Our Famous Blue Raincoat:

The Phenomenon of Leonard Cohen and the

Changing Discourses of Celebrity in Canada


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# ABSTRACT

**Our Famous Blue Raincoat: The Phenomenon of Leonard Cohen and the Changing Discourses of Celebrity in Canada**

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The history of Leonard Cohen's career over the last sixty years is also a reflection of the development of contemporary celebrity culture in Canada. One of the main conditions that allowed this culture to emerge is the *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences* (1949-51). As a result, the Canadian government strengthened cultural policy and developed the Canada Council for the Arts to support cultural production. In 1958, Cohen was a recipient of the new Canada Council Junior Arts Fellowships. Using the celebrity phenomenon of Cohen as my object of research, this dissertation asks: How is the discourse of celebrity constructed in Canada from the mid-twentieth century to the early decades of the twenty-first century? Developing a discursive analysis, I illuminate how we talk about celebrity in Canada at certain socio-historical moments and portray Canada as a nation ambivalent about celebrity. Within the early industrial production of Cohen's poetic celebrity, discourses of literary celebrity, Canadian celebrity, and cultural nationalism discursively manage his biographical production as a popular and accessible poet. In turn, discourses of intimacy connect Cohen with his fans, as fans seek to discover the "real" Cohen through his poetry and music. However, these feelings of intimacy are disparaged through a discourse of the obsessive and emotional fan perpetuated in the media coverage of Montreal 2000: The Leonard Cohen Event. After Cohen's death, I discover a shift away from this discourse. The media coverage of Cohen's death circulates an affective atmosphere of grief and mourning, presents the emotionality of fans as appropriate, and offers socially normative ways of coping with this loss. I explore my own complex emotional reaction to Cohen's death as a fan and academic through an autoethnographic approach, seeking to depathologize the emotional experiences of academia and fandom. One of the most significant changes in discourses of Canadian celebrity that I identify is a potentially seismic shift from willful avoidance to zero tolerance regarding problematic celebrity behaviour.

In conclusion, I build on this discourse by exploring the things we do not talk about when we talk about Leonard Cohen.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported me on this journey. Without all of you, this would not have been possible.

For Catherine and Clare

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> If you hang in there long enough you begin to be surrounded by a certain gentleness, and also a certain invisibility. This invisibility is promising, because it will probably become deeper and deeper. And with invisibility—and I am not talking about the opposite of celebrity, I mean something like "The Shadow," who can move from one room to another unobserved—comes a beautiful calm. – Leonard Cohen[1]

> If I had been given this attention when I was 26, it would have turned my head. At 36 it might have confirmed my flight on a rather morbid spiritual path. At 46 it would have rubbed my nose in my failing powers and have prompted a plotting of a getaway and an alibi. But at 56—hell, I'm just hitting my stride and it doesn't hurt at all. – Cohen[2]

> No comparison can be drawn between Leonard Cohen and any other phenomenon. Many will undoubtedly attempt such a comparison, but the result will be, at best, fragmentary. For Cohen is a rarity, if not a scarcity. And though he will always be rare in the true sense of the word, he will be listened to, sung, and read by an ever increasing entourage, those of the new awareness, those seeking artists of sensitivity. – Ellen Sander[3]

## I cried for you this morning / And I'll cry for you again:[4] Mourning Leonard Cohen

> Did I ever love you / Was it ever settled / Was it ever over / And is it still raining / Back in November – Cohen[5]

It was raining on November 10, 2016, the night I learned Leonard Cohen had died. By the time the news broke, Montreal's patron saint had been laid to rest. Our man was back home. I was playing pinball when I found out. I was having one of my all-time greatest games on Old Chicago, an electromechanical pinball machine from 1976. I had played three of five balls, had a score of over 75,000, and had earned a replay when I was ushered into the back room of the Montreal pinball bar I co-own. "Is everything okay?" I asked with trepidation, unsure of what was going on. "No," my friend Justin answered, "Leonard Cohen died."

Cohen loved pinball. In *Beautiful Losers*, he paid homage to the "yellow pinball machines of ancient variety" of the Main Shooting and Game Alley, "an amusement arcade on St. Lawrence Boulevard."[6] It felt like my life was coming full circle when I rediscovered this passage. We had just opened a pinball bar on St. Laurent Boulevard, North Star Machines à Piastres[i]. Cohen must come and play. I later wrote in my condolence message to Cohen at the Grande Bibliothèque, "I have been the one whispering 'Come back home … we have pinball to play.'" The Columbia record executive who signed Cohen, John Hammond, related to Cohen as

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[1] Cohen qtd. in Mireille Silcott, "A Happy Man," *Saturday Night* 15 September 2001, 26.
[2] "Leonard Cohen Inducted into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame," in *JUNO TV's Vintage Vids*, ed. The JUNO Awards (YouTube, 2015).
[3] Ellen Sander, "Leonard Cohen … the Man," *Sing Out!*, August 1967.
[4] Leonard Cohen, "A Street," *Popular Problems* (Columbia Records, 2014).
[5] "Did I Ever Love You," *Popular Problems* (Columbia Records, 2014).
[6] *Beautiful Losers* (Toronto: Emblem, 2003), 253.

"a completely weird guy, who liked to go around the streets of Montreal and play pinball. And I liked to play pinball, too, so that was a great bond that we had."[7] I thought pinball could be part of our bond too. In the 1965 National Film Board documentary *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen,* Cohen enters an arcade on St. Laurent Boulevard and plays an electromechanical rifle arcade game. Perhaps it is the same game mentioned in *Beautiful Losers*, Williams De Luxe Polar Hunt.[8] A photo of Cohen playing a Monster Bash pinball machine while on tour in Copenhagen in 2008 circulates through Cohen fan circles and amongst pinball players.[9] I like to think that pinball is actually Cohen's favourite game.

You got me singing / Even tho' it all looks grim / You got me singing / The Hallelujah hymn – Cohen[10]

Cohen had been hinting at his pending death. First it was subtle, and then it became more overt. I was in denial. Rumours began gaining steam with the death of Cohen's muse Marianne Ihlen in July 2016. Alerted that Marianne was in her final days, Cohen penned her a letter. His written words one of the last things Marianne heard: "Know that I am so close behind you that if you stretch out your hand, I think you can reach mine."[11] I do not think any of us truly realized how close behind he was. The night we all caught word of his passing, I spun a narrative based on stories of soul mates that cannot face living after the other has departed. It is a consoling, romantic story that eased our pain. After all, we are all just spinning stories; there is no such thing as truth.

After Marianne's death came Cohen's eighty-second birthday, a new album (*You Want it Darker*), and an interview with David Remnick, published in *The New Yorker* weeks before his death. The article is extensive, beautiful, and touching. Buried at the end is a confession: "I am ready to die."[12] My denial remained unshakable, and I swear every time I read that article my brain refused to witness the phrase. It was only when "Leonard Cohen" was trending on Facebook that I became conscious of this confession. I refused to believe it. After all, fans have

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[7] "Interview with John Hammond and Leonard Cohen," The Leonard Cohen Files, accessed September 10, 2018, https://www.leonardcohenfiles.com/jhammond.html.
[8] Cohen, *Beautiful Losers*, 253.
[9] Joseph S Carenza III, *LC Plays Monster Bash – Front Hotel – Copenhagen, Denmark* (Flickr2016), Photograph.
[10] Leonard Cohen, "You Got Me Singing," *Popular Problems* (Columbia Records, 2014).
[11] Cohen qtd. in Daniel Kreps, "Leonard Cohen Penned Letter to 'So Long, Marianne' Muse before Her Death," *Rolling Stone*, August 7, 2016, https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-news/leonard-cohen-penned-letter-to-so-long-marianne-muse-before-her-death-101175/.
[12] David Remnick, "Leonard Cohen Makes It Darker," *The New Yorker*, 17 October 2016, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/10/17/leonard-cohen-makes-it-darker.

been worried about Cohen's imminent death for decades. The release of *You Want it Darker* followed shortly after the publication of the article. The title track contained the chorus, "Hineni Hineni / I'm ready my Lord."[13] I felt chills the first time I heard it. Still, Cohen has been writing and singing about death throughout his entire career. As Remnick reflected, "Cohen's songs are death-haunted, but then they have been since his earliest verses."[14] I was reassured several days later when Cohen retracted his confession at a listening party of *You Want it Darker* in Los Angeles. Speaking in a deep whisper, his voice struggling for breath, he declared: "Uh, I said I was ready to die recently … And I think I was exaggerating. I've always been into self-dramatization. I intend to live forever … I hope we can do this again. I intend to stick around until 120."[15] He told me what I needed to hear.

> The party's over / But I've landed on my feet / I'll be standing on this corner / Where there used to be a street
> – Cohen[16]

As the evening of November 10 wore on, I heard news of a vigil at the doorstep of Cohen's Plateau neighbourhood home. Over the years, I often altered my course so I could walk past his doorstep, wondering if he was home and if I should ring his bell; I was carrying a bottle of red wine after all. I moved back to Montreal in 2011 to pursue my PhD studies and write my dissertation on Cohen. I entertained romantic images of writing in Bagel Etc.; Cohen would come in and I would smile shyly at him. He would nod his head. Of course this was all just fanciful thought and life happened—a wedding, a move out of the Plateau, a divorce, a reconnection with an old love, the discovery of pinball, and now Cohen's death.

> Let's all go to Montreal and stand out outside Leonard Cohen's house / If we stand there long enough, Leonard will turn on a light / Leonard turn on a light" – Rae Spoon[17]

We arrived at the vigil in the early hours of Friday morning. A small group of people remained, camped out in the street. In cracked voices, they began singing "Bird on a Wire." Someone had hung a string of letters across Cohen's front door that read, "Hallelujah." Candles were lit and flowers laid. Cohen's death became frighteningly real. I hesitated to get close and hung back

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[13] Leonard Cohen, "You Want It Darker," *You Want it Darker* (Columbia Records, 2016).
[14] Remnick.
[15] Chris Willman, "Leonard Cohen Corrects Himself: 'I Intend to Stick around until 120'," *Billboard*, October 14, 2016, https://www.billboard.com/articles/news/7541930/leonard-cohen-new-album-corrects-ready-to-die-reports.
[16] Cohen, "A Street."
[17] Rae Spoon, "There's a Light (It's Not for Everyone)," *thereisafire* (2010).

while tears involuntarily ran down my cheeks in an endless stream. It was powerful, the energy intense. After the singing of "Bird on a Wire" ended, I ached to leave. All of a sudden I felt raindrops mixing with the tears on my face. It was a warm night. As I walked back over to St. Laurent Boulevard to catch a cab, it began to pour rain. It was still raining in November.

> The birds they sang / at the break of day / Start again / I heard them say / Don't dwell on what has passed away – Cohen[18]

## Leonard Cohen is Not Picasso

> The writer is ambivalent by nature. That's who we are. – Cohen[19]

There is an inherent ambivalence in how we imagine Leonard Cohen as a cultural figure. Born in Montreal, he is a Canadian who has spent many decades living outside the country, whether in the United States or in Greece. He is a pinball playing poet and a popular musician. His artistic influences include Federico Garcia Lorca and Lord Byron, and he listens to hip-hop and rap music and wrote a poem entitled "Kanye West is Not Picasso."[20] He is a modest and private man who prefers a minimalist lifestyle, and he is a celebrity who is sometimes unwittingly thrust into the spotlight. He is intensely private, but his written works and songs have attracted a large, international audience of attentive listeners and readers. Fans revere him as a saint and quasi-mystical figure, but also consider him a sinner. He is a celebrated Canadian cultural icon who authored "the most revolting book ever written in Canada."[21] He is Jewish, but also an ordained monk who lived for five years in a Buddhist monastery. He is intrigued by the figure of Jesus, and has a long history of drawing on Catholic imagery, culminating in the imagery of Jesus on the cross in the title track of his final album *You Want it Darker*. He is a romantic lover and a misogynistic playboy. He is funny and he is gloomy. He has always been an old man. For many critics and biographers, it is difficult "to reconcile the different parts of Leonard Cohen: the lonely heart and the ladies' man, the ascetic and the tequila drinker, the depressed writer and the funny and warm person."[22] Liel Leibovitz, author of *A Broken Hallelujah: Rock and Roll,*

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[18] Leonard Cohen, "Anthem," *The Future* (Columbia Records, 1992).
[19] Cohen qtd. in Eric Lerner, *Matters of Vital Interest* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2018), 204.
[20] Leonard Cohen, *The Flame: Poems and Selections from Notebooks*, ed. Robert Faggen and Alexandra Pleshoyano (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2018), 38.
[21] Robert Fulford qtd. in Nick Mount, *Arrival: The Story of CanLit* (Toronto: House of Anansi, 2017), 205.
[22] Ian Pearson, "Growing Old Disgracefully," *Saturday Night* March 1993, 79.

*Redemption, and the Life of Leonard Cohen*, cautions that Cohen is a "slippery subject for a writer."[23] Leonard Cohen is an enigma.[24]

While biographers of Cohen seek to solve the riddle, mystery, or enigma of Cohen, in this dissertation I set out to explore how celebrity discourse creates the paradoxical nature of Cohen and then tries to resolve it in order to reveal the "real" Leonard Cohen. In *Bad Feminist*, Roxanne Gay suggests that when you look past the persona, "a celebrity is merely a person you know nothing about."[25] While this forms a common perception of celebrity, it is problematic in that it assumes that there is a real person, a fixed identity, behind the images and discourses that constitute the celebrity. In *Heavenly Bodies*, Richard Dyer, like Gay, notes that our knowledge about the star stems from how they appear in front of us.[26] Unlike Gay, Dyer accentuates the unsustainable concept of the individual as having an "irreducible core" of being.[27] Instead, he demonstrates how the media construction of the star plays with this notion that "there is an irreducible core that gives all those looks a unity"[28] to create the audience's desire to know more about who the star "really" is.[29] Celebrity discourse constructs the star through various, sometimes contradictory images, producing audience members' search for the "real"—"which biography, which word-of-mouth story, which moment in which film discloses her as she really was?"[30]

Dyer defines a star image as an "extensive, multimedia, intertextual" composite of every publically accessible bit of information about a star, including films, public appearances, promotional materials, reviews, interviews, biographies, and press coverage, all of which comes to represent the celebrity as they "really" are.[31] The star image also includes word-of-mouth stories, the use of the star image within different contexts (i.e. advertising, cultural references), and "the way the star can become part of the coinage of everyday speech."[32] Star images shift

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[23] Liel Leibovitz, "Happy Birthday, Mr. Cohen," *Tablet*, September 21, 2012, https://www.tabletmag.com/scroll/112635/happy-birthday-mr-cohen.
[24] Ira Nadel, *Various Positions: A Life of Leonard Cohen* (Toronto: Random House of Canada, 1996), 1.
[25] Roxanne Gay, *Bad Feminist: Essays* (New York: Harper Collins, 2014), 184.
[26] Richard Dyer, *Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society* (Routledge, 2004), 2.
[27] Ibid., 7.
[28] Ibid., 8.
[29] Ibid., 2.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid., 2-3.
[32] Ibid., 3.

over time, producing histories, which "outlive the star's own lifetime."[33] Moreover, star images consist of both the star's image, but also the construction of that image.[34] For Dyer, each element of the star image is "complex and contradictory, and the star is all of it taken together."[35] In *Stars*, he highlights this as the "structured polysemy" of the star, the "finite multiplicity of meanings and affects" that the star comes to personify.[36] Not all of these meanings are active at once, but shift and amplify in different socio-historical contexts.

Celebrity discourse constructs a "coherent continuousness" within the star that "becomes what the star 'really is.'"[37] In this sense, celebrity discourse creates the paradoxical nature of the celebrity, and also resolves it by uncovering "a privileged reality … the reality of the star's private self."[38] At the same time, Dyer notes that the star's image can be resolved in either direction.[39] This involves a matter of perspective, and as audience members "we make it work according to how much it speaks to us in terms we can understand about things that are important to us."[40] We encounter restrictions in the resolution of the star's image as we cannot make it mean just anything, but can only "select from the complexity of the image the meanings and feelings, the variations, inflections and contradictions" that make sense to us.[41]

In *Impersonations: Troubling the Person in Law and Culture*, Sheryl Hamilton turns to publicity law "as both a key site, and a significant technique, of celebrity," one largely overlooked by celebrity scholars.[42] In defining persona, she works from Rosemary Coombe's definition, which specifies that it is "not only the celebrity's visual likeness, but rather all elements of the complex constellation of visual, verbal and aural signs that circulate in society and constitute the celebrities' recognition value."[43] Hamilton explains that the persona is "the most ephemeral form of property recognized by law," and in protecting the persona, publicity rights convert recognition value into exchange value allowing the transfer of that persona, now a

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[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid., 7.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Richard Dyer, *Stars: New Edition* (London: Palgrave Macmillian, 2011), 3.
[37] *Heavenly*, 10.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid., 14.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid., 4.
[42] Sheryl Hamilton, *Impersonations: Troubling the Person in Law and Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009),186.
[43] Coombe qtd. in Hamilton, 184.

cultural entity, to the "authoring self."[44] What is of special interest to Hamilton is the "relationship between the celebrity persona as abstraction and the actual person who is the delimiting medium of its enactment."[45] While publicity law configures the person as the author of the persona, Hamilton accentuates how the authorship of a persona is much more complicated.[46] Examining the production of celebrity requires moving away from biographical approaches or studies of celebrity that centre on the individual and entails considering the larger cultural phenomenon of which the celebrity is a part. In other words, how is the concept of celebrity, or Canadian celebrity, produced as a particular type of subject, one that is simultaneously extraordinary and ordinary, modest and talented, or superficial and generous.

In order to examine how discourse constructs Cohen as a paradox, I must hold these contradictions in tension without trying to resolve them one way or another. Cohen's inherent ambivalence in particular, and the paradoxical nature of celebrity discourse in general, becomes an intellectual problem; how does one deal with ambivalence as a scholar? Slavoj Žižek's concept of the parallax view, as a "constantly shifting perspective between two points between which no synthesis or mediation is possible," provides one way of dealing with this problem of ambivalence.[47] Discourse constructs Cohen as an enigma to peak our interest as audience members. The gap between the contradictory perspectives of Cohen functions as a parallax gap, that is, "the confrontation of two closely linked perspectives between which no neutral common ground is possible."[48] For example, the image of Cohen as saint and the image of Cohen as sinner are "*two sides* of the same phenomenon which, precisely as two sides, can never meet."[49] As Cohen biographers note, the gap between Cohen's various positions[50] appears "irreducible and insurmountable."[51]

As both Dyer[52] and Žižek[53] observe, these two sides of the phenomenon are extensively the same—they both represent Cohen. The difference between these two sides is therefore one of perspective. Once we are intrigued, discourse unveils "the truth" behind Cohen—who he "really"

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[44] Hamilton, 184-85.
[45] Ibid., 187.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Slavoj Žižek, *The Parallax View* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006), 4.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Nadel, 1-2.
[51] Žižek, 10.
[52] Dyer, *Heavenly*, 14.
[53] Žižek, 5.

is—shifting our perspective.[54] However, this shift in perspective reflects a shift in the subject's belief as well as a shift in the object's being.[55] More specifically, my perception of Cohen is "always-already inscribed" onto his image; when I perceive him as a ladies' man, the ladies' man returns my gaze.[56] Yet, this account is "far from providing a truthful account," but is a "retroactive fantasy."[57]

For Žižek, what shifts us from one side of the parallax to the other is "the Real," situated within the parallax gap.[58] Similarly, Dyer helps to elucidate how the star's "coherent continuousness" constitutes the "irreducible core" of the star, who the star "really" is.[59] Bringing these perspectives together, the "irreducible core" of the celebrity, who they "really" are, their "Realness," all become located within the tension of their ambivalent discursive constitution. In this way, "the parallax Real is, rather, that which accounts for the very *multiplicity* of appearances of the same underlying Real—it is not the hard core which persists as the Same, but the hard bone of contention which pulverizes the sameness into the multitude of appearances."[60] This notion of the "irreducible core" of the celebrity,[61] their sense of realness, therefore creates a multiplicity of personae within a "multitude of appearances."[62] As Žižek reveals, the Real "has no substantial density in itself, it is just a gap between two points of perspective."[63] In turn, it functions as the disavowed X,[64] "a *je ne sais quoi* in the object which can never be pinned down to any of its particular properties."[65] In showing the "real" celebrity, celebrity discourse shifts from one side of the enigma to the other; however, there is no "real." Thus, the real can be understood as the gap between the two contradicting perspectives, which discursively functions as a magical quality—the celebrity's essence—that which cannot be grasped.[66]

While celebrity discourse, in revealing "the truth," "attempts to reduce one aspect to the other," the critical potential of the parallax view lies in conceiving the enigmatic celebrity as "the

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[54] Ibid., 19.
[55] Ibid., 17.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid., 19.
[58] Ibid., 26.
[59] Dyer, *Heavenly*, 10.
[60] Žižek, 26.
[61] Dyer, *Heavenly*, 10.
[62] Žižek, 26.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid., 18.
[66] Ibid.

irreducible gap between the positions itself."[67] Instead of synthesizing the ambivalent image of Cohen or choosing one side over the other, the parallax view examines "a new dimension which cannot be reduced to either of the two positive terms between which the gap is gaping."[68] Žižek explains that we need not overcome this division "but, rather, to assert it 'as such,' to *drop the need for its 'overcoming,'* for the additional 'reconciliation' of opposites: to gain insight—through a purely formal parallax shift—into how positing the distinction 'as such' already *is* the looked-for 'reconciliation.'"[69] There is no real Leonard Cohen. He is not one side of the enigma, or the other. Nor can he be both. Rather Cohen is all of it together, tension and all.

**Studying the Cohen Phenomenon: Methodology**
As a long-term project, a dissertation, researched and written over the course of several years—a time of intense questioning, reasoning, and reflection—essentially forms a narrative of the author's intellectual growth and maturation. This dissertation reveals the many intellectual challenges, obstacles, solutions, and learning opportunities I encounter as I endeavor to develop an innovative interdisciplinary methodological framework for my research. The goal of this methodology is to go beyond the traditional methods of literary studies (e.g. close reading of primary texts), crossing disciplinary boundaries and incorporating a variety of different methods and approaches to literary and cultural analysis. Interdisciplinary in this context means that the methodology is neither singular nor fixed but rather a composite of a variety of methods and theoretical approaches.

To construct my overall methodological framework, I draw inspiration from the work of theorists of celebrity and literary celebrity, such as Richard Dyer, Richard deCordova, Tom Mole, Lorraine York, and Line Grenier, utilize Foucauldian discourse analysis, and integrate Bourdieusian field theory. The occurrence of Cohen's death during the course of my research and writing impelled me to reshape and further expand my methodology. To explore my own embodied, emotional experience of Cohen's death as both a fan and an academic I adopt an autoethnographic approach, drawing on fan studies and its autoethnographic tradition as well as sociology of emotions scholarship to provide a definitive understanding of emotion and develop an emotional discourse analysis.

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[67] Ibid., 20.
[68] Ibid., 21.
[69] Ibid., 27.

In studying discourses of celebrity in Canada, and Cohen in particular, I employ the concept of phenomenon to demonstrate how the discursive constitution of Cohen, as a celebrity phenomenon, consists of a multiplicity of perspectives as well as the tension between them. In preparing to undertake this study, I began to feel limited by the concept of celebrity persona. As Hamilton points out, much of the literature on celebrity revolves around the relationship between person and persona.[70] Too often, however, this attention involves trying to reconcile the gap between person and persona.[71] In studying Cohen's celebrity and its discursive constitution, I wanted to move beyond persona to consider how it forms only one part of a larger cultural assemblage. As my object of research, Cohen (the Cohen phenomenon) is a multifaceted phenomenon that consists of and circulates by way of a multiplicity of industrial and fan-based texts, images, discourses, objects, ideas, values, and emotions, which forms around Cohen's celebrity persona. My utilization of this concept is inspired by Grenier's work on the Céline Dion phenomenon and her use of the term to describe Dion's "distinct articulations which … are the key to her circulation and valuation as global pop star."[72]

In "Global Pop on the Move: The Fame of Céline Dion Within, Outside and Across Québec," Grenier explains how the star image or persona of the celebrity is only one aspect of a much larger phenomenon, revealing a wide range of sites of inquiry. By accentuating the "complex web of industrial strategies, cultural activities, technologies, institutions and discourses" that compose the celebrity phenomenon of Dion,[73] Grenier uncovers how "various cultural activities, social situations, and rituals of valorization" contribute to her rise to fame and help produce her as a phenomenon worthy of collective remembrance.[74] Her analysis involves critically investigating a broad spectrum of social discourse that is constitutive of Dion, entrenches the Dion phenomenon in the public mind, and incorporates Dion into the "past(s), present(s), and future(s) of the Quebecois social and cultural formation produced therein."[75]

In particular, the distinct articulations that compose the Dion phenomenon include: Dion as a cultural figure whose presence extends beyond her music and merchandise and "cuts across different regions of social life"; Dion's "ever-expanding commercial, cultural, and financial

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[70] Hamilton, 190.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Line Grenier, "Global Pop on the Move: The Fame of Céline Dion Within, Outside and Across Québec," *Journal of Australian Canadian Studies* 19, no. 2 (2002): 39.
[73] Ibid., 35-36.
[74] Ibid., 40.
[75] Ibid., 41.

empire," which includes her ownership of the legendary Schwartz's Deli; Dion's discursive construction as a star and circulation in the public sphere; and Dion as a cultural, social, political, and ideological referent.[76] In applying Grenier's concept of the phenomenon, I reveal how the Cohen phenomenon encompasses a wide range of distinct articulations that move beyond his persona.

This is not to deny that as a celebrity Cohen has agency and remained a creative and driving force until his death at eighty-two, captivating live audiences with original songs and new recordings and asserting his continuing cultural relevance posthumously. This is not to diminish the incredibly powerful body of work Cohen produced over six decades. This is simply to accentuate the powerful reverberations of Cohen's work that force us to let go of concepts such as authorial intention, that allow us to study "it" (the Cohen phenomenon) instead of "him" (Cohen),[77] that bring into focus the various agents, institutions, and industries who are involved in the circulation of the Cohen phenomenon, and that acknowledge the interconnections between Cohen's celebrity persona and various other images, discourses, objects, ideas, values, and emotions.

This dissertation departs from the goals of biographies and documentaries that seek to reveal the truth behind the writer, the man, the legend: the "who" of Leonard Cohen. Instead, this dissertation explores the ways in which we talk about and have talked about Cohen in Canada over the last sixty years, the discursive rules that demarcate what we say about Cohen, the spaces in which Cohen generates discussion, the practices that bring Cohen into being, and the patterns that emerge and circulate in discourse—in short, the discourses that shape the Cohen phenomenon.

