in favour of running them side by side. Eventually, this developed into the practice of 'tailing:' running the end of an article through the thickets of ads at the back of the magazine to generate reader traffic. *Courier* kept the front half of the magazine free of advertising, then integrated or tailed its articles in the back half. This attention to the needs of advertisers was crucially important in the development of the mass magazines to follow: few things could have better signalled the shift of editorial priorities from subscribers to advertisers.²³

The differences between *Canadian Magazine* and *Canadian Courier* could not have been more stark.²⁴ Regardless, the *Canadian* remained just as it had been. Their respective ads in McKim's directory for 1915 highlights this fact. The *Canadian* ad relied heavily on its prestige, and practically concluded that some advertisers' goods might not be up to the standards of their lofty publication. It intoned 'If your product is worthy of introduction to the permanent homes of Canada from coast

22. *Canadian Courier*, vol.1 (1906-1907)

23. For a description of these trends in American magazines of the 1890s, see Ellen Gruber Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor: Magazines and the Gendering of Consumer Culture, 1880s to 1910s* (New York: Oxford UP, 1996), 80-105

24. Sutherland argues in his history of Canadian magazines that *Canadian* best represented the transition from the traditional literary journal to the modern mass magazine, but the *Courier* stands as a far better candidate. See Sutherland, 96-111.

to coast, you will find the "Canadian Magazine" a profitable medium.²⁵ Meanwhile, the *Courier* drew attention to its regular editorial departments, which closely paralleled emerging consumer patterns. Manufacturers of pianos, sheet music, pianolas, phonographs, and recordings would have appreciated the 'Music' section, while other businesses would have found comfortable niches in one of the 'Motoring,' 'Travel,' or 'Women' sections.²⁶ In 1917, the editor even included a list of national advertisers and recommended that readers patronize them. If readers could not readily find the brand names mentioned, then the editor would be happy to send them instructions on how to get them.²⁷

Advertisers had a reason to prefer *Courier*, and so apparently did readers. By 1910, the weekly *Courier* had 25% more circulation per issue than the monthly *Canadian*. By 1920, the *Courier* had more than doubled the circulation of its elder counterpart. While the *Canadian* published one issue per month with sales of 17,250, the *Courier* (by then a bi-monthly) published two with combined sales of 90,000.²⁸

Another magazine which took the American route was the *Home Journal*, established by James Acton. Acton was a Toronto publisher whose trade journals rivalled those of J.B. Maclean. In 1905 he broke new ground by plunging into the consumer field. In the space of two years, the *Journal's* circulation grew to 20,000, a significant number for any magazine then sold in Canada.²⁹ However, with a format little different from that of its American model, it offered nothing -- other than the citizenship of its writers -- to set itself apart. Its advertising manager, confident of future growth, bought it from Acton only to see its circulation stall. Five years later, he in turn sold it to

25. advertisement, *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 9ed. (1915), 43

26. advertisement, *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 9ed. (1915), 37

27. 'The National Directory of Standard Products,' *Canadian Courier*, 21:25 (19 May 1917), 26-27

28. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 9ed. (1915); *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 14ed. (1920)

29. advertisement, *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 5ed. (Montreal: McKim, 1907), 116

Harold Gagnier, the publisher of *Saturday Night*. Gagnier rechristened the magazine, in a rather unsubtle fashion, *Canadian Ladies' Home Journal*.³⁰ The Curtis Publishing Company did not look kindly on the theft of its name. The Philadelphia publisher immediately filed suit in a Canadian court for copyright infringement, and claimed that the upstart magazine had interfered with its own magazine's Canadian circulation.³¹ Gagnier soon retreated, and settled out of court. He changed its name again, finally settling upon *Canadian Home Journal*.³² Under that title, it remained a stalwart national entry in the magazine wars until 1958. That year, Maclean-Hunter Publications bought it and folded its operations into those of its own *Chatelaine*.

This tendency to imitate specific American magazines did not serve Canadian publishing houses particularly well. *Canadian Courier* and the *Canadian Home Journal* provided modest success stories, but several other entries were not so fortunate. Among these were *National Monthly* (1904-1906), *Canadian Pictorial* (1906-1916), *Canadian Courier* (1906-1920), *Canadian Collier's* (1908-1911), *Canadian Century* (1910-1911), and *Vie Canadienne* (1918-1919). The profusion of national tags in the mastheads is immediately noticeable. It points to a persistent belief among publishers that merely by being 'Canadian,' magazines would attract readers. Apparently, the failure of these self-same magazines did nothing to discourage such hopes. That said, there were a few success stories beyond the *Courier* and the *Home Journal*: *Canadian Motorist* (1914), the *Canadian Forum* (1920), and *Canadian Homes & Gardens* (1922) have all survived into the present day in varying forms, but only the last could claim to be a consumer magazine. *Canadian Motorist* was adopted by the Canadian Automobile Association to become its chatty promotional newsletter, now called

30. Sutherland, 156

31. Canadian circulation figures for both magazines are not available for 1914; the earliest I have found are for 1916, when *Ladies' Home Journal* had 107,000 readers and the *Canadian Home Journal* had 26,000. Figures from *Lydiatt's Book*, 4ed. (Toronto: Lydiatt, 1917).

32. 'Men and Media,' *Economic Advertising*, 7:8 (August 1914), 34; 'Men and Media,' *Economic Advertising*, 7:11 (November 1914), 34

Leisureways. The *Forum*, ever the darling of the intellectual left, survived the Great Depression as an ally of the League for Social Reconstruction and the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation.³³

Canadian Collier's deserves an honourable mention. It was not simply a Canadian imitation of the American magazine, but a Canadian edition owned by the American publisher. Peter F. Collier had made his name producing bargain-priced editions of classic books in the 1870s. He added to this success in 1888 when he started a breezy, well-illustrated paper, eventually titled *Collier's Weekly*. Guided by the success of *Munsey's* and *McClure's*, Collier had his editors pursue more hard news through the 1890s. Slowly his magazine gained a reputation for its unique combination of muckraking journalism, top-notch commentary, and quality illustrations and photography.³⁴

The magazine that set up shop in Toronto offered the same brand of progressive journalism and short fiction as its namesake. Indeed, more often than not, it offered the *same* progressive journalism and short fiction as its namesake. H. Franklin Gadsby, a writer from St Catharines, was given the task of editing the Canadian edition.³⁵ Despite the introduction of some Canadian material, he drew heavily upon the editorial content and advertising of the American edition to fill out its pages. Their covers were the same, and the volume numbering remained synchronized – there was no first issue to launch the 'new' magazine.³⁶ That said, the Canadian material he acquired gave the magazine a very high profile. One series of articles featured biographical sketches of native sons who had become 'Captains of Industry;' another had selected premiers and lieutenant-governors peering into the future to describe their respective provinces in the year 1950. Noted Quebec journalists such as Olivar Asselin provided occasional pieces on Quebec, and during its first few

33. Sutherland, 122; J.L. Granatstein, *Forum: Canadian Life and Letters, 1920-1970* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1970)

34. This description is indebted to Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines*, vol.3.: *1885-1905* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 1967), 453-479.

35. Sutherland, 93

36. *Canadian Collier's*, vols.61-64 (1908-1910)

months of publication these articles appeared in French untranslated.³⁷ Other articles and poetry were written by the likes of Bliss Carman, George F. Chipman, and Hector Charlesworth. Perhaps the most provocative piece the magazine ran was a contest: in 1909, the editor offered \$100 for the best English lyrics written to Calixa Lavallée's national hymn, *Oh Canada*.³⁸ This contest proved so popular that some 200 versions of the unofficial anthem entered circulation across the country, and six of these gained popularity at public events.³⁹ Despite this response, Gadsby's editorial policies were not to last. After a year, his name disappeared from the title page and was not replaced. Canadian contributions waned after that. The same year, Collier died and left the publishing house to his son Robert. Robert ambitiously set his sights on the industry-leading *Saturday Evening Post* and reorganized the American *Collier's* as a lower-quality, 5¢ paper in a bid to attract a wider working-class audience. By coincidence or design, *Canadian Collier's* closed soon after.⁴⁰

Everywoman's World

The true success story in Canada before 1920 was undoubtedly *Everywoman's World*. *Everywoman's* was founded in 1913 by a new Toronto firm, the Continental Publishing Company. Continental was formed by a partnership between Isidor Simonski and Charles C. Nixon. Of the two, Nixon had the more extensive background in publishing and took a more public role in the magazine's promotion. He had served a lengthy period as the managing editor of *Farm & Dairy*, then joined the Gagnier organization to work on its trade papers. Simonski came to publishing from a background in

37. See for example A.D. DesCelles, 'Les Fêtes de Québec,' *Canadian Collier's*, 61:19 (1 August 1908), 32.

38. 'Wanted: A National Anthem,' *Canadian Collier's*, 63:2 (17 April 1909), 7; 'Canadian Magazines,' *Economic Advertising*, 1:10 (June 1909), 30-31; Noel Robert Barbour, *Those Amazing People! The Story of the Canadian Magazine Industry, 1778-1967* (Toronto: Crucible, 1982), 85-86

39. 'Sing "O Canada,"' *The Maple Leaf*, 1:7/8 (September/October 1922), 18-19, 52

40. Mott, vol.3, 1885-1905, 465; the American edition of *Collier's* retained some 30,000 Canadian readers into the 1930s; see various editions of *Lydiatt's Book* after 1916.

marketing.

In a talk to the Toronto Ad Club, Simonski said the idea for the magazine had come to him while marketing a flavouring essence through the existing Canadian magazines. After the campaign was over, he analyzed the response rate from each periodical and discovered that the cost of obtaining each response ranged from 40¢ to \$1.19. This figure was far too high to be justified by the retail price of the product. Looking over the returns a second time, he concluded that there was too much waste in his selection of media. He believed that the product was mainly of interest to women, yet the proportion of women reading any one of the magazines on his list was no more than 60%. Clearly, he thought, there was room in Canada for a new periodical which spoke only to women.⁴¹ The name they chose was a clever alteration of *Everybody's*, a popular American magazine and then part of the Butterick empire.⁴²

Over the next seven years, Simonski and Nixon hammered away at readers and advertisers on this same theme. To readers, the magazine was pitched as the only national medium that spoke to all women as women, regardless of their station or class.⁴³ Certainly, it was priced within reach of many homes, at 10¢ per copy and 50¢ for an annual subscription. When addressing the readers, the magazine's 'national' identification was not described as an economic utility for advertisers, but the product of a genuinely patriotic spirit. Canadianism was a moral imperative which any good Canadian publisher would strive to fulfil. It was a common mantra among all of the consumer magazine publishers of the day, and it was a rhetorical language that *Everywoman's* editors used well.⁴⁴ A Dominion Day editorial in 1920 waxed on the substantial contributions that magazines made to the task of nation-building. 'Something nationally human,' it pronounced, 'must be built

41. 'What's Doing in the Clubs,' *Economic Advertising*, 8:2 (February 1915), 29

42. Mott, vol.4: 1905-1930, 72-87

43. Charles C. Nixon, 'Twixt Us & You,' *Everywoman's*, 1:1 (February 1914), 38

44. Mary Vipond, 'Canadian Nationalism and the Plight of Canadian Magazines in the 1920s,' *Canadian Historical Review*, 58:1 (March 1977), 43-63

upon what politicians, railway builders, manufacturers, and bankers laid down.⁴⁵ Magazines reaching from the Pacific to the Atlantic could supply the cultural content necessary for a country built of money and steel.

The word 'national' meant something slightly different when publishers spoke to advertisers. A national magazine was everything that a daily newspaper or a country weekly was not: nation-wide in its circulation, potentially exclusive in its readership, and geared towards the delivery of advertising rather than news. *Everywoman's* had not been created to cash in on readers' interest in things domestic; *Everywoman's* had been created to cash in on the number of advertisers who wanted to reach Canadian women. It did so by offering them a medium which did that as efficiently as possible. The magazine was planned with a clear conception of a specific market composed of advertisers rather than readers. Nixon himself made this point explicit in *Economic Advertising*. To the question 'Are Women's Magazines Justified?' Nixon replied with a decided yes.⁴⁶ His reasons, however, paid no mind to the growing strength of women's voices within Canadian society, nor did he care to provide them with a forum of their own. Full justification could be found in the simple fact that women controlled household spending. Nixon pointed to a recent study done by the Home Economics Department at the University of Wisconsin which claimed that 90% of household expenditures were made by women. With or without statistics, this belief had long been held by publishers in the United States. Nixon felt it was insufficiently appreciated in Canada.⁴⁷ 'Women

45. Murray Simonski, 'Power of a National Press,' *Everywoman's*, 13:1 (July 1920), 1

46. Charles C. Nixon, 'Are Women's Magazines Justified?' *Economic Advertising*, 7:6 (June 1914), 53-54

47. Jackson Lears, encountering the same claims regarding the importance of women shoppers, suggests that such statistics were nothing more than mythical representations of commonly held beliefs; most writers rarely mentioned the source of their data. In this instance, Nixon cites the University of Wisconsin, whose economics department was a recognized leader in marketing thought. This also seems like the kind of information that settlement houses would have generated. Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York: Basic, 1994), 209

folk are the ultimate buyers of almost all of all kinds of merchandise for food, shelter, and clothing, and to a great extent also of so-called luxuries,' wrote Nixon. For that reason alone, a medium was necessary that would provide advertisers with a single, direct introduction to their homes. That a magazine such as *Everywoman's* could also give its reader 'vital information about her everyday needs and desires, and which also entertains, elevates and points her to new fields of freedom and accomplishment,' was a notable side effect.⁴⁸

The efforts of Simonski and Nixon, combined with those of an aggressive sales staff, paid off. Within a year, *Everywoman's* had the highest circulation of any Canadian magazine. Within two years, it became the first to attain a circulation of 100,000.⁴⁹ Part of this success may be due in part to the magazine's own policy of advertising advertising. Nixon relied heavily on printer's ink rather than salesmen to reach manufacturers. In the summer of 1915, he cut a deal with Norris-Patterson Limited that gave him the entire first page of *Economic Advertising* – a page previously reserved for the paper's lead editorial – through the coming fall and winter. Then, month after month, Nixon used this space to barrage his prospective clients with endless facts and statistics, describing in detail the location, size, spending power, and influence of the magazine's readers. Two years on, Nixon struck again with the first four-colour advertisement in *Economic Advertising* to demonstrate the effectiveness of colour printing in advertising.⁵⁰

In his own pages, Nixon constantly drew attention to the advertising columns. Where other magazines opened their careers with inspirational messages from the editor proclaiming a new star in the firmament of the magazines heavens, *Everywoman's* had a message from the advertising manager. Tucked among the peonies and ribbons of an artfully set page, came a sober essay on the

48. Nixon, 54

49. K.S. Fenwick, 'The Magazine and Farm Paper Situation in Canada,' *Economic Advertising*, 8:6 (June 1915), 25; *Lydiatt's Book 4ed.* (1917), 14

50. *Economic Advertising*, 8:9-12 (1915); *Economic Advertising*, 9:1-4 (1916); *Economic Advertising*, 10:12 (December 1917), 1

economics of publishing and the beneficence of the magazine's advertisers. If readers enjoyed the magazine, Nixon intoned, there was something they could do to ensure its survival.

