Borderline Cases: Crossing Borders in Canadian Communication Studies, 1960s–1980s

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Abstract

Communication studies has been shaped by the affective contexts of border cultures and bordering practices. Human experiences of living in borderlands, of migrating across borders, and the concomitant bridging of cultural and linguistic contexts have influenced theories, metaphors, and methods within communication and media studies. The multicultural and multilingual contexts of Canada and Quebec provide an important case study for a history of communication and media studies across the Americas. This paper explores the history of these fields in the Canadian context through the lens of bordering practices: Canada–US relations, but also the cultural and linguistic borderlines between English Canada, Quebec, and beyond. I develop these themes by exploring specific cases and considerations of early Canadian scholars and programs, as well as key organizations and publications. If 1950s and 1960s new media, including primarily television, promised to de-emphasize official borders, where circuits of media accessibility began to knit US and Canadian cultural practices together, we should not neglect the forces of national concerns on media industries or use. My goal in this paper is not to contribute another institutional study, but rather to offer an interpretative lens on intersecting histories of the field in the context of Canadian pluralisms.

Resumen

Los estudios en comunicación se han visto configurados por los contextos afectivos de las culturas fronterizas y las prácticas *fronterizantes*. Las experiencias humanas de vivir en las zonas fronterizas y de migrar a través de fronteras, así como los puentes que se tienden entre contextos culturales y lingüísticos, han incidido en teorías, metáforas y métodos dentro de los estudios de comunicación y medios. Los contextos multiculturales y multilingües de Quebec nos proporcionan un importante caso de estudio para una historia de los estudios de comunicación y medios en las Américas. En este trabajo se explora la historia de estos campos en el contexto canadiense, con la mirada puesta en las prácticas *fronterizantes:* las relaciones entre Canadá y Estados Unidos, pero también las fronteras culturales y lingüísticas entre la Canadá anglófona, Quebec y más allá. Desarrollo estos temas explorando casos concretos, teniendo en cuenta las consideraciones específicas de algunos de los primeros investigadores y programas de estudio canadienses, así como analizando organizaciones y publicaciones clave. Si bien los nuevos medios de las décadas de los 50 y 60, sobre todo la televisión, prometían desdibujar las fronteras oficiales, donde los circuitos de acceso mediático empezaron a fundir las prácticas culturales de Estados Unidos y Canadá, no debemos subestimar las fuerzas de los intereses nacionales y su impacto en las industrias mediáticas y los usos de los medios. Mi objetivo con este trabajo no es generar otro estudio institucional, sino aportar un enfoque para interpretar las historias entrecruzadas del campo en el contexto de los pluralismos canadienses.

The multicultural and multilingual contexts of Canada and Quebec provide an important case study for a history of communication and media studies across the Americas.[1] This paper explores the history of these fields in the Canadian context through the lens of bordering practices: Canada–US relations, but also the cultural and linguistic borderlines between English Canada, Quebec, and beyond. Robert Holub's 1992 study of the treatment of reception theory, poststructuralism, and deconstruction in Germany and the United States is instructive for other historiographies of intellectual traditions that bridge cultural and linguistic divides. Holub argued that "although theory presents itself as abstract and applicable without regard to temporal and geographical boundaries, its appropriation and understanding were evidently bound to context."[2] According to Holub, "what matters most in the appropriation of a theory from a foreign country is how it fits into an already established constellation in the importing country" and that "the vicissitudes and preferences in theoretical endeavour in the United States and Germany cannot be adequately understood without reference to a notion of cross-cultural contextualization."[3] The history of communication studies has long been shaped by such affective contexts of border cultures and bordering practices. Human experiences of living in borderlands, of migrating across borders, and the concomitant bridging of cultural and linguistic contexts have influenced theories, metaphors, and methods within communication and media studies. This is not surprising since human experiences of living in borderlands regions or crossing borders can be both stimulating and terrifying. Communication practices and material media forms both absorb and circulate the narratives we carry from such experiences.

Scholars of the history of communication and media study have begun to address the twentieth-century transnational origins and legacies of these fields.[4] Have transnational flows of intellectual thought influenced the idea of bordering as a method of theory and practice? In this paper, I suggest that we have yet to recognize fully the role played by what my colleague Lee Rodney has called a "frontier imagination" in the North American context.[5] For this contribution to *Communication Studies Across the Americas*, I develop these themes by exploring specific cases and considerations of early Canadian scholars and programs, as well as key organizations and publications. If 1950s and 1960s new media including primarily television promised to usher in a period of de-emphasizing official borders, where circuits of media accessibility began increasingly to knit US and Canadian cultural practices together, we should not neglect the forces of national concerns on media industries or use. The networked and mediatized characteristics of transborder, diasporic, and

[1] Research for this paper was supported by an Insight Grant (2021–2026) from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada: *Distributed Networks: Media Archaeologies of Educational TV and Communication Studies in Canada, 1945–1975*.

[2] Robert C. Holub, *Crossing Borders: Reception Theory, Poststructuralism, Deconstruction* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), ix.

[3] Holub, *Crossing Borders*, ix.

[4] Stefanie Averbeck-Lietz, *Kommunikationswissenschaft im internationalen Vergleich: Transnationale Perspektiven (Medien, Kultur, Kommunikation)* (Wiesbaden, Germany: Springer, 2017); Norm Friesen, ed., *Media Transatlantic: Developments in Media and Communication Studies between North American and German-Speaking Europe* (Vienna: Springer, 2016); Maria Löblich and Stefanie Averbeck-Lietz, "The Transnational Flow of Ideas and *Histoire Croisée* with Attention to the Cases of France and Germany," in *The International History of Communication Study*, ed. Peter Simonson and David W. Park (New York: Routledge, 2016), 25–46; David W. Park and Jefferson Pooley, eds., *The History of Media and Communication*

multilingual environments of contemporary Canada reach beyond the image of English and French Canada as "two solitudes" and reflect more importantly the multicultural landscape of Canada's urban environments.

