

The Dalton
Camp Award



2011

The Dalton Camp Award

Presentation of the 2011 DALTON CAMP AWARD
Congress 2011
Canadian Federation of the Humanities
and Social Sciences

Beaverbrook Art Gallery
Fredericton, New Brunswick
June 2, 2011

Presented by Friends of Canadian Broadcasting



www.friends.ca

THE DALTON CAMP AWARD



FRIENDS OF CANADIAN BROADCASTING announced the creation of The Dalton Camp Award in December, 2002 to honour the memory of the late Dalton Camp, a distinguished commentator on Canadian public affairs, who passed away earlier that year.

The Dalton Camp Award is available to one Canadian each year, the winner of an essay competition on how the media influence Canadian democracy. The Award consists of a cash prize of \$5,000 as well as a bronze cast medal by the late Canadian sculptress Dora de Pédery-Hunt. In addition, up to four finalists are eligible for a cash prize of \$1,000.

Friends' goal is to encourage young Canadians to reflect and express themselves through original essays on the link between democracy and the media.

The Selection Committee is chaired by Jim Byrd; the other members are Pauline Couture and Maggie Siggins.

The winner of the 2011 Dalton Camp Award will be announced at the Beaverbrook Art Gallery in Fredericton. This year's winner is Nancy Black and the finalists are Joshua Noble and Megan Cécile Radford. Friends of Canadian Broadcasting is pleased to publish these essays herein and on Friends' web site, friends.ca, where details on the 2012 Dalton Camp Award will be available.

Friends of Canadian Broadcasting wishes to thank the Canadian Federation of the Humanities and Social Sciences and the *Toronto Star* for their cooperation regarding the Dalton Camp Award.

Friends of Canadian Broadcasting
200/238-131 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario M5S 1R8
www.friends.ca

THE MEDAL



The late DORA DE PÉDÉRY-HUNT was Canada's foremost medal designer and sculptress. Among her designs are the dollar coin and a cast medal of Norman Bethune presented by Prime Minister Trudeau to Mao Tse-tung in 1973. In 2003, she was awarded the J. Sanford Saltus Award Medal, the American Numismatic Society's prestigious medal for signal achievement in the art of the medal.

THE WINNER & FINALISTS

THE WINNER



Nancy Black is a freelance writer and participant in the Royal Roads Masters of Professional Communication program. Nancy enjoys the many privileges of living in Calgary, Alberta but never takes them for granted.

THE FINALISTS



Joshua Noble completed his Bachelors degree in Psychology at The King's University College in 2010. He is a recent recipient of both the Academic Silver Medal and SSHRC Canadian Graduate Scholarship. He plans to begin working on his Masters of Communication at Simon Fraser University this autumn.



Megan Cécile Radford is a 2011 graduate of the Master of Arts in Journalism program at the University of Western Ontario and has a Bachelor in Social Justice and Peace from The King's University College. She grew up in Canada and Senegal and hopes to become a foreign correspondent.

DISMANTLING THE SCARECROW: AN EXPLORATION INTO CALGARY'S CULTURAL COMING OF AGE

A 45-minute drive south of Calgary on Highway 2 brings you to the edge of the Rocky Mountain foothills and the beginning of prime Alberta ranch country. On the side of the road, on the edge of a vast stretch of land, sits a well-maintained sign that proclaims in bold letters, "Less Ottawa, More Alberta." In a province where spare language is commonly employed to support peoples' passions ("Support Our Troops," "I 'Heart' Alberta Beef"), this slogan rings with a particularly brazen isolationist undertone. Most native Westerners can recognize the proclamation as yet another manifestation of decades-old western alienation born out of grudges over lost national contracts and oil revenues. The more self-conscious Albertan might wonder what, if any measure of comity, is expected to be elicited by the sign from newcomers or visitors passing by on their way to the next milepost of good fortune that dots a landscape so rich in blessings as to be convincingly branded "God's Country."

For every isolationist malcontent in the region, one wonders if there is an equal constituency that holds a more collectivist and universal view of the world and their place within it. Modern-day cosmopolitans, as Martha Nussbaum describes in her 1994 essay, "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism," are those people who reject self-definition based on "morally irrelevant characteristics" such as nationhood or regional affiliation and hold out allegiance for "morally good" characteristics such as universal justice, reason, and mutual respect.¹ Nussbaum's premise is that the "me/my region first" ideology is not a sustainable foundation on which to build a society and that hyper-patriotism has the potential to turn subversive, as some would say occurred in American national security policy following the events of September 11, 2001. In this essay, we use Nussbaum's interpretations and those of her philosophical contemporaries as a guide to probe Calgary's social, political, and media institutions and to understand the extent to which the popular stereotype of Calgary as a predominantly isolationist culture continues to hold true.

As Kwame Anthony Appiah describes in *Examined Life: Excursions with Contemporary Thinkers*, cosmopolitanism is invoked not to denigrate parochial societies but to find a sustainable way forward. "We have to figure out how to live in a world in which our responsibilities are, not to just a hundred people with whom we can interact with [sic] and see, but to six or seven billion people whom we cannot see and whom we can affect only in indirect ways."² With so many eyes on Calgary for its significant influence on globally-shared domains like the economy and the environment, this psychic and physical place is a worthy one in which to pull over, unpack our tools, and explore the competing forces of isolationism and cosmopolitanism in a real-world context.