Perhaps our interested people who get 'Everywoman's World' this month can best show their appreciation for this great Canadian enterprise by writing to and patronizing the advertisers whose advertisements appear in this issue. Advertisers have been rather timid about taking space in this medium, thinking that you might not favor 'Everywoman's World.' We would be glad if in addition to writing to any of our advertisers ..., if you would write to us pointing out other advertisers whom you would like to see as advertisers in 'Everywoman's World.' This will all help us to make 'Everywoman's World' better and better for you.⁵¹

Nothing was said of the magazine's articles and stories of love. Readers with favourite recipes or household tips could keep them to themselves. What the editors really wanted was a clear demonstration that their advertising columns were read.

A regular feature which began that month made the circle of editorial and advertising columns complete. 'The Romance of Modern Business' drew brief biographical sketches of well-known manufacturers and their leading products. All of them became famous through the same measure: advertising. Readers of the Valentine's issue in 1914 were treated to the story of Waterman's Fountain Pen. An unquestionably useful item, it had languished in obscurity until its inventor had a chance meeting with a quick-witted advertising man. A union ensued, and their progeny were multitude. The unnamed author concluded the story thus:

It has been shown that through the force of national magazine advertising a large industry was created. But there is another side

There is a broad, ethical mission to the development of an industry such as

51. Charles C. Nixon, 'Twixt Us & You,' *Everywoman's*, 1:2 (February 1914), 38

the L.E. Waterman Company. Thousands of people are served, office and written work is facilitated, time is saved and life generally is made easier and happier for many the world over.⁵²

This was advertising dressed as romantic fiction, complete with an instructive message and wrapped in a convenient package.⁵³

The appearance of the new magazine made news in *Economic Advertising*, which announced that *Everywoman's* would become the first 'low-price, high-quality' journal of its kind in Canada.⁵⁴ The comment was not made lightly. The *Canadian Home Journal* frequently patronized the advertising columns of the advertising trade paper. Clearly, the editor saw in the new magazine something which made it categorically different from its predecessors. It might be suggested that its contemporaries recognized it to be the first consumer magazine produced in Canada.

MacLean's Magazine

When J.B. Maclean entered the general magazine field, he did so with all of the guile and reserve that characterized the rest of his business. Rather than starting a magazine from scratch, as the Acton Press and Continental Publishing had done, Maclean bought an existing niche-market magazine and allowed it to develop a new editorial voice, though always under the understanding that it would become something geared to the mass market. In 1905, Maclean bought *Business Magazine* from the Toronto bookseller and advertising agent J.S. Robertson. Robertson had established the magazine ten years before to supply local businessmen with articles of interest on commercial affairs,

52. 'Romance of Modern Business, No.1: The Story of a Fountain Pen,' *Everywoman's*, 1:2 (February 1914), 20

53. See also Garvey, 80-105; Jennifer Scanlon, *Inarticulate Longings: The Ladies' Home Journal, Gender, and the Promises of Consumer Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 69-70.

54. 'A New Canadian Magazine,' *Economic Advertising*, 6:9 (September 1913), 37

particularly on the subject of advertising.⁵⁵

Maclean had in mind a magazine that would appeal to the new corporate employee of the twentieth century: urban, white-collar, ambitious, well educated, and engaged in the affairs of the world.⁵⁶ When he bought *Business*, Maclean was primarily acquiring its subscription list and the goodwill of its readers. Robertson had targeted those whom he believed were buyers of advertising, precisely the kind of progressive business people that Maclean wanted to reach. This was the same market that the enormously popular *Saturday Evening Post* was developing in the United States. Not the social élite, and not the urban working class, but go-getters running their own small businesses, professionals, and managers finding their niche in the new corporate structures of monopoly capitalism.⁵⁷ Even so, Maclean's magazine would not be a trade paper for white collar workers. Quite the opposite, Maclean had in mind a consciously home-oriented magazine, more akin to an agricultural journal such as *Farm & Home* than any of his own papers. Initially, Maclean kept Robertson's masthead, but he attached a telling subtitle: 'the Home Magazine of the Busy Man and His Family.' 'Busy Man' had a good ring to it; Maclean made that the new title with the third issue. Despite the new masthead, however, Maclean knew that women were an increasing segment of the urban white collar workforce, and he considered them a part of his potential readership from the outset.⁵⁸ Taken altogether, these readers composed the 'leadership families,' which he described as 'the most cultured and prosperous homes in Canada, homes which influence the buying habits and

55. Copies of Robertson's magazine could not be found. That said, the first three issues under Maclean's imprint carried articles on advertising, as well as several ads promoting the merits of local papers as advertising media. Since these gradually stopped appearing, it would seem that they were run under contractual obligations incurred by Robertson, and reflect his vision of the periodical rather than Maclean's.

56. 'Canadian Magazines,' *Economic Advertising*, 1:12 (August 1912), 30-32

57. Cohn, 21-46; Christopher P. Wilson, 'The Rhetoric of Consumption: Mass Market Magazines and the Demise of the Gentle Reader, 1880-1920,' *The Culture of Consumption* (New York: Random House, 1983), 39-64

58. *Business*, 11:1 (October 1905), 6; 'Canadian Magazines,' *Economic Advertising*, 1:12 (August 1909), 30

practices of the communities in which they are found.⁵⁹

The magazine began as a digest of other periodicals, particularly those from the United States and Great Britain. Canadian material was not a priority in the early going. Instead, his editors reviewed the British and American press for the best new writing on politics, business, and society, then reprinted it for the benefit of Canadians. The idea was pitched to readers as a convenience, saving them both time and money. Occasionally, an original piece written in Canada would appear.⁶⁰

To build up the magazine's circulation, Maclean had two advantages. First, he had Robertson's subscription list, and this he honoured with the new magazine. Second, he had extensive lists of his own, one for each of his ten trade papers. These lists comprised exactly the market that Maclean was hoping to develop: the literate, urban folk engaged in commerce and industry. A letter was sent to each one, describing the new magazine and asking his or her indulgence of a subscription, sight unseen. According to company advertising, this campaign met expectations.⁶¹

For advertisers, the appeal of the new magazine was the subscription list that Maclean had put together. Here was a magazine that reached a decidedly attractive market. Certainly, its readers should have occupied a higher income bracket than most magazines, and they should have provided a ready market for consumer goods. Further, it was not something aimed at the reader while at work, distracted by the hustle and bustle of work-a-day life. It was intended for the quieter moments after hours in the privacy of the home. Better still, the subscription list was genuinely national in scope, and made no appeals to readers on the basis of gender, ethnicity, party, or faith. In the terminology of the day, it was purely a 'class' magazine. The appeal apparently worked. By 1911, the magazine boasted nearly 100 pages of advertising per issue, carefully segregated from the

59. advertisement, *Lydiatt's Book Sed.* (1918), 102

60. 'Inside with the Publishers,' *Business*, 11:1 (October 1905), 6

61. *Business*, 11:2 (November 1905), 3

editorial matter. The February number had 17 pages of advertising at the front, and another 80 pages at the back.⁶²

Over its first six years, *Busyman's* slowly increased the amount of original Canadian material it carried. This may well have been prompted by the competition from the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Canadian Courier*, and *Canadian Collier's*; they all tried to appeal to the same market. In terms of sheer numbers, the *Post* was the clear leader in North America – although it is impossible to state how well any American magazine did in Canada before the Audit Bureau began to supply these statistics. So long as *Busyman's* continued to run reprints from other sources, however, it competed head-to-head with its more polished counterparts. With greater amounts of Canadian content, it slowly created its own niche within the consumer magazine market: Canada itself. Care should be taken to note that this was no mere marketing ploy. Maclean was a nationalist at heart, and keen to serve the country with a good magazine. In the same year that he bought *Business*, he was offered a controlling interest in two top American consumer magazines: *Women's Home Companion* and *Farm & Fireside*. Between them, they had a monthly circulation of 1,200,000 in the United States and Canada.⁶³ Maclean chose to purchase the lowly *Business* – with its circulation of 1,500 in 1901 – instead.⁶⁴

In 1911, Maclean's understanding of American publishing practices, American magazine design, and Canadian content, came together. That year, Maclean refashioned the journal-sized, *Busyman's* digest into a standard sized magazine entitled *MacLean's*. The magazine now rigorously pursued new material from Canadian sources, increased its use of illustrations, and adopted a four-colour cover. From 1913 to 1917, it also appears that Maclean elected to run *MacLean's* on a deficit in order to build it up. The magazine weathered five successive deficits during this time. Given that

62. *Busyman's*, 21:4 (February 1911); Sutherland, 141-142

63. M-H records, b.55, f.AT-Vance, A.T. Vance to J.B. Maclean, 23 September 1905

64. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 3ed. (1901), 108

Maclean enforced strict austerity measures during the war, his willingness to suffer these losses — and their relatively consistent values despite great fluctuations in revenues — can only be seen as deliberate.

Table 6.4

Profit and Loss Statement for *Maclean's Magazine*, 1912-1918

	advertising	subscriptions	loss	profit
1912	\$42,726.00	\$20,161.00		\$4,009.12
1913	45,713.03	47,276.91	\$25,576.32	
1914	48,254.46	13,863.49	20,595.70	
1915	36,849.01	18,618.65	25,209.27	
1916	40,636.94	30,284.13	15,288.90	
1917	56,640.23	44,174.34	29,100.30	
1918	90,038.96	74,086.39		9,767.39 ⁶⁵

Beyond Maclean's deep pockets, the magazine was also helped by the appointment of a new editor, Thomas B. Costain. Costain had joined the company in 1911, when Maclean put him in charge of *Hardware & Metal*. His editorial talents quickly became evident, and he was soon promoted to the chair of the company's flagship magazine. Together with Maclean, Costain slowly crafted a recognizably distinct and competent mixture of muckraking journalism, light fiction, and Canadian nationalism.

The editor did not always agree with his publisher on the magazine's overall direction. Costain was inclined to infuse the magazine with serious commentary; he had in mind articles on Keynes's analysis of the Versailles Treaty and the lingering tensions between French and English Canada. Maclean insisted that the magazine strive for a lighter rather than more serious tone.⁶⁶ In one gentle rebuff of his editor, Maclean wrote that the magazine needed:

65. M-H records, b.50, f.TB-Costain, H.T. Hunter to J.B. Maclean, 16 October 1947; T.B. Costain, 'Magazine Publishers' Efforts,' *Economic Advertising*, 9:8 (August 1916), 20-22

66. M-H records, b.50, f.TB-Costain, J.B. Maclean to T. Costain, 21 April 1917; T. Costain to J.B. Maclean, 19 February 1920

... articles that will interest the great majority of Canadians, and interest them so effectively, that they will talk to every one they meet about the article We don't want to discuss problems of any kind at the present time in *MacLean's*, but to give the most informing, the most exciting, the most curiosity arousing specials we can secure from Canadian writers on Canadian topics, and after that the same class of matter from American, British, and other publications. ... It is not what you and I like best, but rather what the readers like best that we must give.⁶⁷

After a tour of the western provinces, Costain came to agree with his publisher. He had spoken with hundreds of people at luncheons, meetings, and while travelling by train, and he concluded that the magazine had a definite following:

I believe, however, that in order to make them really look forward to the magazine we must provide them with considerable entertainment. I base this on the fact that everywhere I heard references to certain features. Unquestionably the most popular thing that we have been running this year from the Western standpoint is the series of Bulldog Carney stories.⁶⁸

Maclean had learned to give his readers what they wanted, at a price they were willing to pay. It was a formula that worked, and it paid off handsomely over the long run. Such was the success of their efforts that Maclean's greatest rival took notice. In 1921, Costain was offered the position of assistant editor at the *Saturday Evening Post*, where he became heir apparent to its legendary chief, George Horace Lorimer.⁶⁹ When he left *MacLean's*, it was second only to *Everywoman's* among Canadian magazines. By 1930, it was the head of its class, outsold in Canada only by the American

67. M-H records, b.50, f.TB-Costain, J.B. Maclean to T.B. Costain, 21 April 1917

68. M-H records, b.50, f.TB-Costain, T.B. Costain, 'Report on Western Trip,' 11 September 1919

69. Mott, vol.4, 1885-1905, 708

Pictorial Review, and the perennial weekend papers, the *Family Herald & Weekly Star* and the *Star Weekly*.⁷⁰

The Newspapers Respond

The appearance of magazines such as *Everywoman's* and *MacLean's* did not sit well with the publishers of Canada's newspapers. American magazines had affected neither their subscription bases nor their advertising revenue. Canadian magazines were an entirely different story. The aggressive cultivation of advertisers by Charles C. Nixon and J.B. Maclean pointed to a whole new era for the periodical industry. Nixon's sales pitch to manufacturers did not portray the magazine as a useful supplement of newspaper advertising, but as an extraordinarily effective replacement. Newspapers countered this assertion with a host of arguments in their advertisements to the trade, but their most potent weapon was the circulation strength of their weekend editions.

The weekend papers were supplements to the regular Saturday editions of the large metropolitan dailies. In the United States, these papers were usually issued on Sundays and featured articles and stories of a less newsy character than that found in the same papers from Monday to Friday. Serialized fiction, children's pages, comic strips, travel writing, lengthy political discussions, perhaps a rotogravure section, characterized the pages of the popular Sunday papers. Due to Canada's persistent sabbatarianism, its publishers shied away from Sunday print runs and issued their papers on Thursday or Saturday instead.

American weekend papers at the turn of the century resembled consumer magazines. Their Canadian counterparts resembled farm papers. Competition between the metropolitan dailies of the 1860s prompted some publishers to look beyond their native cities into the wider province for

70. *Lydiatt's Book* 9ed. (1922), 14; *Lydiatt's Book* 18ed. (1931), 14; see also David Mackenzie, *Arthur Irwin: A Biography* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 63-76, 79-87

readers.⁷¹ While outlying districts offered greater circulation, the cost of obtaining these readers could be prohibitive. The weekend edition offered a tidy solution to this problem. With a higher price and a greater print run than a daily paper, the weekend edition could be profitably marketed to a rural population. George Brown of the Toronto *Globe* enhanced his farm appeal by gearing his editorial content to the supposed interests of a rural readership. In 1863, he bought a floundering monthly entitled *Canada Farmer* and made it the basis for his own weekend paper. The result was the *Weekly Globe & Canada Farmer*.⁷²

George Brown was not the only publisher to employ this tactic. In Quebec, it was undertaken by French- and English-language papers with equal zeal. Farmers' editions were started at both of the major French papers in Montreal, *La Patrie* in 1880 and *La Presse* four years later. The daily *Canadien* made its ambitions perfectly clear when it named its Saturday edition *Le Cultivateur* (1884). The grand dame of the field, however, was the *Family Herald & Weekly Star*, the weekend companion of Hugh Graham's *Star*. Founded in 1869, the *Family Herald* became a popular institution in Canada whose readership attended its weekly ministrations of sensible advice and romantic fiction for over eighty years.⁷³ By the 1890s, it had attained an average weekly circulation of 70,000, and individual issues occasionally broke the 100,000 mark. In 1926, it became the first periodical in Canada to break the 200,000 mark, and it enjoyed a readership spread from the Prairie West to the Maritimes.⁷⁴ Until World War II, it had the highest circulation of any periodical in the country.