After early "echo chambers" of communication thought and studies took shape in the 1940s and 1950s and first university programs were established in the 1960s and 1970s, a number of historiographies have been published to "take stock" of the field in Canada and Quebec. These include *Studies in Canadian Communications*, edited by Donald Theall and Gertrude Robinson and published by the McGill Programme in Communications;[6] and the volume *Communication Studies in Canada*, edited by Liora Salter at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, a bilingual collection of articles selected from the founding conference of the Canadian Communication Association held in Montreal in 1980.[7] Rowland Lorimer and Jean McNulty's *Mass Communication in Canada* was published in 1987, the first English textbook to introduce students to themes in communication and media studies from a Canadian perspective.[8] Further reflections on the field were published in the *Canadian Journal of Communication* in 1988 and a special issue dedicated to the theme in 2000. Studies taking stock of the field in Quebec were also published in the 1980s in journals including *Communication Information*.[9] In Quebec, scholars involved with the founding of communications studies programs at Francophone universities, such as Roger de la Garde and Gaëtan Tremblay, have published numerous accounts of institutional histories, while a more recent generation have increasingly focused on microhistories of communication studies.[10] These studies have already laid the foundation for a well-documented comparative historiography of the field, including institutional histories of first programs and the key commitments of scholars who founded them. They emphasize the bridging moments across intellectual traditions in rhetoric, literary studies, speech communication, journalism, and the arts broadly, with political economy, sociology, and psychology.[11]

My goal in this paper is not to contribute yet another institutional study, but rather to offer an interpretative lens on intersecting histories of the field in the context of Canadian pluralisms. To undertake this study, I first wish to acknowledge my own position as a white English-speaking Canadian scholar. As a native of Toronto, Ontario, my personal experience derives from undergraduate and graduate studies in second languages and literatures, theater and creative arts, and communication and media studies in Montreal, Quebec from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s (encompassing Quebec's second referendum for independence from Canada in 1995), as well as two separate years studying in Germany. I also spent twelve years, from

Research: Contested Memories (New York: Peter Lang, 2008); Peter Simonson and John Durham Peters, "Communication and Media Studies: History to 1968," in *International Encyclopedia of Communication*, ed. Wolfgang Donsbach (2014); Peter Simonson and David W. Park, eds., *The International History of Communication Study* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

[5] Lee Rodney, *Looking Beyond Borderlines: North America's Frontier Imagination* (New York: Routledge, 2017).

[6] Donald Theall and Gertrude Robinson, eds., *Studies in Canadian Communications* (Montreal: Graduate Program in Communications, McGill University, 1975).

[7] Liora Salter, ed., *Communication Studies in Canada* (Toronto: Butterworth, 1981).

[8] Rowland Lorimer and Jean McNulty, *Mass Communication in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987). Now in its ninth edition as Mike Gasher, David Skinner, and Natalie Coulter, *Media and Communication in Canada: Networks, Culture, Technology, Audience* (Toronto: Oxford University Press Canada, 2020).

[9] Serge Proulx, "Les communications: Vers un nouveau savoir savant?" *Recherches Sociographiques* 20, no. 1 (1979): 103–17; Jean-Guy Lacroix and Benoit Lévesque, "L'émergence et l'institutionnalisation de la recherche en communication au Quebec," *Communication Information* 7, no. 2 (1985); Jean-Guy Lacroix and Benoit Lévesque, "Principaux thèmes et courants théoriques dans la littérature scientifique en communication au Quebec," *Communication Information* 7, no. 3 (1985).

[10] François Yelle, "Étude de la littérature réflexive de la recherche universitaire québécoise en communication médiatique" (PhD diss., University of Montreal, 2004); François Yelle, "L'histoire des études en communication au Québec et le dogme de la rupture, ou l'héritage peu célébré des intellectuels canadiens-français des années 1940 et 1950," *Revista Eptic* 19, no. 1 (2017).

2008 to 2020, as a faculty member at the University of Windsor, a city located on the Canadian side of the US-Canada border, opposite the city of Detroit, Michigan. Here, my interest in multilingualism in cultural and artistic industries began to influence a growing focus on comparative cultural borderlands studies, inspired by the unusual cross-border urbanized context of Windsor-Detroit. Given Detroit's prominence in media industries, particularly its early facilitation of US cable television to a breadth of Canadian centres, it is perhaps no coincidence that the University of Windsor, incorporated in 1962, proposed one of Canada's earliest programs in communication studies, a Department of Communication Arts, as early as 1969. It is impossible to live or study in Windsor without reflecting on the border's influence on a near-daily basis. These experiences have shaped my own relationship to the history of communication and media studies. In this contribution, it is not my goal to develop a single, overarching history of Canadian communication and media studies, but rather to highlight several intersecting histories in which taking a leap across cultural divisions was central to ways in which the field developed in specific locations. The paper first reviews metaphors of crossing borders and translating cultures as part of the lived experiences of influential communications and media scholars. It next considers notions of a "frontier imagination" and a "bi-focal habit of vision" that drew upon Canada's cultural and linguistic pluralisms as early communication and media thought took shape. The paper then dives deeper into the rich disciplinary and discursive border crossings that accompanied the establishment of pedagogical programs, institutional frameworks, and sites of research dissemination. Canada's "borderline case" might ultimately be derived from multi- rather than bi-focal habits of understanding, experience, and indeed, communication.

[11] Robert E. Babe, *Canadian Communication Thought: Ten Foundational Writers* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000); Roger de la Garde, "The 1987 Southam Lecture: Mr. Innis, Is There Life after the 'American Empire'?," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 13, no. 5 (1988); Roger de la Garde and François Yelle, "Coming of Age: Communication Studies in Quebec," in *Mediascapes: New Patterns in Canadian Communication*, ed. Paul Attalah and Leslie Regan Shade (Toronto: Thomson-Nelson, 2002); Gertrude Robinson, "Remembering Our Past: Reconstructing the Field of Communication Studies," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 25, no. 1 (2000); Liora Salter, "Taking Stock: Communication Studies in 1987," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 13, no. 5 (1988); Eugene D. Tate, Andrew Osler, Gregory Fouts, and Arthur Siegel, "The Beginnings of Communication Studies in Canada: Remembering and Narrating the Past," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 25, no. 1 (2000); Michael Dorland, "Knowledge Matters: The Institutionalization of Communication Studies in Canada," in *Mediascapes: New Patterns in Canadian Communication*, ed. Paul Attalah and Leslie Regan Shade (Toronto: Thomson-Nelson, 2002); Gaëtan Tremblay, "Journey of a Researcher," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 39, no. 1 (2014); Gregory Taylor and Ray op'tLand, "Communication Research and Teaching in Canada," *Publizistik* 64 (2019).

Media Metaphors: Crossing Borders and Translating Cultures

Crossing borders, translating between cultures, and living in "marginal" contexts have long influenced metaphors for media and for acts of communication.[12] In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, experiences of international conflict and friction in border zones, historic flows of migration, and the affective implications of crossing borders and cultural divides have featured prominently in the research and writings of key theorists. Among these central figures are scholars such as Harold Innis, who researched cross-border continental patterns in North American staples industries, and later the history of communication and media in terms of imperial legacies across space and time.[13] Innis's studies of empires were driven in

[12] Rainer Guldin, "From Transportation to Transformation: On the Use of the Metaphor of Translation within Media and Communication Theory," *Global Media Journal: Canadian Edition* 5, no. 1 (2012).