In *Affect and Emotion: A New Social Science Understanding*, Margaret Wetherell defines discourse as "the practical (formal and informal) realm of language in action—talk and texts, words, utterances, conversations, stories, speeches, lectures, television programs, web pages, messages on message boards, books, etc., patterned within the everyday activities of social life."[78] By focusing on language *in action* and grounding it within social life, Wetherell implies that discourse consists of more than language itself.

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[76] Ibid., 39.
[77] Ibid., 43.
[78] Margaret Wetherell, *Affect and Emotion: A New Social Science Understanding* (London: Sage, 2012), 54.

Discourse encompasses both words and things. Yet, it is only through discourse that things acquire meaning. This perspective, which James Paul Gee refers to as capital "D" Discourse, recognizes that "language used in tandem with objects, tools, ways of acting and interacting" brings knowledge into being.[79] Moreover, discourses produce social norms and cultural tastes, and set the stage for social interactions;[80] they are social practices, mental entities, and material realities.[81] Comparing discourse to a dance, Gee explains how discourse "exists in the abstract as a coordinated pattern of words, deeds, values, beliefs, symbols, tools, objects, times, and places and in the here and now as a performance that is recognizable as just such a coordination."[82] Here, contextualization is essential as discourses are neither closed nor static, although they sometimes may appear to be. While Wetherell and Gee make some useful points, their approaches to discourse are more closely aligned to a semiotic or socio-linguistic perspective.

In seeking to understand the productive elements of discourse (i.e. how discourse produces celebrity), Michel Foucault's approach is fundamental. Employing a Foucauldian perspective, I understand discourse as a set of statements about a topic (e.g. celebrity or Leonard Cohen), the rules and practices underlying such statements, how these statements, rules, and practices are apt to change within specific socio-historical contexts, and how they form the basis upon which particular institutions emerge (e.g. Canadian literary establishment; the Giller Prize; Canada's Walk of Fame). Following Foucault, I approach the materials under analysis as part of a larger discursive formation that articulates our understanding of Cohen. Correspondingly, I acknowledge that different socio-historical moments may give rise to new discursive formations, in turn producing new conceptualizations of celebrity and, more specifically, of Cohen as a celebrity. As Cohen belongs to discursive formations of celebrity, he can be approached as a subject who re-instantiates certain beliefs and categories of literary artist and celebrity.

The introduction to York's *Margaret Atwood and the Labour of Literary Celebrity* begins with the following quote: "When we conceptualize celebrity as something to be professionally

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[79] James Paul Gee, *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*, 4th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2014), 46.
[80] Ibid., 52.
[81] Ibid., 57.
[82] Ibid., 53.

managed rather than discursively deconstructed, we think about it differently."[83] When I first discovered this passage, I struggled to reconcile York's industrial approach with my own discursive analysis. I worried that approaching celebrity in terms of being professionally managed would come at the cost of rejecting celebrity as something that is discursively constructed. At first glance, this passage appears to uphold an industrial approach to celebrity as an alternative to analyzing its discursive construction. Upon further reflection, I have come to the realization that discourse is another way celebrity is subject to professional management and that these two approaches are not necessarily disparate but have a vital interconnection.

A Foucauldian standpoint underscores how the industrial structures involved in the professional management of celebrity have immense power in dictating what can and cannot be said about celebrity in general and individual celebrities in particular at a given point in time. They have the power to produce and shape celebrity discourse. These discourses are publicly understood to be speaking the truth about celebrity, and correspondingly impact how we talk about celebrity, make sense of celebrity, and interact with celebrity. The celebrity industry—agents, publicists, managers, interviewers, documentarians—produces what we consider the truth about the celebrity.

For Foucault, the "will to truth" is a system of exclusion that "relies on institutional support: it is both reinforced and accompanied by whole strata of practices such as pedagogy—naturally—the book-system, publishing, libraries" and so forth.[84] Celebrity discourse revolves around a "will to truth"—the drive to reveal the "truth" about a celebrity. While the celebrity industry shapes the truth about the celebrity through discourse, it simultaneously obscures its role as a producer of meaning. This enables the celebrity to act as the origin of meaning and truth, not the industry. As P. David Marshall identifies in *Celebrity and Power: Fame in Contemporary Culture*, "the celebrity is a way in which meaning can be housed and categorized into something that provides a source and origin for the meaning."[85] At the same time, celebrity justifies its own existence through these discursive and industrial embodiments.

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[83] Graeme Turner qtd. in Lorraine York, *Margaret Atwood and the Labour of Literary Celebrity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 3.

[84] Michel Foucault, "The Discourse on Language," in *The Archaeology of Knowlege* (New York: Vintage Books, 2010), 219.

[85] P. David Marshall, *Celebrity and Power: Fame in Contemporary Culture* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1997), 57.

Just as discourse, as "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak"[86] through adhering to specific *a priori* rules,[87] often obscures its own construction, the industrial labour that produces celebrity camouflages itself. The reality is "good publicists are invisible" and celebrities are individuals who are the most visible.[88] Celebrity discourse emphasizes leisure over labour, and in turn, this conceals the multiple sites, agents, and labour of celebrity.[89] As Mole contends, "Celebrity culture does not want to be understood. It functions best when consumers remain mystified by it, attributing a celebrity's success to his or her magical star quality."[90] Celebrity discourse works to mask the labour that produces celebrity. We discover stars. Stars are born. Fame magically appears. We rarely hear of the diligence, time, and patience an individual invests to become successful, not to mention the multiplicity of invisible agents and industries involved in maintaining that success, visibility, and fame. In formulating his approach to celebrity, Mole argues persuasively that we as scholars need to "attend to individual celebrities, without mystifying the extent of their agency, to the industry that promotes them, without imagining that its promotional strategies can be separated from the celebrity's work, and to the celebrity's audience, without presenting them as passive ideological dupes."[91]

Correspondingly, I hold as a foundation the diverse forms of labour involved in the circulation of celebrity and seek to shed light on the multiple industrial locations of celebrity. As York points out, "Many considerations of celebrity… focus intently on the individual, or on celebrity as the public performance of subjectivities,"[92] but in fact there are many other types of labour undertaken by many different individuals—not just the celebrity. While York considers the industrial relations and labour that produce celebrity, I illuminate the industrial structures, and the discourses therein, frequently ignored in the study of literary celebrity, especially those connected to the commercial side of the mythological cultural / economic binary. In this way, I uncover the labour involved even if it is not my primary focus.

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[86] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge: And the Discourse on Language* (New York: Vintage Books, 2010), 49.
[87] Ibid., 127.
[88] Graeme Turner, *Understanding Celebrity*, 2nd ed. (London: Sage, 2014), 29.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Tom Mole, *Byron's Romantic Celebrity: Industrial Culture and the Hermeneutic of Intimacy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 1.
[91] Ibid., 156.
[92] Lorraine York, *Margaret Atwood and the Labour of Literary Celebrity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 8.

Literature as a cultural category contains tensions between various forms of capital[93] and literary celebrity is a site where "celebrity as 'empty' cultural signifier"[94] becomes conflated with ideas of "fame based on achievement."[95] Thus, examining the industrial discourses that circulate literary celebrity (and the Cohen phenomenon in particular) is useful in uncovering their rhetorical function in cultural gatekeeping and discourses of authenticity. As Wenche Ommundsen discovers, celebrity is just one of many factors contributing to "cultural panic about loss of distinction," emphasizing that this "anxiety is central to literature as a field of cultural production."[96]

The influence of Pierre Bourdieu's work on cultural distinction is evident in the writings of Ommundsen, such as her article "From the Altar to the Market-Place and Back Again: Understanding Literary Celebrity." In his sociological analysis of the concept of taste, Bourdieu works against the notion of natural taste, which presupposes that taste is a static category or an inherent, ingrained characteristic, and explicates how it connects to other forms of capital and social class, by demonstrating the various ways different social classes employ taste. He conceptualizes tastes, or "manifested preferences," as "the practical affirmation of an inevitable difference," arguing that "tastes are perhaps first and foremost distastes, disgust provoked by horror or visceral intolerance ('sick-making') of the tastes of others."[97]

Applying this to literary celebrity, Ommundsen argues that literary culture "derives status from its ability to mark its distance from the practices of popular culture (such as celebrity), but its increasing implication in the global cultural marketplace has made this distance difficult to sustain."[98] As York points out in *Margaret Atwood*,[99] Ommundsen stresses the importance of the "cultural marketplace to capitalize *on* the distinction itself" transferring cultural into real capital,[100] wrongly assuming however that Bourdieu does not take this into consideration. Within this framework, celebrity discourse, and literary celebrity discourse in particular, becomes an

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[93]  Wenche Ommundsen, "From the Altar to the Market-Place and Back Again: Understanding Literary Celebrity," in *Stardom and Celebrity: A Reader*, ed. Sean Redmond and Su Holmes (Los Angeles: Sage, 2007), 244.
[94] Ibid., 251.
[95] Ibid., 253.
[96] Ibid., 245.
[97] Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Harvard University Press, 1984), 56.
[98] Ommundsen, 253.
[99] York, *Margaret*, 21.
[100] Ommundsen, 245.

especially fruitful site of analysis for examining the discursive negotiation of taste and cultural value.

In shifting away from the meaning of Cohen, who he "really" is, to explore the discursive constitution of the Cohen phenomenon, I draw on the work of Bourdieu to investigate the interconnections between celebrity, distinction, and taste and their use as tools in the field of Canadian cultural production. Bourdieu theorizes the field of cultural production as the site where cultural producers contest, compete, and struggle for legitimacy and authority.[101] At the same time, it constitutes a site for the determination of cultural tastes, values, and distinctions.[102] In short, it is a cultural battlefield. Bourdieu contends that every position within this field is contingent upon all other positions; each position "receives its distinctive *value* from its negative relationship with the coexistent position-takings to which it is objectively related and which determine it by delimiting it."[103]

Bourdieu describes the two principles of hierarchization that structure the artistic field as a site of struggle: the heteronomous principle and the autonomous principle.[104] The heteronomous principle measures success quantitatively (book sales), whereas the autonomous principle evaluates success less concretely, viewing recognition as an indicator of artistic prestige (award nominations); as Bourdieu explains, it is "the degree of recognition accorded by those who recognize no other criterion of legitimacy than recognition by those whom they recognize."[105] Cultural producers who have economic and political influence benefit from the heteronomous principle; however, producers who create "art for art's sake" tend to view economic "success as a sign of compromise."[106] The autonomous principle plays an especially important role in the discursive construction of celebrity in Canada, which interconnects, in part, with Canadian cultural policy and the government support of the arts.

In his foreword to *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, Marshall argues that over the last forty years "Canada has gone through a somewhat limited 'celebritization' process."[107] This

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[101] Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 78.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid., 30.
[104] Ibid., 40.
[105] Ibid., 38.
[106] Ibid., 40.
[107] P. David Marshall, "Foreword: The Celebrity Nation," in *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, ed. Katja Lee and Lorraine York (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), v.

celebritization process refers to the ways in which "Canadian cultural systems have used the celebration of the public individual as a technique to draw attention, organize cultural production, and maintain the attention of the audiences of the nation."[108] In many respects the history of Cohen's career over the last sixty years is a reflection of the development of celebrity in Canada; moreover, dominant discourses of celebrity in Canada form an inherent part of the Cohen phenomenon, and vice versa, and thus impact our understanding of celebrity culture in Canada.

In this respect, my discursive analysis works to illuminate how we talk about celebrity in Canada and Canadian celebrities at certain socio-historical moments, the rules that demarcate what we can say about celebrity, the spaces in which celebrity generates discussion, the practices that bring celebrity into being, the subject-positions that celebrity produces, the notions of cultural value and success that celebrity establishes, the emotional economies celebrity constructs, and how these statements, practices, subjects, institutions, rules, emotions, and beliefs (discourse) construct celebrity in Canada, circulating and shifting over time and space.

I approach the development of celebrity culture in Canada as the circulation and regulation of a specific type of knowledge about Canadian culture, as influenced by the Massey Commission, and I understand the development of Cohen's literary celebrity in Canada as the circulation and regulation of a distinct type of knowledge regarding the author and their role in nation building. This is influenced by deCordova's theorization of the rise of the Hollywood star system through the emergence of a particular type of knowledge regarding the actor, which advances through three discursive transformations on acting, the picture personality, and the star.[109] He stresses that these discourses work together to legitimatize both film acting as a profession and film as a medium. While the discourse on acting calls attention to the labour of acting, the discourse of the picture performer acknowledges the existence of the performer beyond the film's narrative, separating the filmic, profilmic, and the real.[110]

DeCordova identifies three dominant forms of knowledge that emerged to produce the discourse on the picture personality: the circulation of a name;[111] intertextuality (distinguished here as "the recognition and identification of an actor from film to film" but only within these

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[108] Ibid.
[109] Richard deCordova, "The Emergence of the Star System in America," in *Stardom: Industry of Desire*, ed. Christine Gledhill (New York: Routledge, 1991), 17.
[110] Ibid., 20.
[111] Ibid., 24.

films);[112] and the professional experience of the actor.[113] It is important to note, knowledge about a picture personality exceeds the bounds of a film, though restricted to the actor's professional career.[114] With the rise of the star, a clear articulation of the actor outside their films emerges and discourse about the private life of the actor comes into play.[115] Expanding this idea, deCordova writes: "The private lives of the stars emerged as a new site of knowledge and truth" and "the star becomes the subject of a narrative which is quite separable from his / her work in any particular film."[116] Here, the star and the film work to mutually support one another, strengthening the power of the cinema through the discourse of the star.[117]

Although there are patent differences, deCordova's discussion of the rise of film stardom relates to literary celebrity in a number of salient respects. For example, exploring how the development of these three discourses operates to legitimize the Hollywood film industry in a given period of growth and instability helps reveal the power of celebrity discourse in legitimizing cultural production. The rise of literary celebrity in Canada has a direct impact on the value of literary production, and in the case of Cohen, the field of Canadian literature and poetry in the 1960s. The transition of Cohen from poet to public personality by means of establishing his persona outside his work through knowledge about his private life, *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen* being a case in point, can be seen as a type of knowledge instrumental to legitimating literary production in Canada.

Nevertheless, in the same way that film actors do not necessarily become film stars, not all authors become literary celebrities. That is, knowledge about the author's oeuvre does not always lead to the circulation of knowledge about the author's private life. In *Star Authors: Literary Celebrity in America*, Joe Moran identifies this as the difference between celebrity authors and best-selling authors, defining best-selling authors as "writers more read than read about."[118] As York points out, one way to escape conceptualizations of celebrity as negative manifestations of commercial culture is to understand that this shift towards interest in the private lives of authors does not debase literature, but instead helps to legitimate its worth and

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[112] Ibid., 25.
[113] Ibid., 26.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Ibid., 27.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Joe Moran, *Star Authors: Literary Celebrity in America* (London: Pluto Press, 2000), 6.

reinforce its cultural value.[119] Moreover, disclosing the private life of the author increases intimacy between reader and author, consumer and producer.

In further developing my conceptualization of the Cohen phenomenon, I draw on Mole's model of the celebrity apparatus. In *Byron's Romantic Celebrity: Industrial Culture and the Hermeneutic of Intimacy*, Mole describes how the cultural apparatus of celebrity utilizes intimacy to breakdown the distance and "feeling of alienation between cultural producers and consumers."[120] Based on his study of the industrialized print culture at the end of the eighteenth century, Mole conceptualizes celebrity as a cultural apparatus "constructed not only from ideas, attitudes, and discourse, but also from material conditions and technological innovations."[121] For Mole, the three main elements of celebrity consist of an individual, an industry, and an audience. In the context of the print culture of this period, Mole observes how these elements could work together to create audience fascination around an individual.[122] For him, this marks the emergence of celebrity culture as we currently understand it.[123] In defining the industry, Mole considers "the available technology, labour and skill" that are required to produce and reproduce, distribute and circulate "a commodity which need not refer back to any 'original.'"[124] There is both the primary industry that produces the work of the celebrity as well as a secondary industry that promotes and circulates this work.[125]

Using Mole's concept of the celebrity apparatus, I identify three steps in the establishment of an individual (literary) celebrity. First is the shift from the circulation of the celebrity's work in the primary industry to the circulation of the individual and representations of their life within the secondary industry. Here, the celebrity is no longer solely an individual whose work circulates in the primary industry. This step is parallel to the shift that deCordova identifies between picture personalities and stars, between knowledge of the work of the author and knowledge of the author's life. It is imperative to note that the celebrity apparatus "does not set up another counter public sphere in which celebrity discourse circulates. Rather, celebrity is a

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[119] Lorraine York, *Literary Celebrity in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 168.
[120] Mole, 16.
[121] Ibid., 156.
[122] Ibid., 1.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Ibid., 3.
[125] Ibid.

tendency that cuts across all public and counter public spheres, emphasizing not just the permeability of private and public, but their commercialized interpretation."[126]

The second step concerns the hermeneutic of intimacy through which audiences begin to view the celebrity and their work as more than just a commodity. Mole conceptualizes the hermeneutic of intimacy as "an intertextual paradigm for reading celebrity texts, seeded by the texts themselves and the ways in which they were published, propagated by a wider print culture, and variously enacted by individual readers."[127] Marked from the "standardized impersonality of commodity culture," the hermeneutic of intimacy permits audiences to fantasize that the author is speaking directly to them, that the movie star is performing for them alone and "not for the careless multitude."[128] In this vein, the hermeneutic of intimacy operates to reframe celebrity in less commercialized terms. As Mole explains, a hermeneutic of intimacy "figured celebrity texts as conduits through which to relate to a remarkable person, rather than as mass-produced standardized products."[129]

The third step of celebrity occurs when this hermeneutic of intimacy becomes transferred onto other commercial and cultural products, making them appear less commercial and generating higher cultural value. Mole observes that in celebrity culture "texts that do not originate with the celebrity individual will be associated with him or her to enhance their circulation and boost their market value."[130] These texts borrow from the celebrity's symbolic and cultural capital, strengthening their own cultural worth. In turn, this increases the cultural and economic value of the celebrity phenomenon in its entirety.

York defines celebrity as "as a phenomenon that happens not only to individuals but to a whole web of cultural workers."[131] This returns to and reiterates the importance of approaching celebrity as a phenomenon constituted by a diverse range of agents, institutions, meanings, beliefs, emotions, and discourses, rather than studying the manifestation of celebrity in an individual person. Accentuating the significance of studying the cultural apparatus or phenomenon of celebrity, Mole warns that "studies of celebrity will only reinforce the assumptions of the celebrity apparatus unless they also move beyond individual celebrities to pay

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[126] Ibid., 5.
[127] Ibid., 25.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Ibid., 156.
[130] Ibid., 9.
[131] York, *Margaret*, 8.

attention to the genres, media and discourses that enable celebrity culture."[132] Approaching celebrity as a phenomenon rather than its manifestation in an individual persona brings to light the multiple industrial locations, agents, and forms of celebrity labour as well as the highly intertwined fields of economics and arts. This is especially pertinent in regards to literary celebrity as "tensions between high cultural capital, the marketplace and the popular public sphere … are central characteristics of literature as a cultural category."[133] Viewing celebrity as a phenomenon correspondingly reveals the constitution of celebrity as "a collaborative and industrial process."[134]

Refocusing in this fashion away from celebrity persona allows me to acknowledge the multiple agents involved in the circulation of the Cohen phenomenon without erasing Cohen's own agency, "not necessarily as that quality which rises above or resists the industrialized forms of celebrity culture, but, rather, as those qualities which become evident in the exchanges among agents of that industrial culture."[135] It follows that agency is not to be conflated with (authorial) intention or become a question of motives. Just as Cohen's refusal of the Governor General's Literary Award for poetry for *Selected Poems, 1956-1968* in 1968 cannot be seen as a rejection of the award system, but as a legitimate position in the cultural battlefield, we can acknowledge the agency of a celebrity without reducing it to acts of resistance or a question of intentions or motives. For James English, the refusal of a prize has now become a "recognized move" in the game of cultural prizes and thus "the refusal of a prize can no longer register as a refusal to *play*."[136] English's point makes it easier to understand why Cohen accepted a Governor General's Performing Arts Award for his music in 1993. It was not that Cohen initially refused to play the game, but he chose different strategies, styles of play, or ways to play the game in various moments in his careers as poet and musician.

To study Cohen's early literary celebrity, I originally decided to focus on *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen* as it is the first major representation of Cohen's life as a poet. My focus widened however when I travelled to the University of Toronto to explore the Leonard Cohen Papers (the Cohen Papers). Working from my initial assumption that the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library operates primarily as a place of research, I set out to browse the repository of

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[132] Mole, 156.
[133] Ommundsen, 244.
[134] York, *Margaret*, 70.
[135] Ibid., 200.
[136] English, 222.

materials stored in the Cohen Papers to locate relevant research materials to supplement my analysis of the film. While I was working in the library, I soon realized that the archives exist not only as a place of research but as an object of research.

Correspondingly, I reconceived the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library and its archival collections, notably the Cohen Papers, as a particular institution that performs a variety of functions. First, the university's decision to purchase Cohen's manuscripts and papers in the early 1960s, to establish the Cohen Papers, and to house and preserve them in the rare book library constitutes an institutional act of claiming Cohen for the nation, ensuring his place in Canada's cultural history. Second, library archivists (i.e. personnel responsible for archives and record management services at the university) discursively manage his celebrity through the selection of materials available and the omission of others as well as through restrictions in visiting the archive and regulations on photocopying and scanning. Finally, as an institution it draws on Cohen's cultural capital to assert its own legitimacy.

My methodological approach further evolved upon discovering that the Cohen Papers contains materials concerning Cohen fandom, including fan letters written to Cohen in late 1960s and materials surrounding Montreal 2000: The Leonard Cohen Event (Montreal 2000). For me, this both elucidates the interconnections between discourses of celebrity and fandom and centralizes Cohen fandom as a major part of the Cohen phenomenon. The media coverage of Montreal 2000 attracted my attention as it calls into question my initial assumption that Cohen's own cultural capital protects his fans from stereotypical representations. The media representation of Cohen fandom at the Montreal 2000 event became a major focus. Importantly, it allows me to consider the different types of discourse that compose the Cohen phenomenon, while simultaneously drawing attention to Cohen fandom and its connection to other types of media fandom through the prominence of particular stereotypes. At the same time, I wanted to move beyond studying stereotypical media representations of fans to consider the viewpoint of fans and incorporate their own words, feelings, and representations of themselves.

To try to tap into the feelings of fans, I examine fan letters housed in the Cohen Papers. After reviewing the thirty fan letters written to Cohen during the late 1960s, I was able to select twelve for a closer analysis. The guidelines I follow in selecting fan letters emphasize diversity, by trying to include various populations of fans (e.g. men, women, youth) and a range of letters, from those seeking information about Cohen and his work to those expressing the impact of

Cohen on their everyday lives. There are some letters I could not use for practical reasons, such as legibility. This sample of personal fan letters is somewhat restricted by size and by the time frame of the 1960s. While an analysis of Cohen fan materials from online sites lay outside the scope of this dissertation due to their sheer volume, I was able to refer to the most notable online resource for information, The Leonard Cohen Files fansite, created by Jarkko Arjatsalo in 1995. It is an established and respected website, indicated by the approval of Cohen and his management company and its wide base of fans. An exploration of this site, along with its official forum, shows that it continues to be active and indicates that many fans share similar feelings of attachment to Cohen.

Employing a Foucauldian discourse analysis, I explore the statements that fans make, and do not make, in the fan letters and question the basis upon which they are able to make these statements. I discover how these fan letters both interconnect with and constitute the Cohen phenomenon. I was struck by the sense of intimacy these letters convey and how these sentiments form a fascinating counterpart to my analysis of how discourses of celebrity create and capitalize on the feeling of intimacy.

Since the earliest drafts of my dissertation proposal, I planned to engage with Henry Jenkins's concept of the acafan (i.e. an academic and fan who belongs to two distinct interpretive communities, takes both seriously, and reflects upon these experiences within the research[137]), as I considered myself a fan before undertaking this research. However, the significance and direction of this part of my analysis changed once Cohen died. Cohen's death prompted three main changes in the course of my research. First, it helped me refocus the scope and direction as Cohen's death introduced a new conjuncture in which to read his celebrity. The ways in which I was exploring particular aspects of his celebrity were no longer feasible. Second, it opened up a place for an autoethnographic analysis through which to explore my own reaction to Cohen's death and the ways in which it impacted the research process. Employing an autoethnographic approach made room for me to explore the acafan position as an embodied emotional experience. As an ambivalent position, the acafan stance assists in thinking through ambivalence as a theoretical problem. It accentuates ambivalence as an embodied emotional state where our emotions, beliefs, and values as a researcher come into contact with our emotions, beliefs, and

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[137] Henry Jenkins, "Acafandom and Beyond: Week Two, Part One (Henry Jenkins, Erica Rand, and Karen Hellekson)," *Confessions of an Aca-Fan*, June 20, 2011, http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2011/06/acafandom_and_beyond_week_two.html.

values as a fan, at times creating tension. And finally, Cohen's death reinforced the key role of emotions in connection with celebrity, fandom, and academia as well as in all social and cultural life, as emotions are what determine social significance.[138]

To explore the affective atmosphere surrounding Cohen's death in November 2016, I develop an emotional discourse analysis, drawing on literature in the sociology of emotions, notably Valérie de Courville Nicol's embodied in/capacity theory. I understand emotions as constructed ideas and categories we learn through our sociocultural life experiences and utilize to comprehend our embodied sensations. The emotional concepts we employ to make sense of our feelings are informed and shaped by our life experiences, social interactions, and past emotional experiences as well as by various discourses and cultural texts, including Cohen's poems and lyrics. My utilization of de Courville Nicol's method of emotional discourse analysis involves using discursive analysis to reveal the emotional experiences and emotions that compose and circulate the Cohen phenomenon as well as forms of agency associated with these emotional experiences.

For de Courville Nicol, emotional discourse analysis reveals not only emotional experiences but also the "agential effects" of such experiences as forms of agency and feelings of orientation, informed by discourse and social practice.[139] Furthermore, these effects "might bypass what agents consider to be true from a cognitive perspective,"[140] for example, crying after learning of Cohen's death, even though I understand that I did not really know him. Thus, the value of embodied in/capacity theory lies in its ability "to explore the dynamics and effects of emotional relations so that we might cease to dismiss as irrational the expressions of agency that are in conflict with our beliefs about reality,"[141] such as the idea that we cannot mourn the loss of someone that we never really knew.