The *Sunday World* and its crosstown rival, the *Toronto Star Weekly*, were not aimed at the

71. Thomas L. Walkom, 'The Daily Newspaper Industry in Ontario's Developing Capitalistic Economy: Toronto and Ottawa, 1871-1911' (University of Toronto: unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, 1983), 37-38

72. Landon, 167-175; *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 9ed. (1915); J.M.S. Careless, *Brown of the Globe* vol.2: *Statesman of Confederation, 1860-1889* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1963), 113, 269

73. Sutherland, 118-119; Bonville, 240-242

74. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 1ed. (1892), 243-244; *Lydiatt's Book* 14ed. (1927), 14

farm market. Both papers embraced the urban working class, and courted the growing number of families locating in the suburban belt surrounding Toronto after 1900. The *World* was the older paper, owned by the Tory MP William F. Maclean. In the shadow of two other Conservative Party papers – the high Tory *Mail & Empire* and the populist conservatism of John Ross Robertson's *Telegram* – the *World* and its Sunday edition served a steady diet of sensationalist news in the style of the American yellow press. By all accounts, it perfectly suited Maclean's own personality.⁷⁵

The Toronto *Star* under Joseph E. Atkinson emerged as a voice of new liberalism, a distinction which set it apart from the more classically liberal *Globe*. Atkinson took the editor's chair in 1899 when the paper was a distant sixth in a six-paper town. He rapidly rebuilt the paper according to his own vision, and after ten years it became the top Toronto daily.⁷⁶ All that remained in terms of competition was the weekly field, where the *Sunday World* snapped in the wind like a red flag before the bullish editor. When it started in 1909, the *Star Weekly* offered a bookish selection of fine arts and cultural reporting, along with the usual selection of commentary and fiction. While this definitely set it apart from the *World*, it placed it against *Saturday Night*, and won few readers away from either. Things changed in 1910, when J.H. Cranston was appointed its editor. With Atkinson's blessing, he began to introduce ever more photographs, comics, colour rotogravures, short pieces, and humorous stories; he also began to budget more lavishly for the work of better-known writers. By the time he was done, it looked nothing like the paper he had inherited. It paid off. In 1920, the *Star Weekly* overtook the daily in circulation and became the third ranking Canadian periodical. Only the *Family Herald* and the daily *La Presse* topped it. W.F. Maclean's operation depended upon the strength of its weekend edition; when that was overtaken, he bowed out

75. Walkom, 21-72, esp. 39-40; Hector Charlesworth, *Candid Chronicles* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1925), 131-132; Hector Charlesworth, *More Candid Chronicles* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1928), 169

76. Walkom, 120-189; Ross Harkness, *J.E. Atkinson of the Star* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1963), 18-23

of publishing altogether.⁷⁷

From the advertiser's perspective, the line separating the weekend papers from the emerging consumer magazines was fine indeed. Atkinson himself equivocated in his own description of the *Star Weekly*.⁷⁸ Both the papers and the magazines sought the widest readership possible by offering what was essentially entertainment rather than news. Both skirted around the more contentious issues separating Canadians to offer articles geared to lifestyle and recreation. In terms of specific content, this meant current movies, popular writers and their novels, home decorating, fashions in clothes, recipes, sports – all those things that occupied readers in their leisure hours rather than their work-a-day lives. Of course, each provided a leisure-time activity itself. That said, the look and ambience of the weekend papers differed from the magazines. Weekend papers were definitely the poorer cousins of the periodical press, printed as they were on regular newsprint, typeset with the standard linotype, and sold without any binding. Photographs and colour printing appeared, but the quality of these was limited by the quality of the paper itself. Weekend papers were, at bottom, newspapers – and they looked like it, cheap and ephemeral. The newspaper was a literary cigarette, the magazine a cigar. The pages of the best, magazines such as *Everywoman's*, were presented in stylish fonts on high-grade paper and bound for the ages. Where the weekend paper might serve a fecund variety of tasks by the end of the week, the magazine retained a place of honour in the reader's parlour or den, a sign of distinction as surely as a well-selected piano.

Ultimately, there was perhaps one difference that media buyers recognized when choosing between them: where a consumer magazine was capable of targeting a specific national market very efficiently, the weekend paper was capable of blanketing an entire region regardless of its internal market segmentation. Both types of circulation were useful to advertisers, depending on the product

77. Harkness, 72-73; J.H. Cranston, *Ink on My Fingers* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1953), 74-77, 86-88

78. Cranston, 161

and its marketing strategy. Despite their quibbling among each other, papers and magazines would both continue to attract advertising dollars.

The Politics of Publishing

As the competition between the newspapers and the magazines intensified during the 1910s, hostilities spilled over into the Canadian Press Association. Few things better revealed the extent of the magazines' sudden rise and the new importance of advertising. The association had reorganized itself before 1910 to address the problems created by the increased volume of advertising. Its success with this and other concerns had led to its amalgamation with the other press associations of the country.⁷⁹ Now the competition among the publishers for advertising would drive them apart.

Prior to 1910, a group of daily publishers had tried to hobble the trade papers' ability to do business. J.B. Maclean believed that the man behind this effort was Joseph Atkinson.⁸⁰ He was probably right. Atkinson was an acutely shrewd newspaperman, ruthless with his friends and rivals alike, and driven to make the *Star* the largest paper in Canada.⁸¹ Three years into his tenure at the paper, he identified the trade press as a significant obstacle. It began with his efforts to build its circulation. Atkinson pursued suburban readership to increase his advertising revenue; the more readers he had, the more he could charge for advertising space.⁸² Nonetheless, suburban readership would lack value for his urban advertisers unless they actually came into the city to shop. It was in Atkinson's interests to portray rural and small-town retailers as backward and inept, if not outright

79. 'Men and Media,' *Economic Advertising*, 6:8 (August 1913), 35; W.A. Craick, *A History of Canadian Journalism II: Last Years of the Canadian Press Association, 1908-1919* (Toronto: Ontario, 1959), 50, 60-61

80. M-H records, b.52, f.HT-Hunter/1937, J.B. Maclean to H.T. Hunter, 8 November 1937

81. Cranston, 151-152; M.E. Nichols, (*CP*) *The Story of the Canadian Press* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1948), 74-79, 124-130; Jock Carroll, *The Life and Times of Greg Clark*, (Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 1981)

82. In 1910, half of the *Star's* readership lived outside of Toronto; Walkom, 46

charlatans, to encourage readers to patronize his advertisers. At the same time, the trade press actively promoted new ideas and techniques that allowed small shops to remain competitive. In particular, Maclean's *Canadian Grocer* actively assisted independent suburban retailers in their struggles with the department stores and the mail-order houses. Among other things, it carried an extensive series of articles teaching the basics of window display.⁸³

A second complaint lobbed at the trade press emanated from John Ross Robertson. For some time, whispers had suggested that trade papers were little more than blackmail schemes whose petty extractions were enforced through the collection of advertising fees. An editor's contacts throughout a particular industry gave him great influence. If potentially embarrassing information were publicized, devastating consequences could ensue for those dependent on the goodwill of clients, suppliers, and creditors.⁸⁴ On the other hand, the trade press also attracted a useful readership for those companies interested in managing their corporate image. As such, advertising contracts made with the trade press were seen by some as little more than smart public relations, an attempt to remain on the good side of the papers' editors. Robertson shared this opinion. To his mind, the trade papers were 'barnacles' on the 'Canadian Industrial ship,' 'beggars at the feet of organized graft,' 'court jesters' of the 'kings of commerce' – all epithets he directed at Hugh MacLean in a private letter. 'No one knows better than yourself what the trade paper of to-day really is,' he added, 'nobody knows better the contempt it has earned.'⁸⁵ Robertson believed that the trade press was a parasite feeding off the vitality of the legitimate press. By vitality, he meant nothing more than advertising.

Atkinson and Robertson were united on this point: the trade papers were damaging the

83. Keith Walden, 'Speaking Modern: Language, Culture, and Hegemony in Grocery Window Displays, 1887-1920,' *Canadian Historical Review*, 70:3 (1989), 285-310

84. 'Advertising as a Fine Art,' *Saturday Night*, 1:1 (3 December 1887), 7

85. M-H records, b.54, f.HC-MacLean/1, J.R. Robertson to H.C. MacLean, 16 June 1916

income of the daily newspapers. In 1901, they found ready allies among their peers in Toronto and Montreal, and together they agitated for a re-classification of the trade papers' postal status. If this had occurred, it would have increased the annual subscription price of each trade paper dramatically, and seriously undermined their ability to do business.⁸⁶ Maclean threw himself into the fight. He countered that the trade papers were indeed a progressive force in Canada, for all the same reasons that Atkinson had condemned them.⁸⁷ Whether or not the government was convinced, it did not act, and the dailies withdrew. In the meantime, the trade publishers were prompted to consider a sectional meeting of their own, either within or without the association.⁸⁸

Ten years later, Atkinson and Robertson took up their cudgels once again. By this time, the *Canadian Home Journal*, *Canadian Courier*, *Canadian Collier's*, *Everywoman's*, and *MacLean's* had hit the newsstands, and were beginning to attract more national advertising than the trade press had ever had. What's more, most of the new magazines were owned by the major players in the trade press, a fact underlined by the acquisition of *Saturday Night* and *Canadian Home Journal* by Harold Gagnier. Together with the agricultural and religious papers, these magazines then formed their own section of the Press Association in 1912. Atkinson and Robertson began a second agitation soon after. This time it was to oust the 'Trade & Class' Section from the association.⁸⁹

Ousting the magazines was the first step in a strategy designed, once again, to impose economic sanctions on the magazines. Half of this strategy addressed postal rates again, but the other half addressed the newspapers' own weak spot: paper quality. The Trade & Class section were seeking tariff reductions on fine paper stock which was not readily available in Canada. The Daily section, by ridding itself of the magazines, wanted a united front when they took their opposing

86. M-H records, b.52, f.HT-Hunter/1937, J.B. Maclean to H.T. Hunter, 8 November 1937

87. Chalmers, 172-173

88. M-H records, b.54, f.HC-MacLean/1, J. Acton to [H.C. MacLean?], received 2 May 1908

89. Floyd S. Chalmers briefly covers this episode in his biography of Maclean; *A Gentleman of the Press* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 1969), 172-173.

representation to the federal government.⁹⁰ (This plan assumed the co-operation of the Weekly section, which was not necessarily forthcoming.)⁹¹

Five years later, the daily publishers got their wish, in a manner of speaking. Instead of simply ousting the magazines from the Press Association, each of the sections decided to form its own organization, with its own constitution, executive, and meetings. As of 1920, these new bodies were the Canadian Daily Newspaper Association, the Canadian Weekly Press Association, and the Canadian National Newspapers and Periodicals Association. The CPA remained solely as an overarching parent body receiving delegates from each. At that point, however, Atkinson and Robertson's plan went horribly wrong. In 1920, the government tripled postal rates on all periodicals, both magazines and newspapers. Two years later, it doubled them again.⁹²

A month before the legislation passed, an attempt was made to hold a meeting of the reformed CPA. It failed to make quorum. Among the topics to be discussed was the upcoming conference of the Imperial Press Association, a gathering of publishers representing the largest and most prestigious papers in the British Empire. This body had first met in London in 1909; the next meeting, its second, was to be held in Canada. The daily men wanted strict control of the event. By refusing to attend the CPA that year, they effectively commandeered the conference for themselves. Among those who did attend the scheduled meeting was J.B. Maclean, eager to know why the CNNPA had been left out of the planning committees for the conference. Among those not in attendance was Joseph Atkinson, who strongly opposed their inclusion. The CPA never attempted to meet again.⁹³

90. Craick, *A History of Journalism II*, 117-118, 134-137

91. *Ibid.*, 134-137

92. Mary Vipond, 'Canadian Nationalism,' 44-45

93. 'The CPA in Session,' *Printer & Publisher*, 29:6 (June 1920), 29; Craick, *A History of Journalism in Canada II*, 134-137, 172-173; Robert Donald, *The Imperial Press Conference in Canada* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1920)

The Traditional Magazine Genres Respond

If the new consumer magazines had an effect on the newspapers, they had an equal effect on the traditional magazines. The consumer magazines had evolved out of the domestic and literary magazines of the nineteenth century. Those that succeeded in making the transition to consumer magazines with a mass audience were those that expanded their horizons, from the respectable, middle-class readership of the Victorian era to the more broad-based, new middle class of the early twentieth century. Those periodicals which clung to their traditional editorial voices and traditional markets did manage to retain those markets, but they grew increasingly marginal as the readership of the consumer magazines vaulted past 100,000.

Instructive on this score was the fate of *Canadian Courier* and *Canadian Magazine*. As previously noted, *Canadian* was getting along with 17,500 readers per month in 1920, while John A. Cooper's magazine attained a circulation of 45,000 twice monthly.⁹⁴ The *Courier's* numbers were impressive, but even it was rapidly losing ground to *Everywoman's* and *MacLean's* (Appendix IV). Where *Courier* offered a section devoted to women, *Everywoman's* offered an entire magazine - reaching at least 100,000 readers every month. Once *MacLean's* created the same scale audience for a general magazine appealing to men as well as to women, the days of the traditional literary magazine - and its middlebrow progeny - were numbered. While Maclean had begun selling advertisers on the merits of his 'leadership families,' Cooper described his magazine in the following terms in *Lydiatt's Book*:

Canadian Courier - bringing the East and West together in a compact, interesting, compelling review of Canadian Events - set out to enlarge the common understanding and expand National Sentiment throughout the Nine Provinces.⁹⁵

94. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 14ed. (1920)

95. *Lydiatt's Book* 6ed. (1919), 92

Space-buyers may have admired his coast-to-coast patriotism, but he offered them nothing in the way of market information. Apparently, readers preferred *MacLean's* as well. In 1920, *MacLean's* had a circulation of 65,000 per issue, twice a month, and it appealed to the same well-informed, patriotic audience as the *Courier*.⁹⁶ Cooper decided to call it a day, and closed out his magazine in 1920. He soon after joined the Toronto advertising agency of Smith, Denne, & Moore.⁹⁷

Perhaps it is ironic that *Canadian Magazine* outlasted its breakaway editor and his upstart magazine. It did not have long to gloat, however. *MacLean's* continued to rise, and broke 80,000 circulation within three years. *Canadian* hovered at 15,000. The next year, 1924, it was finally revamped as a general magazine. *Canadian* adopted all of the innovations that the *Courier* and *Busyman's* had almost twenty years before: it increased its size, added four-colour printing, adopted a glossy cover, and placed the illustrations on an equal footing with the text. To attract advertisers, it also decided to integrate the editorial and advertising content for the first time. The changes were not well received by its traditional readership, and the more alienated among them left. Its owners decided to cut their losses, and in 1926 sold it to Hugh MacLean.⁹⁸

MacLean changed the magazine yet again. When he bought it, he was well aware that he would be competing head-to-head with his brother J.B., and Hugh was nothing if not competitive. He immediately struck a blow at 'Jack's' company by hiring one of its rising editors, Joseph Lister Rutledge. Together, MacLean and Rutledge crafted a magazine that would rival *MacLean's* both in its content and its service to advertisers.⁹⁹ Within four years, the magazine had a monthly circulation of 91,000, a distant but respectable showing against *MacLean's* and its twice-monthly 164,000.¹⁰⁰

96. *Lydiatt's Book* 8ed. (1921), 14

97. *Marketing*, 16:1 (1 January 1922), 38

98. *Canadian Magazine* vols.63-65 (1924-1926); Sutherland, 102-111

99. Sutherland, 104-107

100. *Lydiatt's Book* 18ed., (1931), 14

Canadian's transformation from a serious literary journal into consumer magazine did not signal the end of serious periodical writing in Canada. There were two havens for the readers of this genre: the university journals and a new breed of political magazines. The university journals had existed for some time, and were very much in the same format as the *Canadian Magazine* of old: digest size, with few illustrations and a predilection for political and social commentary and *belles lettres*. Such journals included *Queen's Quarterly* (1893) and the *McGill University Magazine* (1901-1920).¹⁰¹ Although the latter ended in 1920, its place was soon taken by the *Dalhousie Review* (1921). Unlike *Canadian Magazine*, however, these journals were not market-driven. They were not private enterprises run for profit, but the standard bearers of academic institutions keen to maintain a connection with the outside world.¹⁰² The genre was able to ignore the marketing imperative precisely because they did not rely on advertising to pay their bills. Rather, they took in what advertising was available, had higher subscription rates than most other magazines, and submitted their operating deficits to their universities.