[13] Harold Adams Innis, *Empire and Communications* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1950); Harold Adams Innis, *The Bias of Communication* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951).

part by his personal experiences in the first World War. The post–World War II European "intellectual migration" of cultural scholars to the United States included Paul Lazarsfeld, Herta Herzog, and members of the Frankfurt School.[14] The profound influence of these scholars can only be considered through the lens of their existential border crossings, and the imperative to operate in a second language. Writing about Canada's particular "marginal" condition, Donald Theall once noted that the aesthetic interpretative character of the work of Innis and Marshall McLuhan could be compared with the dialectic procedures and aesthetic interests of "the philosophers of the Frankfurt School, who themselves occupied a marginal position to the United States by continuing to write in German after their emigration."[15] Gertrude Robinson (who along with Theall founded the MA [1973] and PhD [1976] programs in Communication Studies at McGill University) has contributed poignant remarks on the field's history. Tracing the work of Elihu Katz and Leo Lowenthal, Robinson (herself originally from Germany) characterized these scholars as "border travelers," contributing to the "geographical transfer of ideas" and also "setting up new research institutions, which would utilize their scholarly expertise."[16] In the 1960s, McLuhan drew on a frontier imagination to build his many neologisms such as the "global village" or "centres without margins," as well as his arguments about "media as translators" across cultures and borderline conditions as interfaces, or intervals of cultural resonance. In 1980s Germany, particularly in Berlin, it is arguable that the experience of living at the edge of the Iron Curtain contributed to new theories of media and the materialities of communication, including Friedrich Kittler's emphasis on media materialities in terms of the translatability of information. Perhaps the most important communications and media theorist of the twentieth century to have been influenced by his personal history of migration was Vilém Flusser. Having fled his multilingual home in Prague during the period of Nazi Germany, Flusser landed in Brazil before producing an exceptional array of multilinguistic writings on communication and media, including his emphasis on "nomadic thinking" and the experience of the migrant as a quintessential global citizen.[17] These are but a few examples of the central role played by national, cultural, and linguistic border crossing in developing intellectual and institutional traditions of theoretical and creative communications and media research.

To pursue two of these examples, McLuhan's writings on the global village can be juxtaposed with Flusser's thesis of an emergent posthistorical telematic society. These two central contributors to theories of communication and media wrote from vastly different vantage points in the Americas, Canada and Brazil, two countries

[14] Laura Fermi, *Illustrious Immigrants: The Intellectual Migration from Europe, 1930–1941* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968); Donald Fleming and Bernard Bailyn, eds., *The Intellectual Migration: Europe and America, 1930–1960* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1969); Martin Jay, *Permanent Exiles: Essays on the Intellectual Migration from Germany to America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985); Gertrude Robinson, "The Katz/Lowenthal Encounter: An Episode in the Creation of *Personal Influence*," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 608 (2006).

[15] Donald Theall, "Communication Theory and the Marginal Culture: The Socio-Aesthetic Dimensions of Communication Study," in *Studies in Canadian Communications*, ed. Gertrude Robinson and Donald Theall (Montreal: Graduate Program in Communications, McGill University, 1975), 19.

[16] Robinson, "The Katz/Lowenthal Encounter," 94.

[17] Vilém Flusser, *Ende der Geschichte, Ende der Stadt?* (Vienna: Picus, 1992); Vilém Flusser, *Freedom of the Migrant*, trans. Kenneth Kronenberg, ed. Anke Finger (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003).

which, as Alfred Braz has argued, occupy comparably peripheral statuses in inter-American discourse.[18] Reflecting their own histories, McLuhan and Flusser each represent European-oriented experiences of the Americas, yet they returned time and again to broad metaphors of borderlines and translations as sites and methods of interpenetrations between cultures and languages, spaces and cities, senses, images, and codes, and diverse material media forms themselves. As Flusser wrote in 1967, "The problem of translation and translatability takes on the cosmic dimensions of all existential issues: it encompasses everything."[19] The multilingual landscape of Flusser's writings in German, Czech, Portuguese, French, and English (requiring his own body of work to be translated in multiple directions in order for scholars of different backgrounds to be able to trace the full trajectory of his thought) is characterized by his personal experiences of displacement, groundlessness, loss, migration, and unsettlement—first from fleeing Nazi-occupied, multilingual Prague for the United Kingdom, and later from landing in São Paulo, Brazil for some twenty years and then returning to Europe. It was from these vantage points that he developed theses on cultures and cities as relational fields, and of communication and media as intricate and overlapping networks of intersubjective relations. Flusser's commitment to the positive outcomes of what he termed "nomadic thinking" and his capacity to move and write around and between languages led to his theorization of modes of communication and media forms as fundamentally translational and processual. His theories of communication embrace dialogic encounters and translations as a series of jumps or leaps from one language, experience, code, or format to another. These theories can be contrasted with McLuhan's focus on hybrid media, and on forms of cultural, perceptual, and sensual interpenetrations.[20]

McLuhan's references to bordering practices and translation focus not on crossing or overcoming linear borderlines or edges of media forms, but rather deep intervals of resonance and cultural interpenetration. These references can also be read in the context of his experiences moving as a scholar across North America and the United Kingdom from the 1930s to the 1970s, including sites such as Edmonton, Winnipeg, Cambridge, St. Louis, Windsor-Detroit, Toronto, and New York. Such cross-border experiences were ripe for thinking about Canada: the nation's marginality to the United States, Britain, and continental Europe arguably framed perceptions and scholarly outlooks across multiple fields of study, positioning scholars such as Innis and McLuhan as observers from just outside yet still involved with the maelstroms of technological change. Canada's self-perceived marginality also influenced its many institutions of

[18] Albert Braz, "Outer America: Racial Hybridity and Canada's Peripheral Place in Inter-American Discourse," in *Canada and Its Americas: Transnational Navigations*, ed. Winfried Siemerling and Sarah Phillips Casteel (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010).

[19] Vilém Flusser, "Essays," in *Writings*, ed. Andreas Ströhl, trans. Erik Eisel (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 194.

[20] Rainer Guldin, "Die Zweite Unschuld: Heilsgeschichtliche und Eschatologische Perspektiven im Werk Vilém Flussers und Marshall McLuhans," *Flusser Studies* 6 (2008); Michael Darroch, "Medial Translations and Human Unsettlements: Planetary Urbanisms from McLuhan to Flusser," in *Speaking Memory: How Translation Shapes Cities*, ed. Sherry Simon (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016).

nation-building and governance through communicational structures and cultural technologies that became closely aligned with theories of communication and media, as well as fledgling programs of communication studies, in the mid-twentieth century. According to Robinson, "this 'symbolic environment' was constructed by royal commissions and publicly owned Crown corporations, including the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), the National Film Board (NFB), the Canada Council, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), and Téléfilm Canada, as well as the statutory legislation which defines their mandates."[21] Yet the thesis of Canada's marginality, as Sheryl Hamilton has argued, makes many assumptions about Canada's place in the world. Is it Canada's marginality, its "edginess" at the margins of Empire, or rather its deep cross-border cultural interpenetrations with the United States and Europe, that drove scholars to develop studies of communication?[22]

[21] Robinson, "Remembering Our Past," 107.