A CULTURE IN CONTEXT

The newly formed Calgary of the late 1800s did not hold the same broad appeal to immigrants as Canada's port cities or those with a more diverse or established economy. The city's first wave of newcomers, largely immigrants from Northern Europe, was drawn to its agricultural promise. The Leduc oil discovery of 1947 brought the second major wave, consisting largely of profit-seeking Americans responding to the burgeoning fossil fuel industry.³ In Robert Stamp's *Suburban Modern: Postwar Dreams in Calgary*, historian Max Foran describes their influence: "By 1965, over

30,000 Americans lived in the city, with their numbers directed toward the higher income brackets. They figured prominently in the city's social and economic life, and in many ways Calgary had 'more in common with Tulsa or Houston than with Toronto, Montreal or Hamilton.'"⁴

Modern-day Calgary is virtually unrecognizable from its postwar years. A visit downtown on Stampede Parade day reveals a diverse citizenry. Families of multiple ethnicities line the parade route to enjoy the cultural panorama. Here, a Caribbean steel band, there, the Ismaeli Muslim/Habitat for Humanity float, next the Stoney Indians, then the pioneer women. A recent article in *Maclean's* provides the numbers behind Calgary's changing face: "Its dynamic economy makes it home to more immigrants per capita than Montreal.... Nearly a quarter of the population is a visible minority."⁵ But modern cosmopolitanism demands more from a society than ethnic diversity. In her commentary on North London, Ranji Devadason makes an important distinction between a city that happens to be culturally diverse and one that is truly cosmopolitan, defining the latter as "not something which can be inferred from diversity in itself; it requires transformation in 'structures of meaning' (Hannerz, 1990, p. 239) both for the individual and the political community."⁶ In what ways, if any then, might Calgary be building those structures of meaning to bridge over to its democratically cosmopolitan ideal?

IDEOLOGY VS. IDEAS

While Calgary's politicians may endorse *economic* cosmopolitanism (i.e. free trade, foreign ownership), experts would say this is of little relevance to the *moral* cosmopolitan.⁷ Moral cosmopolitanism favours the free trade of ideas over commerce and, therefore, seldom do the two ideologies jibe. Calgary's political ideology could be safely characterized as entrenched. Its citizens have supported the provincial Progressive Conservative government's uninterrupted forty-year reign and the lengthy run of the even more traditional party that preceded it.⁸ The current regime's most viable rival is the even more conservative and isolationist Wild Rose Party. Calgary is the birthplace of the two right-wing parties that morphed into the current ruling federal Conservative party, the party that continues to support Member of Parliament Rob Anders despite his highly-publicized 2001 accusation that Nobel Peace Prize winner Nelson Mandela was a "terrorist,"⁹ the party that has publicly

withdrawn from a 2011 United Nations conference on racism,¹⁰ and has cultivated a cavalier acceptance of that organization's decision to reject Canada's bid for a two-year seat on its Security Council.¹¹ If there were a contest to name the city whose historical voting practices support everything cosmopolitanism is not, Calgary would place prominently.

Conversely, if there were a poster child for everything cosmopolitanism personifies, Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi would be it. Elected in October 2010 to the non-partisan job of mayor, Nenshi is a foreign-born visible minority person of Muslim faith. He is an intellectual. His election platform proposed progressive concepts like bike lanes and transit funding. The very fact of his being elected garnered poorly-veiled amazement from other jurisdictions, raising deep questions as to what this signified about the city, still viewed in some corners as a "white-bread oil town."¹² When asked to respond, Nenshi coolly commented, "issues of race and religion have not come up very much—except, frankly, by the media."¹³

AN EMERGING COMMONS

While traditional media ownership in Calgary is not as concentrated as in some Canadian cities,¹⁴ the bias of its two major newspapers is skewed to the interests of business. The *Calgary Herald* and the *Calgary Sun*, though owned by separate entities, appear to present the same business-focused viewpoint albeit to slightly different audiences (white-collar versus blue-collar) and in different formats (broadsheet and tabloid). If, as Nussbaum believes "one of the greatest barriers to rational deliberation in politics is the unexamined feeling that one's own current preferences and ways are neutral and natural,"¹⁵ then Calgary's talk radio station AM770 CHQR is doing its best to hold up the blinders. Notorious for its hosts' unceremonious silencing of dissenting voices and indulgence of anti-government rants, the highest-rated radio station in Calgary¹⁶ provides the breeding ground for the inflammatory shorthand so appealing to folks like our griping landowner with the billboard. By luring the disenfranchised to its bully pulpit for their own 45 seconds of fame, it perpetuates – among a sufficiently large proportion of the citizenry – the illusion of democratic dialogue.

The relatively recent adoption of Twitter has created a popular, unmediated commons that has allowed a grassroots discourse to develop in Calgary; one more in tune with people than lobbies. The defeat of

two media and business-friendly candidates in the 2010 Calgary mayoral campaign attests to the phenomenon. Nenshi used social media to sustain a free-flowing, uncensored dialogue with Calgarians that propelled popular support of his campaign from eight to forty percent in four weeks.¹⁷ The intensive wave of public and media interest that followed is evidence that Calgary is no social media laggard. What this says about Calgary is that two-way, 24-hour public conversation has the potential to usurp artificial discourse and awaken people to the possibility that the landowner's billboard, the irrelevant press, and the radio rants are straw men created to divert attention from meaningful debates about Calgary's true democratic fitness and its citizens' responsibilities to their wider family of brothers and sisters.