The second group mentioned, the political magazines, tried to respond to the demands of the market while retaining a serious, literary tone. The *McGill Fortnightly Review* (1920-1921), *Onlooker* (1920-1922), *Canadian Forum* (1920), *Willison's Monthly* (1925-1929), and *Canadian Mercury* (1928-1929) each tried to craft a similar paper, a hybrid of the serious journal and the modern consumer magazine. Each entry came in a large magazine format, with modern dress in masthead, typeface, and layout. Nonetheless, all of them remained subdued in their use of illustrations, preferring to run woodcuts or reproductions of contemporary artworks rather than photography.

101. Frederick W. Gibson, *Queen's University vol.2: To Serve and Yet to be Free* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1983), 6, 117; Stanley Brice Frost, *McGill University, For the Advancement of Learning vol.2: 1895-1971* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1984), 51-55. The McGill magazine was actually published independently by Andrew Macphail after the university stopped funding it in 1906.

102. Frost, 53

Willison's was the magisterial soapbox of its namesake, Sir John Willison. In his youth, Willison had risen quickly to become editor of the formidable *Globe* at the age of 34. After twelve years there, Willison grew tired of the ceaseless partizanship of the daily press. Together with Joseph Flavelle, he bought the derelict *Toronto News* in 1902 and tried to make it over into a politically independent evening paper appealing to an up-market readership. It was the worst marketing decision imaginable, and the paper was crushed in the competition between its popular evening counterparts and its up-market morning rivals. After six years, ownership was sold to a Conservative party backer, and Willison, still editor, was enchained again.¹⁰³ The magazine was his last attempt, at age 69, to write serious and independent political commentary. Everything about it reflects a classical image of politics, from the clean symmetry of its cover and the Roman lettering of its typeface, to the sober and institutional tone of its advertising. Following the style of the *London Times*, none of the articles were signed – a signal statement of the periodical's self-assured sense of authority.¹⁰⁴ Looking at the ads, from companies such as Eaton's, Simpson's, and the Canadian Pacific Railway, as well as several banks, insurance firms, and trust companies, it is readily apparent that none of them used hard sell methods in the magazine. All of them ran glosses on their firms as important Canadian firms. One wonders if they were placed out of courtesy, to pay respect to a fading warrior. (Willison's former business manager at the *News* was by then the president of McKim Limited; Willison's son was hired by McConnell & Fergusson in 1922). Few of them ever bought space in the other political magazines. It is impossible to gauge the value of its pages or the

103. Willison left his memoirs, and there is an annotated selection of his letters available, but Michael Bliss offers a much more focused view of Willison's career; Sir John Willison, *Reminiscences Political and Personal* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1919); A.H.U. Colquhoun, *Press, Politics, and People: The Life and Letters of Sir John Willison* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1935); Bliss, *A Canadian Millionaire: The Life and Business Times of Sir Joseph Flavelle, Bart., 1858-1939* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1978), 146-151, 172-173, 182-183

104. Colquhoun, *Press, Politics*, 276-277

size of its readership, since the magazine never revealed these figures to the newspaper directories.¹⁰⁵ For three years Willison held forth. Death took him in 1927, and the magazine in 1929.

None of *Willison's* peers rose above its meagre existence. Willison, having left the *Globe*, the Liberals, and the Conservative press behind, provided an independent conservative voice in his magazine. During its last year, it faced some competition from a younger group at the *Canadian Mercury*. H.L. Mencken's notorious *American Mercury* enjoyed a sizable vogue in the late 1920s among a class of cranky young intellectuals.¹⁰⁶ The *Canadian Mercury* was a none-too-subtle imitation that attracted the same class of readers and contributors in Canada. Among these could be counted the iconoclastic copywriter and artist Bertram Brooker, as well as poets Dorothy Livesay, A.M. Klein, and Leo Kennedy.¹⁰⁷ The *Mercury* did not last long; both it and *Willison's* were eclipsed by their 'new liberal' counterpart, the *Canadian Forum*. Begun in 1920 by a group of professors at the University of Toronto, the *Forum* struggled along with the same cluster of advertisers to which most of its peers had resorted: book publishers and other firms desiring to reach the dusty halls of academe. The *Forum* was the only one to survive the period, perhaps because its brand of liberalism was in its ascendancy.¹⁰⁸ That said, it was never financially self-sufficient. It survived the 1930s not as a truly market-dependent magazine but as an associational organ for a left-wing think tank, the League for Social Reconstruction. Even then, it took a generous cash donation and business advice from a wealthy member to keep it afloat – Carlton McNaught, a staff member

105. *Canadian Newspaper Directory*, 19-22eds. (1926-1929)

106. Mott vol.5, 1905-1930, 3-26; M.K. Singleton, *H.L. Mencken and the American Mercury Adventure* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke UP, 1962), 11-54

107. Ken Norris, *The Little Magazine in Canada, 1925-80* (Toronto: ECW, 1984), 16-20

108. Doug Owsram, *The Government Generation: Canadian Intellectuals and the State, 1900-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1986); Barry Ferguson, *Remaking Liberalism: The Intellectual Legacy of Adam Shortt, O.D. Skelton, W.C. Clark, and W.A. Mackintosh, 1890-1925* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1993)

of McKim's Toronto office.¹⁰⁹

Similarly, the religious periodicals carved out a new niche for themselves in the 1920s. At the height of Protestant influence in Ontario, between 1880 and 1910, there were several periodicals representing each denomination. There were also several Catholic magazines. Advertisers had traditionally used these in Canada in the absence of a national, middlebrow magazine. It was generally assumed that subscribers to such papers were nothing less than the most upstanding members in their respective communities, 'the leadership class.'¹¹⁰ As such, it was they that advertisers of new consumer goods and luxury items most wanted to reach. As an added bonus, the respectability of a religious paper reflected well on the advertiser. Presumably, no such editor would allow his pages to be sullied by charlatans and quacks.

The arrival of *Canadian Courier* and *Canadian Collier's* must have thrown a wrench into the accustomed business of the religious periodicals. Leaving faith aside, they appealed to similar groups defined demographically by their income and social standing. Advertisers who did not identify their markets with denominational labels could now use one appropriation in place of seven or eight – and would probably reach the same number of readers.¹¹¹ Advertisers could also avoid any appearance of religious prejudice by using the secular magazines. The whisper of bigotry inevitably hounded an advertiser if it used any one religious paper to the exclusion of the others.

As a result, denominational organs went through a long period of adjustment after 1905. They could either compete with the new magazines on their own terms, or they could withdraw from

109. Michiel Horn, *The League for Social Reconstruction: Intellectual Origins of the Democratic Left in Canada, 1930-1942*, (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1980), 129-133; McNaught was the co-author with H.E. Stephenson of *The Story of Advertising in Canada: A Chronicle of Fifty Years*, (Toronto: Ryerson, 1940). From the 1950s until recently, these magazines and their arts oriented counterparts benefited from the introduction of state subsidies; see Ioan Davies, 'Theory and Creativity in English Canada: Magazines, the State and Cultural Movement,' *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 30:1 (Spring 1995), 5-19.

110. *Lydiatt's Book* 6ed. (1919), 116

111. advertisement, *Marketing*, 15:5 (1 March 1921), 149

the fight and concentrate solely on denominational matters. The *Christian Guardian* chose the former route. Created by Egerton Ryerson in 1829, the paper had been the voice of the Methodist establishment for eighty years. Around it had been built one of the largest publishing firms in the country, which became the Ryerson Press in 1920.¹¹² Throughout that time, the *Guardian* was a sternly Protestant weekly newspaper, printed on full-sized newsprint with no illustrations. Its masthead was a wrought-iron work of Victorian gothic type, its front page nothing but news and commentary on topics religious, social, and literary. By 1910, Ryerson would no longer have recognized it. Reduced to the size of a small magazine, it sported a front cover in keeping with contemporary trends, a ruler-straight box framing a different inspirational passage each week. The masthead appeared above it in a simplified gothic shadow of its previous self. With these changes in place, the weekly retained a minimum circulation of 20,000 until 1920. At that point, inspired by the success of *Maclean's*, it changed again, this time to a full-size magazine with colour covers. It then embarked on a two-fold campaign to increase its revenues. First it targeted readers by pitching itself as a wholesome Christian paper for the home, Methodist in origin but ecumenical in spirit. Then it targeted manufacturers by pitching its new advertising-friendly façade as well as its application to the ABC. Its readership rose to 40,000 during certain months of the campaign, but only half of the new readers stuck with it. Circulation levelled out at 30,000.¹¹³

This was the magazine inherited by the United Church of Canada. In 1925, the Methodist Church of Canada, the Congregational Church of Canada, and roughly two-thirds of the congregations of the Presbyterian Church of Canada came together to form a 'united church' representing the mainstream of liberal evangelicalism. In this spirit, *New Outlook* was created to supersede each of the concurring denominations' own organs: the *Presbyterian Witness* (1848-1925),

112. United Church of Canada Archives, LC83.061c, Board of Publications records, b.12, f.2, 'The Methodist Book and Publishing House ... What It Is and What It Does' [1925]

113. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 14ed. (1920), 160; *Lydiat's Book* 7-12eds. ([1920-1925])

Canadian Congregationalist (1854-1925), and the *Guardian* itself. The new magazine's editor and printing house were those of the former *Guardian*, and it continued to hold the same conception of its ideal reader: nationalist to a fault, socially conscious, politically engaged, and welcoming of all faiths. The new magazine looked like an explicitly Christian *MacLean's*. It was printed on newsprint, but was a full-sized quarto page and wore a heavy stock cover. Its layout inside was smart and clean, and brightened by a liberal use of white space and photographs. Both Lydiatt and McKim felt comfortable including it with their lists of general magazines as well as their religious periodicals. Its own title, of course, made no reference to religion at all, while its subtitle only declared that it was 'A Paper for the Whole Family.'¹¹⁴

Despite its best efforts, *New Outlook* never achieved the same success as *MacLean's*. Part of the explanation may lie in the fact that *MacLean's* already existed, and the broad-based consumer magazine could not have been reinvented as a denominational organ. After 1926, there was also the redesigned *Canadian Magazine* with which to contend. Second, the churches themselves were losing members through the 1920s. Church membership in Canada had not kept pace with population growth, and was falling away in many urban congregations. It should have surprised no one if their magazines suffered a similar fate.¹¹⁵

Beyond these two market-oriented reasons, a third, more cultural reading presents itself. One might wonder if the ethical prescriptions implicit in the magazine's editorial stance were conducive to the atmosphere of consumption encouraged by magazines such as *Everywoman's* and *MacLean's*. There was no special department set aside for cooking, sewing, or practical housekeeping tips, no sections devoted to spectator sports, music, or automobiles. It would have been difficult for the

114. *New Outlook*, 1:2 (17 June 1925), 1; *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 24ed. (1930), 573; *Lydiatt's Book* 17ed. (1930), 14. The title may well have been inspired by a long-running American religious paper *cum* journal of commentary, the *Outlook*; Mott, vol.4, 1885-1905, 59.

115. John Webster Grant, *A Profusion of Spires: Religion in Nineteenth Century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1988)

advertising manager of any religious paper to solicit appropriate advertisers for regular columns on daily bible readings, overseas missions, or spiritual growth. (Not that they didn't try: Canadian Pacific Steamship Lines created one of the greatest advertising slogans of all time with their invocation to prospective travellers to 'See this World before the Next.')116 The encouragement to consume that pervaded the editorial matter of the general magazines simply was not present in a religious paper devoted to personal piety and self-sacrifice. Readers of *New Outlook* were asked to consider each act of their daily lives as a service to God's plan, to seek spiritual growth, and to participate in church groups and voluntary societies. They were not encouraged to keep up with the Joneses. Assertions of the importance of otherworldly priorities did not establish the atmosphere sought by manufacturers desiring greater concern for material interests.

Despite its failure to secure a mass audience, *New Outlook* eventually recognized the loyal audience it did attract. It then adjusted itself accordingly, and became in essence a newsletter for members of the United Church. While it did not altogether drop its interests in current events, its commentary on issues concerning secular society and politics were reduced to a secondary role within its pages. In so doing, it resigned itself to the same role that its counterparts serving other faiths had previously accepted. Magazines such as *Canadian Baptist* (1854), *Canadian Churchman* (1868), *Presbyterian Record* (1876), and *Catholic Record* (1878), had all made this transition. The gradual waning of denominational animosity had removed the need to interpret the world through the peculiar lenses of the sectarian, and secular periodicals were now covering the world's affairs to the satisfaction of readers. If once the church organs had offered literary and political fare, they now settled into the task of merely reporting the affairs of church councils, recent appointments, and new ideas in fundraising.

116. E.J. Hart, *The Selling of Canada: The CPR and the Beginnings of Canadian Tourism* (Banff, Alberta: Altitude, 1983), ch.8

There were two genres which resisted the move to consumer-oriented general magazines, the trade papers and the agricultural press. Of the two, the former proved much more resilient. Beyond MacLean Publishing, Hugh C. MacLean Publications, and Consolidated Press, Toronto was home to at least seven other trade paper publishers with three or more papers during the 1920s. Several others only operated one, such as W.A. Lydiatt and *Marketing*. Most of these papers relied on circulations between 1,000 and 7,000 subscribers.¹¹⁷ They may not have been numerous, but such readers tended to be the managers of firms in their respective fields. For this reason alone, they served a purpose among those who advertised in them. They held their readers by fulfilling a role which in no way asked them to compete with the consumer magazines.¹¹⁸

The agricultural press was another matter. Farming was never simply a business, and the papers which served farmers and their communities rarely confined themselves to the business of farming. Agricultural papers tended to address all matters affecting the household economy of the farm, both inside and outside of the home. Those editors which had domestic columns were very well situated to attract the advertising for many household items after 1890.¹¹⁹ They were no doubt aided by the fact that the rural population of Canada was numerically greater than the urban population until the 1910s. Even after that date, however, more Canadians were employed in the agricultural field than in any other. If advertisers wanted to reach breadwinners and their families, then the farm papers offered them a sure place to start. As previously noted, this was a fact embraced by many of the largest urban dailies, who designed their weekend editions as agricultural papers.