[22] Sheryl Hamilton, "Considering Critical Communication Studies in Canada," in *Mediascapes: New Patterns in Canadian Communication*, ed. Paul Attalah and Leslie Regan Shade (Toronto: Thomson-Nelson, 2002).

Frontier Imaginations, Cross-Border Interpenetrations

McLuhan's treatise on Canada's "Borderline Case," which he first proposed in 1967 during Canada's centennial celebrations, perhaps captures the idea that Canada is a site of constant bordered conditions, marginality, in-betweenness, and dualisms (as framed by author Hugh MacLennan's famous 1945 novel *The Two Solitudes*). Canada's position between French and British colonial histories, between the influence of European and growing US cultural hegemony, and its later national characterization as simultaneously bilingual and multicultural, have contributed to a sense of national ambiguity that has also shaped the history of these fields. McLuhan's proposal characterizes Canada as many-bordered: historically, geographically, culturally, linguistically, and symbolically. In his 1975 essay, "Communication Theory and the Marginal Culture," Theall surmised that the "communication theory that arose in Canada . . . arose to a considerable extent as a strategy of culture and consequently the theorists concerned themselves with questions of a cultural nature and with a critique of the conflicting demands of British, Continental and U.S. traditions."[23] Similarly, Arthur Kroker once argued that a discourse on technology is "central to the Canadian imagination" because it is "situated *midway* between the future of the New World and the past of European culture, between the rapid unfolding of the 'technological imperative' in American empire and the classical origins of the technological dynamo in European history."[24] In Richard Cavell's reconsideration of McLuhan's "Borderline Case" essay, he notes that "even if the cultural threat" of US hegemony "has receded

[23] Theall, "Communication Theory and the Marginal Culture," 10.

[24] Arthur Kroker, *Technology and the Canadian Mind: Innis, McLuhan, Grant* (Montreal: New World Perspectives, 1984). See also Maurice Charland, "Technological Nationalism," *Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory* 10, no. 1 (1996).

. . . the issue of borderlines is still important culturally and politically."[25] In my own contributions, I have argued that Toronto School media theorization in the 1950s—primarily through McLuhan and Edmund Carpenter's production of the journal *Explorations* with their colleagues in Toronto—represented cross-border and transnational intellectual entanglements through the core research group members' commitment to interdisciplinarity and to studying patterns that connect peoples and cultures across space and time, a precedent for contemporary media studies that emphasize shared methodologies, collaborative projects, experiments in research-creation, and new critical pedagogies reflecting the changing shape of university research cultures.[26]

Intertwined with these considerations is the history of communication and media studies in Quebec, where we must recognize deep interpenetrations of academic fields with English Canada, but also arguably a gaze that reached further to anti-colonialist thought in Latin America, South America, and North Africa. The earliest Canadian English-language undergraduate and graduate studies programs in communication studies were established in Quebec: a BA at Concordia University (then Loyola College) in 1965, and an MA and PhD at McGill University in 1973–1974 and 1976, respectively. These programs were established within the bilingual context of Montreal, a city that has become increasingly intercultural, multilingual, and diasporic since the 1960s. These initiatives paralleled other programs emerging in Ontario, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, and later the Maritimes. Quebec universities including Laval University (in Quebec City) and the University of Montreal also initiated the first French-language programs and departments in communication studies in the late 1960s and early 1970s.[27] The sheer number of university programs in communication and media studies, and adjacent fields, that emerged in and near Quebec in the 1960s and 1970s invites an important historiographical examination of scholarly trends across these political, cultural, and linguistic spaces. Intercultural experiences of moving between cultural contexts and languages in part underpinned these foundational programs. Founding program scholars, including Father John O'Brien at Loyola, Gertrude Robinson at McGill, and James Taylor at the University of Montreal, had completed doctoral studies in the United States; others, including Line Ross at Laval and Gaëtan Tremblay at the University of Quebec at Montreal, had pursued degrees in France.

Lee Rodney's thesis of North America's "frontier imagination" provides a useful framework for considering multidimensional contexts of communication studies. Rodney develops a critical reassessment of the role played by the US-Canadian and US-Mexican

[25] Richard Cavell, "McLuhan's 'Borderline Case' Revisted," in *Comment comparer le Canada avec les États-Unis aujourd'hui*, ed. Hélène Quanquin, Christine Lorre-Johnston, and Sandrine Ferré-Rode (Paris: Presses Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2009), para. 6.

[26] Michael Darroch, "Bridging Urban and Media Studies: Jaqueline Tyrwhitt and the *Explorations* Group, 1951–1957," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 33, no. 2 (2008); Michael Darroch, "The Toronto School: Cross-Border Encounters, Intellectual Entanglements," in *The International History of Communication Studies*, ed. Peter Simonson and David Park (London: Routledge, 2016).

[27] University of Montreal, BA [1969]; Laval University, BA [1969]; University of Quebec at Montreal, BA, [1973]; University of Montreal, MA [1973].

borderlines, not as linear boundaries dividing territorial spaces but rather through the historical and contemporary perceptual imaginaries of these border environments and the bordering logics of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. We must look beyond the idea of the borderline—that is, beyond official and legal narratives about the boundaries that mark such national divides, to reconsider how borders also encompass historical division, political shifts, and racialized experiences of nation and space that have had tangible effects on different communities. Indeed, as Rodney and I argued in a research-creation initiative called *Sensing Borders*, borders are highly mediated and abstract archives of stories and images that shape political imaginaries and repercussions.[28] McLuhan's thesis of Canada itself as a "borderline case" remains pertinent here. His metaphor that a border is not "a connection but an interval of resonance" continues to evoke a compelling framework for understanding cultural borderlands in the twenty-first century.[29] McLuhan suggested that Canada's historical position produced a frontier condition of identity and perspective, a "space between two worlds" distinguished not by linear modes of thought but rather by the metaphors of interval and interface. Such cultural intervals are both spatial and temporal, but they are not necessarily apolitical, harmonious, or representative of cultural hybridity in complacent terms. Rather, borders as intervals of resonance are collective cultural spaces that also produce abrasions or irritations within them, requiring the acknowledgement of cultural differences and necessitating modes of co-existence—or alternatively, igniting fears, crises, and violence. Canada in this reading is not just *a* borderline case, but *the* quintessentially postmodern case constituted by multiple borderlines, many sites of mutual irritation articulated through language, culture, and communication technologies. Jody Berland has claimed that the "consciousness of the border's arbitrary location" has led to labeling Canada "the world's first postmodern country," a country that "registers the prospect of reconciliation among multiple identities, 'in-process' rather than complete; 'in-between' rather than whole; a 'contrapuntal' form rather than a singular narrative."[30] These many metaphors lend themselves to the networked and mediatized characteristics of transborder, diasporic, or multilingual environments in other regions and times.