HEARTS WITHOUT BORDERS

It may come as a surprise to many that Calgary lags only Toronto and Vancouver in its percentage of multiracial or "mixed" unions (6.1 percent versus a national average of 3.9 percent) and this has the potential to influence identity and attitudes over time. "The impact of mixed unions could be far-reaching in changing the dynamic and nature of Canada's ethnocultural diversity in future generations. These consequences may impact the language transfer that takes place within mixed union households, as well as the experiences of children in mixed families and the way in which children of mixed unions report their ethnocultural origins and identify with visible minority groups."¹⁸

MINDS BEYOND BORDERS

Calgary's young people are well-positioned to be the catalyst for the city's ultimate cosmopolitan breakthrough. Here is an excerpt from the report of the *Calgary's Youth, Canada's Future* conference, an event commemorating the province's centennial that involved 70 young people at the University of Calgary:

WHEN ASKED TO DESCRIBE THEIR [THE PARTICIPANTS'] PRINCIPAL ATTACHMENTS... ALBERTA DOES NOT SEEM TO BE PART OF THEIR PSYCHIC IMAGINATION. IT HAS EITHER BEEN DISPLACED OR IS OVERSHADOWED BY OTHER IDENTITIES... . WHEN ASKED IF ALBERTANS SHOULD EMPHASIZE THEIR REGIONAL IDENTITY LESS AND THEIR

CANADIAN IDENTITY MORE, OVER 60 PERCENT GAVE PRIORITY TO CANADA. THERE IS LITTLE COMFORT IN THESE RESULTS FOR THOSE WHO ARGUE THAT THERE IS A DISTINCT ALBERTA WAY OF LIFE, OR WHO TRUMPET THE NEED TO ERECT "FIREWALLS" TO PROTECT PROVINCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND PROMOTE THE POLITICS OF WESTERN ALIENATION, LET ALONE SEPARATION.¹⁹

The report suggests that immigration and information technology are providing unprecedented access to other cultures and ideologies, rendering the once popular concept of regionalism irrelevant to Calgary's youth. While it is possible passions will cool as Calgary's young citizens take their places as workers and leaders in contemporary life, there is an equal potential for passions to ignite and give rise to substantive ideological progress.

Yet despite all progressive indicators, static provincial and federal voting patterns and a tacit acceptance of propagandist local media would indicate that Calgary has yet to confront an existential urgency to evolve toward its cosmopolitan potential. Despite its small steps toward fully integrated democracy, Calgary remains ideologically virgin territory with a sizeable constituency – like our griping landowner – still holding back from discovering "the other." Kwame Anthony Appiah prescribes a spree of ideological promiscuity to such societies: "great civilizations and great cultural moments are usually not the result of purity but of the contamination and combination of ideas to produce new things."²⁰ Calgary's intellectual history is built upon the fluke emergence of a singular industry with singular values that its power players and the cultural, educational, and media institutions they operate must perpetuate. While the elements of true cosmopolitanism are drifting into its cultural gulfstream, Calgary is ripe for that decisive catalytic gust that will propel its citizens toward a true understanding of their privilege and an openness to true representational and operational democracy. It could be catastrophe that ignites this change, but it could also be the collective power of individual human agency as witnessed in the historic 2010 mayoral race. Until that time, while the ideological scarecrows still stand, we see slow but promising evidence of decay as pieces lose their hold and blow off into a borderless wind.

Dismantling the Scarecrow:
An Exploration Into Calgary's Cultural Coming of Age

ENDNOTES

1. Martha Nussbaum, "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism," *Boston Review* XIX, no. 5 (1994), <http://my.opera.com/PRC/blog/martha-nussbaum-patriotism-and-cosmopolitanism>
2. Kwame Anthony Appiah, "Cosmopolitanism," In A. Taylor (Ed.), *Examined Life: Excursions with Contemporary Thinkers*, ed. Astra Taylor (New York: The New Press, 2009), 113.
3. Robert Stamp, *Suburban Modern: Postwar Dreams in Calgary* (Calgary: TouchWood Editions, 2004), 32.
4. *Ibid.*, 33.
5. "The Real Face of Calgary – Young, Cosmopolitan, Confident," *Maclean's*, November 1, 2010, <http://www2.macleans.ca/2010/10/28/the-real-face-of-calgary/>
6. Ranji Devadasan, "Cosmopolitanism, Geographic Imaginaries and Belonging in North London," *Urban Studies* 47, no. 14 (2010): 2945-2963. doi: 10.1177/0042098009360228 2010 47: 2945 (2010)
7. "Cosmopolitanism," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, last modified November 28, 2006, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/cosmopolitanism/>
8. Elections Canada Archives, *Electoral Summary 1905 – 2004*, accessed January 4, 2011, <http://web.archive.org/web/20061005000946/http://www.electionsalberta.ab.ca/electoralsummary.html>
9. "PM Blasts MP for Blocking Mandela Honour," *CBC online*, June 8, 2001, http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2001/06/07/mandela_mpo10607.html
10. "Canada Skipping UN Racism 'Hatefest' Again, Ottawa Says," *Toronto Star*, November 25, 2010, <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/article/896627--canada-will-skip-un-racism-conference-hatefest-again-ottawa-says>
11. "2010 'Crystallized' Canada's Changing Foreign Policy," *CTV news online*, January 2, 2011, <http://edmonton.ctv.ca/servlet/an/local/CTVNews/20101224/heinbecker-canada-foreign-policy-110102/20110102/?hub=EdmontonHome>
12. "The Real Face of Calgary – Young, Cosmopolitan, Confident," *Maclean's*, November 1, 2010, <http://www2.macleans.ca/2010/10/28/the-real-face-of-calgary/>
13. "Calgary Chooses Nenshi as New Mayor," *CBC online*, October 19, 2010, <http://www.cbc.ca/canada/calgary/story/2010/10/19/calgary-election-mayor.html>
14. Marc Raboy and David Taras, "Transparency and Accountability in Canadian Media Policy," *Communications: The European Journal of Communication Research* 29, no. 1 (2004): 59-76.
15. Nussbaum, *Boston Review*
16. Bureau of Broadcast Measurement, *Calgary CMA* (August 30-November 28, 2010), accessed January 4, 2011, http://bbm.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=88&Itemid=71
17. Don Braid, "Nenshi Capitalizing on Social Media Buzz," *Calgary Herald*, September 26, 2010, <http://www.calgaryherald.com/technology/Braid+Nenshi+capitalizing+social+media+buzz/3581186/story.html>
18. Maheux and Tina Chui, *A Portrait of Couples in Mixed Unions*. (Catalogue no. 11-008-X, Statistics Canada).
19. Larry Felske, Gina Grosenick, Kelly Hogan, Laura Schultz, Tamara Seiler, and David Taras, *Report: Calgary's Youth Canada's Future*, accessed January 4, 2011, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/agf/node/58>
20. Appiah, *Examined Life*, 110.