117. See the Toronto listings in any volume of *Lydiatt's Book* or the *Canadian Newspaper Directory* for the 1920s.

118. Studies that include brief discussions of the trade press include Walden, 285-310; Michael Bliss, *A Living Profit: Studies in the Social History of Canadian Business, 1883-1911* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974); David Monod, *Store Wars: Shopkeepers and the Culture of Mass Marketing, 1890-1939* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1996)

119. Lewis, 'Goose Grease,' 234-248

When the increased volume of national advertising began to affect Canadian magazines after 1900, a number of publishers appeared in the agricultural field willing to adapt just as John A. Cooper had when he established *Canadian Courier*. One of the highest circulating farm papers throughout the period was the monthly *Journal d'Agriculture et Horticulture*. The journal was the official organ of the Council of Agriculture of the Province of Quebec, and published two editions simultaneously each month, one in French and the other in English. The council served as an executive body for all of the local agricultural societies in the province, and had semi-official status through an affiliation with the provincial Department of Agriculture.

The *Journal of Agriculture* began in 1898, and had the look of a contemporary trade paper. In particular, its masthead resembled those of the MacLean Publishing Company at that time. The title was superimposed over placid scenes of Quebec farm life, its bold, three-dimensional lettering beaming out towards the reader from a hidden point on the horizon like the morning's first sun at daybreak. Inside, the editorial content covered every possible angle of farm life and every major form of farming; it offered the latest news in crop management and animal husbandry, as well as maintenance tips for machinery and the farm itself. The 'Women's World' section offered advice on such domestic matters as sewing, canning, and candle-making. From the outset the journal had carried photos and cuts, but they were not significant other than as illustrations for articles they accompanied. In sum, the journal was practical, straightforward, and edifying -- concerned more with the serious business of running a family farm than the quality of life of those who lived on it.

As an official organ of the Council of Agriculture, the journal was mailed automatically to every member of a local agricultural society in Quebec. Advertisers usually discounted the circulation of fraternal newsletters because they assumed that readers were indifferent to them. In terms of news or entertainment value, such publications were negligible, and eminently disposable,

no matter how polished their editors tried to make them.¹²⁰ Advertisers did not think this of the *Journal of Agriculture*. Its instructive articles made it useful to farmers whether or not they read its coverage of the council and its affiliated societies. In the 1910s, it enjoyed the largest circulation of any French Canadian periodical save for the daily *La Presse*. In 1913, its French circulation stood at 90,000 while its English circulation was 9,000. If one sets aside the *Family Herald & Weekly Star*, then it was the largest circulation farm paper in Canada.¹²¹ Not surprisingly, then, it was filled with advertising. In the February 1913 issue, advertising covered five pages at the front, eight pages at the back, both inside covers, the back cover, and most noticeably of all, the front cover itself (under the masthead). Advertisers included all forms of farm implement makers as well as consumer durables and foods: effervescent salts, machinery, seeds, stock feed, rifles, oil lamps, potash, stoves, tobacco, fencing, hand tools, concrete, Kodak cameras, indoor plumbing, and Post Toasties all found reason to publicize themselves in its pages.¹²²

Despite its success, the journal still adapted itself to the changing conditions of the periodical market. The look of the journal was modernized in 1914 when the cover was altered to reflect the new fashions in consumer magazines. Its masthead was no longer a cluttered pastiche of pastoral scenery; now its title was printed in a stylized roman font on a plain white background. Elegant, certainly, but it carried none of the symbolism of the farm that had characterized its predecessor. Beneath it, the advertisements for shingles and paint were removed. There now appeared the box design which became common among popular magazines in the 1910s. Inside, the topics and tone of its articles remained fundamentally unchanged. As the editor stated in his brief explanation to readers, 'The Journal of Agriculture stands for progress not only in all lines of farming but also in the production of a high grade, artistic magazine, which will be both instructive and pleasing to the

120. Sutherland, 9

121. *Journal of Agriculture*, 16:8 (February 1913), front cover; *Lydiatt's Book* 1ed. (1914), 14

122. *Journal of Agriculture*, 16:8 (February 1908)

reader.¹²³ Quality of content would not be sacrificed for the quality of the package. Otherwise, the journal also adopted several standard techniques to appease advertisers. By 1920, it no longer segregated its editorial and advertising content, but tailed its longer pieces into the back.¹²⁴

The way in which the *Journal of Agriculture* adapted is notable in itself. Like its approach to editorial content, its approach to format and design was above all pragmatic. Rather than resisting the changing tides of the magazine industry, it incorporated new ideas one at a time. Essentially, it only adopted those ideas that made it more visually interesting or offered better service to advertisers. In this way, it probably avoided the situation faced by *Canadian* in 1924 when that magazine radically altered its format and design only to alienate thousands of readers. Instead, the *Journal of Agriculture* managed to retain a great proportion of its readers throughout the 1920s, despite the growing urbanization of Quebec and the rise of French-language consumer magazines. By 1930, the journal had lost only 25-30% of the circulation it had in 1913. This placed it well behind the weekend farmer's editions of *La Presse* and *La Patrie*, but among magazines it remained second only to a Jesuit religious paper, *Le Messager Canadien du Sacré-Coeur* (1892).¹²⁵

After 1905, a number of agricultural papers appeared in the Prairie West that would challenge the *Journal of Agriculture* for supremacy. Most of them developed in format and design following the same pattern as their Québécois counterpart. Among the most successful were the *Farmer's Journal & Home Advocate* (1866), *Nor'-West Farmer* (1882), *Canadian Thresherman & Farmer* (1903), and the *Grain Growers' Guide* (1908). Among this Winnipeg quartet may also be placed the *Farm & Ranch Review* (1905) of Calgary. Some were associational organs, like the *Grain Growers' Guide*, but most were the products of private publishing houses. Regardless of their affiliations,

123. 'The Journal's New Dress,' *Journal of Agriculture*, 17:7 (January 1914), 129

124. *Journal of Agriculture*, vol.28 (1920)

125. *Lydiatt's Book* 18ed. (1931), 14

however, all of them sought to cultivate sizable readerships and maintain profitable operations. The *Grain Growers' Guide*, the most political of the group, was no different. Under the able direction of George F. Chipman, the *Guide* became one of the most recognizable voices of western Canada, quoted by rival papers across the country for its astute editorials.

The *Guide's* format appealed to the progressive, commercial farmer of the new West. In terms of status this readership did not identify itself with country bumpkins and rubes but with the solidly respectable middle class. That said, it was not a middle class that articulated solidarity with the inhabitants of Canada's eastern cities. This was Chipman's niche; his columns articulated the political and cultural frustration of westerners, and he crafted an editorial identity unique from eastern periodicals.¹²⁶ His defence of reciprocity with the United States, in complete opposition to eastern manufacturers who opposed it, was only the most notorious of his stands. It paid off. Founded in 1908, the *Guide* gradually built up its circulation over the next decade, reaching 29,000 in 1913 and 75,000 in 1920. Its success was matched among agricultural papers only by the less outspoken *Nor'-West Farmer*, which had achieved 74,000 by 1920. Among all Canadian magazines, they were topped only by *Everywoman's* and *MacLean's*.¹²⁷

Advertising writers in *Printer & Publisher* and *Marketing* argued that the readership of the agricultural press was composed of thoroughly modern consumers. Although the western farmer's opinions were not those of his industrial counterpart in Ontario or Quebec, he nonetheless shared the same interests in the burning political, economic, and religious questions of day. The farmer also

126. Davis, 'Country Homemakers,' 163-174

127. *Lydiatt's Book* 1ed. (1914); *Lydiatt's Book* 8ed. (1920)

shared the same taste in consumer goods.¹²⁸ An American advertising manager writing in *Economic Advertising* was dumbfounded by just how few of his peers knew this. G.B. Sharpe wrote:

That the farmer has more surplus money than the average city clerk and mechanic, we must all admit. ...

That he can best be reached through the farm papers, in fact, *cannot successfully be reached in any other way*, and that he is worth interesting, is also a fact that seems not to have percolated to the inner consciousness of many of our national advertisers.¹²⁹

The farm papers themselves set out to re-educate them. *Canadian Farm* advertised itself by suggesting that through its pages, manufacturers would be 'Discovering a New, Big Field for a Product.'¹³⁰ *Rural Canada* bluntly told advertisers that it would reach 'the greatest, most responsive market there is.' It deftly handled its knowledge of markets and market segmentation to argue that farm women and their families needed 'a great home journal edited exclusively for her and their own peculiar farm and home interests -- a great, Canadian, National farm paper.'¹³¹ The *Guide*, asserting that advertising agents knew their markets and used the best media, simply listed the names of ninety-four agencies that has used its pages in 1919.¹³²

The burgeoning market in farm papers was the one field that J.B. Maclean did not enter successfully. Recognizing that his trade papers did not reach this audience, he created *Farmer's*

128. See for instance 'The Farmer as a Factor in Local Advertising,' *Printer & Publisher*, 24:3 (March 1915), 31-31; 'American Magazines No Menace,' *Marketing*, 13:11 (November 1919), 496; T.J. Tobin, 'Do Farm Folks Buy Your Brands?' *Marketing*, 19:11 (1 December 1923), 338; G.A. Gamsby, 'What Kind of Advertising Will The Farmer Read?' *Marketing*, 22:13 (27 June 1925), 373, 385; C.M. Pasmore, 'Farm Consciousness Less Obvious in Farm Paper Advertising,' *Marketing*, 28:11 (26 May 1928), 390

129. G.B. Sharpe, 'Advertising from the Dealer's Standpoint,' *Economic Advertising*, 4:12 (Dec 1911), 36-37

130. advertisement, *Economic Advertising*, 9:1 (January 1916), 16

131. advertisement, *Economic Advertising*, 10:4 (April 1917), 1-2

132. advertisement, *Marketing*, 14:5 (May 1920), 254-255

Magazine in 1910. His intention was to build a national farm magazine, an agricultural companion for *Busyman's* that would rise above the provincial attitudes inherent in the *Journal of Agriculture* and the *Grain Growers' Guide*. However, it was not a field in which Maclean or his staff was experienced. While it offered the full slate of MacLean company services to advertisers, it never provided the national circulation which it had sought. This failure might be traced to its inability to develop a unique or compelling presence in a competitive market. Readers would have found nothing to differentiate its coverage of national affairs from that of their local newspapers, let alone *Canadian Courier* or *MacLean's*. Nor could it overcome regional differences in agricultural production and markets in its coverage of farm news. After twelve years of constant losses, Maclean folded the staff and subscription list of *Farmer's* into *MacLean's*. When he did, he justified it with a fascinating argument:

The automobile has made it convenient for farmers to drive ten, fifteen, or twenty miles into the best shopping centres where they buy first-class merchandise, attend public meetings, and in other ways keep themselves abreast of the times just as do the best of the town and city people. ...

This means that the time has come when they are asking for and will appreciate a good magazine such as *Maclean's* the time had come when Canada's rural denizens no longer wanted special treatment.¹³³

According to Maclean, Canadian farmers wanted the same mix of topical articles, short fiction, and consumer advertising as their urban countrymen. Not only that, but they wanted it in the same package. Perhaps. After this date, *MacLean's* did rise to become the biggest circulation magazine in the country. But dogging its every step were the *Guide* and *Nor'-West Farmer*.

¹³³. advertisement, *Marketing*, 16:3 (1 February 1922), 101; see also *Printer & Publisher*, 31:2 (February 1922), 50

Conclusions

After 1905, Canadian magazine publishers re-oriented their editorial and business departments around the new logic of advertising supplied by applied psychology and market research. If once they had appealed directly to readers, now the fiscal demands of modern technology and distribution systems prompted them to appeal only indirectly to readers through the interests of corporate advertisers. Not all magazines embraced this transformation. A notable group of university, religious, and trade papers held to their traditional formats. Nonetheless, those interested in maintaining a sizable flow of advertising patronage either supplied the services and circulation-boosting techniques which advertisers wanted, or they bowed out. The appearance of *Canadian Courier* was the first sign of things to come; *Everywoman's* was the future arrived.

A certain view of the magazine industry has emerged in the historiography of Canada's culture. This view portrays an industry under seige which was barely capable of resisting the invasion of American magazines that swept across the border. This view has been rooted in the work of Mary Vipond, and her studies of both the writers' and the publishers' trade associations.¹³⁴ Vipond describes a set of nationalist intellectuals and businesspeople who organized in the 1920s to protect their economic interests in the face of foreign competition. Believing that their work as writers and publishers was crucial to the formation of national consciousness, they lobbied the federal government to intervene on their behalf. Above all, they sought a protective tariff that would increase the cover price of American magazines and allow their own products to compete where it

134. Mary Vipond, 'Canadian Nationalism and the Plight of Canadian Magazines in the 1920s,' *Canadian Historical Review*, 58:1 (March 1977), 43-63; Mary Vipond, 'The Canadian Authors' Association in the 1920s: A Case Study in Cultural Nationalism,' *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 15 (Spring 1980), 68-79; Mary Vipond, 'The Nationalist Network: English Canada's Intellectuals and Artists in the 1920s,' *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism*, 7 (Spring 1980), 32-52; see also J.H. Thompson with A. Seager, *Canada 1922-1939: Decades of Discord* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1985), 158-192; Paul Audley, *Canada's Cultural Industries: Broadcasting, Publishing, Records, and Film* (Toronto: Lorimer, 1983), 54-84

counted: on the newsstands. While these lobby efforts were significant, to focus upon them alone distorts the larger picture that has emerged in the preceding pages.

Canada had an astonishingly wide and vital periodical publishing industry both before and after the market was transformed by national advertising. The only components of this industry which did not meet the expectations of their publishers before 1905 were the literary and consumer magazines. Until that date, until Canadian advertisers wanted national media to cover the country, these genres did languish in the shadow of their American counterparts. After that date, however, Canadians developed the skills, capital, and marketing orientation required to produce magazines that were competitive with the American genres they consciously mimicked. Publishers such as John A. Cooper, J.B. Maclean, Harold Gagnier, and Isodor Simonski were enormously important in this regard. Nonetheless, it should not be forgotten that theirs were not the only periodicals produced in Canada. While these four crafted magazines that found a wide appeal in the large, urban centres of central Canada, there emerged in Quebec and the West numerous farm papers that doubled as domestic magazines. Add to these the weekend papers, political and artistic magazines, academic journals, associational organs, and religious papers, and there emerges a great variety of periodicals serving large markets and small.

Ironically, the publishers behind the tariff lobby of the 1920s were the publishers of the consumer magazines. Chief among them, offering both his staff and his financial backing, was J.B. Maclean. A lobby of publishers opposed to a tariff also formed, and it was led by the publisher of the *Grain Growers' Guide*, George F. Chipman. Vipond argues that the difference between the two camps was informed by traditional regional politics, a protectionist central Canadian manufacturer facing off against a free-trade western farmer. This explanation completely overlooks the underlying structure of the industry in which both participated. Chipman and his peers supplied periodicals which had evolved in the communities they served, be it the academic tone of the *Journal of*

Agriculture in Quebec or the barber shop pragmatism of the *Guide* itself. Often, the publishers and contributors had been or were still engaged in agriculture. The same could be said of all of the trade papers when they began. More often than not, they were started by someone from within the trade who saw an opportunity to serve a larger field. Similar points could be made of the religious, fraternal, and other associational periodicals. The consumer magazines were not inspired by the same urge. They were formed from a desire to recreate the success of a genre of magazines that had developed in another country with a different social and economic structure. They had to create the audience they intended to reach, and for this reason they were constantly dependent on its whims and desires. When these publishers compared the circulation figures of their own magazines to those of their American rivals, they had good reason to be disappointed. In most cases, the American magazine of the same genre outsold the Canadian version in Canada itself.