Cohen's death resulted in a complex emotional experience for me in ways that were both expected and unexpected. My experience of grief as a Cohen fan was an expected reaction. Of course I was sad; Cohen had a big impact on my life personally. What was unexpected was my emotional experience as a researcher. I was in the middle of writing my dissertation when Cohen died. My feelings stopped me in my tracks. It was too much to process at once. I began to

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[138] Jack Barbalet, "Introduction: Why Emotions Are Crucial," *The Sociological Review* 50, no. 52 (2002): 6.
[139] Valérie de Courville Nicol, *Social Economies of Fear and Desire: Emotional Regulation, Emotion Management, and Embodied Autonomy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2011), 12.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Ibid.

experience feelings of failure not only because I did not finish my research before he died, but also because I felt like I could not move forward with my research. I felt pressure to be part of the cultural conversation, but I also felt that my research had not progressed to a level where I could speak with authority. This pressure also stemmed from academic discourses that addressed me as a graduate student, triggering the anxiety that I should be working harder.

Although the experience that brought my feelings to the surface—the death of my research object—is uncommon, the feelings I experienced as a graduate student in the throes of writing her dissertation are common, and this is one reason I want to talk about them. In line with its original goals, I utilize the acafan position to confront the limits of academic norms and discourses. In particular, I challenge academic norms that discount not only the value, but also the existence of emotions in the research process by talking about my emotions as a researcher. These are things that we do not talk about when we talk about academic work. As such, my discussion of academic affect serves to disrupt academic norms around emotion and is firmly situated within the current cultural moment of questioning outmoded cultural beliefs and social norms. In the same way that improper attention to emotion misconstrues it as something potentially dangerous and not rational, not talking about academic affect, ignoring it, can and does lead to its pathologization.

If the goal of acafandom, as Jenkins argues, is to narrate our emotional responses—what prompts them, how they feel, what impacts them—to our object of fandom and its broader context,[142] then exploring my own emotional experience in the aftermath of Cohen's death further necessitates undertaking an autoethnographic approach. Self-reflexive autoethnography—a methodology "strongly indebted to broadly feminist perspectives"[143]—is integral to the acafan position[144] and has a long history in fan studies. Situating autoethnography as a "critical and innovative tool" for fan studies research, in "Desperately Seeking Methodology: New Directions in Fan Studies Research," Adrienne Evans and Mafalda Stasi uncover the potential of this tool to

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[142] Henry Jenkins, "Acafandom and Beyond: Week Two, Part Two (Henry Jenkins, Erica Rand, and Karen Hellekson)," *Confessions of an Aca-Fan*, June 23, 2011, http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2011/06/acafandom_and_beyond_week_two_1.html.
[143] Matt Hills qtd. in "Gender and Fan Culture (Round Twelve, Part One): Catherine Driscoll and Matt Hills," *Confessions of an Aca-Fan*, August 22, 2007, http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2007/08/gender_and_fan_culture_round_t.html.
[144] Adrienne Evans and Mafalda Stasi, "Desperately Seeking Methodology: New Directions in Fan Studies Research," *Participations: Journal of Audience and Reception Studies* 11, no. 2 (2015): 15.

tell stories about the lived experience of embodying the subject positions of fan and academic.[145] In this vein, autoethnography allows for "embodied accounts that deal not only with the discursive practices of fandom [and academia] (e.g., the constructs and constraints of identity), but with what it means when people actually take up these discursive practices and really live through them."[146]

In addition to the acafan concept, the use of autoethnography can help question the discursive construction of binaries and dualisms. In "Memory Work, Autoethnography and the Construction of a Fan-ethnography," Jeanette Monaco identifies how Matt Hills is able to use autoethnography to "confront the constructions of an intricate array of moral dualisms that often aligns 'us,' the fantasised 'rational' academics, against 'them,' the fantasised 'deficient' or 'self-absent' fans."[147] I employ an autoethnographic approach to create a narrative that demonstrates "the impossibility of separating the scholar's academic desires from their fan-related pleasures" while simultaneously deconstructing the problematic supposition that the discursive positions of fan and academic should be characterized "through a binary relationship of objective / subjective, good / bad," or rational / emotional dualisms.[148]

What is autoethnography? In "Popular Culture Studies and Autoethnography: An Essay on Method," Jimmie Manning and Tony E. Adams provide a basic definition of autoethnography as a "research method that foregrounds the researcher's personal experience (*auto*) as it is embedded within, and informed by, cultural identities and con/texts (*ethno*) and as it is expressed through writing, performance, or other creative means (*graphy*)."[149] Autoethnographers concentrate on their own private, emotional experiences and memories, exploring through storytelling how these experiences intersect with various texts, communities, and identities.[150] At the same time, these personal experiences are not meant to be representative of the experiences of others. Matt Briggs's notion of the micro-example is helpful in explaining how moving toward the singular—my own personal experience—generalizes within the individual and not

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[145] Ibid.
[146] Ibid.
[147] Jeanette Monaco, "Memory Work, Autoethnography and the Construction of a Fan-Ethnography," *Participations: Journal of Audience and Reception Studies* 7, no. 1 (2010): 103.
[148] Ibid., 131.
[149] Jimmie Manning and Tony E. Adams, "Popular Culture Studies and Autoethnography: An Essay on Method," *The Popular Culture Studies Journal* 3, no. 1-2 (2015): 188.
[150] Ibid., 189.

across the audience.[151] For Briggs, concentrating on a singular example differs from examining a singular practice, and involves investigating "the embedding of this singular practice in an irreducible nexus of practice."[152] Rather than propose my own personal experiences as something that can be generalized to the wider audience of Cohen fans or as a singular practice that exists in solitude, I focus on my own specific experiences alongside particular theories as well as discourses that circulate the Cohen phenomenon, demonstrating how my experiences are "informed by those same theories," texts, and discourses.[153] Turning to embodied in/capacity theory, I describe my experience of Cohen's death as both a fan of Cohen and a scholar studying Cohen. I trace how the Cohen phenomenon intertwines itself into different moments of my life, reflecting upon whether the same discourses that circulate the Cohen phenomenon inform, impact, or constrain my experiences.

Evans and Stasi argue that autoethnography risks focusing too much attention on individual feelings, thereby neglecting the interactions and interconnections between larger cultural structures, discourses, and those feelings.[154] I argue there is a lack of attention towards the emotional experience of academic work within the acafandom literature and in academic literature generally, and in this respect, I maintain that placing a spotlight on my emotions is vital. Correspondingly, I recognize Evans and Stasi's concern and demonstrate that autoethnography is more than just a "tell-all" confessional that centres on individual feelings, and requires contextualization within the broader social and cultural structures. Monaco explains how autoethnography diverges from the confessional through its critical path.[155] For Manning and Adams, autoethnography uses personal experience not as an end in itself but to "criticize, write against, and talk back to popular culture texts."[156] By drawing on embodied in/capacity theory, I emphasize the social functions of emotions and their connections to larger structures and discourses, discovering how particular discourses trigger my feelings. Manning and Adams reason that since "culture flows through the self; the personal, the particular, and the local are inseparably constituted and infused by others as well as by popular texts, beliefs, and

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[151] Matt Briggs, "Beyond the Audience: Teletubbies, Play and Parenthood," *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 9, no. 4 (2006): 443.
[152] Ibid., 456.
[153] Manning and Adams, 200.
[154] Evans and Stasi, 16.
[155] Monaco, 132.
[156] Manning and Adams, 201.

practices."[157] Focusing on my own emotions, the micro-example, and connecting them to larger social norms and discourses reaches out beyond the individual and forges a critical path in self-exploration.

The act of remembering forms the basis for my personal narrative and autoethnographic analysis. Monaco positions "the use of memory as a way of reflecting on personal and collective lived experience" as central to self-reflexive accounts of fandom.[158] If memories are the vehicle that drives autoethnographic practice and the ability to "think through the self," then, following Monaco, I must "acknowledge the mediated and discursive nature of memories."[159] The act of remembering is performative, contextual, healing, culturally situated, and discursive.[160] Moreover, what it means to be a fan and what it means to be a scholar are also discursive practices. Bringing together the act of remembering the emotional experience of Cohen's death and how this emotional experience shapes my own understanding of myself as a fan and a scholar is another way in which to study discourse.

Drawing on Hills, Monaco suggests that autoethnography assists in exploring and exposing the discursive practices we engage in as academics and as fans when we assert these aspects of our identity.[161] By being self-reflexive, Hills argues, we can question why "we stop self-analysis at a certain point by refusing to challenge privileged discourses."[162] Self-reflexive autoethnography exposes the limits of research and knowledge production that tries to isolate the "detached intellectual realm of the objective from the highly emotional realm of the subjective, which is silenced or rationalized in empirical work."[163] At the same time, I did not simply assume particular discourses dictating what it means to be a fan or a scholar. I did not just "mechanically adopt these subject positions … Rather, these discourses were refracted through an accumulated history, across a range of practices."[164] In turn, my narrative circulates back into these discourses, including discourses of celebrity and the Cohen phenomenon.

My overarching research question is: *How is the discourse of celebrity constructed in Canada from the mid-twentieth century to the early decades of the twenty-first century?* To

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[157] Ibid., 189.
[158] Monaco, 109.
[159] Ibid.
[160] Ibid.
[161] Ibid., 121.
[162] Matt Hills, *Fan Cultures* (London Routledge, 2002), 72.
[163] Monaco, 120.
[164] Briggs, 455.

properly address this question, a number of follow up questions arise, notably: What conditions of possibility foster the emergence of contemporary celebrity culture? What delineates celebrity as a discourse in Canada during the mid-twentieth century, and can we identify changes in this discourse as we move from the twentieth to the twenty-first century? What can Canadian celebrity tell us about the surrounding culture at particular socio-historical moments, and in what ways do other discourses (e.g. nationalism) incorporate celebrity?

The celebrity phenomenon of Leonard Cohen and his multi-decade career form the object of my research and a way to interrogate discourses of celebrity in Canada. The Cohen phenomenon is a productive object of inquiry because it allows me to track shifts in the construction of Canadian celebrity over half a century. My analysis focuses on a broad range of materials whose circulation composes the Cohen phenomenon, including but not limited to, archival materials, newspaper and magazine articles, reviews, biographies, interviews, documentaries, images, television programs, correspondence, websites, posts on social media, advertisements, and fan events.

My overall goal in undertaking this study is a result of two main gaps in the literature. First, while the preoccupation with celebrity in Canada is increasingly evident in popular discourse, the academic study of celebrity culture in Canada is a fairly new and underdeveloped field. This is in part due to the influence of discourses of celebrity that position Canadian celebrity as simple and unexceptional (i.e. not important).[165] To help fill this gap, this study examines the industrial and discursive constitution of celebrity in Canadian culture, with a special focus on Canadian literary culture. It investigates the construction of celebrity phenomena through various discourses that circulate through our culture via diverse media channels, and what these discourses (and the tensions between them) can tell us about the changing constitution of celebrity in Quebec, Canada, and beyond our national borders since the mid-twentieth century.

My contribution to this body of scholarship is both theoretical and methodological. This study combines a diversity of theoretical perspectives on celebrity from a range of disciplines, which I review in the following chapter. The complexity of the Cohen phenomenon necessitates integrating scholarship on literary celebrity with scholarship, for example, on popular music celebrity. Additionally, it introduces theories of emotion as well as theories of circulation to the

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[165] York, *Literary*, 168.

study of celebrity. Focusing on the circulation of celebrity extends the analysis from the content and meaning of celebrity to consider its interconnection with other cultural forms and discourses as well as its relationship to cultural value and taste.

Second, this project has implications that stretch beyond the cultural study of celebrity and call for the development of new methods in literary studies. It is no longer possible to consider the literary in isolation from popular culture at large. Being a Canadian writer is now inextricable from aspiring to some form of celebrity, and seeking visibility and fame has become another method of competing for cultural authority in the field of literary production. As York points out, "Authors have, in one sense, never been more visible in Canada than they have in recent decades."[166] Nevertheless, "one cannot simply blame increasing publicity for literary stardom"; taking an historical approach acknowledges that "celebrity has been a major part of what it is to be an author for some time."[167] As such, this dissertation demonstrates the advantage of adopting innovative methods for literary studies that go beyond close reading and draw on a specific range of cross-disciplinary approaches, including discourse analysis, celebrity studies, studies of circulation, and Bourdieusian field theory.

There is a tendency in literary culture to accentuate aesthetics at the cost of ignoring the impact of economic factors on the production, circulation, and consumption of literature. York observes that scholars of "Canadian literature have been, in the past number of decades, extremely reticent about the economic processes at work in the formation of the literature and its canons, preferring to rely on universal abstractions such as good taste and artistic excellence."[168] Alternatively, we must approach the "economic" and the "cultural" as "'hybrid' categories."[169] In the wake of poststructuralist approaches to literature, scholars have also moved away from the figure of the author, "reframing the discussion in terms of ideology and power."[170] A clearer articulation of the impact and role of economic factors in the field of literary production requires more material-based analyses of literary production and new methods that exceed deliberations of authorial intention without losing sight of the figure of the author in its entirety. While celebrity discourse obscures the labour of literary production, and literary culture is sometimes

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[166] Ibid., 3.
[167] York, *Margaret,* 22.
[168] *Literary*, 26.
[169] Du Gay qtd. in Annabelle M. Leve, "The Circuit of Culture as a Generative Tool of Contemporary Analysis: Examining the Construction of an Education Commodity," in *Joint AARE APERA International Conference* (Sydney 2012), 7.
[170] York, *Literary*, 3.

resistant to discussing the impact of market forces, the academic study of literary celebrity exposes the limitations in doing so. In this dissertation, I utilize the study of celebrity as a bridge to consider both economic and cultural factors in the field of Canadian cultural production.

Approaching celebrity as a phenomenon opens up an array of materials for analysis beyond primary texts, such as fan texts, bootlegs, correspondence and personal notes, collectibles, posts on social media, interviews and media appearances, documentaries, and biographies. While these materials may inform cultural and media studies analyses, they tend to be neglected in studies of literature, where the traditional emphasis is on close reading, biographical studies, and aesthetic influences.

In *Canadian Literary Power*, Frank Davey distinguishes between "short-term interventions" on behalf of a literary text and more long-term interventions that aid in its cultural preservation.[171] For Davey, short-term interventions refer to media appearances, interviews on television and radio, and newspaper and magazine articles / reviews, which shape the immediate and temporary reception of a literary text.[172] He contrasts these ephemeral publications with critical journals, which, for him, persist in cultural memory.[173] Yet continuing to refuse these ephemeral materials or short-term interventions a place within literary analysis, or to reject their academic worth, is akin to denying the impacts of discursive, industrial, and economic factors in literary culture.

In *Literary Celebrity in Canada*, York recounts how she had to reconsider using such material for her research when she began to study literary celebrity:

> But in researching the topic of their celebrity I had to go back and retrieve those items that I had, first as a graduate student and then as a teacher of Canadian literature for twenty years, disregarded as not scholarly enough or simply irrelevant to what I saw as my primarily literary purpose: profiles of the writers in magazines and newspapers, detailed publishing figures, and advertisements for their books and for films based on their books. What was happening was a reorientation of what I was seeing as

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[171] Frank Davey, *Canadian Literary Power*, ed. Smaro Kamboureli, Writer as Critic (Edmonton: NeWest Press, 1994).
[172] Ibid., 106.
[173] Ibid.

academically valuable, and the new orientation did not shut out the operations of publicity and publishing economies.[174]

As York suggests, we have much to gain by studying ephemeral materials of the mass marketplace and popular culture, and that without these materials an analysis of literature remains firmly planted within what Bourdieu refers to as the economic world reversed.[175]

By studying the Cohen phenomenon, I draw attention to the myriad texts, objects, and discourses that traditionally fall outside the purview of literary studies and demonstrate the fundamental importance of considering the broader workings of literary culture and ephemeral materials of popular culture. A careful examination of the materials of celebrity allows us to contextualize the study of Canadian literature within the field of literary production, opening up new possibilities for research. The types of extra-textual materials I analyze in this study consist of documentaries (e.g. *Ladies and Gentleman, Mr. Leonard Cohen*); television, radio, and print interviews (e.g. CBC Digital Archives); archival materials (e.g. personal notes, correspondence, posters, promotional materials, and fan mail); journalistic material (e.g. *Montreal Gazette; Toronto Star; McGill Daily; The Globe and Mail*; *Maclean's*; *Saturday Night*); posts on social media (e.g. Internet forum posts, Tweets, Facebook posts); official and unofficial fan texts (e.g. fan websites like "The Leonard Cohen Files"); emotions; and images. These are the materials that when circulated constitute and reconstitute the Cohen phenomenon.

To investigate how discourses of celebrity in Canada in general and the Cohen phenomenon in particular shift over time, I situate these materials in specific socio-historical moments from the 1960s to the present, questioning how different time periods, changes in dominant media formats, and Cohen's multiple discursive identities shape the Cohen phenomenon. Studying these materials, which constitute and circulate Cohen as a celebrity, I undertake a discursive analysis to uncover how the Cohen phenomenon is made intelligible through these discourses and to question what interests, practices, beliefs, values, identities, and institutions come into play.

To undertake my discourse analysis, I created a set of questions as a guide to uncover the statements, rules, subject-positions, practices, values, and beliefs that give rise to the Cohen phenomenon, including:

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[174] York, *Literary*, 27.
[175] Bourdieu, 29.

- How does this material produce Cohen as a significant figure in Canadian culture?
- What rules (explicit or implicit) govern the ways in which this material constitutes Cohen?
- How does this material assign value to Cohen? What kind of capital does it bestow to Cohen (symbolic, cultural, economic, celebrity), and in what ways?
- What aspects of his identity does it place value on, and in what ways?
- What types of knowledge does this material privilege (i.e. beliefs about Cohen as a cultural figure, the role / value of celebrity, the role / value of fandom, or the value of music / literature to national identity), and in what ways?
- In what types of spaces does this material circulate?
- Does this material intersect or reference any other materials that constitute the Cohen phenomenon?
- In what ways do these materials reflect, and perhaps help to produce, dominant ideas about celebrity in Canada?

These guiding questions encourage me to be alert to the types of representations, readings, constructions, regulations, and social relations that interconnect and constitute the Cohen phenomenon.

**The Flame Burns On: Findings**

One of the main conditions that allowed for the emergence of contemporary celebrity culture in Canada is the *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences*, more commonly known as the Massey Commission. As a result of these hearings, which began in 1949, the Canadian government strengthened cultural policy and developed the Canada Council for the Encouragement of the Arts, Letters, Humanities and Social Sciences, to support and bolster cultural production in Canada. The development of cultural policy and the imperative to help fund cultural production, alongside the infrastructure of a Canadian public broadcasting system, paved the way for the use of public, creative, and cultural individuals to attract a national audience, conjure national feeling, and initiate cultural production.[176] In this vein, celebrity in

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[176] Marshall, "Foreword: The Celebrity Nation," viii.

Canada functions as an extension and an instrument of the state,[177] and circulates through cultural policy, governmental paperwork,[178] and discourses of nationalism.

The Massey Commission also played a role in the development of a specific image of nationalism that began circulating in postwar Canada, a discourse of cultural nationalism that branded Canadian culture as distinct from American mass culture.[179] Traces of this discourse of cultural nationalism continue to circulate in contemporary discourses of celebrity today. Two dominant discourses structure the circulation of celebrity in Canada; these discourses are paradoxical and function within their inherent tension. Building on the discourse of cultural nationalism, the first paradox depicts Canadian celebrity in distinction to American celebrity; it operates in terms of cultural rather than economic capital. Yet, American recognition validates Canadian celebrity. The second discourse configures Canadian celebrity as something that both can and cannot occur in Canada, and interconnects with the idea that to achieve fame and celebrity, individuals have to leave the nation. This relates to the belief that Canada has no star system or apparatus for creating and circulating celebrity and minimal cultural infrastructure to support cultural production.

Emanating from the second paradox of celebrity, Canada has created a large infrastructure for reincorporating Canadian celebrities successful outside the nation back into national mythology and Canadian heritage. This infrastructure includes public institutions, such as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) as well as private institutions, such as Canada's Walk of Fame. Reflecting the discourse of cultural nationalism, the criteria for nomination to Canada's Walk of Fame specify cultural and national values; however, I identify unspoken criteria of economic success and American recognition, which appear to play a large role in determining who receives a star. This corresponds with Cohen's lack of a star on the Walk of Fame until late 2018. This unspoken factor of economic success reveals Canada's ambivalence about the role of economics in cultural production, and accordingly forms the basis for Canada's ambivalence about celebrity.

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[177] Patricia Colleen Cormack and James F Cosgrave, "State Celebrity, Institutional Charisma and the Public Sphere: Managing Scandal at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation," *Media, Culture & Society* 38, no. 7 (2016): 1049.
[178] Ira Wagman, "Bureaucratic Celebrity," in *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, ed. Katja Lee and Lorraine York (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), 202.
[179] Paul Litt, "The Massey Commission, Americanization, and Canadian Cultural Nationalism," *Queen's Quarterly* 98, no. 2 (1991): 376.

Canada's ambivalence about celebrity—due in part to the inherent interconnections between celebrity, American culture, and economics—situates literary celebrity as the quintessential figure of Canadian celebrity. The discourses of literary celebrity and celebrity in Canada have significant overlap, which helps to explain the rise of literary celebrity in Canada and the Can-Lit boom that began in the late 1950s, which saw a radical increase in the number of literary books published in Canada by Canadian authors, shortly after the Massey Commission and the implementation of Canada Council grants. This overlap comprises an emphasis on labour, a denial of economic factors (art for art's sake), ideas of modesty and humility, artistic over mass production, and an overall sense of moral superiority.

The intersection of discourses of literary celebrity, Canadian celebrity, and cultural nationalism is prominent in the early industrial production of Cohen's poetic celebrity. The National Film Board documentary, *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen,* in particular builds on these discourses to produce an image of Cohen as a Canadian cultural figure that appeals to Canadian audiences interested in American popular culture, constructing him as an accessible, popular poet. Despite the denial of economic factors in cultural production, the documentary emphasizes Cohen's earnings to bolster his cultural capital. Specifically, how much money he earns translates into cultural success while simultaneously erasing traces of high cultural elitism. The documentary also calls attention to Cohen's natural talent, which he develops through hard work. In turn, this image of Cohen as both talented and hardworking can be situated in a broader discourse of Canadian celebrity as a product of creativity and industriousness.

As a Canadian celebrity, Cohen becomes incorporated into economies of cultural heritage through acts of claiming, which involve classifying him as Canadian or a Montrealer and mobilizing his image within institutional and national contexts.[180] Specific examples include the use of Cohen's image in tourism advertisements, the Leonard Cohen Papers at the University of Toronto's Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, the CBC's claiming of Cohen as "Canada's Melancholy Bard,"[181] the painting of two murals of Cohen in Montreal after his death, and so forth. While Cohen's literary celebrity instigated his incorporation into economies of cultural

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[180] Katja Lee, "'What an Elastic Nationality She Possesses!' Transnational Celebrity Identities in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," in *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, ed. Katja Lee and Lorraine York (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), 39.
[181] "Leonard Cohen: Canada's Melancholy Bard," CBC Digital Archives, accessed September 9, 2018, https://www.cbc.ca/archives/topic/leonard-cohen-canadas-melancholy-bard.

heritage, such as the University of Toronto's purchase of his papers and manuscripts in the early 1960s—an unprecedented move at the time to collect the papers of a still-living author—it is worth questioning whether his literary celebrity continues to form a basis for his celebrity in the context of his career as a singer-songwriter and late-career musical resurgence.

Our final image of Cohen shortly after his death centralizes the value of his musical career, as stories circulate representations of him working on his final album with his son, despite his weakening body. This is an image of Cohen the musician, performing into his late-seventies and working diligently up until his final days. This is the image of how we remember him. In spite of his death, Cohen's career continues to flourish. This may reintroduce the importance of his literary career as a basis for his celebrity. For example, a final collection of poems was published in October 2018, entitled *The Flame*. *The Flame* is Cohen's first collection of poems since 2006, and only the second new collection of poems published over the past three decades.

One of the most significant changes in discourses of Canadian celebrity that I identify is a potentially seismic shift from willful avoidance to zero tolerance regarding problematic celebrity behaviour. While Canada has often been quick to claim and celebrate any achievement by a Canadian, there are signs of an emerging discourse of celebrity that calls this uncritical celebration into question. The CanLit community in particular has felt the weight of this shift, as some members of a younger generation of writers are rejecting the use of creative genius as a mask for bad behaviour. In the 1960s, Cohen alluded to the notion that good writing can nullify the problematic behaviour of the artist. In the current cultural climate of #metoo, some critics are now returning to his early literary work to demonstrate its problematic representations and condemn his past behaviour. This is taking place within a broad cultural shift in which dominant constructions of the past are being challenged, for example calls for the removal of statues of Sir John A. Macdonald, and within a widespread cultural movement, typified by the #timesup and #metoo social media campaigns, in which women are speaking out about their experiences of sexual abuse and harassment.

By investigating discourses of celebrity in conjunction with discourses of fandom, I reveal their interconnections through the discourse of intimacy. Celebrity discourse addresses fandom as a public, interpellating fans through the use of intimacy, and fandom, as a public, circulates discourses of celebrity through its engagement with these discourses. In studying fan

letters written to Cohen in the 1960s, I discover a discourse of intimacy that situates Cohen as a friend. In five of the twelve letters that I examine, the individuals writing the letters use the term "fan" as a way to describe themselves, and four of these letters include a story of how they became a fan. At times, the word "fan" appears in quotation marks, indicating a need for fans to distance and distinguish themselves from stereotypical discourses of fandom.

Through exploring the media coverage of Montreal 2000: The Leonard Cohen Event, I ascertain why some fans may feel the need to distance themselves from the descriptor of fan, as this coverage places Cohen fandom in a larger media discourse of the deviant fan, mocking the feeling of intimacy that fans feel towards Cohen. In spite of attempts by event organizers to distinguish Cohen fandom, the popular discourse surrounding the Cohen event relies on stereotypical discourses to make sense of the event and portrays Cohen fans as obsessive and emotional. I find that the deviant construction of Cohen fans reflects the cultural anxiety inherent in Cohen's career change from poet to musician. By transferring this anxiety onto his fans, it serves to resolve the cultural ambivalence in Cohen's career change.

Turning to an examination of Cohen fans after his death, I find that they are no longer constructed as deviant and their emotionality is understood as appropriate under the circumstances. The reasons for this shift in representation are in part due to the contextualization of the fan's emotional nature within the mourning of Cohen's death. This prompts me to question whether this shift away from pathological representations can be fully attributed to changing discourses of fandom, as fandom becomes increasingly mainstream, or whether Cohen's death provides a temporary exemption.

The media coverage that reports on Cohen's death circulates an affective atmosphere of grief and mourning. Cohen's death functions as both an object of fear that prompts an emotional response and a sign of danger in a world that is quickly altering beyond recognition. The announcement of his death intersects with other significant events, such as the death of additional legendary musicians within the same year, including Prince and David Bowie, the election of Donald Trump two days earlier, and Remembrance Day in Canada. These events shape the emotional experience of Cohen's death. I further identify how the media coverage of Cohen's death implicitly offers various socially normative ways of coping with this loss, such as: storytelling, visiting landmarks, purchasing cultural and commercial objects, and listening to and reading Cohen's work.