WIKILEAKS, CANADIAN MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY: MEDIA WITH A FACE

INTRODUCTION: A WIKILEAK IN THE SYSTEM

WIKILEAKS HAS PROVEN A RICH SOURCE OF NEWS, HOWEVER TENUOUS ITS JOURNALISTIC STATUS. WIKILEAKS CERTAINLY THINKS OF ITSELF AS DOING THE WORK OF JOURNALISM, AS EVIDENCED IN JULIAN ASSANGE'S COMMENT: "IT IS THE ROLE OF GOOD JOURNALISM TO TAKE ON POWERFUL ABUSERS, AND WHEN POWERFUL ABUSERS ARE TAKEN ON, THERE'S ALWAYS A BAD REACTION. SO WE SEE THAT CONTROVERSY, AND WE BELIEVE THAT IS A GOOD THING TO ENGAGE IN."¹ WIKILEAKS' INHERENT STRUCTURE, PRINCIPALLY ANONYMITY, IS IN FACT ANTITHETICAL TO JOURNALISM AND LEAVES THE ORGANIZATION AN ODD BLEND OF INFORMATION LEAKER, NEWSMAKER, EDITORIALIZER, SELF-STYLED JOURNALIST, AND GENERAL UNCLASSIFIED NEWS MEDIUM.

WikiLeaks has vaulted onto the international stage to a mix of adulation and anger. The international, non-profit organization is in possession of some "1.5 million documents so far from dissident communities and anonymous sources".² Since the founding of WikiLeaks in 2006,³ the organization has

released sensitive documents of a political, legal, martial, or economic nature. The releases have made shockwaves in international diplomacy, the world economy, and every level of politics. Thus, WikiLeaks has garnered both public awe and public ire. In turn, Canadian journalists and the Canadian blogosphere have buzzed with questions. "Is anonymous leaking and faceless journalism ethical?" "Does this style of reporting endanger or protect?" "Is WikiLeaks democratic or anarchistic?" If one can step back from the rhetoric that surrounds WikiLeaks, there is an opportunity for reflection on the importance of responsible journalism – what I will call in this essay 'journalism with a face'. Particularly, it is valuable for a democratic society to hold journalists professionally accountable for publications, to ask their media to publish in a meaningful context, and to insist that a healthy public dialogue is created through journalistic work. In short, WikiLeaks demonstrates that in the Canadian context (or in any democratic nation), a media that is accountable to the public is invaluable.

THE UPSIDE OF WIKILEAKS: THE PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW

The 'company profile', and informal mandate, of WikiLeaks is defined as: "WikiLeaks is a distributed organization which publishes and analyzes information through an uncensorable approach – focusing on documents, photos and video which have political or social significance."⁴ WikiLeaks has been awarded both the 2008 Economist New Media Award⁵ and the 2009 Amnesty International New Media Award.⁶ The stories that WikiLeaks has broken include: politically motivated killings and disappearances in Kenya,⁷ a myriad of embarrassing stories, facts, and loose talk about politicians and diplomats,⁸ a controversial video of the allegedly unprovoked killing of innocents by U.S. soldiers in Baghdad, and details of the treatment of detainees in Guantanamo Bay.⁹ These stories have exposed government lies, human rights abuses, and private sentiments and opinions. In this way, WikiLeaks has disclosed vital information to the otherwise unwitting public.

THE DOWNSIDE OF WIKILEAKS: ANONYMITY AND INAPPROPRIATE INFORMATION DISCLOSURE

WikiLeaks has also come under fire from governments such as Australia,¹⁰ France,¹¹ Iran,¹² and the United States¹³ for a host of reasons. Some nations, organizations, and individual citizens have called into question the validity of the information released.^{14, 15} Others have accused

WikiLeaks of editorializing “unbiased” leaks.¹⁶ One particularly contentious video, dubbed “Collateral Murder” has been heavily criticized as an edit of the original “uncensored” video.¹⁷ Additionally, some have criticized WikiLeaks for endangering careers, relationships, and lives by its cavalier decisions to release private documents. Some have argued that WikiLeaks will actually mean that people will be less likely to engage in resistance exercises that may be compromised by an anonymous leak.¹⁸ Still others have made the point that WikiLeaks may choose to release only whatever leaks support the agendas of insiders or may even blatantly falsify documents and “leak” them.

THE STUMBLING BLOCK: WIKILEAKS AS SIMULTANEOUS SOCIAL GOOD AND SOCIAL EVIL

So we find ourselves at an impasse. There are impressive reasons for and against WikiLeaks – and, more broadly speaking, anonymous, faceless journalism. Neither the merits nor the dangers can be dismissed or trumped by the other in any de facto manner. We love WikiLeaks, we hate WikiLeaks. Or more importantly, we have reason to love WikiLeaks, we have reason to hate WikiLeaks. And so we find ourselves either caught with an ambivalent attitude toward WikiLeaks or mired in polemic side-taking and name-calling. Though I do not dream that I am able to resolve all the ethical questions of Wikileaks, I do believe that these ethical problems offer an opportunity for reflection on the importance of responsible media. In the Canadian context – *our context* – the media plays a vital informational role that is in danger of being distorted by the effects of anonymous journalism. For democracy to continue to thrive in Canada, an accountable, honest media must flourish. Without passing judgment on the complex ethical and moral questions of WikiLeaks, I hold that there is no doubt that in *daily* journalism practice, democracy needs a media with a face.

ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE CANADIAN MEDIA

Journalists of the Canadian media are held accountable for what they have published. When journalists do not work behind the mask of anonymity, they must be willing to put their career, principles, and reputation on the line with every story they publish. Thus, members of the Canadian media

(as individuals or organizations) must be professionally responsible – must “own up” – to what they have written. There is obvious value to accountability in journalism. Let us consider three values of a professionally accountable media; the three values of media with a face.

ONE: CONTEXT AND CATEGORY

The published work of any journalist or news source may be evaluated and reviewed in the context of a larger agenda, opinion, tone, and perspective. Though all worthwhile journalism strives for an unbiased weighing of all sides of an issue, there is no doubt that news outlets and individual journalists have distinct perspectives. Therefore, an article found in one of the major national newspapers or in a special-interest magazine or on a blog can be fairly contextualized by what has been previously published by that organization in general and that journalist in particular. Criticism and praise of a political party, organization, social movement, etc. are best understood with a healthy appreciation of the underlying reasons and history of the author’s sympathies. To get a thorough understanding of these sympathies it is imperative to evaluate both the journalist’s previous publications and any links with organizations reported on. Furthermore, having categories to help us understand journalism is worthwhile. An article read in the opinion section of a newspaper, in a trade journal, or a comments board online are all read in the tone of the category in which they are published. It is difficult to know what the tone in the category of anonymous journalism is because the reasons for protecting identity are diverse and potentially malicious. Where anonymous journalism and pseudo-journalism leave a trail of context-less information disclosed by people for a myriad of unknown reasons (political leanings, personal retribution, religious beliefs, etc.) responsible Canadian journalism promotes contextualized reporting.

TWO: RESPONSIBILITY AND REPERCUSSION

Dangerous, slanderous, inappropriate and offensive material cannot be published without repercussions. In Section 2b of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms the: “freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication”¹⁹ is guaranteed. Unfortunately, some have taken freedom of the press to mean that unprofessional, reckless, or slanderous writing

is acceptable. This is simply untrue. Section 1 of the Charter states: “The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees the rights and freedoms set out in it subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.”²⁰ I am not interested in attempting to build a legal case; rather my point is simply this: freedom of speech does not mean that all expression is accepted and valued in a democratic society. Take as an example hate speech – not protected under the Canadian Charter as a ruling of the R. v. Keegstra case.^{21, 22} Anonymous journalism working under the guise of ‘freedom of the press’ that engages in hate speech, slander, or endangers lives/national defence is the antithesis of democratic free speech. The structure of accountability – the imperative to self-identify, support your claims, and answer detractors – means the Canadian media does not allow the unchecked, dangerous, and destructive derivatives of free speech to run amok. In a global context where secrets that endanger national security²³ can be published anonymously, it is clear that accountable journalism is vital to the democratic process.

THREE: DISAGREEMENT AND DIALOGUE

Journalism with a face leaves room for rebuttal, collaboration, and dialogue – the very heart of democracy. Faceless, non-contextualized journalism cannot be rebutted or engaged in any meaningful dialogue. It comes from nowhere and has no face for healthy dialogue. From WikiLeaks we have at times seen mass frustration not simply because of the content leaked, but because there is no legitimate, fair venue for retort. In this way the faceless gain the advantage by being unseen in their accusations, whereas those who have been implicated via leaks are sometimes unfairly vaulted into the public eye without an opportunity for a contextualized conversation with an opponent. The Canadian media is essential to democracy because it takes the form of democracy – it promotes dialogue and gives a venue for disagreement. Dialogue requires that two or more equals come to the table with honesty about their convictions. Dialogue requires that people look one another in the face and debate, argue, agree, and negotiate. Dialogue requires that people offer to one another, as a show of good faith and respect that is the backdrop for any productive conversation, their own faces. Dialogue cannot be done with the faceless, and a society without dialogue – even heated

dialogue – is forever in danger of power concentrations and power vacuums that are antithetical to democracy.

MEDIA WITH ACCOUNTABILITY AS A DAILY DOSE OF DEMOCRACY

Literary giant Mark Twain once said, “There are laws to protect the freedom of the press’s speech, but none that are worth anything to protect the people from the press”.²⁴ Twain’s words take on poignant, frightening new meaning in a context that includes anonymous journalism done from all corners of the globe. Anonymity is understandable, perhaps even courageous, in contexts of totalitarian regimes, hidden corruption, and flagrant human rights abuses. However, anonymity is indefensible, sometimes abhorrent, in various other contexts. As a daily model for journalism in a democratic society it is unreliable and unsafe. Because of the problems in the structure of anonymous journalism, the Canadian public – and Canadian democracy in general – are dependent on an accountable media. We may not always agree with what is printed in our newspapers, but the fact that we can know the identity of the writers – and disagree with the writers – means that, as far as our media is concerned, democracy is still at work.