The content of the Canadian consumer magazines made them vulnerable. Their editorial voices tended to emphasize an urban, modern world of new technologies, convenience goods, and ample leisure-time distractions. Much of their cultural content was cosmopolitan in nature, offering cars from Detroit, songs from New York, art from the continent, movies from Hollywood, and clothing from London or Paris. No matter where one lived, the emerging culture of industrial society was relatively homogenous, and media such as magazines, cinema, and radio made this culture widely recognizable – if not yet widely available. Toronto and Montreal simply were not centres in this network of creativity. If a magazine that discussed such things was available from London, New York, or Paris, it probably made more sense to buy it rather than a pale Canadian imitation. This was true even if the topics discussed were entirely irrelevant in Canada, even if the specific goods advertised were utterly unavailable. Perhaps the greatest lesson that the Canadian publishers of consumer magazines had to learn was this: that their competitors' products were not necessarily bought for their news value or even their relevance to the work-a-day lives of their readers. They

Table 6.5

Ten Highest Circulating Canadian Magazines in Canada
including Farm Papers,
and Estimated Value of Circulation,
1921

Title	price/ issue in dollars	issues/ year	average circulation/ issue	total annual circulation	total annual value in dollars
Everywoman's World	.20	12	106,000	1,272,000	254,400.00
Le Journal d'Agriculture	*1.00	12	89,000	1,068,000	89,000.00
Grain Grower's Guide	*1.00	52	82,000	4,264,000	82,000.00
MacLean's	.20	24	76,000	1,824,000	364,800.00
Nor'-West Farmer	.20	24	71,000	1,704,000	340,800.00
Canadian Home Journal	.20	12	55,000	660,000	132,000.00
Northern Messenger	.10	52	54,000	2,808,000	280,800.00
Farm & Ranch Review	.20	24	50,000	1,200,000	240,000.00
Jack Canuck	.10	52	49,000	2,548,000	254,800.00
Farmer's Sun	.05	104	46,000	4,784,000	239,200.00
totals				22,132,000	2,277,800.00

* Magazine did not have newsstand sales; total annual value in dollars calculated by multiplying annual subscription rate by the average circulation per issue.

Circulation figures rounded to nearest 1,000.
Circulation figures taken from *Lydiatt's Book* 9ed, (Toronto: W.A. Lydiatt, 1922).

were often bought simply for their entertainment value. Appeals to the supposed higher moral qualities of Canadian magazines or their patriotic value were useless. Such was the lesson that MacLean taught Costain.

By contrast, the political economy of farming in Canada was significantly different from that in the United States. Periodicals that offered insightful discussions of farm life, as well as recipes and short fiction, pictures and humour, found readers in every province of the Dominion. Their publishers did not seek tariff protection because they could compete against their American counterparts without it. Unlike the consumer magazines, the farm papers did not simply recreate successful *formats* found elsewhere and expect similar results in Canada. Rather, they matched a set of editorial services with an exceptionally large readership; they recreated – either intuitively or intentionally – the successful marketing *formulas* of the American consumer magazines. Perhaps better than Cooper or Collier, Chipman knew who composed the largest mass market in Canada. Further, he had a large group of advertisers who wanted access to that readership. By matching a set of advertisers with its ideal market, the *Grain Growers' Guide* and its rivals were more successful as consumer magazines than most of the actual consumer magazines themselves. If one includes them in the portrait of Canadian consumer magazines drawn in Table 6.3, one gets a decidedly different impression of the Canadian magazine market; the five top-selling farm papers displace five consumer magazines from the list (Table 6.5). One might also note the Advertising Service Company in this regard. In 1928, they appointed a director of 'Agricultural Markets Advertising.' The man they hired to fill this post was a former minister of agriculture for the province of Alberta, Duncan Marshall.¹³⁵ As such, the farm papers cannot be dismissed from the ranks of Canadian magazines before 1930. They were a popular, nation-wide collection of periodicals that reflected the realities of the country's economy, society, and culture through the eyes of its rural citizenry.

135. *Marketing*, 29:10 (10 November 1928), 337

Hence, the perception of an industry under siege has for its focus an exceptionally narrow view of the periodical market. It only takes into account the situation of a limited group of consumer magazines consciously recreating the American formats they were intended to displace. By focusing on the national appeal in their pitch to readers, so-called 'mass magazines' such as *MacLean's* simply boxed themselves into a niche market: Canada itself.

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Conclusions

Among the constructive economic forces in business, alongside the engineers, the architects, and the manufacturing experts, the genuine and experienced Advertising Agency takes its place.

McKim Limited, 1923¹

Every now and then somebody compares us advertising men unfavourably with doctors, lawyers, engineers, and other earthworms of that sort. ... They say that these professional men are welcomed and their pronouncements weighed with much gravity in the counsels of the mighty. Personally, I doubt it. ...

It's the bunk! But there *is* one place, it seems to me, where advertising men might learn something. And that is the theatre. And especially, the vaudeville theatre.

Bertram Brooker, 1925²

Bertram Brooker could afford to be flippant. By the mid-1920s, advertising had achieved a certain cachet within the publishing industry, and advertising agents were riding what was probably the largest volume of appropriations ever seen in Canada. It was both curious and revealing that he should compare himself and his peers – even in this backhanded fashion – to the learned professions, as opposed to, say, skilled tradesmen or businessmen. Clearly, Brooker was having some fun at the expense of his readers by exposing their yearnings for a respectable public image while distancing themselves from the past. A less charitable analysis might conclude that he was picking at a scab. Little wonder then that he published this piece under a pseudonym, 'Mark E. Ting.'

There was no doubt about it, however. Advertising agents had successfully turned an

1. *Canadian Newspaper Directory* 17ed. (1923), vi

2. Mark E. Ting [B. Brooker], 'Hoist the Sales!' *Marketing*, 22:6 (21 March 1925), 168

opportunistic, marginal nineteenth-century trade into a service-oriented, vital twentieth-century economic sector. They alone were not responsible for the revolutionary changes that had overtaken the economy, the publishing industry, or the very nature of the periodicals themselves. Nor, notwithstanding the claims of agents such as H.E. Stephenson and Carlton McNaught, had the nineteenth-century agents truly participated in the movement to national advertising as it occurred after 1900.³ Rather, a younger generation of entrepreneurs, who had witnessed the changes overtaking the American periodical industry, opened shop just as a similar movement began in Canada. They then re-invented the idea of agency service and, through their success, forced the older agencies to adapt or bow out of the field. In the wake of J.J. Gibbons, the older space brokerages of Ansom McKim and Eduoard Desbarats adapted; J.S. Robertson and Frederick Diver eventually bowed out.

Just as the agents were not the sole instruments of the changes overtaking the publishing industry, they were not the only occupational group groping towards a new conception of expertise and respectability. Rather, they were part of a larger phenomenon affecting the structure of Canadian society. As central Canada developed a modern industrial economy after 1870, a new class of white-collar workers and professional managers stepped in to administer it.

Where much of the professional middle class were indirectly dependent on the expansion of the industrial economy for their material support, adworkers and other managerial employees were directly dependent upon it. Indeed, the development of advertising as a unique career path was the product of the division of labour within the white collar workforce. Adworkers followed the patterns of professionalization to a remarkable degree. The writings on advertising that appeared in the regular and trade press after 1860 demonstrated that a new field of expertise was emerging even at

3. H.E. Stephenson and C. McNaught, *The Story of Advertising in Canada: A Chronicle of Fifty Years* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1940), 18-35, 337-353

that early date. Notably, this occurred among publishers and their advertising departments first. Publishers such as Hugh Graham at the *Star*, the Riordans at the *Mail*, and E.E. Sheppard at *Saturday Night* deployed their understanding of advertising in order to generate more business long before the agencies were a significant force in the trade. Out of their advertising departments, however, the first generation of advertising agents came, and their expertise was similarly demonstrated through their own publications: more often than not, trade journals and directories.

With the recognition of common experiences and problems came organization. Again, it was the publishers who used their existing body, the Canadian Press Association, to initiate discussions concerning the trade in advertising. Once the agencies began to feel that their problems too could be met through co-operation, they also organized, through the Canadian Association of Advertising Agencies. Both groups of adworkers then joined, though less formally, with their peers in corporate advertising departments through the Associated Clubs movement, and in particular the local ad clubs. While this latter group addressed the broad interests of the trade, and performed public relations duties, it could not act to improve the trade without compromising its co-operative structure. Recognizing this, the Press Association and CAAA continued to gain members and play an important role after 1911 because they continued to represent the economic interests of their members. By 1916, the Toronto Ad Club had dissolved; in 1916, the Association of Canadian Advertisers took definite shape as the representative trade association for corporate advertising managers.

Through the associations and the discussions they fostered came an articulate sense of this new field of expertise. Both through the Truth in Advertising movement and the campaign to Advertise Advertising, adworkers rationalized the contribution that their jobs made to their industry and to society at large. At a time when public esteem for their trade was exceptionally low, Truth in Advertising allowed adworkers to stand the common notion of advertising on its head. In their eyes, advertising became the transparent shop window of mass salesmanship in which all goods were

held up to the acid test of public scrutiny. By contrast, it was the non-advertising business that was to be questioned. The Advertising Advertising campaign then broadcast this new, articulated sense of themselves to the rest of Canada.

Hand-in-hand with this attempt to elevate their position in the public eye was their attempt to reform the commercial basis of their trade. Herein was the reason for the continuing strength of the trade associations and the faltering interest in the Associated Clubs. As economic actors with competing interests, adworkers used their associations to hammer out internal and inter-sectoral agreements that set out standards of conduct for practitioners. The discussions surrounding rate cards, commissions, rebating, cost accounting, and circulation audits exposed the problems which had made the trade disreputable in the eyes of its own workers. Whether or not the agreements which concluded these discussions brought these questionable practices to an end is debatable. Certainly, there were representatives in each sector who claimed that rebating, secret commissions, and price-cutting continued to be problems into the 1920s. That said, real gains were made. Three stand out. First, even a reduction in the number of questionable practices stood as a sign of victory among many adworkers. The crusading publisher Hal Donly, who believed that co-operative effort was the only way to place the weeklies on a rational business foundation, never stopped emphasizing this point. Second, the agency agreement of 1907, and the recognition committee that administered its terms, provided a stable environment within which the full-service, independent agencies could establish their domination over the field in advertising service. Until they were assured that their commissions would not be undercut by freelancers, corporate in-house agencies, or fly-by-night operators, agents such as Gibbons, Norris-Patterson, and McConnell & Fergusson could not invest in the personnel and plant necessary to run a full-service agency. Third, the adoption of the Audit Bureau of Circulations above all else placed advertising appropriations on a secure foundation. Advertisers might not know just how effective their publicity was, but they would know without a doubt the

approximate number of potential readers they would reach. Further, the bureau set a new benchmark in market research. It provided a lasting model of statistical expertise employed in the service of advertisers.

The question of the effectiveness of advertising was better addressed by the development of applied psychology and market research. Neither introduced totally new concepts to the field of commerce during this period, but they did offer means to consolidate and standardize existing practices. What had once been left to intuition or chance could now be purposefully planned. Both provided adworkers with the vocabularies and tools necessary to understand and explain their work in the terms of a modern social science. Once these vocabularies and tools were integrated into the trade, it became possible to formulate clearer principles regarding it, and even to teach these principles as aspects of a nascent social 'science.' Just as the business reforms placed the structure of the trade on a secure economic foundation, the integration of applied psychology and market research placed the content of the trade on a secure social and intellectual foundation. Each gave the adworkers – but especially agents – a clearer sense of their role within the publishing industry. It was a sense that those outside of the trade were beginning to share, as increasing numbers of industrialists and politicians, before approaching the public, consulted agents for their advice. As T. Johnson Stewart put it, the trade was 'emerging from cloudland' in the 1910s. It was no longer dealing with a totally imagined audience and its intuited thought-processes, but rather with statistically-verifiable constructs that followed scientifically-documented consumption patterns.

With the integration of market research into the repertoire of agency services, the chief characteristic that set the Canadian agencies apart from their American competitors began to erode: their shared nationality with the intended readership. In the 1890s, McKim could set himself apart from the likes of Ayer, Rowell, and Thompson through his better understanding of the Canadian periodicals market. His agency took great pride in the sheer number of periodicals it listed in its

directory. The fact that it named more than the Americans was proof positive that the Americans were poor judges of the Canadian scene. Then, with the advent of copywriting and illustration, it was argued that a Canadian agency would be better familiarized with the vernacular of Canadian life than Americans. Few things could have demonstrated the adworkers' feelings better than their self-conscious use of Scottish regalia at the conventions of the Associated Clubs. They were even indignant when 'a band of imitation kilties' from St Petersburg, Florida, arrived at the 1925 convention.⁴ Extending this logic, it was similarly pragmatic to hire a woman to handle campaigns targeting female consumers, and French Canadians to handle the same in Quebec. One could not expect a man to fully understand the intricacies of the female thought processes, any more than one could expect that a slogan drafted in English would carry the same impact if translated literally into French. With the new social science techniques at their disposal, however, the Americans were as well-equipped to handle the particularities of the Canadian market as they were the handling of various regions of the United States. Further, they hired much of their Canadian-based staff away from Canadian firms. Until 1929, however, none of the American agencies in Toronto had cultivated Canadian accounts. Rather, they placed business in Canada for American clients of the head office, or they placed business in Canada for Canadian branch plants of those American clients. J. Walter Thompson signalled the end of those practices. With the most celebrated market research department of any agency in the United States, it entered Canada after having studied the Ontario periodical market in great detail, and staffed its Montreal office with adworkers from McKim and Norris-Patterson. Within the year, it had landed a handful of plum Canadian accounts.

Still, it would be wrong to read this penetration of the Canadian market simply as another example of American imperialism. Publishers and agents such as T.W. Dyas, J.B. Maclean, J.J. Gibbons, and W.A. Lydiatt consciously adopted techniques they had learned in the United States, and

4. Charles W. Stokes, 'What a Canadian Saw,' *Marketing*, 22:11 (30 May 1925), 317

it was they who had cultivated the interest of Canadian advertisers in the new services. They did not deploy them because they were 'American,' but because they accomplished the tasks they were intended to do. Industrial capitalism and a free press had developed on both sides of the border. It would have been more surprising had the Canadian trade not adopted similar outlooks and techniques. Canadian agents could comfortably consort with their American counterparts in the Associated Clubs and adopt the practices they pioneered because they fundamentally shared the same outlook towards the trade in which they were engaged. Contrary to much nationalist myth-making, they also shared the same outlook towards industrial capitalism.⁵ The Americans were generally conceded to be world leaders in the field of advertising; Britain and France did not offer comparable role models on which to draw.⁶

The modern trade in advertising was the product not of any one group or event, but of the convergence of interests of four groups: publishers, advertisers, agents, and readers.⁷ Each of them had their own reasons to encourage the massive development of advertising that occurred between 1900 and 1930. Publishers, competing for greater numbers of readers with greater numbers of editions, required greater cash flow to cover the increasing capital costs tied up in new technologies and raw materials. Manufacturers, blessed with new transportation and communications media that allowed them to integrate vast territories into their marketing strategies for the first time, required a means to get news out about their products. Adworkers, but especially agents, recognized the financially lucrative possibilities of joining the publishers and advertisers in a mutually beneficial

5. This point has been made about Canadian business more broadly by Kenneth Dewar, 'Toryism and Public Ownership in Canada: A Comment,' *Canadian Historical Review*, 64:3 (September 1983), 404-419.