[28] See Michael Darroch, Karen Engle, and Lee Rodney, "Introduction: Sensing Borders," in "Ressentir (les frontières)/Sensing (Borders)," special issue, *Intermédialités*, no. 34 (Autumn 2019).

[29] Marshall McLuhan, "Canada: The Borderline Case," in *The Canadian Imagination*, ed. David Staines (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), 226.

[30] Jody Berland, *North of Empire: Essays on the Cultural Technologies of Space* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 52.

A "Bifocal Habit of Vision"

It is worth recalling that one foundational moment in the Canadian context, an early "echo chamber" that pre-dated the formation of programs or centers of study, started with a 1953 Ford Foundation grant application submitted by McLuhan, Edmund Carpenter, and

their colleagues that promised to explore the "Changing Patterns of Language and Behavior in the New Media of Communication."[31] Their successful Ford grant facilitated a two-year graduate seminar in Culture and Communications, and the launch of the journal *Explorations in Culture and Communication* that the applicant team co-edited between 1953 and 1958. The Ford proposal portrayed a specific Canadian dualistic mindset that drew in part from their reading of the Canadian political economist Harold Innis. Key moments in Canadians' history, they argued, created "a bi-focal habit of vision in their culture which makes natural to their outlook the historical and the scientific, the humanist and the technological simultaneously."[32] They believed this dualistic sensibility offered a rich perspective on all of North America, where Canada worked as an "early warning system" for the United States, another border metaphor based on the DEW-line radar in the Canadian arctic. As I have traced in other contributions, what later became known as the "Toronto School" was set in motion by a group of scholars from Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom who sought to bridge historical, cultural, and disciplinary borders.[33] They equally embraced contributions from other transatlantic thinkers such as the Swiss architectural historian Siegfried Giedion. While they were very different scholars, Innis and Giedion shared some common research and pedagogical goals in the late 1940s: Innis's encyclopaedical studies on *Empire and Communication* (1950) and the *Bias of Communication* (1951) were compiled in largely the same period that Giedion scoured patent offices across the United States to develop his monumental volume *Mechanization Takes Command* (1948). Both scholars approached space and time as key dimensions of technological history and cultural analysis. And this should not be surprising in the wake of World War II, when evolving theories in natural sciences and physics in space-time relations also shaped works such as Norbert Wiener's *Cybernetics* (1948). Co-applicant Jaqueline Tyrwhitt, a British town planner linked to CIAM and the London-based MARS group, and a longtime colleague and translator of Giedion's work, used her own voice to shape his writings for consumption within anglophone countries.[34] Tyrwhitt came to Toronto in 1951 and participated in the Ford Foundation project bringing scholarly interests from across disciplines and languages to the table.[35] And Edmund Carpenter, an American anthropologist who with McLuhan most shaped Toronto School thought, arrived in 1948 with experiences including his World War II soldier years in Japan, and with connections to a vast network of scholars in anthropology and intercultural communications in the United States. Carpenter actively solicited contributions from scholars such as Ashley Montagu, David Bidney, and Irving Hallowell for the journal

[31] See La Garde, "The 1987 Southam Lecture," 8–9.

[32] Edmund S. Carpenter, Jaqueline Tyrwhitt, H. M. McLuhan, W. T. Easterbrook, and D. C. Williams, "University of Toronto: Changing Patterns of Language and Behavior and the New Media of Communication (1953–1955)," Ford Foundation Archives, Rockefeller Archive Center, New York, grant file PA 53–70, section 1, 1.

[33] Darroch, "Bridging Urban and Media Studies"; Darroch, "The Toronto School."

[34] See Ellen Shoshkes, *Jaqueline Tyrwhitt: A Transnational Life in Urban Planning and Design* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2013).

[35] Darroch, "Bridging Urban and Media Studies."

Explorations, for which he acted as chief editor from 1953 to 1958. In 1959, Carpenter left Toronto to serve as chair of a new anthropology department at San Fernando Valley State College in Northridge, California (now a campus in the University of California system), where he helped shape the curriculum in visual and film anthropology, and across the arts. *Explorations* was borne out of the Ford Foundation grant and took a bi-focal or even mosaic habit of vision as its mantra. It was a journalistic experiment meant to integrate research in anthropology, culture, and communication, and to provide a mosaic of approaches, studies, and understandings.

While the notion of a "bi-focal" habit of vision influenced the early Toronto School and English-Canadian approaches to communication and media, the story in Quebec is different. While Innis was English Canada's most prominent political economist and overall scholar in the 1940s and early 1950s, he was received much more hesitantly in Quebec. In *Harold Innis in the New Century,* Daniel Salée and, in a separate chapter, Alain-G Gagnon and Sarah Fortin review the many reasons that Innis's staples theories and major writings received such a different audience there.[36] Just as Canadian scholars of Innis's generation most often took their doctorates in the United States, Britain, or France, Quebec undergraduates also left for the United States and Europe, as well as English Canada. As Salée notes:

> In the late 1940s, the first crop of graduates from Laval's École des sciences sociales returned from the United States and English Canada with postgraduate degrees to fill new academic positions. It was only then that a more positivistic and theoretically inclined outlook on social questions began to emerge in Quebec's sociographical and historiographical discourse.[37]

[36] Daniel Salée, "Innis and Quebec: The Paradigm That Would Not Be," in *Harold Innis in the New Century*, ed. Charles R. Acland and William J. Buxton (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999); Alain-G Gagnon and Sarah Fortin, "Innis in Quebec: Conjectures and Conjunctures," in *Harold Innis in the New Century*, ed. Charles R. Acland and William J. Buxton (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999).

[37] Salée, "Innis and Quebec," 200.

Nevertheless, Innis's preoccupations and outlooks did not widely resonate with scholars of his generation. "The scholarly traditions out of which each emerged, the imperatives of their milieux, and the characteristic objectives of their respective intellectual endeavours were so divergent that they would have had little to say to each other."[38]

[38] Salée, 202.

Innis's scholarship came back into prominence in English Canada in the early 1960s through political economists such as Mel Watkins at the University of Toronto. Watkins was, intriguingly, one of the graduate students in the Culture and Communications Seminar provided by the Ford grant, working under the supervision of Innisian political economist Thomas Easterbrook. Watkins became part of a generation of scholars concerned with Canadian economic dependence on the United States, inspired by Innis's studies of Canada's economic history.[39] As Salée notes, however, in Quebec the same generation of scholars working towards radical analyses of economic

[39] For example, M. H. Watkins, "A Staple Theory of Economic Growth," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* 296, no. 2 (1963).

history and dependence did not share Watkins's reinterpretation of Innis:

> Quebec's young radical intellectuals and academics found much with which to agree in such an objective, but that was not going far enough. They explained Quebec's experience in the light of its political, economic, and cultural oppression in the post-Conquest (English)-Canadian state. Their reading of Quebec's situation through authors such as [Frantz] Fanon and [Albert] Memmi clearly indicated that they equated Quebec's plight with that of Third World colonies and developing nations.[40]

[40] Salée, "Innis and Quebec," 204–5.