CITATIONS

1. "Julian Assange Quotes". BrainyQuote, http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/j/julian_assange.html
2. "WikiLeaks official facebook page." WikiLeaks – Facebook. <http://www.facebook.com/WikiLeaks?v=info> (accessed February 1, 2011)
3. Ibid
4. Ibid
5. Publisher, Francisco Goldman., and Atlantic Books. "Index on Censorship » Blog Archive » Winners of Index on Censorship Freedom of Expression Awards announced." Index on Censorship. <http://www.indexoncensorship.org/2008/04/winners-of-index-on-censorship-freedom-of-expression-awardannounced/> (accessed February 14, 2011)
6. "AIUK: Amnesty announces Media Awards 2009 winners." Amnesty International - working to protect human rights worldwide. http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news_details.asp?NewsID=18227 (accessed February 20, 2011).
7. Townend, Judith. "Difficult to get Western media attention on Kenyan killings and disappearances, says WikiLeaks editor." Journalism.co.uk :: news for journalists. <http://www.journalism.co.uk/news/difficult-to-get-western-media-attention-on-kenyan-killings-and-disappearances-says-wiki-leaks-editor/s2/a534659/> (accessed February 1, 2011).
8. Roth, Zachary. "Top 10 revelations from WikiLeaks cables - Yahoo! News." http://news.yahoo.com/s/yblog_thelookout/20101129/ts_yblog_thelookout/top-ten-revelations-from-wiki-leaks-cables (accessed February 14, 2011).
9. "Publishing classified documents - CBC News." CBC.ca. <http://www.cbc.ca/world/story/2010/07/26/f-wiki-leaks-background-faq.html> (accessed February 4, 2011).
10. "Gillard condemns WikiLeaks." The Age - Business, World & Breaking News. <http://www.theage.com.au/technology/gillard-condemns-wiki-leaks-20101202-18haq.html> (accessed February 13, 2011).
11. Campbell, Matthew. "WikiLeaks Flees to Switzerland as U.S., France Options Narrow." BusinessWeek. <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2010-12-03/WikiLeaks-flees-to-switzerland-as-u-s-france-options-narrow.html> (accessed February 20, 2011).
12. "WikiLeaks claims are 'psychological warfare' says Ahmadinejad." The guardian. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/nov/29/WikiLeaks-claims-psychological-warfare-ahmadinejad> (accessed February 13, 2011).
13. "cnet news." Congressman wants WikiLeaks listed as a terrorist group. http://news.cnet.com/8301-13578_3-20023941-38.html#ixzz16keYyAPb (accessed February 14, 2011).
14. "Thunder Pig: WikiLeaks Lies: The 'Full Video' Released Has 20 Minutes Missing." Thunder Pig. <http://thunderpigblog.blogspot.com/2010/04/WikiLeaks-lies-full-video-released-has.html> (accessed February 13, 2011).
15. "The Colbert Report." The Comedy Network. <http://www.thecomedynetwork.ca/Displayblog.aspx?bpid=d639883b-2685-428b-bb20-32018fed6973> (accessed February 13, 2011).
16. "The Colbert Report: Julian Assange: Unedited Interview." The Comedy Network Video Player. <http://watch.thecomedynetwork.ca/the-colbert-report/exclusive-interviews/the-colbert-report--julian-assange-unedited-interview/#clip288411> (accessed February 11, 2011).
17. "Collateral Murder." <http://www.collateralmurder.com/> (accessed February 20, 2011).
18. "WikiLeaks just made the world more repressive - The Globe and Mail." Home - The Globe and Mail. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/opinions/opinion/WikiLeaks-just-made-the-world-more-repressive/article1818157/> (accessed February 13, 2011).
19. "Section Two of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia." Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Section_Two_of_the_Canadian_Charter_of_Rights_and_Freedoms (accessed February 14, 2011).
20. "Section One of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia." Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Section_One_of_the_Canadian_Charter_of_Rights_and_Freedoms (accessed February 14, 2011).
21. "R. v. Keegstra." Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/R._v._Keegstra (accessed February 16, 2011).
22. "Supreme Court Decisions." Supreme Court of Canada. <http://scc.lexum.org/en/index.html> (accessed February 14, 2011).
23. "WikiLeaks attack on Canada." Home - The Globe and Mail. www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/second-reading/spector-vision/WikiLeaks-attack-on-canada/article1826060/ (accessed February 13, 2011).
24. Twain, Mark, and Charles Neider. The complete essays of Mark Twain. New York: Da Capo Press, 2000.

HOW CANADIAN NEWSPAPERWOMEN WON THE VOTE

“There was a tradition among women in newspaper work not only to write the news, but to make it.”

Marjory Lang, *Women Who Made the News* (226)

On May 24th, 1918, they did it. After decades of petitions, demonstrations, and rallies, female citizens over the age of 21 in the Dominion of Canada won the right to vote. The girls of the newspapers put down their pens to celebrate, then sat up straighter at their desks, ready to take on another social issue. The women of the press had fought for the vote in every way available to them. Their women’s pages had provided a forum for people of many social classes across the country to discuss suffrage, in all its complications. Through the press, what was considered a women’s issue was plunged into the general discourse, helping to usher in a new era of democracy. This is how Canadian suffrage was won through the women of the media.

From the start, suffrage was caught up in the newspaper business, because the press was one of the only places where women could voice their opinions. In the late 1890s and into the early 1900s, it was not considered appropriate

for a woman of good breeding to stand at a pulpit, pound with her fist and preach social change. A more liberal view of a “woman’s place” began to evolve as the new century wore on, but more often women would take the avenue that was available to them: writing in letters or editorials in the women’s pages, or under pseudonyms if they managed to break into the main pages of the paper (Rex x). According to information from a 1911 census, 25 percent of female suffrage leaders were journalists or authors, the highest-represented profession among the group (Bacchi 6).