6. Henri Vathelet, *La Publicité dans le Journalisme* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1911), 7; Mark E. Ting [B. Brooker], 'Hoist the Sales,' *Marketing*, 23:7 (3 October 1925), 202; Raoul Renault, 'Notre Program,' *La Clé D'Or*, 1:1 (Mars 1926), 1

7. Richard Ohmann has carried this thesis for the United States; see his *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century* (London: Verso, 1996).

relationship. And readers – particularly the new, urban, white-collar readers so intensively cultivated by editors and adworkers alike – benefitted from advertising's system and its magic. First, so long as they read periodicals blessed by high circulation and the patronage of advertisers, their favourite newspapers and magazines came to them at far below the cost of production. Second, at a time when everything about their lives appeared to be in transition, the ads offered a reassuring message: that order and meaning were only as far away as the nearest corner store.

Out of this mix of interests, modern advertising was born. The scale of the population to be reached and the costs of production determined the costs involved. The costs involved, and the common desire to protect the capital invested in the industry, drove the search for an increasingly sophisticated understanding of how advertising worked. Such a search was in the adworkers' own best interests. Had they been unable to explain their craft to their clients, it is unlikely that they would have won the contracts that they did.

This knowledge in turn wrought a transformation in the character of the periodicals. The size of the periodicals changed with the amount of new advertising matter published. Beyond this, there was a decided shift away from the previously predominant concerns of politics and religion, and towards more fiction, illustrations, sports, domestic affairs, and cartoons. Periodicals were evidently no longer considered to be purely the means through which good burghers participated in the public sphere. They were no longer solely the vehicles of partizan opinions and theological debates. Now, periodicals were viewed in a much lighter vein, as reading matter, a medium of leisure-time activity in themselves. Where the trade and agricultural papers might still have hewn to a traditional set of generic formulas, the most popular dailies and the consumer magazines had made the transition to the delivery of entertainment as well as news.

The news that was reported was decidedly less partizan and acrimonious in its outlook than ever before. Again, where publishers were seeking the largest audiences possible, it no longer paid

to marginalize the interests of any sizable, affluent group within the mainstream of society. Controversy could be profitably aimed at groups outside of the middle-class mainstream to generate sales, but controversy was counterproductive if it stirred animosity among majority members of the same community. Hence, muckraking journalism that exposed the foibles of a widely-derided capitalist class could be effective for a popular paper such as the *Telegram* or the *Star*; championing the Orange Lodge against Roman Catholics might have been less so. At the same time, advertisers became attuned to the fact that consumers responded to advertising in accordance with the character of the papers in which it appeared. This had originally been noted with religious periodicals, but it was an idea that could be generally applied. An even-tempered and fair-minded journal of record would likely provide a valuable placement for the publicity of a company seeking a respectable readership.

Publishers made themselves most useful to advertisers with the array of new services they developed after 1900. Technically, there were several innovations that improved the look of advertising over the previous century: half-tones, better papers, better inks, and colour printing were the most obvious advances here. There was also the provision of more conscientious composition and layout in the preparation of ads, not to mention a ready supply of illustrations if such were required. In a broader sense, however, nothing could have better demonstrated the publishers' new pursuit of advertising than the magazines' decision to integrate their ad content with editorial content, and to tail reading matter in their back pages. Over time, publishers learned not simply to place advertising alongside complementary reading matter, but to create such material from scratch to generate interest for key advertisers. Within a newspaper or general magazine, it could be as simple as establishing a domestic column to advertise foods and household products. Most notable were the ubiquitous radio departments in urban dailies of the mid-1920s, as manufacturers began to market the first ready-built set for listeners, and stations began to diversify the entertainments available on

regular schedules.⁸

It was only a short step from a department in a daily newspaper or a general magazine to the creation of a new periodical. At one time in the mid-1920s, there were five radio magazines serving Canada, filled with ads for electrical components, batteries, antennae, ready-made sets, stations, broadcast schedules, and listeners' clubs. Other magazines were aimed at boaters, automobile owners, travellers, photographers – any number of pastimes that required a serious financial outlay before participation was possible. Each of them carried helpful advice and stories of interest to those who engaged in the featured pastime, but more importantly they carried advertising for any product integral to participation. They also carried advertising for products which were not integral but thought to be of interest to people who enjoyed the lifestyle choices associated with the magazines' key subject of interest.

By reconstructing their publications around lifestyle choices centred on consumption, the publishers were responding to the demands of advertisers and agents who sought these kinds of pages to enhance the appeal of their ads, but the publishers were also making their own businesses more lucrative. At the same time, the content of these changes – the actual periodicals and ads that emerged – participated in the wider cultural project of middle-class formation. Evangelical religion, voluntary associations, and progressive political movements helped to articulate a new set of values for the emerging industrial capitalist society, and in the process they allowed their middle-class participants to articulate a sense of themselves and their relationships with one another, the state, and civil society.⁹ Advertising performed a similar set of functions, but in a different realm. Rather

8. 'Taking Radio Tide at the Flood,' *Marketing*, 20:5 (8 March 1924), 131-2

9. Paul Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1978); Stuart Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989); Marianna Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1991), 15-33; Lawrence W. Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 1988); John F. Kasson, *Rudeness & Civility: Manners in Nineteenth-Century Urban America* (New York: Hill &

than prescribing ethical codes and political relations, it prescribed codes of material possession and social relations. Through their selective use of psychological motivations, lifestyle vignettes, and reason-why argumentation, copywriters could graft onto any product or service a particular set of meanings which would allow consumers to integrate that product or service seamlessly into their lives.¹⁰

The practice of inscribing everyday objects or actions with culturally specific meanings was not new in itself, as Jackson Lears has made abundantly clear in his examination of advertising.¹¹ Rather, it was the commercial intent behind the deployment of this practice that was new. Adworkers were in the business of grafting meaning onto products purely for the commercial gain that could be realized. Where the goods and services of previous generations may have found their meaning through socially-mediated processes and the vagaries of the marketplace, it was the conscious intent of adworkers to short-circuit that process by supplying the meaning for products ready-made – in a way that Walter Dill Scott likened to hypnotism. Their success in maintaining that meaning beyond the point of purchase may be debated, but this was never their intellectual function.

Bertram Brooker believed that adworkers had progressed a great distance in the twenty years leading up to 1924. To his mind, however, there was still one thing left to accomplish, though this too would soon be in hand. 'We are slowly acquiring,' he wrote,

the last and most difficult lesson in the curriculum of art, the method of concealing art. The advance in naturalness, in human appeal, in selling force, when this lesson

Wang, 1990)

10. Ohmann, 81-117, esp. 91-94; Jackson Lears, 'From Salvation to Self-Realization: Advertising and the Therapeutic Roots of The Consumer Culture, 1880-1930,' *The Culture of Consumption*, eds. R.W. Fox and J. Lears (New York: Pantheon, 1983), 1-38

11. Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1994)

is learned, will be incalculable.¹²

Brooker, like any good magician, knew that half the trick was making it look as if there were no trick at all. Learning that lesson would fall to the next generation of Canadian adworkers.

12. Richard Surrey [B. Brooker], 'The Copy Outlook for 1924,' *Marketing*, 20:1 (12 January 1924), 11

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Appendices

Appendix I

Selected Advertising Agencies in Toronto Handling National Accounts, 1890-1930

Agency	Year Founded	Year Closed if before 1931	Head Office if not in Toronto & Founding Year	Founder & Original Chief Executive Officer, or, Manager of Toronto Branch of Outside Agency	Still CEO in 1930?	Comments: Last Place of Employ of Principal - Changes to Agency Composition - Foreign Partners
Ackerley-Langley Ltd	1927			A. Ackerley	yes	R.C. Smith & Son
Advertising Service Co Ltd	1915	1929		C. Truscott Solomon	died	Gagnier Advertising Service - agency served as Canadian branch of H.K. McCann Co, New York, after 1923 - combined with National Publicity to form Cockfield, Brown & Co
Baker Advertising Agency	1911			Robert A. Baker	died	Toronto Star
Bowman-Hoge Ltd	1924		New York <1911	J. Morland Bowman	yes	J.J. Gibbons Ltd - agency served as Canadian branch of Huber Hoge Inc., New York
Brotherton Co of Canada Ltd	1924	1925		A. Ross Malton	-	McCConnell & Fergusson Ltd - absorbed by Smith, Denne, & Moore Ltd
Campbell-Ewald Advertising	1922		Detroit 1911	Milton D. Bergey	yes	McKim Limited, Toronto
Canadian Advertising Agency	1893	1899		John I. Sutcliffe	-	
Canadian Advertising Agency	1928		Montreal 1906	Noel R. Barbour	yes	Gagnier Publications
Central Press Agency	1897	1913		Frederick Diver	-	
Cockfield, Brown, & Co Ltd	1928		Montreal 1928	T.L. Anderson	yes	Advertising Service Co - formed by merger of National Publicity and Advertising Service - served as Canadian branch of H.K. McCann Co, New York
Consolidated Advertising Service	1907			Harold Gagnier	died	until 1917 called Gagnier Advertising Service
Crawford-Harris Advertising Service	1930	1930	Vancouver 1915	Bruce Campbell	-	Winnipeg Free Press - bought by J.J. Gibbons Ltd
E. Sterling Dean Advertising Agency	1912			E. Sterling Dean	yes	Toronto Telegram
A.J. Denne & Co, Ltd	1921			A.J. Denne	yes	Smith, Denne, & Moore Ltd

Debarats Advertising Agency	1922		Montreal 1892	E.E. Manchoe	no	
Dominion Advertising Agency	1906	1919		Frank Rowe	-	Frank Presbrey Co. New York - Agency was owned by a print shop: Toronto Type Foundry
Federal Advertising Agency	1926	1929	London 1913?	A.L. Robertson	-	absorbed by McConnell & Ferguson Ltd
Financial Advertising Co of Canada, Ltd	1923		Montreal 1910?	?	?	?
William Findlay Co Ltd (Lord & Thomas & Logan of Canada, after 1929)	1927		(Chicago after 1929)	William A.H. Findlay	yes	became Canadian branch of Lord & Thomas & Logan, Chicago, 1929
James Fisher Co Ltd	1919			James Fisher	yes	McConnell & Ferguson Ltd
J.J. Gibbons Ltd	1899			John J. Gibbons	yes	Canadian Advertising (Toronto), Toronto News
The F.H. Hayhurst Co Ltd	1927			Frederick H. Hayhurst	yes	Baker Advertising Agency
F.W. Hunt Advertising Service	1923			F.W. Hunt	yes	Mansey-Harris Mfg
Letter & Copy Shop	1908	1909		T.J. Tobin T. Johnson Stewart	-	Tobin: Maclean Publg - bought by Norris-Patterson Ltd
Clarke E. Locke Ltd	1924			Clarke E. Locke	yes	served as Canadian branch of Walter Judd Ltd, London UK
Harold C. Lowrey Organization	1929			Harold C. Lowrey	yes	Maclean Publg, Toronto Globe, Southam Press
W.A. Lydiatt Ltd	1924	1926		W.A. Lydiatt	-	J.J. Gibbons Ltd
George H. MacDonald Ltd	1923			George H. MacDonald	yes	Toronto Star, Norris-Patterson Ltd
Theodore F. MacManus Co	1929	1929	Detroit < 1927	R.C. Blackwell	-	Theodore F. MacManus Inc, Detroit
Mail Advertising Agency	1882	1897		James T. Wetherald	-	Toronto Mail
H.K. McCann Co, Advertising	1914	1923	New York 1911?	L.J. Cunniff	-	Canadian operations managed by Advertising Service Co, after 1923; Cockfield, Brown & Co after 1929
McConnell & Ferguson Ltd	1906		London 1902	Malcolm M. Ferguson	died	
McKim Ltd	1903		Montreal 1889	W.B. Somerset	no	Toronto Mail
McKinney, Marsh, & McMillan Ltd	1926	1927	Detroit < 1926	David McMillan	-	Canadian branch of McKinney, Marsh, & Cushing Advertising, Detroit
Mitford Advertising Ltd	1918			George Mitford	yes	
R. Sykes Muller Co Ltd	1922		Montreal 1914	R. Sykes Muller	yes	Canadian Advertising (Montreal)
Holby Myers & Co	1880?	1902?		Holby Myers	-	
Norris-Patterson Ltd	1904			J.H. Woods C.C. Norris John P. Patterson	no died yes	all three: Toronto Mail Patterson: Canadian Courier

Margaret Pennell Advertising	1928			Margaret Pennell	yes	J.J. Gibbons Ltd
Press Agency Bureau Ltd	1910?			J.B. O'Higgins	yes	Woodstock <i>Sentinel-Review</i>
Thornton Purkis, Advertising	1919			Thornton Purkis	yes	J.J. Gibbons Ltd
Edward W. Reynold & Co	1926			Edward W. Reynolds	yes	Norris-Patterson Ltd
J.S. Robertson, Advertising	1899	1917?		J.S. Robertson		bookseller, publisher
Ronalds Advertising Agency Ltd	1929		Montreal 1923	G. Walter Brown	yes	Ford Co of Canada, Ltd
F. Albany Rowlett, Advertising	1911	1925		F. Albany Rowlett	-	Norris-Patterson Ltd - absorbed by Thornton Purkis Advertising
Claude Senagan Advertising Agency, Ltd	1923			Claude Senagan	yes	Toronto <i>Globe</i> and Willys-Overland Mfg Co
George E. Scroggie	1930			George E. Scroggie	yes	Toronto <i>Mail & Empire</i> and J.J. Gibbons Ltd
R.C. Smith & Son, Ltd	1913			Robert C. Smith Adam F. Smith	yes yes	father: Toronto <i>Globe</i> son: J.J. Gibbons Ltd - until 1918 agency called Advertisements Ltd - affiliated with William H. Rankin Co, New York, 1924
Smith, Denne, & Moore Ltd	1916	1927		Frank G. Smith Harold A. Moore A.J. Denne	-	formed when principals bought J. Walker Thompson, branch offices in Toronto and London UK - bought by J.J. Gibbons Ltd
Tandy Advertising Agency, Ltd	1927			Harry M. Tandy	yes	left Smith, Denne, & Moore Ltd when bought by J.J. Gibbons Ltd - became Canadian branch of Williams & Cunnyngham Inc, Chicago, 1930
J. Walter Thompson - 1st entry	1911	1916	New York 1878	John C. Kirkwood	-	Maclean Publg Co and Gagnier Publications
- 2nd entry	1930		New York 1878	W.C. Eadie	yes	McKim Ltd
Larry Webster Advertising Agency	1929			Larry Webster	yes	
Williams & Cunnyngham Ltd	1927	1930	New York <1927	Fred W. McLaughlin	yes	Toronto <i>Globe</i> - Canadian operations managed by Tandy Advertising Agency after 1930
Frank Wilson	1895	1897		Frank Wilson	-	

Data taken from *Printer & Publisher*, vols.1-33 (1892-1924),
Canadian Advertising Data, vols.1-5 (1928-1932),
Economic Advertising/Marketing, vols.1-31 (1908-1930),
The Toronto City Directory (Toronto: [publisher varies], 1880-1930), and
H.E. Stephenson and Carlton McNaught, *The Story of Advertising in Canada* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1940).