In exploring my own emotional experience of Cohen's death as an academic and a fan, I discover how I employed many of these methods to deal with my feelings of grief as a fan. At the same time, as a researcher studying Cohen I struggled in other ways, anxiously interpreting his death as a potential sign of my own failure as an academic. Upon further introspection, I determine that Cohen's death did not cause my feelings of inadequacy as a researcher, but brought them to the surface. I clarify how, in this respect, various discourses mark me with a feeling of "ethical incompleteness"[182] that fills me with the anxiety that I can always work harder. By utilizing the notion of depression as an impasse,[183] I adopt the use of autoethnography as a creative way through the impasse as a state of depression caused by both Cohen's death and my feelings of failure.

My use of the acafan stance in my autoethnography however both troubles the concept and highlights its potential. First, I realize how positioning my research as a justification to engage in fan activities could function as a form of distinction that devalues the importance of fan activities outside the research context. By using my research as a justification, I was implying that my engagement in fan activities would otherwise be considered inappropriate and obsessive. Second, calling attention to Ian Bogost's critique of acafandom,[184] I acknowledge the difficulties in maintaining a skeptical approach to Cohen and underline my potential hesitation in examining the challenging parts of his identity that cause me discomfort. However, I also recognize the potential of acafandom, which resides in its ideal stance of ambivalence,[185] a stance that allows researchers to explore the tensions and contradictory nature of popular culture as well as our complicated emotional responses to it.

If celebrity discourse is inherently ambivalent and fandom is a public that arises through its address, our feelings towards celebrity are going to be fundamentally ambivalent; the role of the acafan is to recognize this experience of ambivalence, in all its complexity, rather that attempting to resolve it. Throughout this dissertation, I find the continual need to reassert the significance of ambivalence and paradox, arguing for the necessity to keep this inherent tension intact. I discover the only way to approach ambivalence is through an ambivalent stance: one

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[182] Toby Miller and George Yúdice, *Cultural Policy* (London: Sage Publications, 2002), 15.

[183] Ann Cvetkovich, *Depression: A Public Feeling* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 21.

[184] Ian Bogost, "Against Aca-Fandom: On Jason Mittell on Mad Men," *Ian Bogost: Writing*, July 29, 2010, http://bogost.com/writing/blog/against_aca-fandom/.

[185] Jenkins, "Acafandom and Beyond: Week Two, Part Two."

where there is an irreducible gap between the two positions. In other words, approaching ambivalence from a parallax view, I reinforce the importance of not resolving this tension.

**From Popular Poet to Canadian Legend: Chapter Summaries**

In Chapter One, I build on the notion of celebrity as paradox, recognizing two paradoxes that characterize celebrity discourse in Canada. Situating celebrity in a Canadian context, I portray Canada as a nation ambivalent about celebrity and the role of economics in cultural production. I argue that studying literary celebrity is imperative, as it allows for an exploration of the broader workings of literary culture, such as: literary awards, popular criticism, interviews, the publishing industry, and cultural policy. In developing my interdisciplinary theoretical framework, I review the literature on the study of celebrity in Canada as well as relevant scholarship on literary celebrity, celebrity theory, and fandom, and I situate my conceptualization of emotion within sociology of emotions scholarship. Integrating concepts of circulation and emotion into my analysis of celebrity, I contend that the study of celebrity requires—beyond an examination of persona and its meaning—an analysis of the celebrity phenomenon and how it interconnects with various practices, beliefs, values, spaces, rituals, emotions, and cultural artifacts. Theories of circulation accentuate the continuing constitution of the celebrity phenomenon as it moves through, and takes up, cultural space, connecting with other cultural forms.

Turning to the industrial structures and discourses that contribute to Cohen's fame as a literary celebrity early in his career, in Chapter Two I explore how these structures and discourses discursively manage his early biographical production as poet. I emphasize his representation as a popular and accessible poet in the documentary *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen,* and trace the circulation of this idea through promotional materials and publicity. I contextualize this representation within the dominant discourse of Canadian cultural nationalism, considering the role of the Massey Commission in the circulation of Cohen's celebrity. In studying Cohen's early biographical production, I examine newspaper articles, press releases, and book advertisements as well as the Leonard Cohen Papers at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, positioning the Cohen Papers as another key institution that circulates and restricts Cohen's celebrity. In investigating how these materials co-constitute and circulate Cohen's early literary celebrity, I reveal the multiple industrial locations of celebrity and the various forms of labour involved in its production.

In Chapter Three, I undertake an analysis of Cohen fandom, stressing the interconnections between discourses of celebrity and fandom. I define Cohen fandom as a public that celebrity discourse creates through its address to Cohen fans and through the engagement of Cohen fans in this discourse. Within Cohen fandom, fans participate in discourses of celebrity and fandom and circulate Cohen through these discourses, in turn shaping the Cohen phenomenon. In particular, I identify two discourses of Cohen fandom: a discourse of intimacy that positions Cohen as a friend and a discourse of the deviant fan. In some respects, the second discourse can be understood as a response to the first discourse in that it embodies the anxiety that the fan's intimate para-social relationship to the celebrity triggers. While I identify a discourse of intimacy through an analysis of fan letters written to Cohen in the late 1960s, I locate a deviant discourse of the obsessive and emotional fan in the media coverage of Montreal 2000: The Leonard Cohen Event. I argue that the representation of Cohen fans as emotional and obsessive reflects cultural anxiety around audience behaviour and, more specifically, it embodies and parallels the cultural tension inherent in Cohen's career change from poet to musician. As scapegoats for this cultural anxiety, Cohen fans play a role in resolving Cohen's cultural ambivalence.

My aim in Chapter Four concerns, in part, whether pathological images of Cohen fans as emotional and obsessive persist. However, two factors are in play. First, there is the question of shifting norms concerning celebrity mourning and grief, as celebrity continues to be pervasive and fandom is now more mainstream. Second, and more importantly, the images of fans that I consider in this chapter depict fans as mourners in the aftermath of Cohen's death. In this chapter, I undertake an emotional discourse analysis, employing the conceptual framework of Valérie de Courville Nicol in *Social Economies of Fear and Desire: Emotional Regulation, Emotion Management, and Embodied Autonomy*. In the first section, I examine the Canadian media coverage of Cohen's death in November 2016, identifying the dominant affective atmosphere, different emotional experiences, and how the coverage offers implicit means of realizing security shortly after his death.

In the second section of Chapter Four, I shift to an autoethnographic approach and explore my own emotional reaction to Cohen's death as both a fan and a scholar. Engaging in debates around the current effectiveness and continuing relevance of Henry Jenkins's acafan concept, I engage in a self-reflexive analysis utilizing the acafan stance to explore my feelings of

ambivalence without trying to resolve them. By calling attention to how Cohen's death functions as an object of fear, I examine how I achieve a feeling of security in mourning his death as a fan and an academic, investigating how these experiences differ as well as interconnect. While certain events comfort me as a fan, as an academic I perceive these same events as objects of fear and signs of danger, as I anxiously question my ability to complete my dissertation. I recognize the greatest strength of the acafan concept is its ability to emphasize the affective experience of the researcher, a factor largely ignored in academic analysis. At the same time, I question whether the conceptualization of the acafan in fact operates as a process of distinction that values the work of acafans over that of fans.

Building on the emerging discourse of celebrity I identify in Chapter One—one that is more critical of celebrity in terms of inappropriate and uncivil behaviour—in the conclusion, I explore the things we do not talk about when we talk about Leonard Cohen. I begin by identifying my own hesitation to acknowledge the problematic aspects of Cohen, troubling the concept of the acafan and reinforcing the need for self-reflexivity. I then turn to three examples that highlight the importance of holding Cohen's paradoxical nature in tension: Myra Bloom and Anakana Schofield's articles on Cohen's "ladies' man persona" and novel *Beautiful Losers*; Michael Rakowitz's multimedia installation *I'm Good at Love, I'm Good at Hate, It's in Between I Freeze*; and Cohen fansite owner Allan Showalter's discussion of the topics that Cohen fans uniformly dislike. Rather than revealing a new perspective on Cohen, I argue that these dissident discourses expose our desire to smooth out the edges of ambivalence and to resolve aspects of Cohen's identity that make us feel uncomfortable as well as uncover the crucial role of discourse in this process. Connecting this to current debates around the removal of statues of Sir John A. Macdonald, I differentiate between erasing the past and celebrating the past. In reexamining dominant discourses, the aim is not to erase the past but to reframe it by reengaging with its uncomfortable truths and paradoxical nature. Instead of resolving the ambivalence of the past, we must engage with it, tension and all.

<u>Chapter One: The Word Made Flesh</u>

Children show scars like medals. Lovers use them as secrets to reveal. A scar is what happens when
the word is made flesh. – Cohen[1]

Public speaking continued to be important in the twentieth century, as the circulation of author photographs on book
jackets or in magazines intensified the reader's desire for an encounter with the author "in the flesh."
– Faye Hammill[2]

The projection of text onto the author, and the idea of author as text … Figured as word made flesh, literary celebrity
is not necessarily a function of bodily *presence*. – Wenche Ommundsen[3]

## 1.1 Introduction: The Little Jew Who Wrote the Bible[4]

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God … And
the Word became flesh."[5] This passage from the Bible describes the birth of Jesus Christ, Son of
God, through the metaphor of the Word (God) becoming flesh (human). "When the word is
made flesh"[6] is a phrase I first encountered in Cohen's novel *The Favourite Game* and my
intrigue with its intricate meanings remains. This was perhaps not the first time Saint Leonard
became my introduction to the Bible, as biblical allusions permeate his work. Valérie Nicolet
describes Cohen's use of biblical metaphors as "building blocks" through which he "constructs
his own pantheon," concentrating on "everyday life as a place of deep spiritual experience."[7]
Through his work, she argues, "the bible becomes relevant, because, for Cohen, it is about 'us.'"[8]
Only Cohen could make the Bible relevant to my life.

This phrase became even more germane when I started studying literary celebrity, as the
celebration of the author embodies this transformation of the written word into flesh, and
moreover, it highlights the god-like status of celebrity in contemporary culture. On the one hand,
this process shows how the literary work of the author begins to take on the figure of the author;
that is, audiences often read the literary text as a sign of the real person, the authority, and the
genius behind the text. The Word is God, the ultimate authority; the author is the word (literary
text / god) made flesh. That this phrase appears in Cohen's first novel, which many critics,
reviewers, and audiences believe to be autobiographical, is very fitting.

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[1] Leonard Cohen, *The Favourite Game* (Toronto: Emblem, 2000), 8.
[2] Faye Hammill, "'A New and Exceedingly Brilliant Star': L. M. Montgomery, 'Anne of Green Gables,' and Mary
Miles Minter," *The Modern Language Review* 101, no. 3 (2006): 659.
[3] Ommundsen, 251.
[4] Leonard Cohen, "The Future," *The Future* (Columbia Records, 1992).
[5] John 1:1-2, 1:14.
[6] Cohen, *Favourite*, 8.
[7] Valérie Nicolet, "Leonard Cohen's Use of the Bible: Transformations of the Sacred," *Academia.edu*, 1-2.
[8] Ibid., 12.

On the other hand, the word made flesh reflects the accumulation of discourse that embodies the persona of the author in the ascent to god-like, celebrity status. More specifically, it depicts the process whereby an individual becomes a celebrity, who personifies a large body of materials and discourses that circulate through culture, including: advertising, reviews, magazine / newspaper articles, interviews, and other media appearances. In both these instances, words either written by or about the author stand in for the author, figuratively becoming their flesh. Seeing the author as the word made flesh accentuates the author's authority. Identifying the convergence of religious belief and practice with celebrity cultures, Chris Rojek contends that "'post-God' celebrity is now one of the mainstays of organizing recognition and belonging in secular society."[9] Viewing the literary celebrity as god incarnate (the Word made flesh) perpetuates the notion of the author as genius. In doing so, it upholds the aesthetic influences of literary production, masking economic ones.

The tension between Word (God) and flesh (human) mirrors discourses of celebrity that simultaneously mark the celebrity as both ordinary and divine, authentic and inauthentic, constructed and born, public and private. In "Stars as Cinematic Phenomenon," John Ellis delineates "the enigma of star paradox"; that is, the journalism surrounding both the film star and the rock star operates in a "paradoxical register" that presents the star as both ordinary and extraordinary.[10] He clarifies: "The star is ordinary, and hence leads a life like other people, is close to them, shares their hopes and desires: in short, the star is present in the same social universe as the potential film viewer. At the same time the star is extraordinary, removed from the life of mere mortals, has rarified and magnified emotions, is separate from the world of the potential film viewer."[11] Like Christ, the celebrity exists as a quintessential paradox: both god-like and human, both of this world and beyond it.

In *Stars*, Richard Dyer formulates the notion of the star image to indicate how the signification of celebrities are "realized in media texts" and how "stars do not exist outside of such texts."[12] For Dyer, "Stardom is an image of the way stars live. … [I]t combines the spectacular with the everyday, the special with the ordinary."[13] Yet, he poses this paradox of the

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[9] Chris Rojek, *Celebrity* (London: Reaktion, 2001), 58.
[10] John Ellis, "Stars as Cinematic Phenomenon," in *Visible Fictions: Cinema: Television: Video* (London: Routledge, 1992), 107-108.
[11] Ibid., 97.
[12] Dyer, *Stars*, 1.
[13] Ibid., 35.

star as an issue. He sees one problematic aspect of dealing with the star image as "the extreme ambiguity / contradiction … concerning the stars-as-ordinary and the stars-as-special."[14] Instead of viewing this as a problem, I argue that the ambiguity of the celebrity, its existence as a paradox, forms the very essence of celebrity discourse. While Dyer identifies how the star image attempts to resolve the tension between the competing ideologies that embody celebrity, such as public / private, ordinary / extraordinary, authentic / inauthentic, constructed / born, cultural / economic, and labour / leisure,[15] I resist the urge to resolve this ambivalence. Throughout this study, I argue that discourse constructs the celebrity as paradox and attracts our attention through its promise to reveal the "real" celebrity, and I approach celebrity as paradox through a parallax view that maintains there is no reducible truth within the celebrity; the celebrity is the tension.

The discourse of ordinary / extraordinary is just one paradox that constitutes celebrity discourse. In this chapter, I present the relevant literature on the study of celebrity cultures in Canada, provide an overview of scholarship on literary celebrity, celebrity, and fandom, and set out my interdisciplinary theoretical framework. I begin by introducing celebrity in a Canadian context, identifying two paradoxes that shape celebrity discourses in Canada. In doing so, I present Canada as a nation ambivalent about celebrity as well as the role of economic factors in cultural production.

In her article "'He Should Do Well on the American Talk Shows': Celebrity, Publishing, and the Future of Canadian Literature" (a precursor to her 2006 book *Literary Celebrity in Canada*), Lorraine York points out the tendency to overlook the marketing machinery of Canadian literature, namely, how we promote and advertise literary texts and authors in Canada.[16] She refers to the critical reaction to Robert Lecker's study of McClelland and Stewart's New Canadian Library[17] (NCL) and exposé on the role of market forces in literary canonization as a clear example of the hesitancy of literary critics to discuss the economic factors intrinsic to literary culture. Curious about such sustained resistance, York writes: "What fascinated me at the time, and what has continued to do so, was the emotional need felt by some scholars—having devoted their lives to this field of study and, no doubt, having taught much of their courses using the NCL paperbacks—to deny the economic and to reassert categories of

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[14] Ibid., 43.

[15] Ibid., 38.

[16] Lorraine York, "'He Should Do Well on the American Talk Shows': Celebrity, Publishing, and the Future of Canadian Literature," *Essays on Canadian Writing* 71 (2000): 96.

[17] Robert Lecker, "New Canadian Library: A Classic Deal," *American Review of Canadian Studies* 24, no. 2 (1994).

'literary excellence' and 'classic' literature."[18] York situates her prior exclusion of the literary marketplace within this widespread negation of economic forces in Canadian literary studies, advancing her project on celebrity and Canadian literature as a corrective to this negation. Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's understanding of the disavowal of the economic in the field of cultural production, York sets out to "unforget" the economic.[19]

The national context of celebrity discourse in Canada further reproduces boundaries between economics and aesthetics by privileging cultural production and its role in nation building. Since the postwar era, and specifically the *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences*[20] (Massey Commission), cultural production in Canada has been closely tied to nationalism. The Massey Commission in particular contributed to the production of an anti-American, Canadian cultural nationalist discourse that continues to shape how we understand cultural production, the role of art, and celebrity today. York identifies one pervasive myth of Canadian fame that no doubt stems from such discourse: Canada is neither disposed to celebrity, nor is it a place where fame can be achieved.[21] In *Literary Celebrity in Canada*, York maintains that Canadians "cling to the belief that there is something different—often something more simple, modest, or ennobling—about our approach to celebrity than we perceive in the celebrity culture of the nation to our south."[22] This implies that somehow, as Canadians, we are more humble about celebrity; it affects us less.[23]

Another dominant discourse expresses esteem for Canadian actors who choose to work in Canada out of desire for "challenging creative projects"[24] with those who move to Hollywood to pursue financial success.[25] In turn, this discourse reinforces and perpetuates existing stereotypes about Canadians "as quiet and self-effacing, opting for creative fulfillment over power and money."[26] These discourses support the notion that Canadian cultural industries value the production of cultural capital over economic capital. Taking government support of the arts into

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[18] York, "He Should," 97-98.
[19] Ibid., 98.
[20] Canada, *The Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences 1949-1951* (Ottawa: Edmond Cloutier, 1951).
[21] York, "He Should," 98.
[22] *Literary*, 168.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Katherine Monk qtd. in Katherine Ann Roberts, "Crossover Stars: Canadian Viewing Strategies and the Case of Callum Keith Rennie," in *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, ed. Katja Lee and Lorraine York (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), 152.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.

consideration, P. David Marshall, in his foreword to *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, argues that it is difficult to pinpoint the specificity of Canadian celebrity "beyond a sensibility that privileges the comfort with a culture not necessarily produced entirely from commercialization, but a hybridity of popularity buttressed by national and government-supported systems of media and culture."[27] Because of Canada's hybrid cultural industry, cultural production can never be taken as explicitly commercial, thereby producing a more highbrow depiction of Canadian culture. These discourses of celebrity in Canada not only impact the ways in which audiences understand celebrity, but also the approaches taken by academic studies.

As part of investigating the two main paradoxes that structure discourses of celebrity in Canada, I question whether these discourses perpetuate a clear separation between economic and aesthetic factors in the circulation of celebrity in Canada. Further, I explore whether celebrity discourses in Canada create a distinct hierarchy of cultural value, one that attributes cultural success and celebrity foremost to aesthetic and cultural factors rather than economic and market forces. Turning to scholarship on celebrity in Canada, I undertake a review of the literature, pointing to theoretical works that particularly advance the field, such as the recent collection of essays *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, edited by Katja Lee and Lorraine York.[28]

In their introduction to *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, Lee and York recognize the skepticism surrounding "the legitimacy, the value, and the significance of celebrities and celebrity systems in Canada."[29] Casting this aside, they argue that "the cultural and political identities of famous people matter: these identities matter to the star, to the fans, to the industries that attempt to capitalize or mitigate the effects of these identities, and to the nations that administer these individuals and industries."[30] In publishing this collection of essays, they aim to make room "for the conversations that are already unfolding in celebrity studies, cultural studies, and other disciplines," to recognize celebrity as "a historical and ongoing presence in the Canadian cultural landscape that wields considerable cultural, political, affective, and economic power," and to locate "the study of celebrity cultures in Canada to centre stage."[31] Throughout, Lee and York are careful to acknowledge the critical body of scholarship already undertaken in

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[27] Marshall, "Foreword: The Celebrity Nation," v.
[28] Katja Lee and Lorraine York, eds., *Celebrity Cultures in Canada* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016).
[29] "Introduction: Celebrity Cultures in Canada. It's Not a Question," in *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, ed. Katja Lee and Lorraine York (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), 2.
[30] Ibid., 12.
[31] Ibid.

developing the study of celebrity cultures in Canada.

Research to date covers a variety of different types of celebrity, comprising among others: political celebrity (Bell; Jackson), television-based celebrity (Baltruschat; Byers; Cormack and Cosgrave; Czach; Rak), Quebec stars (Czach; Dickinson), music celebrity (Carr, Duffett, Grenier, Jackson, Young), and literary celebrity (Becker; Deshaye; Gammel; Hammill; Kamboureli; Percy; Pike; G. Roberts; Wolframe; York). This literature also hinges on a number of issues concerning celebrity in Canada and Canadian celebrity, such as: lack of attention to smaller star systems or localized apparatuses of celebrity, including Quebecois and Indigenous celebrity (Dickinson; Czach; York "Celebrity and the Cultivation"); the role of nationalism and cultural heritage (Bell; Byers; Duffett; Millar; Rak; Shore; Young); transnational celebrity (Byers; Deveau; Lee; K. Roberts); cultural policy (Cormack and Cosgrave; Henderson; Wagman); disability (Millar); publicity law (Hamilton); and prize culture (Percy; G. Roberts; Young).

The preoccupation with celebrity in Canada has become increasingly evident in popular discourse. As Liz Czach points out, the common belief that Canada does not have its own star system fails to acknowledge "the zeal with which Canadians participate in celebrity culture via gossip magazines, celebrity news shows, and so forth."[32] Yet despite this enthusiasm, the academic study of celebrity culture in Canada has been slow to develop and remains largely untapped. With the recent publication of *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, the study of celebrity in Canada is now increasing momentum and moving forward as its own distinctive field.

From this review of the literature, I build the interdisciplinary framework for my study, drawing on celebrity and fandom theory across a range of disciplines, scholarship on the sociology of emotions, and theories of circulation. Demonstrating the fundamental importance of studying the broader workings of literary culture, I argue that an analysis of the materials of literary celebrity allows us to contextualize the study of Canadian literature within the field of literary production as well as its location in the field of power. This opens up a wide range of objects of inquiry and sites of analysis ignored by more traditional literary methods; such objects and sites encompass: literary awards, the relationships between agents in the field of literary

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[32] Liz Czach, "Television, Film, and the Canadian Star System," in *Canadian Television: Text and Contexts*, ed. Marian Bredin, Scott Henderson, and Sarah A. Matheson (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2011), 61.

production, popular criticism of literary works and authors, interviews, the publishing industry, and cultural policy and its tools of implementation.

**1.2 The Canadian Context: Dominant Discourses of Celebrity**
The very essence of celebrity lies in its contradiction. This is the discourse that circulates celebrity: the celebrity as both ordinary and extraordinary, the extraordinary star we can come to know (through tabloids, interviews, biographies, etc.) and the ordinary person we can never really know—the unknowable individual and the knowable star. Moreover, two main paradoxes structure celebrity discourse in Canada, reflecting Canada's ambivalence towards celebrity and influencing how Canadian audiences, fans, journalists, critics, and scholars think about celebrity in postwar Canada. First, Canadian celebrity is anti-American; that is, Canadian celebrity is defined against American celebrity, what it is not. At the same time, Canadian celebrity desires American recognition (economic vs. cultural capital). Second, we tend to understand Canadian celebrity as something that both can and cannot occur in Canada (Canadian celebrity vs. celebrity in Canada).

The first paradox interconnects with the idea that fame and celebrity (economic) are antithetical to "Canadian-ness" (cultural). Because there is so little economic capital at play, the majority of which the Canadian government subsidizes, our perception of the Canadian culture industries is based on our assumption that they deal primarily in cultural capital. Thus, the first paradox rests on the belief that celebrity is a negative manifestation of (American) economic and market forces and is thus incompatible with the high cultural artistic practices of the Canadian arts scene. In other words, notions of fame and celebrity connect to notions of economic success, which we interpret as antithetical to the meaning of Canadian cultural success and a Canadian "marketplace, where 'success' would not necessarily be measured in terms of sales."[33]

In "The Social Identity of English Canada," Ian Angus examines the "cultural-policy discourse that emerged in Canada with the Massey Commission in the 1950s."[34] Angus astutely points out how this discourse contains and "compresses three cultural oppositions."[35] These three oppositions involve: Canada / United States, high / low culture, public / private ownership, structured in such a way that "the first of each of the pairs becomes practically equivalent to the

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[33] Wagman, 206.
[34] Ian Angus, "The Social Identity of English Canada," in *Canadian Cultural Studies: A Reader*, ed. Sourayan Mookerjea, Imre Szeman, and Gail Faurschou (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009), 240.
[35] Ibid., 241.

others, as does the second of each of the pairs."[36] In conflating these cultural oppositions, this cultural-policy discourse centres on the belief that "the United States produces low, or popular, culture through private ownership of the media"; for Angus, this becomes "the polemical object that the discourse constructs."[37]

Paul Litt examines this negative perception of American culture in postwar Canada, which for him "indelibly stamped its brand of cultural nationalism."[38] In "The Massey Commission, Americanization, and Canadian Cultural Nationalism," Litt observes how the Massey Commission circulated fears of American mass culture and contributed to anti-Americanization.[39] The contemporary tendency to define Canadian culture against American culture can therefore be traced back to these ideas of cultural nationalism as developed in the mid-twentieth century, influenced by the Massey Commission and the dialogue surrounding it. Today these thoughts of cultural superiority continue to circulate in discourses of celebrity in Canada, creating a sense of hesitancy as to whether there can be such a thing as a celebrity in Canada.

Tied to the second paradox is the belief that Canada has no star system or apparatus for creating and circulating celebrity and minimal cultural infrastructure to support cultural production. This discourse gained steam with the Massey Commission and its aim to "give encouragement to institutions which express national feeling."[40] Due to a lack of Canadian cultural production and increasing American cultural influence, the Massey Commission began public hearings in August 1949 to better understand how to address these issues in supporting Canadian artistic and cultural production (although not necessarily in Canada). The report details how throughout the inquiry, "We have been impressed … with the need to provide Canada wider opportunities for our own workers in the arts, letters and sciences. In this respect we have arrears to make up."[41] Typifying this discourse today are the success stories of Canadians who leave the country to foster their talents, whether it is through the story of Justin Bieber's discovery on YouTube by American musician Usher or through the plethora of Canadian stories of success in Hollywood, including Rachel McAdams, Jim Carey, Catherine O'Hara, Ryan Reynolds, and

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[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Litt, 376.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Canada, 5.
[41] Ibid., 10.

Mike Myers. The great success of these individuals who left Canada implies that the same kind of success cannot be achieved locally.