In an interview, Carleton Journalism adjunct professor Barbara Freeman maintained that women working for newspapers in those early days were well-educated, bright, progressive and informed. They meshed well with other professionals, such as doctors, teachers and civil servants who joined them as leaders of the suffrage movement. In 1911, almost 60 percent of female suffrage leaders were employed outside the home, compared to 14.3 percent of the general population of females over the age of ten in 1911 (Bacchi 6). They were privileged, and with that came the responsibility to represent the concern of the common woman, despite the fact that for many this consideration did not seem to encompass those outside the Anglo-Saxon race (Bacchi 104).¹

Freeman argues that for many female journalists, their support of suffrage was a reflection of their concern for women and their families, and later their patriotism. Many suffragettes were teetotalers, including the vivacious Nellie McClung. Their desire to ban alcohol arose from the plight of women whose husbands came home drunk and penniless, leaving their children hungry.² Then, when many women took up work on the home front of the First World War, women of the media lobbied Prime Minister Borden for the right to vote for conscription. It was this fight that pushed Borden to grant women the federal vote (Freeman). Their passion and awareness served them well, both on the women’s pages and in the public sphere.

In the corners of Canadian papers and magazines, women editors, writers and readers alike gave vent to their opinions concerning their right to vote. Early in the game, the globe-trotting Sara Jeanette Duncan sparred with readers and politicians with her characteristic wit and satire (Fiamengo 11). Marjory Lang writes that views like Duncan’s were ignored in other sections of the paper (156). Indeed, it seemed as though women were carrying out a revolution under the very noses of the men who isolated them.

But it wasn't kept secret for long. In the *Grain Grower's Guide* and other newspapers, women began to circulate petitions demanding women's rights and the right to vote (Lang 225). Coverage of women's club events often discussed the issue of suffrage, and gave rise to lively debate in letters from readers. One example is from a woman named Elizabeth to the *Grain Growers Guide* on March 18th, 1914:

I AM A FARMER'S WIFE, OR RATHER A HOMESTEADER'S WIFE, NINETEEN MILES FROM A TOWN AND CERTAINLY KNOW WHAT THE FARM WOMAN HAS TO CONTEND WITH. CHEER UP, SISTERS, BETTER DAYS ARE COMING. THE MEN ARE WAKING UP AND SO ARE WOMEN. ...I NOTICED IN THE GUIDE THAT PREMIER ROBLIN REFUSES TO GRANT SUFFRAGE TO WOMEN. HOW CAN HE, HAVING A GOOD WIFE, AND ADDRESSED BY SUCH A SPLENDID WOMAN, WIFE AND MOTHER AS MRS. MCCLUNG, ALSO PETITIONED BY SO MANY OTHER PROGRESSIVE WOMEN, DENY A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO HAVE A VOICE IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE NATION? IT IS CERTAINLY A "MOTHER'S" RIGHT. OH, THAT WE COULD DO SOMETHING EFFECTIVE TO PUT A STOP TO THIS AWFUL TRAFFIC OF LIQUOR... .

The talented women's pagers were inspiring ordinary women to take a stand with them. And while their peers in England resorted to molotov cocktails and hunger strikes, all Canadians seemed to need were words.

Their words often earned them undesirable consequences. In 1913, during a presentation at the Alberta Legislature, Premier Sifton was reported to have said to Nellie McClung and Emily Murphy: "Did you ladies wash up your luncheon dishes before you came down here...? If you haven't you'd better go home because you're not going to get any votes from me" ("Interview"). Even the brave Kit Coleman of the *Toronto Daily Mail* held back her opinions on suffrage because of the views of her conservative paper (Freeman). It was not easy or popular to be a "progressive woman".

But women of the press had been standing up to the insults of men since they had first entered the newsroom. Kay Rex writes that in the early 1900s the newspaper business was all but closed to the female sex because men didn't want women in their "smoke-filled dens" (Rex x). Women at the turn of the century were "expected to be 'seen and not

heard'" (Rex *ibid.*). Those women who did manage to become reporters did so by crashing through barriers or by setting up shop as permanent fixtures in the discourse of women's pages. They fought for their jobs, earning them on the skill of their pens and the strength of their connections in the world of women. As Isabel A.R. MacLean of the *Vancouver Province* once said, "Why shouldn't women become first-rate book reviewers and critics of music and drama?" (in Rex 19).

Still, many female journalists had to content themselves with editorials in the women's section. There, at least, women were needed for economic reasons, to attract advertisements from companies that sold household and fashion goods (Lang 8). The women's pages helped to finance the news, and even the stodgiest newsman couldn't say a thing about that.

Women's page editors would often use their columns to debate men's arguments against suffrage, or to argue with other women who were less sympathetic towards the cause. Most suffrage supporters were not shy of public speaking, but expressing their views in print allowed them to reach a wider audience. This was especially true of Camille Lessard-Bissonnette, a columnist for *Le Messenger* of Maine. Lessard-Bissonnette is often overlooked as a suffrage supporter in the annals of both Canadian suffrage and Canadian women of the press, perhaps because she spent part of her life writing for the Quebec diaspora in the United States. But in those days the debate across borders was fluid, and Lessard-Bissonnette engaged with other French-Canadians as well as with Franco-Americans (Shideler 74). She offered scathing observations about the hypocritical nature of saying that women should not get involved with politics or voting because it would soil their superior virtue (Shideler 70). On February 4th, 1910 she wrote in the *Le Messenger*:

YOU SAY, SIRs, THAT IT IS THE WOMAN WHO LIGHTS UP YOUR HOME. YOU COMPARE HER TO A RAY OF SUNSHINE. YOU EXCLAIM THAT WOMEN MUST NOT BE DRAGGED INTO THE MUD OF POLITICS. BUT SIRs, WHEN A RAY OF SUNSHINE FALLS ON THE MUD DOES IT DIRTY ITSELF, OR DOES IT DRY UP AND PURIFY THE MUD?³