Appendix II

Canadian Press Association, Foreign Advertising Rates, 1891

WEEKLY PAPERS		
Circulation		Per inch display per year
1,000 or under		\$ 4.00
Each subsequent 1,000 or fraction over 500		\$ 2.00
DAILY PAPERS		
Circulation		Per inch display per year
1,000 or under		\$10.00
Each subsequent 500 or fraction over 250		\$ 3.00

Every other day and every other week, or six months, 60 per cent. of above rates. Three months, 33 1/3 per cent. of above rates. Top of column or next reading matter, 10 per cent. extra. Top of column, next reading, or first following and alongside reading, 20 per cent. extra.

Reading notices, 50 per cent. increase on above rates.

These prices net, except to approved advertising agents, who shall be allowed a commission of 25 per cent.

Taken from *Printer & Publisher*, 13:11 (November 1904), 8.

Appendix III

Canadian Press Association, Advertising Rates, 1904

WEEKLY PAPERS

1. That all publishers of weeklies who are members of our Association shall charge not less than a minimum gross rate for 'foreign' advertising as distinguished from 'local' advertising.

2. That for the purpose of this understanding the papers shall be divided into five classes-

A. with a circulation of 1,000 or less

B. 1,000 to 1,500

C. 1,500 to 2,000

D. 2,000 to 2,500

E. over 2,500

3. That the following shall be the minimum gross rates for each of these classes:

	A	B	C	D	E
Per inch, 3 months	\$0.75	\$1.13	\$1.50	\$1.87	\$2.25
" 6 "	1.33	2.00	2.67	3.25	3.92
" 12 "	2.40	3.60	4.80	6.00	7.20

This on the basis of 5.75 cents per insertion on three months contracts, 5 cents per insertion on 6 months contracts, and 4.6 cents on yearly contracts. ...

4. That these rates are to be a minimum below which each publisher must not go; but each will be entitled to charge as much more as the quality of his circulation entitles him to, or as his circumstances justify, nor are these rates intended as a substitute for a rate card; they are simply the basis from each publisher may build a rate card.

5. That in December of each year each publisher shall sign a declaration that during the preceeding 12 months he has not taken a contract below the minimum gross rate.

6. That he shall also declare that he has not directly or indirectly allowed more than 25 per cent. commission on any any contract.

REVISION, February 1905

	A	B	C	D	E
Per inch, 12 months	\$3.00	\$3.60	\$4.40	\$5.20	\$6.00

Taken from *Printer & Publisher*, 13:11 (November 1904): 9; 14:2 (February 1905), 23.

Appendix IV

**Agreement between the Canadian Press Association
and
the Canadian Association of Advertising Agencies
1 April 1907**

(a) It is recommended that the publishers adopting these regulations for a subsidiary section of the Canadian Press Association appoint a committee to act on their behalf in the enforcement of these regulations and the adjustment of any disputes which may arise as to any violation of these regulations - and also authorize some one of their members to sign on their behalf their agreement to adopt and enforce these regulations and receive from the various advertising agencies properly signed agreements to comply with these regulations.

(b) It is further recommended that, in order to avoid unnecessary work, all advertising agencies recognized by the publishers adopting these regulations authorize the secretary of the Canadian Association of Advertising Agencies to sign on their behalf their agreements to comply with these regulations.

(1) Every advertising agency quoting rates for advertising service shall quote such rates exactly as given in the rate card supplied him by the publisher, and he shall not allow any commission, discount, or rebate to any person from such card rates.

(2) Every advertising agency quoting rates for advertising service in any publication that may adopt these regulations shall quote separately for such paper and exactly in accordance with the rate card supplied by the publisher.

(3) Any advertising agency who shall not complete his contract shall pay the publisher for the actual space used according to the publisher's rate card, but an advertising agency will not be liable to pay such short rates should the advertiser become insolvent.

(4) Each advertising agency to be furnished with a rate card giving full particulars of the rates for all classes of advertising which the publisher will accept, such charges being the lowest the publisher will accept, from any person other than from qualified and recognized advertising agencies, to whom the regular commission will be allowed.

(5) The advertising agency shall not allow to any person any discount, commission, rebate, or deduction upon or from said card rates.

(6) The publishers shall not charge a qualified and recognized advertising agency for advertising service in his publications a higher gross price than the least publisher will accept net for similar advertising service placed by an advertiser direct.

(7) The publishers shall, under all conditions whatsoever, short rate every direct advertiser who shall not complete his contract, and the publisher shall collect from the advertiser for the actual space used according to the publisher's rate card, and this short rating shall be a condition of every contract.

(8) 'Advertising Agency' shall mean a person, firm, or company who or which is not a salaried employe of any advertiser, and who or which has an office or offices properly equipped for carrying on as his or their principal business a general advertising business, and who is, by experience and in the possession of financial resources qualified to carry on the business of an advertising agency, and who or which has at least three bona fide new general advertisers or clients, whose advertising is to be placed in Canadian newspapers.

(9) [List of specific agencies eligible for recognition.]

(10) Before according recognition to any additional advertising agency, the committee of publishers shall notify the secretary of the Canadian Association of Advertising Agencies that an application has been made for recognition as an advertising agency, stating the name and qualifications

of the applicant. If the association shall notify the committee within ten days after receipt of such notice, that, in its opinion, such person is not a properly qualified advertising agency, no advertising shall be accepted from the applicant at other than regular card rates net, and the commission shall not be allowed until the objections of the Canadian Association of Advertising Agencies as to the eligibility of such applicant shall have been considered by the committee of publishers.

(11) No one shall be accorded agency recognition as an advertising agency until he enters into an agreement to conform to these regulations.

(12) These regulations to apply immediately upon adoption by the publishers, to all business accepted from date of adoption; but in order that all existing obligations shall be completed, it will not apply to existing advertising but will apply to all advertising published subsequent to twelve months from the date of the adoption of these regulations by the publishers, subject to the right of any publisher or agency to complete any contract existing at date of adoption.

(13) These regulations are not to apply to local advertising. A general advertiser, no matter where his place of business or head office may be located, is one who advertises in three or more journals in three or more towns or cities in the Dominion, but whose product or merchandise does not constitute the major portion of any local retail store. A branch store or office devoted wholly or the greater part thereof to the business advertised, and which is in competition with businesses already in existence and paying local rates, is to be classified as a local advertiser and comes under local rates, with commission to any qualified and recognized advertising agency.

(14) Should any advertising agency violate these regulations, the advertising agency shall be duly warned by a committee representing the publishers – and, should he again violate these regulations or have ceased to be a properly qualified agency within the meaning of these regulations – the publishers shall refuse to accept any advertising from the agency, at other than the regular card rates net.

(15) Should any publisher violate these regulations, he shall be duly warned by a committee representing the publishers, and should he again violate these regulations he will cease to be a member of the subsidiary section of the Canadian Press Association comprising the publishers who have adopted these regulations.

These recommendations and regulations were adopted by the following papers:

W.M. O'Bierne, for the Stratford Beacon
 L.H. Dingman, for the St Thomas Times
 W.B. Burgoyne, for the St Catharines Standard
 A.E. Bradwin, for the Galt Reformer
 J.I. McIntosh, for the Guelph Mercury
 W.J. Taylor, for the Woodstock Sentinel-Review
 Allan Gillis, for the Stratford Herald
 Frank Adams, for the London Advertiser

Certified to be correct,
 A.G. Donaldson,
 Secretary Daily Newspaper Section
 Canadian Press Association
 Toronto, April 1st, 1907.

Taken from *Printer & Publisher*, 16:4 (April 1907), 12-13.

Appendix V

Highest Circulating Canadian Magazines in Canada,
with Circulation Above 25,000,
for Selected Years, 1915-1930

Table of Symbols:

d = daily

w = weekly

m = monthly

sm = semi-monthly

farm = agricultural journal

mag = consumer magazine

nppr = weekend newspaper

rel = religious paper

frat = fraternal organ

1915

Family Herald & Weekly Star	Montreal	w	nppr	169,000
Le Journal d'Agriculture	Montreal	m	farm	101,000
Sunday World	Toronto	w	nppr	85,000
Everywoman's World	Toronto	m	mag	81,000
Canadian Butterick Trio*	Toronto	m	mag	75,000
Western Home Monthly	Winnipeg	m	mag	44,000
MacLean's	Toronto	m	mag	41,000
Grain Grower's Guide	Winnipeg	w	farm	34,000
Farmer's Advocate & Home Journal	Winnipeg	w	farm	33,000
Farmer's Advocate	London	w	farm	33,000
Canadian Home Journal	Toronto	m	mag	30,000
Nor'-West Farmer	Winnipeg	m	farm	30,000
Canadian Countryman	Toronto	w	farm	29,000
Canadian Thresherman & Farmer	Winnipeg	m	farm	27,000
Canada Monthly	London	m	mag	26,000
Canadian Courier	Toronto	w	mag	25,000

* The Canadian Butterick trio was composed of three quarterly magazines: Butterick's, Standard Fashion, and New Ideas.

Figures taken from:

K.S. Fenwick, 'The Magazine and Farm Paper Situation,'
Economic Advertising, 8:6 (June 1915): 23-27.

Figures rounded to the nearest 1,000.

1920

Family Herald & Weekly Star	Montreal	w	nppr	158,000
Star Weekly	Toronto	w	nppr	110,000
Everywoman's World	Toronto	m	mag	105,000
Canadian Messenger	Montreal	m	rel	86,000
Le Journal d'Agriculture	Montreal	m	farm	83,000
MacLean's Magazine	Toronto	sm	mag	76,000
Grain Grower's Guide	Winnipeg	w	farm	75,000
Canadian Butterick Quarterlies	Toronto	m	mag	75,000
Nor'-West Farmer	Winnipeg	sm	farm	71,000
Veteran	Toronto	m	frat	67,000
Northern Messenger	Montreal	w	rel	55,000
Canadian Home Journal	Toronto	m	mag	51,000
Farm & Ranch Review	Calgary	sm	farm	48,000
Farmer's Advocate & Home Journal	Winnipeg	w	farm	43,000
Western Home Monthly	Winnipeg	m	mag	42,000
Canadian Countryman	Toronto	w	farm	39,000
Farmer's Advocate	London	w	farm	35,000
Farmer's Magazine	Toronto	w	farm	35,000
Saturday Night	Toronto	w	mag	35,000
Christian Guardian	Toronto	w	rel	34,000
Catholic Record	London	w	rel	33,000
Canadian Farmer	Toronto	w	farm	32,000
Farmer's Sun	Toronto	sm	farm	30,000
Sailor	Toronto	m	mag	30,000
La Canadienne	Toronto	m	mag	27,000

Figures taken from:
Lydiatt's Book 1921 8ed, (Toronto: W.A. Lydiatt, 1921).
 Figures rounded to the nearest 1,000.

1925

Star Weekly	Toronto	w	nppr	182,000
Family Herald & Weekly Star	Montreal	w	nppr	178,000
MacLean's Magazine	Toronto	sm	mag	86,000
Canadian Butterick Quarterlies	Toronto	m	mag	85,000
Canadian National Rwy's Magazine	Montreal	m	mag	78,000
Grain Grower's Guide	Winnipeg	sm	farm	77,000
Nor'-West Farmer	Winnipeg	sm	farm	76,000
Canadian Home Journal	Toronto	m	mag	69,000
Le Journal d'Agriculture	Montreal	m	farm	65,000
Canadian Messenger	Montreal	m	rel	65,000
Western Home Monthly	Winnipeg	m	mag	62,000
Farmer's Advocate	London	w	farm	61,000
Presbyterian Record	Montreal	m	rel	57,000
Canadian Countryman	Toronto	w	farm	56,000
Farm & Ranch Review	Calgary	sm	farm	51,000
Ontario Farmer	Toronto	sm	farm	46,000
Northern Messenger	Montreal	w	rel	45,000
Maple Leaf	Toronto	m	frat	43,000
New Outlook	Toronto	w	rel	42,000
The Veteran	Toronto	sm	frat	41,000
Catholic Record	London	w	rel	33,000
Saturday Night	Toronto	w	mag	32,000
Saskatchewan Co-operative News	Regina	m	farm	29,000
Western Producer	Saskatoon	w	farm	29,000
Le Samedi	Montreal	w	mag	29,000
Farm & Home	Vancouver	w	farm	27,000
Canadian Motorist	Toronto	m	mag	27,000
Sentinel	Toronto	w	frat	26,000

Figures taken from:
Lydiatt's Book 1926 13ed., (Toronto: W.A. Lydiatt, 1926).
 Figures rounded to the nearest 1,000.

1930

Family Herald & Weekly Star	Montreal	w	npr	213,000
Star Weekly	Toronto	w	npr	210,000
MacLean's Magazine	Toronto	sm	mag	164,000
Canadian Home Journal	Toronto	m	mag	143,000
Country Guide	Winnipeg	m	farm	140,000
Chatelaine	Toronto	m	mag	125,000
Western Home Monthly	Winnipeg	m	mag	115,000
Nor'-West Farmer	Winnipeg	sm	farm	114,000
Canadian Magazine	Toronto	m	mag	91,000
Canadian National Rwy's Magazine	Montreal	m	mag	87,000
Ontario Farmer	Toronto	m	farm	81,000
Farm and Ranch Review	Calgary	m	farm	74,000
Canadian Messenger	Montreal	m	rel	73,000
Canadian Countryman	Toronto	w	farm	71,000
Le Journal d'Agriculture	Montreal	m	farm	69,000
Northern Messenger	Montreal	w	rel	69,000
Saskatchewan Farmer	Regina	sm	farm	56,000
United Farmers of Alberta	Calgary	sm	farm	49,000
Farmer's Advocate	London	sm	farm	49,000
Farm & Dairy	Peterborough	sm	farm	44,000
La Voix Nationale	Montreal	m	mag	43,000
Presbyterian Record	Montreal	m	rel	42,000
Goblin	Toronto	m	mag	36,000
Western Producer	Saskatoon	w	farm	35,000
Le Samedi	Montreal	w	mag	34,000
The Legionary	Toronto	m	frat	34,000
Scoop Shovel	Winnipeg	m	farm	33,000
Catholic Record	London	w	rel	33,000
Saturday Night	Toronto	w	mag	32,000
Bulletin de la Ferme	Quebec	w	farm	30,000
Maritime Farmer & Co-op Dairyman	Sussex, N.B.	sm	farm	29,000
New Outlook	Toronto	w	rel	28,000
Canadian Motorist	Toronto	m	mag	27,000
Western Farmer	Calgary	sm	farm	26,000

Figures taken from:
Lydiatt's Book 1931 18ed., (Toronto: W.A. Lydiatt, 1931).
 All figures rounded to the nearest 1,000.

Vitae

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- Place & Year of Birth:** Hamilton, Ontario, 1967
- Education:** McMaster University, 1986-1990
B.A. (Hons History & Philosophy), 1990
Queen's University at Kingston, 1990-1992
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Department of History, Queen's University, 1994-1997
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- Publications:** 'The Consolidation of the Advertising Agency System in Canada, 1900-1914.' 8th Conference on Historical Research in Marketing and Marketing Thought, Kingston, Ontario, May 1997.
'The Emergence of Broadcast Advertising in Canada, 1919-1932.'
Historical Journal of Film, Radio, and Television. 17:1. March 1997. 29-47.
'The Early Trials of Protestant Radio, 1922-38.'
Canadian Historical Review. 75:3. September 1994. 376-402.
- Awards:** Joseph Leslie Engler Dissertation Prize, Queen's University, 1997
Graduate Dean's Travel Grants, Queen's University, 1995, 1996
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Donald S. Rickerd Fellowship in Canadian-American Studies, 1995
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