While neo-Innisians such as Watkins sought to reinforce Canadian economic autonomy through state structures, Quebec's radical political economic scholars during the province's growing nationalist movement and Quiet Revolution cast their look farther south and beyond, to anti-colonialist struggles in North Africa and to Latin American dependency theory.

Yet a reading of Innis also needs to be positioned through his influence on McLuhan and on the general orbit of the Toronto School, and the emerging field of communication studies in the mid-to-late 1960s across Canada, including Quebec. By the time new programs in communication studies were being established from 1965 onwards, understandings of his thought began to circulate among Quebec-based scholars, both anglophone and Francophone, many of whom were bilingual themselves or at least willing to work across the linguistic cleavage. This is to note again that the bi- and multilingualism of many of Quebec scholars facilitated and influenced emergent programs in this province. If Innis's work itself was only selectively taken up by Quebec's Francophone scholars in political economy and political science, the themes of his key 1950s communications studies were announced and recirculated through the excitement that McLuhan garnered across Canada and Quebec, first when McLuhan rose to fame in the early 1960s and again when the translation of his work into French coincided with Expo 67 in Montreal. With the dawn of communications programs and related journals in Quebec in the 1960s, Innis began to receive a new readership. Roger de le Garde and Line Ross, founding members of Laval University's program and the journal *Communication Information*, later published the only (to my knowledge) translation of Innis's work in French, the famous first chapter "Minerva's Owl" from *The Bias of Communication*, explaining that "Innis outlines a new field of communication research in which media history is related to its cultural, economic, political and military context."[41] La Garde would also reconsider Innis directly in his Southam Lecture address to the Canadian Communication Association in 1987: "Mr. Innis, Is There Life after the 'American Empire'?"[42]

[41] Harold Adams Innis, "L'Oiseau de Minerve," trans. by Roger de la Garde and Line Ross, *Communication Information* 5, no. 2–3 (1983): 266.

[42] La Garde, "The 1987 Southam Lecture."

Gaëtan Tremblay, founding member of the University of Quebec at Montreal's program in communication (established in 1975) and first President of the Canadian Communication Association, has also recognized the profound influence of reading both Innis and McLuhan, the former when he was an undergraduate student in sociology at Laval University,[43] and the latter after his undergraduate studies and in the heyday of Expo 67.[44]

[43] Gaëtan Tremblay, "From Marshall McLuhan to Harold Innis, or From the Global Village to the World Empire," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 37, no. 4 (2012): 563.

[44] Gaëtan Tremblay, "Journey of a Researcher," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 39, no. 1 (2014): 11.

Disciplinary and Discursive Border Crossings

Accounts such as Tremblay's invite us to recall the diversity of cultural and linguistic experiences for many Canadians, particularly in key urban centers such as Montreal where both English- and French-language universities established programs of study, and thus to the role played not only by the promotion of Canadian and Québécois linguistic and multicultural policies, but also to the city's everyday multilingualism and acts of translation. They also invite us to consider the influence of core translations of communication and media theorization that facilitated access to scholarship for a rising generation of scholars in Quebec and across Canada. In Quebec especially, the French journal *Communications*, launched in 1961 by Roland Barthes, George Friedmann, and Edgar Morin, was a major resource for studies in mass communications and theories of semiotics. The translation into French of McLuhan's most influential writings in the late 1960s by Quebec journalist Jean Paré further promoted the study of media and communication. The establishment of scholarly journals in Canada and Quebec also provided sites for translations of intellectual positions as well as reviews of books across languages: the *Canadian Journal of Communication*, originally based in Toronto, and the journal *Communication Information*, based in Quebec City at Laval University, were launched in 1974 and 1975, respectively. Yet scholars and students in the bilingual capital of Quebec played a central role. La Garde and Yelle note that:

> The newness of the field of communication studies has meant that there is a relative scarcity of books and articles devoted to it. Until the end of the 1980s, Quebec students drew on their knowledge of English, which was fortunately reasonably good, in order to gain access to the broader disciplinary debates. Of course, certain extracts from classic American texts of the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s had been translated into French by European researchers.[45]

[45] La Garde and Yelle, "Coming of Age," 73.

These include the first significant volumes of French translations of core writings from US-based scholars which provided even further access to Francophone students, such as *Sociologie de l'Information: Textes fondamentaux*, edited by Francis Balle and Jean G. Padioleau in

1972, and *La Nouvelle Communication*, edited in 1981 by Yves Winkin. These two contributions provided translations of core communications scholarship, including, among many others, writings by Harold Lasswell, Talcot Parsons, Elihu Katz, Gregory Bateson, Ray Birdwhistell, Erving Goffman, and Edward T. Hall.[46]

What became the *Canadian Journal of Communication* (*CJC*) was first launched in 1974 as *Media Probe* by Earle Beatie, a York University professor of journalism and the journal's first editor. Beatie explained that there was "no organization worrying about how news is presented and how that presentation can be achieved." *Media Probe* no doubt provided a nod to McLuhan's theses on the artist and academic as cultural probe, but also to organizations such as Pollution Probe that were active at the time. Among the journal's initial areas of focus were analysis of how information circulates and questions of access, library sciences and the responsibilities of libraries, and "understanding . . . the process of communication, the roles of communication agencies, and the characteristics of the various communication media."[47] *Media Probe* was established in metropolitan Toronto after meetings in 1973 at York and the then Ryerson Polytechnical Institute. While the journal was initiated in Toronto, its "area of coverage" was planned to "include other parts of Canada" with the suggestion that "local or regional Media Probes may be organized in other areas and linking up will constitute a national organization."[48] By 1978, *Media Probe* had transitioned officially into the *Canadian Journal of Communication* (*CJC*). A conference held at the University of Windsor in 1979 facilitated initial discussions for forming a Canadian Communications Association (CCA) as a learned society. The *CJC* was recommended to act as the association's publication arm, but the "necessity to encompass French language scholarship in the field" also led to the concern from "Quebec participants . . . that trying to incorporate the two language groups into a single journal would be inappropriate and impracticable, given not only the language question, but also the differing areas of emphasis of French and English language scholars."[49] An alternative affiliation for the association was proposed with the "University of Laval, which now publishes a scholarly journal involving itself with communication concerns."[50] This journal, *Communication Information* (*CI*), launched in 1975 with Line Ross, Michel de Repentigny, and Roger de la Garde as part of the editorial team.[51] Ultimately, *CI* did not become officially associated with the Canadian Communications Association. The *CJC* took on this mantle for the association's initial years, although there was no legally binding arrangement.