The second paradox is clearly inseparable from the idea that to achieve fame and celebrity, individuals have to leave the nation. This notion that one must leave Canada to create culture can again be traced back to the Massey Commission as well as the original guidelines of Canada Council grants. The Massey Commission reported that in the mid-twentieth century, "Canada 'sells down south' as many as 2,500 professional men and women in a year."[42] A significant outcome however of the Commission's recommendations to help develop and foster Canadian cultural production was the birth of the Canada Council for the Encouragement of the Arts, Letters, Humanities and Social Sciences. However, as Nick Mount points out in *Arrival: The Story of CanLit,* "the main purpose of its grants for individuals had been to help talented Canadians leave Canada" and senior arts fellowships "were tenable only abroad."[43] While this requirement of Canada Council grants changed in the mid-1960s,[44] undercurrents of this belief that one must leave Canada to become successful continue to circulate. Contained in both these paradoxes are implicit notions of what constitutes Canadian-ness and who is a true Canadian, enacted through "acts of claiming"[45] individual celebrities as representatives for the nation. Here, the understanding is that once individuals have become recognized for their achievements outside the nation only then can they be incorporated into Canadian celebrity.

The first paradox of Canadian celebrity posits that while Canadian celebrity defines itself against American celebrity, it simultaneously desires American recognition. This hinges on the notion that "Canadians usually take pride in themselves, because America liked it."[46] As Marshall notes in his foreword to *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, Canadians love showing acclaim to internationally recognized celebrities for being Canadian.[47] Katherine Ann Roberts similarly observes how Canadians "*know* when Hollywood celebrities, singer-songwriters and / or television personalities are Canadian, even if this information goes unremarked or is deemed irrelevant by the rest of celebrity marketplace."[48] For Marshall, this is "a way in which

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[42] Ibid., 15.
[43] Mount, 43.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Lee, 39.
[46] Mount, 57-58.
[47] Marshall, "Foreword: The Celebrity Nation," vii.
[48] Roberts, 148.

Canadians work to self-identify."[49] "To follow the careers of these 'exile' Canadians," Roberts argues, "is an integral part of Canadian celebrity culture."[50]

Katja Lee refers to this process as an act of claiming through which we assert ownership over transnational celebrities.[51] Lee explains that transnational celebrities are more than just individuals known outside their country of origin; their slippery identities "are constructed and received as exceeding the claims of any one nation."[52] While transnational celebrities "do not deny their connections to Canada," they also do not "rely on them to make meaningful contributions to their labour, identity, or celebrity."[53] In "'What an Elastic Nationality She Possesses!' Transnational Celebrity Identities in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century," Lee examines the concept of transnational celebrity over this period, a time marked by an exodus of Canadians seeking work in the United States.[54] She bases her study on three women who resisted national identification and "chose, instead, to mobilize a transnational identity long before such discourses existed for framing their subjectivity": Dame Emma Albani, Maud Allan, and Mary Pickford.[55] Lee's analysis of transnational celebrity identity begins with a statement that reflects the second paradox of Canadian celebrity, that celebrity (can)not occur in Canada. She writes: "In Canada we have a long history of having to move beyond our geo-political borders and cultural institutions in order to produce and disseminate celebrity."[56]

The concept of transnational celebrity operates alongside the beliefs that Canada has no star system and Canadians must leave to find fame and success, and in turn defines celebrity in economic terms. The title of Michele Byers's article "On the (Im)possibility of Canadian Celebrity" speaks loudly to the second paradox of fame and celebrity in Canada.[57] Addressing the part Canadian-ness plays in producing and circulating celebrity, Byers accentuates the ambiguity of Canada "as a space that both produces and yet does not produce stars, as a space from which stars emanate and yet a space from which emanation is impossible."[58] She argues

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[49] Marshall, "Foreword: The Celebrity Nation," vii.
[50] Roberts, 148.
[51] Lee, 44.
[52] Ibid., 37.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid., 38.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Michele Byers, "On the (Im)Possibility of Canadian Celebrity," *Reconstruction: Studies in Contemporary Culture* 12, no. 1 (2012).
[58] Ibid., 2.

that the very emergence of Canadian celebrity depends upon their circulation outside the country.[59]

Danielle Deveau pinpoints this as a central tension in Canadian celebrity culture. Canadians love celebrating the success of Canadian celebrities outside the nation, yet we mourn the lack of "vitality of Canadian cultural identity and the cultural industries."[60] In "What's so Funny about Canadian Expats? The Comedian as Celebrity Export," she locates the tension between the national orientation of Canadian domestic comedy and the goal of gaining success in the US market, a goal that ignores the peripherality of the comedic material to American audiences and the difficulties of selling Canadian performers to agents and networks in a US market.[61] Emphasizing the "natural flow of cultural workers" from a small Canadian market to a large American market, Deveau recognizes Canada's role as a "vital training ground," which allows cultural workers to "develop the skills necessary to move into the larger American entertainment industry."[62] This is consistent with Byers's contention that "for Canadian stars, the best road to follow is a literal one: south."[63] Deveau realizes that this pull south of the border is not unique to comedy or the entertainment industries, but can be found in a range of professional fields.[64] For Canadians across the industrial spectrum, she argues, "the US remains the 'big leagues.'"[65] Interestingly, she sees the irony in cultural workers often having "greater access to Canadian audiences through the US entertainment industry."[66]

Scholarship on the circulation of Canadian celebrity outside our borders advances issues of exportability and transnational celebrity. Katherine Ann Roberts takes up a related concern in her study of the careers of "exile Canadians."[67] In "Crossover Stars: Canadian Viewing Strategies and the Case of Callum Keith Rennie," she traces the movement of Callum Keith Rennie's career in Canada and the United States. Roberts identifies a certain recognition effect by Canadian fans of Scottish-born, Edmonton-raised Rennie; for instance, "his Canadian fans appreciate his U.S. success, yet take pleasure in an ironic recognition effect" that marks him as

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[59] Ibid., 4.
[60] Danielle J. Deveau, "What's So Funny About Canadian Expats? The Comedian as Celebrity Export," in *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, ed. Katja Lee and Lorraine York (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), 167.
[61] 167-168.
[62] Ibid., 168.
[63] Byers, 4.
[64] Deveau, 174.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid., 168.
[67] Roberts, 148.

different, an effect only available to Canadians who regard him as one of their own.[68] For Byers, it is precisely this ability to "pass" through "strategies of assimilation / camouflage" that allows Canadians to become celebrities outside the nation.[69] These studies document both the limits of the exportability of Canadian celebrity as well as the process through which Canada reincorporates performers, who attain success beyond our borders, into national discourses that recognize them as part of Canadian cultural heritage.

The belief that to gain access to Canadian audiences one must become successful outside the country has a long circulation in the culture industries. In *Arrival*, Mount notes that the "moment that Canadians began imagining themselves as writers, they began to leave."[70] Lack of local support, lack of precedent, and numerous barriers, such as "a publishing industry intent on selling foreign books and a readership too preoccupied with economic progress to care about most kinds of writing" are among the reasons he underscores.[71] He elaborates: "At a professional level, their decision to publish in and move to cities like Paris, London, Boston, and New York wasn't about giving up one country for another. It was about moving from the margins to the centres of continental and transatlantic literary markets—markets that included Canada."[72] In other words, reaching Canadian audiences and achieving cultural recognition in Canada essentially requires leaving the country.

The American / Canadian border is critical to the constitution of a Canadian cultural-policy discourse premised on cultural protection. For Mount, America plays a predominant role in the development of Canadian cultural nationalism and protectionism. He explains: "From the Massey Report to Ontario's Royal Commission on Book Publishing, America's enormously successful cultural industries gave Canadian cultural nationalism something to define itself against."[73] The Massey Commission identifies the geography of the nation as having a major impact on the development of a "Canadian spirit."[74] It identifies the main barrier as the proximity of the majority of the population to the American border. The report reads: "On this continent, as we have observed, our population stretches in a narrow and not even continuous ribbon along our frontier—fourteen millions along a five thousand mile front. In meeting influences from across

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[68] Ibid., 162.
[69] Byers, 13.
[70] Mount, 182.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid., 190.
[74] Canada, 13.

the border as pervasive as they are friendly, we have not even the advantages of what soldiers call defence in depth."[75] Here, the Massey Commission employs military imagery to assert the importance of cultural protection from the United States, configuring America as the enemy invader. Litt emphasizes that it was this "perception of an American cultural invasion," as imagined in the Massey Commission, which resulted in the development of Canada's "first conscious and comprehensive cultural policy."[76] In the end, the Massey Commission singled out American influence "as the greatest threat to the development of a distinct Canadian culture"[77] and proposed government subsidies to protect against Americanization.[78]

However, if we look closely at the Massey Commission, the threat of American culture it circulates is explicitly the threat of mass culture. Its anti-American sentiments originate in the threats embodied by mass culture, and these become crucial in the development of cultural-policy discourse. Mount provides context for the development of this discourse. Calling attention to the economic prosperity following World War II, such as the increase in trade with the United States and American investment in Canada, he points to both a rise in the Canadian standard of living and an "unprecedented rise in anxiety about the source of that rise, America and its stuff."[79] For the commissioners of the Massey inquiry, the United States represented all of what "was tasteless and vulgar in modern life."[80] Litt explains how this conflation of American and mass culture added another dimension to a national issue: class.[81] Thus, for the Canadian cultural elite, "the onslaught of American mass culture threatened not just Canadian culture, but traditional high culture as well. The two issues became one."[82] Cultural elitism and nationalism merged into the same issue. Litt explicates how the construction of national culture as high culture developed in contrast to a "stereotype of vulgar Americanism."[83] This operates alongside the image of America as the enemy portrayed in the Massey Commission.

In addition to the "intellectuals, cultural bureaucrats, artists and the voluntary associations" who "dominated the Massey Commission's hearings," the commissioners were

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[75] Ibid., 14.
[76] Litt, 379.
[77] Ibid., 378.
[78] Ibid., 379.
[79] Mount, 15.
[80] Litt, 380.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid., 385.

also members of the Canadian cultural elite.[84] Mount shows how the Massey Commission laboured "to defuse concerns that it would impose highbrow tastes on Canadians,"[85] for example, by omitting the word *culture* from the Commission.[86] Mount recounts how at the first press conference, Commission Chair Vincent Massey, "charter member of Toronto's social elite," ironically expressed how he was "a bit shy about the word 'culture.' It has sort of a highbrow ring about it."[87] The Massey Commission addresses this concern about imposing culture on the Canadian public explicitly in its mandate, which reads: "At the outset of the inquiry we were asked whether it was our purpose to try to 'educate' the public in literature, music and the arts in the sense of declaring what was good for them to see or hear. We answered that nothing was further from our minds than the thought of suggesting standards in taste from some cultural stratosphere."[88] Litt argues that the Massy Commission's deployment of nationalism helped to dissuade the Canadian public's wariness of elite culture by offering "popular appeal."[89] At the same time, the implicit cultural elitism of this developing discourse of cultural nationalism gave it a unique identity and sense of "moral superiority."[90]

As Litt reasons, in order to completely grasp the significance of this conceptualization of Canadian cultural nationalism, "the international intellectual concerns of the postwar period have to be taken into account"; notably, the concern that "mass culture undermined democracy."[91] The Massey Commission took place during the pinnacle of the Cold War, "when capitalist democracies were struggling to articulate the superiority of their way of life over that of communism."[92] Litt identifies how the belief that the "successes of fascism and of communism … rested to a significant degree on their exploitation of mass media" was prominent at the time.[93] This understanding brings new meaning to the Massey Commission beyond petty anti-Americanism. By contextualizing the Massey Commission, Litt establishes how it "had a bearing not just upon the identity and future of the Canadian nation, but upon the survival of western liberal democracy"; in this context, high culture served as "an antidote to mass culture and the

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[84] Ibid., 380.
[85] Mount, 38.
[86] Canada, 7.
[87] qtd. in Mount, 38.
[88] Canada, 6.
[89] Litt, 381.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Ibid., 382.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid.

susceptibility to totalitarianism which it bred."[94]

Herein we discover another paradox. Throughout the Massey Commission, the commissioners consulted American experts.[95] Thus, American influence is only a threat when packaged in mass culture. The Massey Commission's compounding of nationalism, high culture, and cultural protectionism, as well as its use of anti-Americanism as a substitute for anti-mass culture, produces a discourse of cultural nationalism that the Canadian public could support, one which "would be influential for years to come."[96] Remnants of this discourse of cultural nationalism continue to circulate through discourses of Canadian celebrity and celebrity in Canada today.

Returning to the second paradox, one way that Canadian celebrity can occur is after an individual gains recognition outside the nation. Discussing Cohen, Mount contributes to this discourse by declaring it is "not an accident that the bestselling poet in Canada was first a successful singer in America."[97] Once they succeed in the United States, Canadian performers gain cultural capital and celebrity in Canada[98] and Canadians work to reclaim them as their own. Examining a process similar to Canada's claiming of Mary Pickford as part of our cultural heritage (e.g. through granting her a star on Canada's Walk of Fame), in "Rediscovering Nell Shipman for Canadian Cultural Heritage" Amy Shore charts how Canada reincorporates persons who gain fame outside the country back into our cultural heritage. Shore argues that Canada's success in culturally claiming Nell Shipman came about by virtue of her "original stardom,"[99] emblematic of the core values and ideals of Canadian nationalism at the turn of the twentieth century, for example a now "'lost' form of nationalism that links national identity and landscape."[100] Shore describes how acts of cultural claiming take place in a variety of "institutions, from museums and archives to libraries, national parks, corporate exhibits, malls, amusement parks, and historical tourist sites in Canada and around the world."[101] Canada's Walk of Fame forms another interesting example of an institutional act of claiming.

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[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid., 383.
[96] Ibid., 384.
[97] Mount, 185.
[98] Deveau, 168.
[99] Amy Shore, "Rediscovering Nell Shipman for Canadian Cultural Heritage," in *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, ed. Katja Lee and Lorraine York (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), 21.
[100] Ibid., 31.
[101] Ibid., 22.

Canada's Walk of Fame characterizes itself as a "public / private non-profit organization," and lists Bell Media, Cineplex, Royal Bank of Canada, Molson Canadian, and *The Globe and Mail* among its corporate partners.[102] Aiming to be "the pinnacle of achievement in Canada," its vision is to be "a catalyst that inspires all Canadians to go for the gold, empowering and connecting us to excellence in every field—regionally, nationally and around the world."[103] On its website, everyday Canadians can nominate famous Canadians for consideration for induction.[104] The nomination page lists four criteria for nomination. First, the nominee "must have been born in Canada or have spent their formative or creative years in Canada."[105] According to this first criterion, simply being born in Canada is sufficient for an act of claiming. If an individual was not born in Canada, having spent "their formative or creative years in Canada" makes them equally eligible.[106] This demonstrates the slipperiness of cultural claiming and reveals an implicit debate concerning who constitutes a Canadian citizen.

While the second criterion involves the length of performance experience or size of body of work, a "Nominee must have a minimum of 10 years' experience in their field and have an established body of work," the third and fourth criteria deal explicitly with the nominee's impact on Canada and Canadian culture.[107] The third criterion requires that a "Nominee must have had national or international impact on Canada's heritage."[108] This criterion clearly expresses the pervasiveness of Canadian celebrity within economies of cultural heritage.[109] Shore explains how the "practice of modern cultural heritage" centres around an artifact that can be claimed by an official entity, thereby transforming "the artifact into 'cultural property.'"[110] Drawing on Eisuke Tanaka, she elaborates how these artifacts play "an important role in providing a concrete image of a particular past, the history of the nation or an ethnic group," which aids in "proving their existence and presence."[111] Similar to Shore's account of the process that claimed Nell Shipman

[102] "Our Partners," Canada's Walk of Fame, accessed October 17, 2018, https://www.canadaswalkoffame.com/our-organization/our-partners.
[103] "Our Vision," Canada's Walk of Fame, accessed October 17, 2018, https://www.canadaswalkoffame.com/our-organization/our-vision.
[104] "Nominations," Canada's Walk of Fame, 2018, accessed September 3, 2018, https://www.canadaswalkoffame.com/inductees/nominations.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Shore, 23.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Tanaka qtd. in Shore, 23.

for the nation by converting her into "an object for cultural claim and then linked to Canada as a site of 'origin,'"[112] Canada's Walk of Fame reifies Canadian celebrities into cultural artifacts for the nation to claim and consume. As these illustrations indicate, the celebrity becomes a surface onto which "cultural heritage becomes inscribed," and in the process it obtains symbolic value for the nation.[113]

The fourth criterion constructs the celebrity as an ideal citizen, necessitating the nominee embody core values defining Canadian identity: "Peace Loving, Diverse, Harmonious, Socially Responsible, Creative, Confident, Innovative, and Successful."[114] Together, these last two criteria clearly exemplify how Canadian celebrity is often "configured as national citizen."[115] Sheryl Hamilton refers to this as "the second structuring myth of Canadian celebrity: the celebrity citizen" and explains how in "Canada, good celebrities are nation-builders."[116] This reflects the Massey Commission's mandate in providing financial support for cultural production, as culture is that which creates national feeling and unites the nation. The best example of a celebrity citizen for Hamilton, however, is a famous athlete who is a good sport and role model.[117] Playing for a national sports team, the famous athlete's "national affiliation is taken as given."[118] A prime example of this would be hockey player Sidney Crosby, whom the Canadian public recognizes as one of its own. Early in his career he was considered the next Wayne Gretzky (another famous Canadian hockey player), and is now a superstar NHL hockey player who has represented Team Canada at both the Junior and Olympic levels.

Thirty-one of 173 inductees on Canada's Walk of Fame fall under the category of sports, making it the second largest group after music (forty-eight inductees).[119] The category of film and television is the largest with sixty-nine inductees. Curiously, while Nickelback was awarded a star on Canada's Walk of Fame in June 2007, Leonard Cohen is receiving this honour posthumously in December 2018. This forces the question of the unspoken criteria of economic success. Nickelback's career shows great financial and commercial success, selling over fifty

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[112] Shore, 23.
[113] Ibid.
[114] "Nominations."
[115] Hamilton, 200.
[116] Ibid., 203.
[117] Ibid., 202.
[118] Ibid., 204.
[119] "Inductees," Canada's Walk of Fame, 2018, accessed September 3, 2018, https://www.canadaswalkoffame.com/inductees.

million records worldwide,[120] but in terms of cultural capital, there are widespread negative public perceptions of the quality of the band's music. Nickelback's profile on Canada's Walk of Fame website ends with the statement: "The band has sold over 21,000,000 album copies in the U.S. alone."[121] This exposes the role of economic factors as well as American recognition in the constitution of Canadian celebrity. Cohen, conversely, has a history of more modest record sales in Canada,[ii] nevertheless achieving a high level of cultural capital.

The slippery process of claiming celebrities is also evident in literary culture. Here, "Canadian-ness" becomes a loosely defined category that classifies and claims individuals as Canadian, regardless of place of birth or current place of residence, as the country seeks to celebrate and claim any individual achievement that reflects greatness onto the nation. For example, when Carol Shields won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1995 for *The Stone Diaries*, it marked an immense achievement for a Canadian author and for Canada. However, the basis of Shields's eligibility for the Pulitzer was her place of birth, the United States, a factor largely ignored by celebrations. When the Nobel Prize in Literature went to Alice Munro on October 10, 2013, she was upheld as the first "Canada-based writer" and one of thirteen women to ever win this award.[122] Speaking to the CBC shortly after hearing the news, Munro stressed the importance of her award to Canadians and Canadian literature, stating: "I'm particularly glad that winning this award will please so many Canadians. I'm happy, too, that this will bring more attention to Canadian writing."[123]

An article by Mark Medley in the *National Post* details reactions to Munro's Nobel Prize, including those from then Prime Minister Stephen Harper and the Artistic Director of the International Festival of Authors, Geoffrey Taylor, who compared Munro's achievement as commensurate to a win by the Canadian national hockey team at the Olympics.[124] Tongue-in-cheek, a picture accompanying Adam Sternbergh's article in *The New York Times* blog *The 6th*

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[120] Paul Resnikoff, "Nickelback Is Officially the 11th Best-Selling Band in History," *Digital Music News*, January 25, 2017, https://www.digitalmusicnews.com/2017/01/25/nickelback-best-selling-band/.

[121] "Nickelback," Canada's Walk of Fame, 2018, accessed September 4, 2018, https://www.canadaswalkoffame.com/inductees/2007/nickelback.

[122] Mark Medley, "Alice Munro Wins Nobel Prize in Literature, First Canada-Based Writer to Win Award," *National Post*, October 10, 2013, https://nationalpost.com/afterword/canadian-author-alice-munro-wins-nobel-prize-in-literature.

[123] "Alice Munro Is 1st Canadian Woman to Win Nobel Literature Prize," CBC News, updated October 11, 2013, https://www.cbc.ca/news/entertainment/alice-munro-is-1st-canadian-woman-to-win-nobel-literature-prize-1.1958383.

[124] Medley.

*Floor* features a group of Canadians celebrating an Olympic gold metal win in hockey in 2002; the caption reads: "No doubt the streets of Canada look similar today."[125] Although Quebec-born Saul Bellow received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1976, most news articles dismissed his Canadian birth in view of his American residency, reaffirming Munro's win as the first "real" win for a "real" Canadian author (Bellow moved to the US as a child). This suggests that Canadians are quick to celebrate any accomplishment associated with the nation, although such celebration is overwritten when a "real" Canadian achieves greatness.

When Eleanor Catton won the Governor General's Literary Award for fiction in 2013, Thomas Hodd, Assistant Professor of Canadian literature at the Université de Moncton, expressed his disdain for awarding a national prize to an author no longer residing in Canada. In the *Toronto Star* article "The Scandal that is Canadian Literature," Hodd frames the event as a travesty.[126] Catton's win is unjustified, he claims, because she is not a Canadian resident; born in Canada, she moved away at age six.[127] Bringing Alice Munro's Nobel Prize into the discussion, he invokes a sense of shame that people worldwide recognized Munro's talents and understood she was a deserving recipient, while locally we failed to afford her the same acclaim. He remarks: "Who did Canada award for our country's top literary prize this year? A New Zealander."[128] Hodd places considerable value on the author and their role in nation building, yet disregards the nation strengthening effect of a Canadian winning an extranational prize such as the Nobel Prize.

This reveals another tension created by the paradoxical understanding of Canadian celebrity. Ira Wagman suggests Canada does not have the celebrity mechanism necessary "to produce the spectacles that would celebrate Canadian achievements," adding that Canadians are reluctant to express their desire to celebrate such accomplishments out of concern for being considered "'too American' or, even worse, 'a sell out.'"[129] This takes us back to the first paradox of Canadian celebrity: Canadian celebrity desires American recognition but defines itself against conceptualizations of American celebrity, understood as a negative manifestation of

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[125] Adam Sternbergh, "Why Alice Munro Is Canada's First Nobel Prize Winner for Literature (with an Asterisk)," *The 6th Floor*, *New York Times*, October 10, 2013, 2013, https://6thfloor.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/10/10/why-alice-munro-is-canadas-first-nobel-prize-winner-for-literature-with-an-asterisk/.
[126] Thomas Hodd, "The Scandal That Is Canadian Literature," *The Toronto Star*, November 14, 2013, https://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2013/11/14/the_scandal_that_is_canadian_literature.html.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Wagman, 203.

economic forces and mass culture. Thus, Canadians are highly ambivalent in regards to celebrity, at once celebrating Canadians who achieve success outside the nation while simultaneously believing that the pursuit of success internationally is akin to "selling out." Yet, as Hamilton explains, demonstrations of Canadian-ness by celebrities can help negate this "sell-out" status.[130]

It is often comparisons between Canada and the United States that reinforce beliefs about Canada's lack of a star system. Lee and York contend that the "ease with which American cultures of celebrity can circulate in Canada and the capacity of our talent, particularly English-Canadian talent, to pass into their systems has promoted discourses that mobilize the US as the yard-stick by which to measure ourselves."[131] As referred to above, these discourses have roots in the cultural nationalism and cultural protectionism discourses that surround the Massey Commission, which frame Canadian cultural nationalism in distinction to American culture.

The overriding interest in the difference between (English) Canadian and American celebrity leaves a deficiency in English-language scholarship in regards to less visible star systems, such as Quebec's star system (with the exception of a few notable works: Bodroghkozy; Dickinson; Czach; Straw "Cross-Border"). *Celebrity Cultures in Canada* makes an effort to investigate the often invisible public spheres "whose media structures, when well-integrated across platforms, have the potential to give rise to celebrities," including those in Indigenous, Asian, and South Asian communities.[132] Just as Canadian celebrity culture is frequently subject to being "trivialized or even delegitimized when measured by the reach and influence of other star systems," discussions of celebrity in Canada tend to neglect these smaller publics, in part a factor of the adjacency to our American neighbours and a cultural nationalist discourse that defines Canada in distinction to our neighbours.[133]

In "Celebrity and the Cultivation of Indigenous Publics in Canada," York begins to bridge this gap in the literature by examining the relationship between celebrity and Indigeneity in Canada. Her approach moves beyond the limited "oppositional stance that leaves Indigenous culture simply and only ever reacting to non-Indigenous mainstream culture" and recognizes the complexity of Indigenous celebrity.[134] She posits that while dominant models of celebrity place

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[130] Hamilton, 204.
[131] Lee and York, "Introduction," 15-16.
[132] Ibid., 16.
[133] Ibid.
[134] Lorraine York, "Celebrity and the Cultivation of Indigenous Publics in Canada," in *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, ed. Katja Lee and Lorraine York (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), 95.

value on individualism and view fame as an individual achievement, Indigenous media publics offer possibilities for restructuring celebrity in terms of a "collectivist achievement."[135] York's article marks a crucial first step towards recognizing celebrity in an array of communities in Canada and provides a corrective to other studies, such as Michele Byers's essay "On the (Im)possibility of Canadian Celebrity," which, York argues, "equates celebrity with whiteness in too cursory a fashion."[136]

While American recognition of Canadian talent appears to be an important aspect of Canadian celebrity, the success of Canadian exports does not always lead to celebration. As Deveau explains, despite the temptation of "American acceptance, American cultural goods, American money and American respect" aiming for success in the United States also implies something "dirty and problematic."[137] She describes the tension that "plays out as a compromise between creatively principled work in Canada and the pursuit of wealth through the mass entertainment system in the US."[138] Comparisons between the United States and Canada are not just about difference, "but are simultaneously about valuation."[139] In *Impersonations*, Hamilton argues that the ongoing tension between three prevailing discourses, "merit, sovereignty, and personality," serves to perpetuate two dominant myths about Canadian celebrity: Canadian celebrity hinges on merit or qualities, not personality, and celebrities contribute to nation building.[140] Regarding the merit discourse, she claims that it ultimately reproduces a dichotomy between high and low culture.[141] She identifies a national "unease with celebrity and its commodification" and "a distrust of the persona within a marketized economy."[142] By constructing Canadian celebrities as more "deserving / authentic / sincere / self-made / modest / real … Canadian celebrity inevitably emerges from this comparison as morally superior."[143] These comparisons often rely on a discourse that represents Canada in high cultural, aesthetic terms and the United States in low cultural, economic terms, a discourse, as Augus discovers, discernible in the Massey Commission.[144]

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[135] Ibid.
[136] Ibid., 96.
[137] Deveau, 179.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Hamilton, 202.
[140] Ibid, 200-201.
[141] Ibid., 218.
[142] Ibid., 200.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Angus, 241.