It was not only men that suffrage writers had to contend with. To see the deep divisions within Canada on the issue of suffrage you need look

no further than the fact that the National Council of Women did not declare its support for the cause until 1910. Even within the Canadian Women's Press Club, consensus could not be reached. Despite being a founding member of the CWPC, Anne-Marie Gleason-Huguenin (pen name Madeleine) of *La Patrie* did not support the women's vote. While Lessard-Bissonnette was less harsh in disagreeing with Madeleine than with men, she stood firm in her conviction that women must support their suffragette "sisters," even if they did not agree with them (Shilderer 74). She bitterly rebuked women who, as Janet Shilderer writes, "maliciously characterize, generalize, and verbally assault their sisters engaged in the fight on behalf of all women" (75). Her frustration was warranted: Quebec chose not to give women the vote till April, 1940, decades after most other provinces.

Women from all provinces were often recruited to write for newspapers because of their work in women's clubs (Lang 222). Their connections meant that women would pay attention, and advertisers would want their wares shown alongside prominent female columns. Their social aptitude may have landed them the job, but it also helped them promote their pet cause (Lang 224). Emily Murphy is said to have "dragged the CWPC's Edmonton branch kicking and screaming into the feminist world of confrontation" (Rex 15). Journalism was a medium for change.

Networking was crucial to spreading the word about the need for women to vote, but the women of the press went further than that. They staged rallies, and hosted prominent British suffragettes to make sure that the public heard their cries loud and clear. Flora MacDonald Denison of the *Toronto Sunday World* was a key player in bringing controversial British suffrage leader Emmeline Pankhurst to Massey Hall in Toronto in the fall of 1909 (Fiamengo 155). Denison, who was at the time the vice-president of the Canadian Suffrage Association, wrote in her column after meeting Pankhurst that "she left us crowned with the admiration of everyone who heard her..." (in Fiamengo 155)

Of course, no account of the effect Canadian journalists had on suffrage would be complete without mention of the famous Mock Parliament staged in Winnipeg in 1914. Nellie McClung had joined the Canadian Women's Press Club in 1910. Because of her efforts, those of agricultural reporter Cora Hind and the spirited Beynon sisters, the journalists of Winnipeg became the keepers of "the cradle of the women's

suffrage movement in Canada," forming the Political Equality League (Rex 14; Lang 225). Women of the press played the key roles in the Mock Parliament held by the Political Equality League, with Nellie McClung starring as the premier, Sir Rodmond Roblin (Lang 226). Their efforts to promote equality outside of paper and ink were as fervent as their written words. Even after suffrage had passed, McClung, Murphy and others were not satisfied. Equality would not be achieved till women could not only vote for their representatives, but become them.

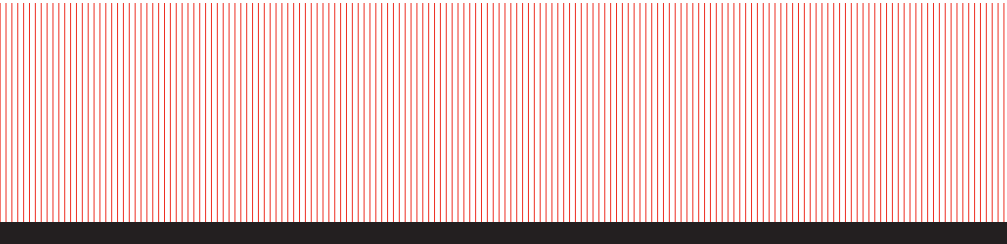
In the May 1916 issue of *Maclean's*, one month after Alberta became the third Canadian province to allow female citizens to vote, Nellie McClung wrote, "Democracy has its faults; the people may run the country to the dogs, but they will run it back again. People, including women, will make mistakes, but in paying for them they will learn wisdom." It is because of McClung and her peers that Canadian women now have the opportunity to make those political mistakes. Whether we will "learn wisdom" from those mistakes is now a choice that is solely our own.

CITATIONS

1. A notable exception was Francis Beynon, who was forced to resign from the Grain Growers Guide when she opposed World War I and McClung's position that foreign-born women should not be granted suffrage (Lang 227).
2. Nellie McClung's prohibition stance led to her being defeated after one term in the Alberta Legislature (Rex 14).
3. Translation from the original French by the author of this essay.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bacchi, Carol Lee. *Liberation Deferred? The Ideas of English-Canadian Suffragists, 1817-1918*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983.
- Elizabeth. "Good Time at Lethbridge". *Grain Grower's Guide*. 18 March 1914.
- Fiamengo, Janice. *The Woman's Page: Journalism and Rhetoric in Early Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008.
- Freeman, Barbara. Personal Interview. 3 March 2011. "Interview with Tom Wilson, 1913 MLA for Rocky Mountain House." 2002.
- The Famous Five. Heritage Community Foundation. 4 March 2011. http://www.edukits.ca/famous/murphy_reading4.html.
- Lang, Marjory. *Women Who Made the News*. London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999.
- Lessard-Bissonnette. *Le Messager*. 4 February 1910: 2.
- McClung, Nellie. "Speaking of Women." *Macleans*. May 1916. http://www.edukits.ca/famous/mcclung_reading4.html.
- Rex, Kay. *No Daughter of Mine: The Women and History of the Canadian Women's Press Club 1904-1971*. Toronto: Cedar Cave Publishing, 1995.
- Shideler, Janet L. *Camille Lessard-Bissonnette: The Quiet Evolution of French-Canadian Immigrants in New England*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc, 1998.



A SMALL DROP OF INK...
MAKES THOUSANDS,
PERHAPS MILLIONS, THINK.



www.friends.ca