Both journals contributed to disciplinary and linguistic border crossing. *Media Probe*/*CJC* started as a more modest publication and

[46] I wish to express my appreciation here to my colleague François Yelle at the University of Sherbrooke for a discussion of key sites and collections of communication thought in French translation. See also Yelle's (2004) exhaustive bibliography of publications in Europe for francophone communication studies, including those published in English, those co-authored by a Québécois scholar, and those written by an anglophone: "Étude de la littérature réflexive de la recherche universitaire québécoise en communication médiatique" (PhD diss., University of Montreal, 2004), lxiv–lxxii.

[47] Earle Beattie, "What Media Probe Is All About," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 1, no. 1 (1974): 12.

[48] Beattie, 11.

[49] Stewart Ferguson, "Communication as a Discipline," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 5, no. 1 (1978): 3.

[50] Ferguson, 3.

[51] The journal would later be renamed *Communication, Information, Médias, Théories* in 1983.

until the early 1980s remained largely focused on English Canadian explorations of media industries, communications policy, and theory. The journal has moved to the home university of each subsequent editor. When the second editor, Eugene Tate from St. Thomas More College, University of Saskatchewan took the reins in January 1982, the *CJC* began requiring abstracts in English and French, and published its first full essay in French in the April 1985 issue (vol. 11, no. 4). It was not until Gertrude Robinson and Liss Jeffrey took over the editorship at McGill University in 1988 that the journal actively sought more submissions in French with the offer of translating them where possible, noting as well that *CI* was the leading publication for Francophone research in communications.[52]

From the vantage point of Quebec City, the early issues of *CI* survey Quebec-based communications issues and industries, but also more directly sought to incorporate research from beyond Quebec's borders. To be sure, this outreach included reporting on research from English Canada, the United States, and Europe. The original cover of *CI* through its first six issues (vols. 1 and 2, 1975–1978) features the image of a human ear with an eye within it—a likely gesture to McLuhan's neologism of an "eye for an ear," resembling the inside cover of *Explorations 8: Verbi-Voco-Visual* (1957), a reference to the interconnected sensory perceptions afforded by new media and an ode to the polyphonic writing of James Joyce. However, *CI* quickly adopted an interest reaching beyond North American and European sources. As early as its fifth edition (vol. 2, no. 2), *CI* began publishing abstracts in French, English, and Spanish. The journal's Winter 1980 edition (vol. 3, no. 2) focused on "L'information internationale: commerce ou propagande ?," included a primary section of articles stemming from a symposium on February 24, 1979 on "L'échange inégal des informations dans le monde: le cas de l'Amérique Latine," including a contribution from Armand Mattelart after he had left the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile and returned to France. In 1983, *CI* announced a partnership with the journal *ININCO* of the Insitutio de Investigaciones de la Communicación, Universidad Central de Venezuela (vol. 6, no. 1), with the promise that each journal would publish a contribution from the other, followed by a similar arrangement with *Communicación y cultura* in Mexico (vol. 7, no. 1). If English Canadian communication thought and studies were wrapped up with east-west cross-border disciplinary- (and nation-) building exercises, Quebec-based communications scholars were casting their gaze beyond the continent.

In her 1999 Southam Lecture for the Canadian Communication Association, Gertrude Robinson set out to "reconstruct" the field of Canadian communication studies. Drawing on previous historical

[52] See also Karla Margarita Ramírez y Ramírez's bibliometric analysis of the *CJC* and *CI*: "Analyse bibliométrique des revues *Canadian Journal of Communication* et *Communication* 1974–2005" (PhD diss., University of Montreal, 2010).

accounts of the field, she examines three interrelated phases: "The first inquires into when and how our field was institutionalized into the university system, the second probes into the 'founders' who set up the 10 graduate programs, and the third addresses the French-English division of labour in building our interdiscipline."[53] In the first phase, she reminds us (following Roger de la Garde) of a range of "echo chambers" from the 1940s to early 1960s that predated university programs and other institutional frameworks.[54] These are largely framed within central Canada, between the axes of Toronto and Montreal. In Toronto, they include the 1950s Ford Grant and *Explorations* period of Toronto School thinkers described in the previous section.

[53] Robinson, "Remembering Our Past."

[54] See La Garde, "The 1987 Southam Lecture."

In his own 1987 Southam Lecture, La Garde took stock of such echo chambers in the Quebec context, some twenty years after the first programs had been institutionalized. These include Radio-Canada's research division; the Centre catholique national; journals and magazines including *Cité Libre* (1950) and *Parti Pris* (1960), and le Centre de recherche sur l'opinion publique (CROP), the province's first privately owned public opinion firm.[55] It is essential to recall that this phase took place during Quebec's Quiet Revolution, overlapping with the launch of television by CBC/Radio-Canada in 1952, a period of intense nation-building and modernization during which the state wrestled social power and educational oversight from the Catholic Church. Taking place towards the end of this period and coinciding with the launch of Quebec's first communication studies programs was of course the much-celebrated world exposition in Montreal, Expo 67.

[55] La Garde, "The 1987 Southam Lecture." See also Robinson, "Remembering Our Past"; Lévesque, "L'émergence et L'institutionnalisation."

The founding of the first university programs in communication arts or studies thus overlapped with the Canadian centennial celebrations of 1967, monumentalized by Expo 67. The bi-focal habit of perception that inspired Toronto School scholars in the 1950s was in many ways echoed at these celebrations. McLuhanism was a major influence at Expo 67 after the publication of *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962) and *Understanding Media* (1964), and their translation into French by Jean Paré in 1967 and 1968. The first program in Communication Arts in Canada was founded in 1965 by Father John O'Brien at Loyola, an English-language Jesuit College in Montreal that graduated students with BA degrees first through Laval University and later through the University of Montreal, before the institution merged with Sir George Williams University to become today's Concordia University. O'Brien would contribute to designing the Christian Pavilion at Expo 67, which featured the renowned film *The Eighth Day* by filmmaker and Loyola Communications faculty member Charles Gagnon. At McGill University, Donald Theall

led a "McGill Study of Expo 67" with graduate student researchers from the Department of English, and later planned to complete a manuscript on "Expo 67 as Total Environment" in the same year (1976) that Theall and Robinson helped establish the first PhD in Communication Studies at McGill.[56] In 1971, Theall also recruited Jacques Languirand, a Quebec dramatist and novelist, who had a major presence in radio and television, to join McGill's English Department, where he taught until 1980. Languirand had helped coordinate Expo 67, contributing to the design of several key installations: the CN Pavilion, the Polar Regions, the Ville des solitudes, and most notably, the Citérama as part of the Man and his Community Pavilion.[57]

Michael Dorland reminds us that Robinson's brief reference to the French-English divide in her 1999 address

> does at least raise the linguistic/cultural question, which surely constitutes a crucial defining characteristic of the institutionalization of communication studies in the Canadian context—indeed, a characteristic as significant as the role of the state in setting research priorities and establishing graduate programs. The "linguistic divide," therefore, reinforces the highly fragmented nature of communication studies in Canada, a fragmentation already encouraged by the various disciplines from which different programs emerged and by their regional location.[58]

The disciplinary and discursive fragmentation that Dorland alludes to represents in part the variety of communication studies or cognate programs across the Canadian horizon. In the 1960s and 1970s, these include communications-related programming at the University of Saskatchewan, particularly its Regina campus in the 1960s and early 1970s; the University of Windsor, which established a degree in Communication Arts in 1969; and Simon Fraser University's Vancouver campus, which launched a BA program in 1973. Alongside Quebec institutions, participation from these institutions came together to form the Canadian Communication Association (CCA) in 1979.