Liz Czach's comparison of English-Canada and Quebec celebrity in "*Bon Cop, Bad Cop*: A Tale of Two Star Systems" further contributes to the discourse that distinguishes Canadian celebrity.[145] In comparing Quebec's domestic star system and English-Canada's underdeveloped celebrity mechanisms, she similarly constructs a high / low cultural binary between the two. For example, arguing that "Quebec produces *stars* while English-Canada, at best, produces well-known or *recognizable actors*," Czach participates in the discourse that (English) Canada does not have the apparatus to create celebrity.[146] Implicit within Czach's argument is the notion that English-Canada cannot manufacture celebrity, as its main operating principle is to produce high culture. Again we find influences of the cultural nationalism discourse, in the association of mass culture with economic capital and cultural recognition with symbolic value and cultural capital.

Examining Colm Feore and Patrick Huard, the main actors in *Bon Cop, Bad Cop* who come from English Canada and Quebec respectively, she distinguishes Feore's high cultural associations from Huard's popular "everyman" status. Czach lists Feore's history with the Stratford Festival, his work in art films, and his varied performances across a wide range of highbrow texts, claiming that "Feore's work in these arguably 'unpopular' high-culture texts reaches a limited audience that does not translate into a stardom of a name-brand variety."[147] Her analysis represents a variation on the first paradox of celebrity, by constructing (English) Canada as disinterested in popular culture and celebrity and preoccupied with high cultural recognition. By doing so, Czach portrays Quebec as parallel to the United States in its production of popular stars and successful star system.

Due to the intervention of the federal government in Canada's culture industries along with the discourse of cultural nationalism, Canadian culture often appears more aligned with (high) cultural concerns. In "Bureaucratic Celebrity," Ira Wagman elucidates how celebrity discourse "freely flows between the pages of policy documents and tabloids"[148] and emphasizes the need to study state-sponsored systems of cultural production and celebrity. Reasoning that certain social forces and structural factors impede Canadian cultural expression, cultural policy developed as compensation for "a 'promotional gap' in Canada's entertainment industries" and

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[145] Liz Czach, "*Bon Cop, Bad Cop*: A Tale of Two Star Systems," in *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, ed. Katja Lee and Lorraine York (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016).
[146] Ibid., 131.
[147] Ibid., 136.
[148] Wagman, 202.

to foster a cohesive Canadian culture.[149] The result is a detailed and complex policy apparatus—a complicated nexus of policies, programs, and procedures—governing cultural production in Canada.[150] In turn, this amalgam of "paperwork" becomes a key part of the cultural and artistic practice of cultural workers, acting as "the medium between artists and their work."[151] From grant applications to financial reports, government paperwork acts as a conduit through which "celebrities are afforded legitimacy" and ideas about celebrity circulate.[152] Wagman argues that "since much cultural discourse in this country appears caught between aesthetic judgments about the quality of a creative work and the politics of the system that assists, to varying degrees, in making that work possible, this has an effect on the nature of discourse around those who occupy celebrity status in Canada."[153]

Would Cohen have become a celebrity without the assistance of the Canada Council? Moreover, if it were not for the discourse of cultural nationalism, which shaped the value of particular types of cultural production in Canada, would Cohen have been considered a candidate for national attention? In 1958, Cohen was among the first recipients of the new Canada Council Junior Arts Fellowships.[154] Despite Mount's joke that the "idea of giving taxpayer money to Leonard Cohen so he could get high in Greece took some getting used to,"[155] the Massey Commission and the resulting Canada Council grants shaped and continue to shape discourses of celebrity in Canada. For Wagman, to declare celebrity a policy matter is not "an exercise in hyperbole."[156]

The lack of critical attention to subjects such as governmental paperwork is indicative of our discomfort with giving recognition to the economic, commercial, and bureaucratic aspects of cultural production in Canada. In *Canadian Literary Power*, Frank Davey reveals the propensity in Canadian culture to separate economic, political, literary, cultural, and symbolic power, "as if the structures of wealth production and distribution did not effect electoral processes, as if which governments we elect did not effect cultural institutions and funding and effect ultimately what gets published, by what publishers, in what regions, and with what amount of distributional

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[149] Ibid., 205.
[150] Ibid., 206.
[151] Ibid., 209.
[152] Ibid., 202.
[153] Ibid., 209.
[154] Mount, 42.
[155] Ibid., 43.
[156] Wagman, 300.

force."[157] He suggests the way we conceive literary power is also a way of constructing, disputing, constraining, and allocating power[158] and that the struggle for literary power in Canada, while often camouflaged as aesthetic, is actually a struggle for social and political power.[159]

Corroborating the bureaucratic complexity of Canada's culture industries, Kit Dobson and Smaro Kamboureli observe how a multitude of forces mediate cultural objects.[160] In *Producing Canadian Literature: Authors Speak on the Literary Marketplace*, Dobson and Kamboureli query a range of Canadian authors of literary fiction (novels and poetry) about their literary processes and interactions with funding agencies, literary awards, publishers, and agents in a series of interviews. Through these interviews, they investigate the material reality of literary production in Canada, questioning what happens between the moment a book is first written and when it finally arrives on store and library bookshelves.[161] By accentuating the relationships and interactions between authors and publishers, agents, editors, and institutions such as granting agencies and literary awards, they probe the ways in which "the Canadian culture industries influence the creative practice of writers"; this focus recognizes that literary production does not take place in a cultural or social vacuum.[162]

By considering the "material conditions that shape the making and circulation of a book," Dobson and Kamboureli subvert the conjecture that "writers interact directly with readers through the words that they set down on the page."[163] Their decision to employ the interview format stems predominately from the decline in letter writing as a practice, which formerly constituted a key resource for information on literary authors, and due to the difficulty of otherwise gaining a comprehensive overview of the Canadian literary market, as literary authors have limited representation in such studies.[164] In the introduction, Dobson explains:

> We opted for the interview mode because our project was generated by our desire to find
> out how literary authors navigate the cultural marketplace, that is, how the publishing and

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[157] Davey, 3-4.
[158] Ibid., 7.
[159] Ibid., 39.
[160] Kit Dobson and Smaro Kamboureli, *Producing Canadian Literature: Authors Speak on the Literary Marketplace* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2013), 8.
[161] Ibid., 5.
[162] Ibid., 2.
[163] Ibid., 4, 2.
[164] Ibid., 4-5.

marketing conditions influence—positively or adversely—their writing, but also to confirm or belie some of our own perceptions and assumptions about what for most readers seems to remain an invisible or mystifying process.[165]

Dobson and Kamboureli strive to salvage the distance between the author and the reader in a culture industry that upholds "an affective vision of the book as the unmediated vision of an artist, one that the reader, in turn, can access."[166] As they illuminate, within the distance between author and reader lays an array of material, industrial, and governmental conditions that impact cultural production.

Owen Percy draws on the work of Barbara Godard to emphasize the specificity of Canadian cultural production. His argument revolves around the nation state and its centrality to "the socio-cultural framework upon which any notion, past or present, of professional Canadian culture relies."[167] For Godard, fields of cultural production in Canada, especially the literary field, "are not autonomous in the way Bourdieu formulated the concept" due to government intervention and cultural protectionism.[168] She stresses how at "every stage in cultural production, government financial support compensates for the lack of economic capital invested in publishing—grants to artists, block grants to publishers, fees to translators, funds to promote books and support readings of work by writers and translators."[169]

Percy interprets this centrality of the nation in cultural production as "an ever-present governmentality."[170] For Foucault, the art of government concerns the proper management of individuals, goods, and wealth akin to the "meticulous attention of the father towards his family," and governmentality incorporates this type of care into the management of the state.[171] Connecting Foucault's notion of governmentality with cultural policy, cultural policy can be understood as part of this "duty of care."[172]

Foucault traces these questions of government back to the sixteenth century, questions

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[165] Ibid., 5.
[166] Ibid., 8.
[167] Owen Percy, "Prize Possession: Literary Awards, the GGs, and the CanLit Nation" (University of Calgary, 2010), 81.
[168] Barbara Godard, *Canadian Literature at the Crossroads of Language and Culture* (Edmonton: NeWest Press, 2008), 279.
[169] Ibid.
[170] Percy, 81.
[171] Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, ed. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 92.
[172] Miller and Yúdice, 5.

which go beyond notions of governing a state and include: "How to govern oneself, how to be governed, how to govern others, by whom the people will accept being governed, how to become the best possible governor."[173] Comparing governing the state with that of a household, Foucault adds further clarity: "Governing a household, a family, does not essentially mean safeguarding the family, their wealth and prosperity. It means to reckon with all the possible events that may intervene, such as births and deaths, and with all the things that can be done … it is this general form of management that is characteristic of government."[174] Applying this rationale to the governing of a state thus involves not only governing the population, but importantly their relations to other events, which Foucault characterizes under three categories of things: wealth and resources, culture and customs, and accidents and misfortunes.[175] In essence, what matters most in governing is "this complex of men and things; property and territory are merely one of its variables," and so is culture.[176]

Within governmentality, the family is no longer the model of governing, but becomes a tool for its implementation.[177] Both "internal and external to the state," governmentality can be understood as "the tactics of government which make possible the continual definition and redefinition of what is within the competence of the state and what is not, the public versus the private, and so on."[178] In this way, governmentality involves the institutionalization and instrumentalization of different forms of care, including responsibilities once under the jurisdiction of the church, the family, and so forth, extending the reach of the state. Viewed as a resource by the state, the population and its welfare constitute the main purpose of government, "the object in the hands of the government, aware, *vis-à-vis* the government, of what it wants, but ignorant of what is being done to it."[179]

In their introduction to *Critical Cultural Policy Studies: A Reader*, Justin Lewis and Toby Miller explain the link between Foucault's conceptualization of governmentality and cultural policy.[180] For Lewis and Miller, cultural policy operates as a "site for the production of cultural

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[173] Foucault, 87.
[174] Ibid., 94.
[175] Ibid., 93.
[176] Ibid., 94.
[177] Ibid., 100.
[178] Ibid.
[179] Ibid.
[180] Justin Lewis and Toby Miller, eds., *Critical Cultural Policy Studies: A Reader* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2003).

citizens," which governments utilize to provide its citizens with images of "patriotism, custom, and art."[181] They define cultural citizenship as a discourse that maintains and expands "cultural lineage via education, custom, language, and religion, and the acknowledgement of difference" to other cultures.[182] In this way, culture industries present citizens with a range of reflections of themselves as well as the "rationales for particular types of conduct."[183] For example, the museum, as a cultural institution, is both a "form of display, invoking certain histories and suppressing others" and a demand for a specific type of citizenship that "respects authority and the narratives that sustain it."[184]

Cultural policies work to develop distinct "institutions, practices, and agencies" in order to discover, provide, and "nurture a sense of belonging."[185] In turn, cultural policies are a form of governance that promotes "public collective subjectivity."[186] In part, cultural policies rest on the "insufficiency of the individual";[187] for example, the belief that Canadians will not consume Canadian cultural products without the development of Canadian content regulations that "force" this content on the nation. Lewis and Miller term this an "'endangered species' approach to culture," but importantly point out how protection is only available to certain types of culture, while others are left to die.[188]

Identifying two dominant understandings of culture, Lewis and Miller discuss how our view of cultural policy is contingent on how we approach culture.[189] The first understanding of culture is an aesthetic approach, which "focuses on self-consciously 'artistic' output, emerging from creative people and judged by aesthetic criteria."[190] The second understanding is an anthropological approach to culture that defines culture as "an all-encompassing concept about how we live our lives, the sense of place and person that make us human—what Raymond Williams referred to as a 'structure of feeling.'"[191] For Lewis and Miller, the first understanding

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[181] Ibid., 1.
[182] Ibid.
[183] Ibid.
[184] Ibid., 2.
[185] Ibid.
[186] Ibid.
[187] Ibid.
[188] Ibid., 4.
[189] Ibid., 2.
[190] Ibid.
[191] Ibid., 3.

of culture has overt elitist tones.[192] Preferring the second understanding, they demonstrate how it gives a more complete appreciation of the workings of cultural policy, more specifically how this complex network of policies and guidelines "define what takes place and which visions of the social they privilege."[193] This allows for an analysis of cultural policy in terms of how it conjures national discourse and evokes "ideas of nation that are fraught with political choices about who or what can legitimately represent a national culture."[194] This discernment of cultural policy is important to the study of celebrity in Canada, as cultural policy implicitly permits certain forms of cultural production over others, resulting in the national celebration of some individuals over others, notably, celebrities and public figures who represent the nation. Thus, cultural policy plays a pivotal role in determining who can speak for the nation.

In "Canadian Cultural Policy in the Age of Media Abundance: Old Challenges, New Technology," Ira Wagman and Ezra Winton advance an understanding of cultural policy in Canada as "a convenient container term that refers to the portfolio of legal, regulatory, and technical instruments that structure and support artistic activities from broadcasting to ballet," arguing that the aim of these cultural policies is to promote equilibrium between two opposing value sets, the aesthetic and the economic.[195] They clarify how the Canadian government stresses "the *national* significance of its cultural policies" in order to nullify any "potential clashes" between these two values.[196] Through their study of Canadian cultural policy, Wagman and Winton expose the national concern with balancing aesthetics and economics in the production of Canadian culture, revealing how at times economic capital becomes disguised as national capital within the Canadian culture industries. As a classic case of governmentality, cultural policy channels artists "like service providers to manage the social."[197] In doing so, the cultural sector is "simultaneously clarifying, abetting, modifying, and countering market tastes" all under the unifying banner of nationalism.[198]

Reflecting Davey's comment regarding the linkages between the government we elect

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[192] Ibid.
[193] Ibid.
[194] Ibid., 5.
[195] Ira Wagman and Ezra Winton, "Canadian Cultural Policy in the Age of Media Abundance: Old Challenges, New Technologies," in *Mediascapes: New Patterns in Canadian Communication*, ed. Leslie Regan Shade (Toronto: Nelson, 2010), 61.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Miller and Yúdice, 21.
[198] Ibid.

and cultural production in Canada, Wagman looks at the strategies the federal government employs to (re)brand itself.[199] Writing while Stephen Harper's Conservative government was still in power, Wagman observes how the Department of Canadian Heritage website, decorated in Tory blue instead of the traditional red and white of the Canadian flag, "barely mentioned that this is the agency devoted to supporting culture, ensuring Canadians can tell stories, and developing a positive cultural identity."[200] Here, Wagman identifies significant changes, a shift from a "cultural nationalist discourse" to a "rhetoric of job creation and innovation," and a shift from cultural value to economic health.[201] This prompts him to contemplate: "If federal cultural policy measures are now presented explicitly in economic terms, will that change the ways artists interface with the state,"[202] and I would add, how does this alter our perception of the value of cultural production in Canadian culture? Since the federal government participates in the culture industries through funding and cultural policy, as governments change we can expect a shift in policy, funding, and ultimately the value of artistic production in Canada. This will create new understandings of celebrity and its cultural, economic, and national value in Canada. With the election of Justin Trudeau as Prime Minister in 2015, this discussion becomes all the more pertinent.

Looking at the Department of Canadian Heritage website in 2018 under the Trudeau government tells a slightly different story. The description at the top of the page clearly indicates this is the agency that supports culture. It reads: "Canadian Heritage and its portfolio organizations play a vital role in the cultural, civic and economic life of Canadians."[203] At the same time, it retains a bit of what Wagman refers to as a "rhetoric of job creation"[204] with its emphasis on the number of jobs the government helps create in the culture industries, "more than 650,000 jobs in sectors such as film and video, broadcasting, music, publishing, archives, performing arts, heritage institutions, festivals and celebrations."[205] By offering financial information regarding the amount that the Canadian Government spends on arts, culture, and

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[199] Wagman, 217.
[200] Ibid.
[201] Ibid.
[202] Ibid., 218.
[203] "Canadian Heritage," Government of Canada, updated August 6, 2018, accessed August 11, 2018, https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage.html.
[204] Wagman, 217.
[205] "Canadian Heritage."

heritage: $53.8 billion,[206] the website implicitly connects the health of Canadian cultural production to the amount of money it represents in the Canadian economy. Overall, the website appears to assert an educational, cultural discourse that advises Canadians to "Show your pride for this amazing country," "Discover Parliament Hill," "Learn more about Canada's languages," "Get information about the melodies, objects and flags that have become … the symbols by which Canadians identify themselves."[207] In this way, the website attempts to conjure a feeling of national pride, perhaps not so different from the discourse of cultural nationalism.

The intersection between discourses of celebrity and nationalism is a popular topic among scholars of Canadian celebrity. Approaching the myth of Terry Fox from a critical, disability-centred standpoint, in "Terry Fox and Disabled Celebrity" Valerie Millar explores how "Canadian nationalist interests shape Fox as the ideal citizen."[208] This reflects Hamilton's argument regarding the myth of the celebrity citizen: the belief that "in Canada, good celebrities are nation-builders."[209] In her article, Millar situates Fox's Marathon of Hope in 1980 within the political climate of the country at the time, a climate heavily defined by a threat to Canadian nationalism by Quebec pro-separatists.[210] In the context of the Liberal government's agenda to foster Canadian unity, Fox's cross-country Marathon of Hope quickly adopted "a nationalist framework that was, if not explicitly used by the Canadian government, certainly promoted in Canadian media-produced imagery and rhetoric."[211] The image of Fox as he arduously makes his way along Canadian highways, "the maple leaf emblazoned on his T-shirt,"[212] positions him as "a symbol of a united country—his run was a reconfirmation of Quebec's decision" to remain part of Canada.[213]

David Young identifies a similar positioning of Céline Dion within the 1980s national unity debate in his article "Céline Dion, National Unity and the English-language Press in Canada." Finding parallels between the rise of Dion's career and the growing tensions between Quebec and English-Canada, he contends that "Dion had emerged as a star all across the

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[206] Ibid.
[207] Ibid.
[208] Valerie J. Millar, "Terry Fox and Disabled Celebrity," in *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, ed. Katja Lee and Lorraine York (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), 60.
[209] Hamilton, 203.
[210] Millar, 60-61.
[211] Ibid., 60.
[212] Ibid., 61.
[213] Taft qtd. in Millar, 61.

country—embraced in both French Canada and English Canada—at a time when it was looking more than ever like the country might eventually break up."[214] Examining the intersections between discourses of nationalism and English-language media coverage of Dion,[215] he discovers a "pro-unity frame" portraying Dion as a "unifying force" who has "the ability to bring anglophones and francophones together."[216] In her article "Canadian Political Celebrity: From Trudeau to Trudeau," Jennifer Bell considers how political celebrity operates as a "calculated process" and develops within the context of particular cultural and historical periods.[217] For example, during his time as Prime Minister of Canada, Pierre Elliot Trudeau served as a "unifying image" of the nation.[218] If, as Dyer suggests, stars offer a "value, order, or stability to counterpoise" social uncertainty,[219] then these studies reveal how the ideal celebrity in Canada is one that represents a unified, Canadian national identity.

As other scholars attest, this interaction between discourses of nationalism and celebrity regularly occurs on Canadian television programming, such as *Canadian Idol*, *Hockey Night in Canada*, CBC's biography program *Life & Times,* and its 2004 competition *The Greatest Canadian*. In her article, "Lament for a Hockey Nation, Don Cherry, and the Apparatus of Canadian Celebrity" Julie Rak traces the ways in which Don Cherry performs a "melancholic nationalist narrative"[220] that directs "attention away from the fact of American corporate dominance in Canada by appealing to an imagined Canadian dominance of hockey in the past."[221] His appearance as a top ten finalist for *The Greatest Canadian*, and the only media personality to reach the top ten, fixes Cherry's celebrity to "working class values and nationalism."[222]

Using *The Greatest Canadian* and *Life & Times* as examples, Rak describes how the genre of television biography works as a social practice that produces a "biography of the

[214] David Young, "Céline Dion, National Unity and the English-Language Press in Canada," *Media, Culture & Society* 23, no. 5 (2001): 650.
[215] Ibid., 659.
[216] Ibid., 650-651.
[217] Jennifer Bell, "Canadian Political Celebrity: From Trudeau to Trudeau," in *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, ed. Katja Lee and Lorraine York (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), 74-75.
[218] McLuhan qtd. in Bell, 78.
[219] Dyer, *Stars*, 31.
[220] Julie Rak, "Lament for a Hockey Nation, Don Cherry, and the Apparatus of Canadian Celebrity," in *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, ed. Katja Lee and Lorraine York (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), 120.
[221] Ibid., 121.
[222] Ibid., 120.

nation."[223] She reveals how "the national identity of the subjects is central to the telling of their life story," which she ties to a "lack of celebrity discourse in Canada."[224] *The Greatest Canadian* forms a particularly noteworthy case of an "unabashedly partisan and populist history mixed with celebrity glamour," as celebrities are on the list of greatest Canadians, a list of individuals nominated for the competition by additional Canadian celebrity figures.[225] Other studies focus on *Canadian Idol*, which Byers, for example, sees as creating music stars while simultaneously participating in producing a "commonsense understanding of what a Canadian *is—or isn't*."[226] Byers's study heightens awareness of the circulation of celebrity discourses on television and their role in establishing and perpetuating notions of Canadian citizenship and "mythic notions about Canada as a nation."[227]

Implicit within both paradoxes of Canadian celebrity—that Canadian celebrity is something that both can and cannot occur in Canada and Canadian celebrity is anti-American but desires American acceptance—is the belief that the celebrities who circulate in Canada are different. In the final section of "On the (Im)possibility of Canadian Celebrity," Byers observes "the paradoxical nature of the more obscure creature: the Canadian celebrity at home."[228] She asks, "Why is it that these identities may be stopped at the border, and how may they be recuperated to celebrity status within the nation?"[229] In posing such questions, she plays on the paradox of Canadian celebrity that dictates going beyond our national borders represents the true mark of fame, implying celebrity status within the nation is somehow of less consequence. Byers suggests that "being too Canadian" is a hindrance and thwarts individuals from finding fame outside the country.[230] Furthermore, the "very qualities that make someone famous in Canada may work against their becoming a transnational celebrity."[231] For Byers, being a successful

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[223] Anderson qtd. in Julie Rak, "Bio-Power: CBC Television's *Life & Times* and A&E Network's *Biography on A&E*," *LifeWriting* 1, no. 2 (2005): 21.

[224] Ibid., 35.

[225] Julie Rak, "Canadian Idols? CBC's *The Greatest Canadian* as Celebrity History," in *Programming Reality: Perspectives on English-Canadian Television*, ed. Zoë Druick and Aspa Kotsopoulos (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2008), 52.

[226] Michele Byers, "*Canadian Idol* and the Myth of National Identity," in *Programming Reality: Perspectives on English-Canadian Televisio*, ed. Zoe Druick and Aspa Kotsopoulous (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2008), 75.

[227] Ibid., 80.

[228] Byers, "On the (Im)Possibility," 18.

[229] Ibid.

[230] Ibid., 21.

[231] Ibid.

Canadian celebrity requires leaving the nation, but "being too Canadian"[232] is a barrier to international recognition. From this viewpoint, the Canadian celebrity in Canada is also understood as a failure of celebrity. Byers's article demonstrates how scholars also participate in discourses of Canadian celebrity, perpetuating particular notions.

Describing the other part of the paradox, that celebrity can occur at home, Hamilton depicts Canada's expanding celebrity apparatus as a collage of various uncoordinated parts: "the Junos, the Genies, *Star!* TV, the Toronto International Film Festival, 'Can-Con' regulations, the Hockey Hall of Fame, the Scotiabank Giller Prize, the Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit, Star-Académie, the cover of *Maclean's* magazine, *Canadian Idol*, and so on."[233] What is noticeably missing from this list is the CBC, which not only helps produce and circulate celebrity, but is also a celebrity in its own right. Wagman suggests that Canada's biggest international celebrities are not in fact individuals, but are institutions like the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) or the National Film Board (NFB), which are highly recognizable Canadian entities.[234] Moreover, within Canada news anchors and radio hosts achieve their own celebrity status.

In "Theorising the State Celebrity: A Case Study of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation," Patricia Cormack and James Cosgrave call attention to the role of state broadcasters in the "shaping and cultivation of celebrity"[235] and set forth the concept of state celebrity as a critical but largely untapped aspect of celebrity culture.[236] Centering on the CBC and its white, male "personality system" (Don Cherry, Peter Mansbridge, Rick Mercer, and George Stroumboulopoulos),[237] their analysis underlines the necessity of contextualizing the CBC in terms of its extensive "official history of cultural protectionism."[238] Cormack and Cosgrave reveal that not only does the state celebrate and promote local celebrities, but as "objects of state themselves, these celebrities work to celebrate the state in all its manifestations—technologies, personnel, policies, practices, and ideologies."[239] Accordingly,

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[232] Ibid.
[233] Hamilton, 200-201.
[234] Wagman, 202.
[235] Patricia Colleen Cormack and James F Cosgrave, "Theorising the State Celebrity: A Case Study of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation," *Celebrity Studies* 5, no. 3 (2015): 321.
[236] Ibid., 334.
[237] Ibid., 327.
[238] Ibid., 326.
[239] Ibid., 335.

state celebrity serves to legitimize the state broadcaster, "setting it apart from 'crass' commercial considerations."[240]

In "State Celebrity, Institutional Charisma and the Public Sphere: Managing Scandal at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation," Cormack and Cosgrave analyze the scandal involving Jian Ghomeshi, a (former) CBC radio host accused of sexual assault, examining "how contemporary liberal-democratic state broadcasters make use of celebrity for their own self-legitimation as moral mediators of the public sphere and nation."[241] Identifying Ghomeshi as a state celebrity, they demonstrate how the academic conceptualization of celebrity as commodity "does not completely fit the state celebrity we have found cultivated at the CBC."[242] Cormack and Cosgrave expand this conceptualization with the idea that "state celebrity functions as a mediated pseudo-commodity, attractive because he or she apparently offers cultural products fashioned at least in part *outside* the demands of profit making."[243] This understanding of state celebrity as pseudo-commodity is helpful in exploring the types of celebrities that Canadian culture industries produce, and leads me to suggest that this might be why literary celebrity circulates so well in Canada, as both are understood as cultural products produced beyond the realm of market demand and profits.

As members of the national family, state celebrities stand at the intersection of "state, nation building and official culture" and their "exemplary nature as citizens and representatives of the nation" has an instrumental part in building emotional identification among Canadian citizens.[244] Cormack and Cosgrave link the creation of the CBC in the 1930s to "cultural sovereignty concerns"[245] and highlight its role in the 1960s and 1970s with building a distinct Canadian identity, fostering "home-grown talent," and cultivating a "new generation of Canadian celebrities."[246] This reinforces the authority of the CBC as a national, cultural institution.[247] In order to keep up with the diversifying population and younger generations, the CBC continually incorporates and circulates new stars that attract younger audiences while still representing

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[240] Ibid., 325.
[241] Cormack and Cosgrave, "State Celebrity," 1049.
[242] Ibid., 1050.
[243] Ibid.
[244] Ibid.
[245] Ibid.
[246] Ibid., 1051.
[247] Ibid.

national values.[248] Using an interview between Stroumboulopoulos and Ghomeshi pre-scandal as an example, Cormack and Cosgrave identify how these CBC celebrities play a key role in redefining what it means to be Canadian "from within their multifaceted roles as citizens, celebrities, and embodiments of state policy (towards multiculturalism) and commentators."[249] In turn, Stroumboulopoulos and Ghomeshi were integral to the rebranding of the CBC as a Canadian national institution for younger audiences.[250]

In late October 2014, the Canadian public began grappling with and responding to the CBC's firing of Ghomeshi. Many of the news articles revolved around Ghomeshi's role as a Canadian public figure, dissecting the careful creation of his celebrity persona. Many Canadians however claim that they were not aware of Ghomeshi, denying his celebrity by disputing his visibility. As York observes, celebrities' immersion in "an economy of visibility" makes them vulnerable to one of the most discrediting accusations, that of being invisible.[251] For Cormack and Cosgrave, the circulation of one image in particular encapsulated Ghomeshi's fall. The image "captured a CBC maintenance worker standing on a tall ladder scraping off Ghomeshi's portrait in the CBC lobby—an efficient visual trope of the ritual expunging of this larger-than-life star from his state-cultural home."[252] Canadian media circulated this image, including the CBC.

If "CBC's moral positioning within Canada allowed this scandal to be potentially bigger than it would be in the case of similar transgressions committed by a journalistic / cultural celebrity in the private sphere,"[253] how did the CBC discursively manage this scandal and maintain its identity as a Canadian cultural institution and moral mediator? Cormack and Cosgrave observe how the CBC managed this scandal by divorcing its managerial and journalistic voices.[254] In response to the scandal, the CBC underwent a workplace investigation (the Rubin Report) and aired an investigative documentary by "award-winning" CBC television program *The Fifth Estate*, "The Unmaking of Jian Ghomeshi."[255] Cormack and Cosgrave identify how both "*The Fifth Estate* broadcast and the Rubin Report work discursively (one as

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[248] Ibid., 1052.
[249] Ibid.
[250] Ibid., 1053.
[251] York, *Margaret*, 6.
[252] Cormack and Cosgrave, "State Celebrity," 1056.
[253] Ibid., 1054.
[254] Ibid., 1057.
[255] Ibid.

journalistic guardian of the public sphere and the other as independent rational-legal investigator) to save the CBC from itself, by separating managers and celebrity from the broader institution."[256] For example, the recommendations of the Rubin Report permitted the CBC to publicly "locate scandal at the level of its star and his managers,"[257] thereby redeeming itself as the "nation-cultural-moral guardian" of Canadian culture[258] and "the gold standard ... for journalists and cultural workers."[259]

With the election of Trudeau as Prime Minister in 2015, Canada's celebrity apparatus again came to the forefront as the fanfare surrounding Trudeau was commensurate to that of celebrity. The CBC's coverage of the swearing in of Trudeau was extensive, including a twenty-five minute documentary in which chief correspondent Peter Mansbridge, who received his own round of cheers and applause when arriving on the scene, followed Trudeau around for the day, giving the Canadian public an insider look. The documentary[260] contains intimate footage of Trudeau with his children the morning of his swearing-in ceremony and features Mansbridge asking Trudeau personal questions about his father, the importance of this day, and his feelings in the moment.

Although not convinced Canada has its own celebrity culture or star system, in "Television, Film, and the Canadian Star System" Czach presents the idea that if Canada did have a celebrity culture, it would be located, "developed and sustained through television."[261] Pointing to the absence of "domestically produced movie stars,"[262] or what Charles Acland deems Canada's "*star-system-in-exile*" to refer to the process by which Canadians consume our national celebrities through American films,[263] she maintains that celebrities in Canada are largely persons who make regular television appearances. This corresponds to Aniko Bodroghkozy's assertion that Canada's, albeit limited, star system consists of journalists,

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[256] Ibid., 1059.
[257] Ibid., 1058.
[258] Ibid., 1059.
[259] Ibid., 1056.
[260] *The National*, "Behind-the-scenes of Justin Trudeau's first day as Prime Minister," aired November 4, 2015, on CBC.
[261] Czach, "Television," 65.
[262] Ibid.
[263] Charles R. Acland, *Screen Traffic: Movies, Multiplexes, and Global Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 191.

interviewers, and other television personalities.[264] This is not to undervalue the importance of literary and musical celebrity, but to highlight the role of television in introducing the Canadian public to the personalities of authors and musicians.

Thus, for Czach and Bodroghkozy, the specificity of Canadian celebrity culture lies in whom we choose to celebrate, or rather, who is left to celebrate. Rather than movie stars, Canadian celebrity culture is made up of television anchors and radio hosts, athletes, politicians, authors, musicians, and other individuals who commonly appear on television, which, like radio, is a very intimate medium. In analyzing the intersections between Canadian television and film, Czach uses as an example the career of Paul Gross and his cameo in *Barney's Version*. She brings his cameo performance to the forefront as "a tongue-in-cheek intertextual reference to Gross's best-known role as the earnest Mountie Benton Fraser on the television series *Due South*."[265] This leads Czach to conclude that Canada's star system works inversely to the Hollywood star system. That is, unlike the Hollywood star system where television operates as an ancillary mechanism of celebrity, in Canada the creation of celebrity occurs through television, and film becomes an ancillary mechanism of fame.[266]

For Wagman, the development of telecommunications and expansion of media in Canada has not assisted in the creation of a homegrown star–system, but has "only served to improve the exposure of celebrities from other places."[267] He elaborates on the selective media coverage of Canadian celebrities:

> A stable of domestic *paparazzi*, gossip columnists or "gawker stalkers" tracking the shopping habits, dieting fads, and nocturnal affairs of Sarah Polley or members of the Tragically Hip would be a refreshing departure for a media culture that largely ignores prominent figures except those who are usually seen wearing hockey equipment or who advocate for social issues like the environment.[268]

Making a similar point about the seemingly absurd category of literary celebrity, and echoing York in *Literary Celebrity in Canada*, Percy remarks: "'Literary Celebrity?' Really? And, more specifically, Canadian poetry celebrity? Erin Mouré thronged by legions of squealing fans at a

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[264] Aniko Bodroghkozy, "As Canadian as Possible …: Anglo-Canadian Popular Culture and the American Other," in *Hop on Pop: The Politics and Pleasures of Popular Culture*, ed. Henry Jenkins, Tara McPherson, and Jane Shattuc (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 575.
[265] Czach, "Television," 68.
[266] Ibid.
[267] Wagman, 203.
[268] Ibid.

book launch? Don McKay swarmed by paparazzi on what his publicist promised him was a remote hiking trail? Leonard Cohen dating fashion models, wearing designer suits and sunglass—uh, nevermind."[269] As Percy humorously alludes to, Cohen and his celebrity may be an exception to Wagman's argument, premised on his various bases of fame.

While these overarching discourses of celebrity in Canada form the foundation for my analysis, it is important to be watchful for signs of shifting or emerging discourses, especially when there are changes in the elected government, for example, the shift from Harper's federal Conservative government to Trudeau's Liberal government in 2015. Since the Canadian government has a direct impact on the culture industries, it is likely that new understandings of celebrity will develop. There may be indications of emerging discourses, for example, which challenge the belief that Canada lacks mechanisms for producing and circulating celebrities, or that "Canadian-ness" is instrumental in the production of celebrity.

One indication of an emerging discourse may be found in the manner in which some Canadian journalists, such as Dave Bidini, discuss our national icons, taking a more critical, rather than the traditional celebratory stance. In his *National Post* article "An Open Letter to Joni Mitchell, From Dave Bidini," he remarks that because Joni Mitchell is "a 'legend' and a 'cultural treasure' and an 'icon,' people thread [her] lots of rope"; however, he refuses to.[270] Appalled at some of Mitchell's recent comments, such as negative remarks about musicians covering her songs, Bidini does not hold back, reminding Mitchell that she should be grateful for her privileged position. He writes: "I wonder about grace and class and how hard it is for you to be kind—simply kind—or to express gratitude that people are out there keeping your music alive, whatever the quality of their interpretation. Shouldn't you feel lucky or blessed? I know I would. I know most would. Instead, you mock those who celebrate your work."[271] Additionally, he frames the public acceptance of Mitchell's negative attitude and comments within what he views as a general problem of celebrity and fame in Canada: "allowing people a wider birth because of their fame or rank."[272] Bidini's critical stance suggests a lack of tolerance for celebrities who utilize their fame as a shield, or excuse, for bad behaviour. Instead, he reinforces the idea that we

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[269] Owen Percy, "Re: Focusing (on) Celebrity: Canada's Major Poetry Prizes," in *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, ed. Katja Lee and Lorraine York (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), 189.
[270] Dave Bidini, "Paving over an Icon's Paradise: An Open Letter to Joni Mitchell," *National Post*, November 29, 2014.
[271] Ibid.
[272] Ibid.

should be critical of all bad behaviour and not provide celebrities with a pass due to their high social and cultural (and economic) capital.

In addition to the circulation of celebrity discourse by mainstream media and audiences, cultural policy, Canadian publicity law, and academic studies all further shape and circulate celebrity discourse. For Lee and York, the study of celebrity discourses in Canada "includes and absorbs those very discourses that question the viability, significance, and/or existence of Canadian celebrity: to disavow Canadian celebrity is to participate and sustain a discourse about the phenomenon."[273] In studying discourses of celebrity in Canada and the Cohen phenomenon, this dissertation likewise actively participates in these discourses, negating, reinforcing, and circulating particular understandings of celebrity in Canada.

### 1.3 Literary Celebrity

Literary celebrity forms an area of celebrity scholarship that is flourishing both in and outside Canada. In Canada, York has produced groundbreaking work, starting with her 2007 book *Literary Celebrity in Canada*, the "first full-length study of the author as media persona in Canada,"[274] and her follow-up *Margaret Atwood and the Labour of Literary Celebrity*. In both books, York makes the methodological decision to apply celebrity theory from other disciplines to the literary field, as studying literary celebrity separately from other fields may obscure potential interconnections.[275] Other notable scholarship that investigates the various facets of Canadian literary celebrity includes Joel Deshaye's *The Metaphor of Celebrity: Canadian Poetry and the Public, 1955-1980*, Gillian Roberts's *Prizing Literature*, and Owen Percy's "Re: Focusing (on) Celebrity: Canada's Major Poetry Prizes" and dissertation "Prize Possession: Literary Awards, the GGs, and the CanLit Nation."

As York's work demonstrates, Atwood's celebrity persona has become a popular topic in studies of literary celebrity in Canada. For example, Susanne Becker writes about Atwood's development as "Canada's most gossiped-about writer,"[276] analyzing both media representations and Atwood's "own ironic voice … in her essays and fiction."[277] In "Invented Interventions: Atwood's Apparatuses of Self-Extension and Celebrity Control," Phebe Ann WolfrOme

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[273] Lee and York, "Introduction," 15.

[274] York, *Literary*, 3.

[275] Ibid., 20.

[276] "Interview with Margaret Atwood," *Maclean's*, September 6, 1976, 4.

[277] Susanne Becker, "Celebrity, or a Disneyland of the Soul: Margaret Atwood and the Media," in *Margaret Atwood: Works & Impacts*, ed. Reingard M. Nischik (New York: Camden House, 2000), 29.

discusses Atwood's negotiation of celebrity in relation to her invention of the LongPen, a device that allows authors to sign books remotely. Wolframe claims that "Atwood's LongPen is one in a series of devices she uses, both in her novels and in her public life, to extend and control her celebrity persona."[278]

In addition to Atwood, Lucy Maud Montgomery is also a primary example of literary celebrity. In *Women, Celebrity, & Literary Culture Between the Wars*, Faye Hammill devotes a chapter to Montgomery, the only illustration of Canadian literary celebrity in her book.[279] In "A New and Exceedingly Brilliant Star," Hammill analyzes the interplay between the celebrity images of Montgomery, her character Anne Shirley (a celebrity in her own right), and the actresses who play Anne on screen.[280] Holly Pike's article, "Mass Marketing, Popular Culture, and the Canadian Celebrity Author,"[281] appears in Irene Gammel's book *Making Avonlea*, a collection of essays that examines "the national and international popular industry that has emerged in Montgomery's name."[282] For Gammel and the collection's authors, Montgomery's name no longer represents "just the author of the books; it also represents the author behind a 'pop culture' industry that includes musicals, films, tourist sites, an official provincial license plate, dolls … and much more, as Montgomery's value spawns a multimillion dollar industry in tourism and entertainment."[283]

Despite the growing interest in literary celebrity in Canada, Cohen is rarely the main subject. Instead, analyses of Cohen's literary work predominate (see for example, Davey; Diehl-Jones; Ellison; Gnarowski; Hutcheon; Kerber; Macfarlane; Markotic; Morley; Nonnekes; Rae; Ravvin; Scobie; Siemerling; Wainwright). Joel Deshaye's essay "Celebrity and the Poetic Dialogue of Irving Layton and Leonard Cohen" and his book *The Metaphor of Celebrity: Canadian Poetry and the Public, 1955-1980* are notable exceptions, as Deshaye frames his analysis of Cohen through the lens of celebrity. In the first line of *The Metaphor of Celebrity*,

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[278] Phebe Ann Wolframe, "Invented Interventions: Atwood's Apparatuses of Self-Extension and Celebrity Control," *Margaret Atwood Studies* 2, no. 1 (2008): 14.
[279] Faye Hammill, "'Astronomers Located Her in the Latitude of Prince Edward Island': L. M. Montgomery, *Anne of Green Gables*, and Early Hollywood," in *Women, Celebrity, & Literary Culture between the Wars* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007).
[280] Hammill, "A New," 652.
[281] Holly Pike, "Mass Marketing, Popular Culture, and the Canadian Celebrity Author," in *Making Avonlea: L. M. Montgomery and Popular Culture*, ed. Irene Gammel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).
[282] Irene Gammel, ed., *Making Avonlea: L. M. Montgomery and Popular Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 8.
[283] Ibid., 6.

Deshaye establishes his interest in "poets imagining celebrity."[284] Here, the emphasis is on the author's experience of celebrity, an "identity crisis," and the articulation of this experience in the poetry of literary celebrities in Canada.[285] Observing that "celebrity is much more literary than we might expect," he considers the "influence of literary thinking in popular culture.[286]" While Deshaye provides an astute analysis of Cohen's experience of celebrity as depicted in his poetry, because of his focus on primary literary texts, Deshaye's study at times reads like a thematic analysis of Cohen's poetry.

Despite his inclusion of two short chapters that centre on non-print media (fourteen pages total), Deshaye downplays the relevance of materials of celebrity beyond primary texts—the extra-textual materials that form the main core of my methodology in analyzing the construction and circulation of celebrity discourses and the Cohen phenomenon. Deshaye's argument also appears to revert to discourses of celebrity with the implicit assumptions that there is a fixed subjectivity, the "private self," behind the celebrity persona that experiences an existential crisis of identity in response to celebrity[287] and that the celebrity personae of these poets are entirely of their own manufacturing.[288] Unlike other scholars of literary celebrity, Deshaye depicts celebrity as a short-term, negative manifestation of mass culture and juxtaposes it against the more noble "literary recognition," perceived as a long-lasting, elite form of fame.[289] By concentrating on primary literary texts, Deshaye's analysis falls short with the lack of acknowledgement of the industrial and fan-based aspects of literary celebrity vital to the study of celebrity, especially in Canada.

The scholarship on literary celebrity falls under two main categories: first, studies of literary celebrity that lie closer to thematic analyses of celebrity in the work of famous authors; and second, studies that move away from the primary texts of authors and examine the broader entanglements of celebrity in the field of literary production. Deshaye's work falls firmly into the first category, and in some respects Loren Glass's study *Authors Inc.: Literary Celebrity in the Modern United States, 1880-1980* also exemplifies this first category. Curiously, in his study of

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[284] Joel Deshaye, *The Metaphor of Celebrity: Canadian Poetry and the Public, 1955-1980* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 3.
[285] Ibid.
[286] Ibid., 4.
[287] Ibid., 5.
[288] Ibid., 9.
[289] Joel Deshaye, "Celebrity and the Poetic Dialogue of Irving Layton and Leonard Cohen," *Studies in Canadian Literature* 34, no. 2 (2009): 78-79, 100.

literary celebrity in the United States between 1880-1980, Glass defines literary celebrity as an historical phenomenon originating in late nineteenth-century America alongside the "rise of mass culture and the first crisis of masculinity" and *ending* toward the close of the twentieth-century with the "emergence of postmodernity and the second crisis of masculinity."[290]

Glass discerns how the rise of mass culture adversely affected male literary celebrities within this period and investigates the masculine personae that these authors developed in reaction to the increasingly feminized mass marketplace. For these authors, "Celebrity challenged deeply held convictions about authorial inspiration and property in texts by appearing to cede creative agency and control to the mass audience and literary marketplace."[291] Authors such as Ernest Hemingway and Norman Mailer perceived this change as a loss of their own authorial control and reacted strongly against it.[292] For Glass, the conflict between the model of the author as creative genius and the model of the author as manufactured by the marketplace establishes the quintessential tension of modern celebrity.[293] However, by locating celebrity as an historical phenomenon within modernism, he fails to recognize the possibility that literary celebrity might continue to operate within this tension.

Regarding the second category of literary celebrity studies, the works of Tom Mole, Lorraine York, Joe Moran, Wenche Ommundsen, and James English and John Frow all call attention to the importance of studying literary celebrity as a phenomenon within the field of literary production. Starting from the position that there is no comprehensive history of celebrity and no determined date of emergence, in *Byron's Romantic Celebrity*, Mole sets out to explore the origins of celebrity culture in its contemporary form within the Romantic period, centering on the career of Lord Byron. In order to approach both the artistic and commercial aspects of literary celebrity, Mole defines celebrity as a cultural apparatus that involves the relationships between a celebrity, industry, and audience and demonstrates how celebrity materialized within the context of the industrialized print culture of the late eighteenth century.[294] Under the category of industry, Mole differentiates between a primary and secondary industry, where the primary industry produces and circulates the author's work and the secondary industry promotes and

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[290] Loren Glass, *Authors Inc.: Literary Celebrity in the Modern United States, 1880-1980* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 23.
[291] Ibid., 8.
[292] Ibid.
[293] Ibid., 6-7.
[294] Mole, xi.

circulates the literary celebrity.[295] He maintains that what marks the emergence of modern celebrity culture is the point at which these three elements—celebrity, industry, audience—come together and work to "render an individual personally fascinating."[296]

The influence of Mole on York's writing, especially the concept of the celebrity apparatus, is evident in her book *Margaret Atwood and the Labour of Literary Celebrity*. Continuing her quest to reintegrate economic and industrial factors into studies of literature, York emphasizes the "industrial relations that enable and reproduce literary celebrity" and conceptualizes celebrity "as the product of the labour of many other agents in dialogue with a celebrated individual," such as literary agents, publicists, editors, publishers, and assistants.[297] Drawing on Mole's definition of celebrity as a cultural apparatus, she clarifies the essential role of the industry in creating literary celebrity, demonstrating how it interacts with celebrity and audience.[298] York refutes the notion that celebrity is a contemporary phenomenon and adopts an historical perspective, one that recognizes its lengthy and varied past. For her, it is a simplification to attribute the exposure from publicity to literary stardom.[299]

Evoking comparison to unrecognized technical labour in cinema, she gives recognition to the unknown workers "whose labour rarely enters discourse"[300] and concentrates on the "second-order cultural workers in the Atwood 'industry.'"[301] York remains unequivocal about how both academic studies and celebrity discourse tend to discount the large amount of industrial labour involved in the production and circulation of celebrity.[302] In response, her study examines these "cultural intermediaries" and illuminates how the struggles among agents in the field of literary production involve "varied combinations of cultural and economic imperatives and motives."[303] In doing so, she establishes a new approach to celebrity, a model of literary celebrity that underlines the industrial constitution and agency of the author and complicates "any easy dichotomy between economics and literature."[304]

Approaching literary celebrity as located in-between Bourdieu's restricted and extended

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[295] Ibid., 3.
[296] Ibid., 1.
[297] York, *Margaret*, 8.
[298] Ibid., 11.
[299] Ibid., 22.
[300] Ibid., 10.
[301] Ibid., 161.
[302] Ibid., 12.
[303] Ibid., 17-18.
[304] Ibid., 24, 38, 40.

subfields of cultural production, the next three studies form key examples of the growing concern with economic factors in literary studies more generally and literary celebrity studies in particular. In *Star Authors: Literary Celebrity in America*, Moran considers the interrelation between creativity and economics in the field of literary production. Demonstrating how literary celebrity opens up vital questions about "the relationship between literature and the marketplace, and between 'high,' 'low,' and 'middlebrow' culture in contemporary America,"[305] he challenges the "descension narrative" that positions celebrity as a debased version of fame.[306] He claims that academics are guilty of propagating this narrative, which juxtaposes "'serious' literature with the frivolous, titillating agenda of the media and the disposability of consumer culture."[307] It is this naturalization of the unquestioned authority of the author that Moran seeks to disrupt in his book.

Drawing on the work of Bourdieu, Moran depicts literary celebrity as simultaneously both marketable commodity and creative talent[308] and argues that literary celebrities represent "complex cultural signifiers who are repositories for all kinds of meanings, the most significant of which is perhaps the nostalgia for some kind of transcendent, anti-economic, creative element in a secular, debased, commercialized culture."[309] For Ommundsen, this fundamental friction between elite fame and crass celebrity, or cultural and economic capital, lies at the heart of literary celebrity.[310] In "From the Altar to the Market-Place and Back Again: Understanding Literary Celebrity," Ommundsen, in keeping with York and others, rejects the idea that literary celebrity is a new phenomenon, a product of late-capitalist commodity culture that contaminates literary culture. A seminal contribution of this analysis, neglected by other scholars, is her attention to the intersections between the literary marketplace, celebrity, and the impact of globalization.

Advising literary scholars "to be wary of overly narrow theories of cultural production," in "Literary Authorship and Celebrity Culture" English and Frow resist the ideas that literary celebrity represents the problematic commodification of literature and that the rise of literary celebrity in Britain reflects the influence of American consumer culture.[311] Advocating for a

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[305] Moran, 4.
[306] Ibid., 2.
[307] Ibid.
[308] Ibid., 6.
[309] Ibid., 9.
[310] Ommundsen, 249.
[311] James F. English and John Frow, "Literary Authorship and Celebrity Culture," in *A Concise Companion to Contemporary British Fiction*, ed. James F. English (Malden: Blackwell, 2006), 44.

"multidimensional model of the literary field," English and Frow consider the "literary-value industry" or what Mole refers to as the secondary industry of the celebrity apparatus.[312] They explore the industries, institutions, and individuals involved in "producing the reputations and status positions of contemporary works and authors, situating them on various scales of worth."[313] For English and Frow, the study of literary celebrity is critical as it opens up other paths to investigate and discuss the system of literary value, both in terms of economics and aesthetics.[314]

This begs the question of what makes literary celebrity unique? Both Hammill in "A New and Exceedingly Brilliant Star" and York in *Literary Celebrity in Canada* claim we cannot understand literary celebrity in isolation from other types of fame.[315] For example, Hammill makes connections between literary celebrity and the Hollywood star system, accentuating the central role of the media in constructing and circulating celebrity personae. More specifically, she addresses the contingency of L. M. Montgomery's celebrity on both the fame of her character Anne and on the screen actresses playing Anne.[316] English and Frow express that even if literary celebrity is different, like the movie star, the formation and circulation of the literary celebrity occurs within the secondary industry, "created outside and beyond the immediate domain of recognition and across a range of secondary media."[317] Just as the Hollywood star is a creation of tabloid magazines and "fanzines," the literary celebrity is a product of the media.[318] Yet, for Ommendsen the author represents a measuring device for determining other claims to fame.[319] By contrast, Deshaye locates the specificity of literary celebrity in the ability of celebrity authors to conceal their "private concerns in plain view" and to develop literary personae "as a decoy offered to the public."[320] For me, the specificity of literary celebrity, and especially the particularity of literary celebrity in Canada, lies in its illumination of and its location within the intersections of art and commerce, mass and elite culture, economic and symbolic / cultural value.

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[312] Ibid., 45.
[313] Ibid.
[314] Ibid., 53.
[315] Hammill, "A New," 654.
[316] Ibid., 652.
[317] English and Frow, 51.
[318] Ibid.
[319] Ommundsen, 254.
[320] Deshaye, "Celebrity," 78.

The study of literary celebrity must work against the notion that to celebrate the author, or to be interested in the author's persona, debases literature and literary culture. Acknowledging the widespread perpetuation of the image of the author as pure, creative genius, the study of literary celebrity alternatively stresses the influence of economic and cultural production. Moran identifies the long-established conception of the literary celebrity as inhabiting an elite, superior form of fame that exists outside the marketplace, which he situates in the historical context of the "displacement of aristocratic patronage by the rise of the author as individual entrepreneur within the literary marketplace" in the United States.[321] In a similar vein, Ommundsen describes how "visions of poor but 'pure' writers starving in proverbial garrets" continue to circulate, relegating celebrity to mass culture and to "the lowering of cultural standards."[322] In refuting such images, these scholars unmask the unique position of literary celebrity within the field of production.