The CCA was first proposed at a meeting of scholars at the University of Windsor in Spring 1978. In Fall 1978, Donald Theall chaired a steering committee meeting in Ottawa to consider the formation of the new academic society. The association itself was established the following year at the learned societies meeting in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, with a board of directors and steering committee chaired by Theall. At the following learned societies meeting in Montreal in 1980, Gaëtan Tremblay was elected as the first president of the association. Windsor thus played an important but underreported role in establishing the CCA as a cross-nation initiative for the field of Canadian communication studies. Windsor had in fact been home to McLuhan from 1944 to 1946 when he taught at the university's prede-

[56] Monika Kin Gagnon and Janine Marchessault, *Reimagining Cinema: Film at Expo 67* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014), 10.

[57] François Yelle, "McLuhan at McGill: a Brief Look at Theall and Languirand" (paper presented at the Edgy Media Symposium, University of Windsor, Canada, March 1, 2019).

[58] Dorland, "Knowledge Matters," 56.

cessor, Assumption College. As I have argued elsewhere, McLuhan's experience living in the Windsor-Detroit borderlands, where one of his idols, Wyndham Lewis, was also actively lecturing, can only have influenced his later concept of borderlines as intervals of resonance.[59] In 1965, Windsor commissioned a report by instructors at Wayne State University in Detroit which recommended a "suggested structure and application of a closed circuit television system to the instructional program of the University of Windsor" based on research and institutional experience with educational television at American universities.[60] In short order, a Communications Centre was established in 1966 to provide CCTV and other media services across faculties at the University of Windsor. By 1968, however, it became clear that media services would become in demand across the institution and that the study of communication and media practices would require a different entity. The Department of Communication Arts "sprung from the Communications Centre," particularly through the leadership of the Centre's first director, Walter Romanow, who then became the initial Chair of Communication Arts.[61] Windsor grew into a prominent Communications program; faculty took part in international conferences and contributed to a number of Royal Commissions, most importantly Ontario's LaMarsh Royal Commission on Violence in the Communications Industry (1975).

[59] Michael Darroch, "Border Environments: Theorising Media and Culture in the Windsor-Detroit Borderlands, 1943–1946," in "Borders and Spaces in the English-Speaking World," ed. Jean-Jacques Chardin, special issue, *RANAM: Recherches Anglaises et Nord-Américain*, no. 52 (2019).

[60] James B. Tintera and Stuart K. Bergsma, "A Report to the University of Windsor: The Suggested Structure and Application of a Closed Circuit Television System to the Instructional Program of the University of Windsor" (Detroit: Mass Communications Centre, Wayne State University, November 30, 1965), original document, Department of Communication, Media, and Film, University of Windsor.

[61] "The Future of the Media Centre at the University of Windsor" (unpublished manuscript, August 1971), original document, Department of Communication, Media, and Film, University of Windsor.

Borderline Cases: Multifocal Habits of Vision

Communication studies in Canada from the 1960s to the 1980s was an environment that bridged disciplinary but also cultural divides, in Flusser's terms, requiring translative leaps across linguistic and disciplinary horizons. These acts of border crossing took place particularly due to the people involved, scholars and students who were committed to writing and studying in French and English, or to publishing their scholarly work in both languages. Many of these scholars came from backgrounds that afforded them the multilinguistic capital to pursue these avenues; others worked tirelessly to overcome the linguistic divide, taking pride in even working on translations of their own work. The stories told by founding figures in the field are therefore important, even as they at times question and contradict each other. We may recognize that communication and media studies in Canada have been shaped by the symbolic environment of the powerful discourses of Canadian dualisms, including the binational status of English and French as official languages; and by the many royal and provincial commissions and Crown corporations established to examine and promote bilingual cultural and communication

institutions and infrastructures (mostly in cities huddled along the physical border).[62]

McLuhan's notion of Canada's borderline case expressed the perspective that Canadian identities, during the time when communications studies programs took root across the country from the 1960s to 1980s, were ambivalent and post-national. In the twenty-first century, this has become a more difficult perspective to maintain. Since the beginning of the century, borders have become more firmly entrenched and militarized, and offer more hesitantly the same metaphorical resonance of openness, allegiances, or forms of cultural interpenetration.[63] Within Canada, the "two solitudes" motif has faded as multicultural policies have embraced Canada's pluralism, its First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, and as immigration has rapidly risen. Political momentum to restrict immigration and assert a firmer Canadian identity ensconced in settler colonial histories and ideological images of Canada as a northern state today collides with increased recognition of Indigenous peoples' histories across Canada and decolonial narratives advanced by scholars, activists, and artists, particularly after the final report of the 2015 Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

However, rather than viewing Canadians' "bi-focal habit of vision," celebrated by McLuhan and his *Explorations* colleagues, as out of step with twenty-first century realities, I would argue that the metaphorical power of the notion of the borderline case still resides in its multiplicity. As McLuhan indicated in his 1967 lectures, Canada was never *a* borderline case, but rather is constituted by multiple borderlines. Janine Marchessault remarks that McLuhan

> was able to recognize and understand as radical methodology in Innis's work [that] the borderline is historical, charged with emotional intensities, and in Canada's case is "porous." History written from a location along the borderline can reanimate and challenge official history and reassert the effects of time.[64]

This recognition was amplified by the various proposals for establishing communications studies in Canada in the late 1960s. To stick with musical metaphors, borders (national, cultural, linguistic) may be spaces of intense resonances, but that does not necessarily make them harmonious. A frontier imagination enables cultural collisions and consonances, facilitates contradictions and agreements, and provides sites for processes of conflict, power, force, and aggression to function against and alongside hospitality, openness, and, indeed, communication. For the history of Canadian communication studies, Canada's many borderlines continue to provide fertile ground for multifocal habits of vision.

[62] Michael Dorland, ed., *The Cultural Industries in Canada* (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1996), xii.

[63] Lee Rodney, *Looking Beyond Borderlines: North America's Frontier Imagination* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 104–6.

[64] Janine Marchessault, *Marshall McLuhan: Cosmic Media* (London: Sage, 2005), 100.

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