According to Mole, celebrities form a distinct, complex, and important set of cultural concerns: "producers and consumers, elite and popular pursuits, high and low culture, bourgeois individualism and proletarian collectivity, cultural capital and hard cash."[323] For Moran, this complex constellation of cultural and economic concerns signals the key difference marking literary celebrity. The interconnections of economic and cultural factors in literary celebrity, he explains, are "part of a complicated process in which various legitimating bodies compete for cultural authority and / or commercial success."[324] In *Margaret Atwood*, York is aware of the complexities underpinning the relationship between economic and cultural production, especially in Canada, and does not attempt to single out particular agents or roles in the literary field as either economic or cultural. In the first chapter, for example, she looks at the author-agent relationship, working to avoid the tendency to "see individuals as separate embodiments of cultural forces in tension";[325] she resists the temptation to align the author with cultural, literary forces and the agent with commercial forces and "crass commercialism."[326]

As these scholars illustrate, the study of literary celebrity is vital. As literary celebrity inhabits a unique position situated between economic and cultural interests, popular and elite culture, a study of its cultural importance reintroduces the role of economic factors. However,

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[321] Moran, 5.
[322] Ommundsen, 245.
[323] Mole, 4.
[324] Moran, 3-4.
[325] York, *Margaret*, 37.
[326] Ibid., 18.

one problem with bringing together this review of the literature on literary celebrity is the specific socio-cultural and historical contexts from which these scholars are writing. There is much to learn about the impact of particular socio-historical contexts on the development of literary celebrity in the United Kingdom, United States, and Canada, for example, the unique factors that underpin their emergence as a phenomenon in these specific locations, and the resulting discourses of literary celebrity.

The study of literary celebrity not only opens up a dialogue of the economic within literary culture, but it also introduces a diverse range of objects of inquiry outside traditional forms of literary analyses. Critical of the overemphasis on close reading or grand surveys, in *The Economy of Prestige*, James English encourages study of a neglected area, "the whole middle-zone of cultural space."[327] It is a space that crowds a whole conglomerate of agents and industrial activities from producers and consumers, "bureaucrats, functionaries, patrons, and administrates of culture" to a vast set of value-industry activities and instruments, such as literary awards, "the best-of list, the film festival, the artists' convention, the book club, the piano competition."[328] Concentrating on this middle ground and focusing on cultural prizes and the players, rules, and strategies involved, English advocates for "a general reorientation of cultural study toward what has too often been set aside as the mere machinery of cultural production."[329]

For English, cultural prizes constitute an instructive site of examination; they are "the single best instrument for negotiating transactions between cultural and economic, cultural and social, or cultural and political capital."[330] In this respect, cultural prizes, as "institutional agents of *cultural intraconversion*,"[331] perform the complex translation of one form of capital into another. Investigating the award as a site of capital exchange and conversion, English recognizes the cultural ambivalence of awards, which he argues stems from our discomfort with the mixing of artistic achievement with consumerism encapsulated by the award.[332] Building on English's study and bringing his examination into a Canadian context, Percy illustrates the interrelations between economic and cultural capital in literary prize culture in Canada. In "Re: Focusing (on) Celebrity: Canada's Major Poetry Prizes," Percy construes literary prizes as "the currency of

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[327] James F. English, *The Economy of Prestige* (Harvard University Press, 2005), 12.
[328] Ibid.
[329] Ibid., 13.
[330] Ibid., 10.
[331] Ibid.
[332] Ibid., 1.

literary celebrity," accentuating their role to "quantify quality" within the literary field.[333]

      Adding national capital to the forms of capital that literary awards circulate and translate, in *Prizing Literature: The Celebration and Circulation of National Culture*, Gillian Roberts investigates the "relationships between text and celebratory context" by identifying and examining moments when particular texts resist incorporation into the national discourses that celebrate them.[334] Like English's depiction of awards as agents in the cultural economy,[335] Roberts argues that literary awards do not simply reflect the "greatness" inherent in a literary work but "are entities unto themselves, carrying as many cultural implications as the works they celebrate, and forming a cultural frame in which the works are consumed and read."[336] She explains that within a Canadian context, the cultural value of the literary award translates into national value; the celebration of literature therefore is the celebration of the nation.[337] Beyond the work of symbolic and economic capital in accruing value from literary prizes, there is "a kind of national capital that functions in Canadian literary prizes and in Canadian responses to extranational prizes that anoint Canadian literature."[338] Drawing on English, Roberts observes how the Canadian government complicates this process of capital intraconversation through its support of national culture and the arts, support which rests in part on fears that non-Canadian cultural products will overshadow the Canadian market.[339] In this respect, she accentuates the pivotal role of national capital within the Canadian economy of prestige.

      In *Reading in Alice Munro's Archives*, Joanne McCaig advocates for the study of literary archives as "an underutilized source of useful information about culture, authorship, and literary process," and selects the Alice Munro archival fonds at the University of Calgary as her primary source.[340] In her study of Alice Munro, McCaig's interest lies in questions of authorship and in issues surrounding the figure and agency of the author: "How is authorship constructed in literary culture? …[and] How can literary archives … be used in conjunction with contemporary

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[333] Percy, "Re: Focusing," 189.

[334] Gillian Roberts, *Prizing Literature: The Celebration and Circulation of National Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 6.

[335] English, 147.

[336] Roberts, 51.

[337] Ibid., 21.

[338] Ibid., 20.

[339] Ibid., 19-20.

[340] Joanne McCaig, *Reading in Alice Munro's Archives* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2002), 13.

theories of literature to explain the inexplicability of authorship?"[341] She clarifies that while Munro's literary works inform her study, she does not analyze them.[342]

Interrogating notions of authorship within the literary marketplace, she draws on Foucault's notion of the author function as a "plurality of selves."[343] Employing this concept, McCaig emphasizes that she is not theorizing "the 'real' Alice Munro, but the author function known as Alice Munro, a plurality of selves that combine to make her the Canadian woman short story writer."[344] Importantly, McCaig points out that "once the author function is in operation, all texts touched by the author's hand become imbued with authority; when an archive purchases Alice Munro's papers, it is not only her published texts that 'received a certain status' but also her letters, her contracts, her grocery lists."[345] By concentrating on the literary marketplace and examining archival materials that reveal the "hard work, the endless drafts and rejections, the desperate periods of block, the effort to integrate one's own vision with the real demands of the marketplace,"[346] McCaig seeks to move beyond romantic notions of the author as genius.

What these approaches all share is their common objective to move beyond methods of close reading in literary analysis and to undertake material-based explorations of objects, processes, practices, relationships, and events that occur in the larger field of literary production. This shift in approach resonates with Williams's call in *Marxism and Literature* for a reimagining of literary theory that incorporates "the specificities of material cultural and literary production."[347] By stepping away from close readings of literary texts, these scholars are able to break down the authority of the author and examine the material reality of literary production, exploring objects, texts, and discourses traditionally ignored by literary studies: biographies, interviews, magazine reviews, literary awards, book clubs, and so forth.

To me, this shift in methodology reflects Foucault's assertion that we need to move away from studying discourse "in terms of their expressive value or formal transformations" and turn instead to understanding "their modes of existence."[348] This involves modes of "circulation,

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[341] Ibid., 3.
[342] Ibid., 13.
[343] Ibid., 10.
[344] Ibid.
[345] Ibid., 5.
[346] Ibid., 54.
[347] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 5.
[348] Michel Foucault, "What Is an Author?," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews by Michel Foucaul*, ed. Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 137.

valorization, attribution, and appropriation," which diverge and adapt to different contexts.[349] By studying literary celebrity, literary awards, correspondence, interviews, popular criticism, and related materials, relationships, and processes located in the middle-zone of cultural space, I believe we are heading in the direction advocated by Williams and Foucault, opening up a more discursive and material-based analysis of literary culture, one that no longer dismisses the role of economics.

**1.4 Celebrity Theory**

In describing her reasons for omitting Cohen from her book *Literary Celebrity in Canada*, York writes:

> An equally obvious choice would have been Leonard Cohen, and scholars in the field might reasonably wonder at his exclusion. But his celebrity was taken to an international level through his work in the recording industry, which, in turn, fed into his literary acclaim. For my study, on specifically literary celebrity, I wanted examples of writers whose fame, no matter what Hollywoodized forms it might subsequently have assumed, derived from their labour as writers of books.[350]

While Cohen forms a prime example of literary celebrity in Canada, as both York and Percy maintain, he also has international recognition for his work as a musician. This complicates any easy analysis of Cohen as a literary celebrity and reaffirms the necessity of drawing on scholarship outside of literary celebrity and from different disciplinary traditions. As both York and Hammill assert, we cannot study literary celebrity in isolation from other types of fame. Moreover, a study of Cohen's literary celebrity cannot ignore the other drivers of his fame. In this section, I question the usefulness of media-based taxonomies of celebrity and instead propose how celebrity functions as another form of capital in the competition for cultural authority.

Writing in the early 1970s, Francesco Alberoni declares that stars are a powerless elite who, in contrast to true elites—kings, political leaders, etc.—hold no institutional power, despite the "maximum degree of interest" in their lives.[351] He argues that although stars are highly

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[349] Ibid.

[350] York, *Literary*, 7.

[351] Francesco Alberoni, "The Powerless Elite: Theory and Sociological Research on the Phenomenon of the Star," in *The Celebrity Culture Reader*, ed. P. David Marshall. (New York: Routledge, 2006), 108.

observable, with an increase in observability comes a decrease in power.[352] Writing a decade earlier, Daniel Boorstin mourns the rise of a "new kind of eminence"[353]—celebrity—a product of the Graphic Revolution, which witnessed the mass reproduction and increased circulation of images.[354] Walter Benjamin similarly laments the loss of aura that occurs with mass production—due to its removal from time and space, from tradition, and thus resulting in the loss of its authenticity.[355] Using film as an example, Benjamin describes how the film star's lack of an aura results from an absence created by the performer acting in front of a "mechanical contrivance" instead of an audience.[356] For him, this leads to the cult of the personality outside of the film.[357] He explains: "The cult of the movie star, fostered by the money of the film industry, preserves not the unique aura of the person but the 'spell of the personality,' the phony spell of a commodity."[358] The construction of the film star through discourse outside of the film thereby attempts to compensate for this loss of aura. For Boorstin, celebrity exemplifies how fame and greatness become conflated; the Big Name and the Big Man (hero) become one.[359] While the hero achieves greatness, the celebrity is merely "known for his well-knownness."[360] Boorstin laments that we can make a man famous, "but we cannot make him great."[361]

Although these early scholars of fame describe the changes taking place, their tone is predominantly nostalgic. While Alberoni argues that stars have no institutional power and Boorstin views celebrity as a debased-version of fame, in "The Triumph of Mass Idols" Leo Lowenthal identifies a shift in societal choices of celebrities through comparing the subjects of biographies in two newspaper publications from the early 1900s and the 1940s.[362] On this basis, he uncovers a shift from idols of production to idols of consumption. The subjects of biographies in the early 1900s mainly represent models of success—businessmen, political leaders, etc.[363] in

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[352] Ibid., 112.
[353] Daniel Boorstin, "From Hero to Celebrity: The Human Pseudo-Event," in *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* (New York: Atheneum, 1992), 57.
[354] Ibid., 13.
[355] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schoken, 2007), 229.
[356] Ibid.
[357] Ibid., 231.
[358] Ibid.
[359] Boorstin, 47.
[360] Ibid., 57.
[361] Ibid., 48.
[362] Leo Lowenthal, "The Triumph of Mass Idols," in *The Celebrity Culture Reader*, ed. P. David Marshall (New York: Routledge, 2006), 128.
[363] Ibid., 128.

contrast to those of the 1940s, which include "the headliners of the movies, the ball park, and the night clubs."[364] Lowenthal identifies consumption as a major theme running through the biographies as well as the newspapers that printed them.[365]

Viewing these idols of consumption as pseudo-educational models,[366] Lowenthal appears to reproduce the "narcotizing illusion" that Alberoni works against, the notion that stars function as an escape fantasy for the masses to distract them from their own exploitation under the capitalist system.[367] Boorstin perpetuates a similar manipulation thesis regarding celebrity as a "human pseudo-event."[368] Yet, Leo Braudy sees this as a rather nostalgic response. In his book *The Frenzy of Renown*, he makes the point that in terms of contemporary celebrity, fame cannot be divorced from greatness and furthermore proposes that the idea of greatness has instead been redefined.[369] More specifically, greatness and achievement no longer contain an external but rather an internal element. That is, greatness comes from within.[370]

Examining scholarship on celebrity, it becomes clear that debates about the "newness" of celebrity, its emptiness versus former types of pure, heroic fame, continue to proliferate. Like Braudy, perhaps it is more fruitful to shift the debate slightly. Instead of discussing what constitutes a real celebrity, we need to take a step back and contemplate what the study of celebrity can tell us about our own tastes, biases, and culture. What can the study of celebrity reveal about the inner workings of popular culture that other areas of inquiry cannot, and how does it lead us to consider important objects of inquiry neglected by other approaches?

With the publication of *Stars* in 1979, Dyer changes the ways in which we study stars.[371] In this pioneering text, Dyer constructs a dual approach, combining semiotics and sociology, empirical data with theory.[372] Viewing the star as a social phenomenon, a sign, and an image, Dyer analyzes film stars "in terms of their signification, not with them as real people."[373] Overall, his interest lies in the ideological power of the star, its ideological function and its ideological

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[364] Ibid., 130.
[365] Ibid., 132.
[366] Ibid., 145.
[367] Alberoni, 119.
[368] Boorstin, 57.
[369] Leo Braudy, *The Frenzy of Renown: Fame and Its History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 587.
[370] Ibid.
[371] Su Holmes, "'Starring … Dyer?': Re-Visiting Star Studies and Contemporary Celebrity Culture," *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture* 2, no. 2 (2005): 8.
[372] Dyer, *Stars*, 1-2.
[373] Ibid., 2.

content.[374] He defines ideology as "the set of ideas and representations in which people collectively make sense of the world and the society in which they live."[375] Conceptualizing the star as a media text, he brings attention to their "structured polysemy, that is, the finite multiplicity of meanings and affects they embody," and how these meanings shift in particular socio-historical moments.[376] Rebutting Alberoni's assertion that stars have no power, Dyer elucidates how Alberoni, by focusing on institutional power, neglects the ideological power of stars.[377]

With the publication of *Heavenly Bodies* several years later, Dyer introduces the role of discourse and the audience to the study of stardom, explaining: "It is through the concept of discourses that I have sought to bring together the star seen as a set of media signs with the various ways of understanding the world which influenced how people felt about the star."[378] Dyer clarifies how celebrity engages with discourses of subjectivity, which explicate what it is like to be an individual in capitalist society, "with its particular organization of life into public and private spheres."[379] For Dyer, this captures our preoccupation with stars, as they provide us with models of how to make sense of everyday life.[380]

In his chapter on Marilyn Monroe, Dyer contextualizes the study of her star image within two dominant discourses of sexuality at the time, characterized by *Playboy* and the Kinsey report on human sexuality.[381] He attributes Monroe's charisma to her embodiment of these discourses at the height of their popularity, discourses that designated "the important-at-the-time central features of human existence."[382] Dyer employs the term discourse to "indicate that we are not dealing with philosophically coherent thought systems but rather with clusters of ideas, notions, feelings, images, attitudes and assumptions that, taken together, make up distinctive ways of thinking and feeling about things, of making a particular sense of the world."[383]

Influenced by Dyer, David Marshall's *Celebrity and Power* frames the discursive power of the celebrity as "a voice above others, a voice that is channeled into the media systems as

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[374] Ibid., 20.
[375] Ibid., 2.
[376] Ibid., 3.
[377] Ibid., 7-8.
[378] Dyer, *Heavenly*, ix.
[379] Ibid., 15.
[380] Ibid.
[381] Ibid., 17.
[382] Ibid., 18.
[383] Ibid., 17.

being legitimately significant."[384] For Marshall, the power of the celebrity resides in the capacity "to represent the active construction of identity in the social world. Studying the celebrity offers the reader of culture a privileged view of the representative forms of modern subjectivity that pass through the celebrity as discourses."[385] Ultimately, Marshall stresses the power of the celebrity in terms of "its capacity to house conceptions of individuality and simultaneously to embody or help embody 'collective configurations' [audiences] of the social world."[386] Marshall establishes the role of celebrity in how members of dominate and subordinate cultures alike make sense "of the social world."[387] Marshall arrives at the conclusion that while the culture industries manufacture the star, it is re-read, re-interpreted, and sometimes rejected by the audience. In this way, the celebrity is both commodity and an object of affect.[388]

While Dyer makes significant inroads in the field of film stardom, Marshall broadens the scope of his study to involve television and music, thereby contributing to scholarship that categorizes celebrity in terms of media distinctions. Reinforcing a media-based taxonomy of celebrity, Marshall points to the mysteriousness of the film star ("admiring identification"[389]), the familiarity of the television personality (sympathetic association[390]), and the associative audience identification with the musician.[391] While the older nostalgia-based taxonomies of celebrity bemoan the emergence of new, empty, and powerless types of fame, here celebrity is distinguished by medium. For example, in her introduction to *Stardom: Industry of Desire*, Christine Gledhill emphasizes the hegemony of the film star as the ultimate arbiter of fame.[392] However, the clearest illustration of this media-based taxonomy of celebrity can be seen in the work of John Ellis.

In "Stars as Cinematic Phenomenon," Ellis contrasts film stars and television personalities, claiming that unlike film, television does not produce stars.[393] For Ellis, the star as a cinematic phenomenon stands out for two main reasons: the star paradox, the depiction of the

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[384] Marshall, *Celebrity and Power*, x.
[385] Ibid., xi.
[386] Ibid., xi-xii.
[387] Ibid., 51.
[388] Ibid., 245.
[389] Ibid., 187.
[390] Ibid., 180.
[391] Ibid., 193.
[392] Christine Gledhill, "Introduction," in *Stardom: Industry of Desire*, ed. Christine Gledhill (New York: Routledge, 1991), xiii.
[393] Ellis, 95.

star as simultaneously unique and ordinary, and the photo effect of cinema as "an absence that is present."[394] Although the star image is always incomplete, "composed of clues rather than complete meanings," it serves as "an invitation to cinema."[395] In this respect the film promises to be more complete than the star image; it is the star in motion.[396] It reveals more than what can only be hinted at within the subsidiary circulation of the star image. Conversely, television does not create a photo effect due to its "liveness," nor are television personalities extraordinary but coexist in the same space as the television audience.[397] Interestingly, Ellis views the music star in comparable terms to the film star, with the live performance replacing the film performance.[398] Just as it frames the film star, journalistic discourse emphasizes the ordinary / extraordinary star paradox of the musician.[399]

As celebrity enters an increasingly more complex media environment, the terms of understanding shift yet again. With the performance of celebrity occurring primarily online, media distinctions between celebrities begin to break down. Yet, in her article "Starring … Dyer?" Su Holmes is cautious about identifying supposed shifts in celebrity as new, as this overlooks the long history of celebrity, one that predates Dyer.[400] What *is* new for Holmes is the creation of different taxonomies of celebrity—those no longer based on media distinctions.[401] For Holmes, celebrities in all types of media are now equally of public interest. She recognizes changes in the hierarchy of celebrity, observing that "[t]he hierarchy once headed by cinematic stars has apparently shifted as glamorous names from film, TV and other arenas feature alongside one another as equal objects of desire and public interest."[402] She assigns considerable importance to academic discourses, as one of the "cacophony of voices," and their role in generating discussion of celebrity.[403] She calls for more self-reflexivity in how our own categorization and perspective of celebrity impact popular discourses and reinforce outmoded hierarchies.[404] Overall, her intention is not to deny change but to press for greater introspection

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[394] Ibid., 90.
[395] Ibid.
[396] Ibid.
[397] Ibid., 95.
[398] Ibid., 97.
[399] Ibid., 97.
[400] Holmes, 18.
[401] Ibid., 10.
[402] Ibid., 9.
[403] Ibid., 7.
[404] Ibid., 18.

and reflection on how we develop our analyses of celebrity.[405]

In *Celebrity*, Chris Rojek addresses the current public obsession with celebrity and sets out to explore its foundations, approaching celebrity "as the attribution of glamorous or notorious status to an individual within the public sphere."[406] Rojek distinguishes modern celebrity from pre-figurative celebrity status by drawing attention to the illusion of intimacy central to celebrity in the mass-media age.[407] Using this as a basis, he constructs an alternative typology of celebrity. For Rojek there are three main types of celebrity: ascribed (e.g. the Royal Family), attributed (e.g. mass media celebrity), and achieved (e.g. the hero).[408] Dealing mainly with attributed celebrity, he establishes two sub-categories: the celetoid (famous for being famous) and the celeactor (a character, played by an actor, who rises to fame, e.g. Marg Delahunty from *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*).[409] Similar to Boorstin's nostalgia-based hierarchy of fame, Rojek argues that in opposition to the celebrity the celetoid is a short, fleeting type of fame.[410] On that point, Rojek's taxonomy falls prey to nostalgia and ultimately does little to advance the study of celebrity. Moreover, his disregard for media distinctions overgeneralizes his account of stardom, making it appear as though celebrity functions in the same way across cultural industries and in various contexts.

One distinguishing feature of Rojek's taxonomy is his addition of notoriety as a means of achieving fame when no legitimate ways of achieving fame are available to an individual.[411] He elaborates on the alternatives to attaining fame: "The normal pattern of achieved celebrity involves public acclaim and the ritualization of bonds of recognition and belonging. If the desire to 'be someone' is not achieved by 'normal' means, some individuals will have a compelling propensity to use violence as a means of acquiring fame through notoriety."[412] However, I believe that Marwick and boyd's discussion of Twitter, "To See and Be Seen: Celebrity Practice on Twitter," complicates this idea, as social media today open up considerably more avenues for fame. Positioning celebrity as a performative practice,[413] they introduce the notion of the micro-

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[405] Ibid.

[406] Rojek, 10.

[407] Ibid., 19.

[408] Ibid., 10.

[409] Ibid., 18, 23.

[410] Ibid., 10.

[411] Ibid., 146.

[412] Ibid.

[413] Alice Marwick and danah boyd, "To See and Be Seen: Celebrity Practice on Twitter," *Convergence* 17, no. 2 (2011): 140.

celebrity, suggesting the potential for everyday individuals online to become celebrities.[414] By reinforcing the idea of fame as existing along a continuum, "rather than as a bright line that separates individuals,"[415] they reject a hierarchical definition of celebrity. However, this is not to say that social media create a democratic environment; both Marwick and boyd[416] and Graeme Turner warn against this interpretation. Alternatively, Turner identifies a demotic turn (not a democratic turn) that increases access for consumption and participation for "'ordinary people' in contemporary media."[417]

In "The Promotion and Presentation of the Self: Celebrity as Marker of Presentation Media," Marshall ponders why celebrity continues to play such a large role in our culture, "given the shifted structure of media and entertainment industries in the twenty-first century," and discusses the pedagogical function of celebrity and its impact on self-production.[418] He constructs new categories regarding fame; however, his categories centre on the presentation of the self in online culture, linking celebrity and everyday forms of self-presentation on social media.[419] Marshall elucidates how celebrity continues to function as a pedagogical tool and "a pedagogical aid in the discourse of the self," despite the shift from a representational system of culture (television, film) to a presentational culture and regime (online).[420] Through the representational system of culture, "[c]elebrity taught generations how to engage and use consumer culture to 'make' oneself."[421] The pedagogic work that transformed "a more traditional culture into a consumer culture was very much dependent upon celebrities."[422] Connecting celebrity with the production of the self, he argues that celebrity continues to be relevant, with celebrity gossip "providing a continuity of discourse around the presentation of the self for public consumption."[423]

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[414] Ibid., 155.
[415] Ibid., 140.
[416] Ibid., 155.
[417] Turner, 101.
[418] P. David Marshall, "The Promotion and Presentation of the Self: Celebrity as Marker of Presentational Media," *Celebrity Studies* 1, no. 1 (2010): 36.
[419] Ibid., 38.
[420] Ibid.
[421] Ibid.
[422] Ibid.
[423] Ibid., 36-37.

Marshall uses the term "presentational culture" to demonstrate celebrity culture's continuing influence on the production and presentation of the self online.[424] He addresses some of the changes with online access:

> Some of the key changes in the way that we find, explore and share entertainment and information have produced this shifted constitution of our culture. It is not that television and film as examples of representation media do not continue to produce quite profound structure for our culture; it is more accurate to say that influence is just less profound and less relentlessly omnipresent and perhaps remediated through on-line pathways.[425]

He underlines how social networks operate as both media and a communication form. Since the very act of celebrity involves producing and presenting an image of the self, celebrity "now serves as a rubric and template for the organization and production of the on-line self which has become at the very least an important component of our presentation of ourselves to the world."[426] Thus, our presentation on Facebook or Instagram serve as "a kind of ritual of the performance of the self," much like the performance of celebrity.[427]

Marshall demonstrates how in "the era of social media and presenting and producing the self, the search for the true and the real continues in a manner similar to the way celebrity gossip was a channel in the twentieth century to the more authentic star."[428] Here, he develops new categories to describe the presentation of self in online culture, such as: the public self (official version / industrial image); the public private self (celebrity in the world of social networking); and the transgressive intimate self (understood as exposing the real, authentic self; motivated by temporary emotion, it might result in a tweet you will later regret.)[429] Throughout this article, Marshall exposes how celebrity culture continues to connect with discourses of self-production, shifting from a representational logic to one of self-presentation.

Turner's approach in *Understanding Celebrity* is likely the most influential work on celebrity since Dyer. By firmly situating the study of celebrity and taking account of its industrial, discursive, and socio-historical contextualization, Turner demonstrates the limits of typologies of celebrity. For Turner, celebrity represents a discursive construction, cultural formation, and

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[424] Ibid., 38.
[425] Ibid.
[426] Ibid., 39.
[427] Ibid., 40.
[428] Ibid., 44.
[429] Ibid., 44-45.

commercial commodity.[430] Emphasizing both the discursive construction and the industrial production of celebrity, Turner argues: "When we conceptualise celebrity as something to be professionally managed, as well as discursively deconstructed, we think about it differently."[431] Turner describes his approach as one that endorses "celebrity as a media process that is coordinated by an industry, and as a commodity or text which is productively consumed by audiences and fans."[432] For Turner, a distinctive aspect of contemporary celebrity culture is its pervasiveness.[433] Despite the perception of celebrity as "trivial, ephemeral, or inconsequential," Turner argues that celebrity is worthy of attention.[434] Here, we can see the study of celebrity beginning to shift again, enlarging its scope from the persona of celebrity to a broader contextualization of the phenomenon of celebrity that considers cultural activities, industrial production, social context, discourse, and institutions. Overall, Turner's study offers perceptive reflections on the cultural value associated with celebrity.

Building on the work of Bourdieu, we can begin to position celebrity as another type of capital (alongside economic, cultural, and popular cultural capital) acquired and utilized to assert oneself in a position-taking game in the field of cultural production. In *Performing Rites: On the Value of Popular Music*, Frith argues for the recognition of popular cultural capital, countering the idea that popular culture is equivalent to "market choice," which measures popularity by "sales figures and market indicators."[435] For music, he explains, this is especially detrimental as it ignores "the significant unpopularity of certain stars."[436] Even though the value differences between high and low culture have become a social fact, he maintains that people still employ the same evaluative principles to high and low culture.[437] The actual difference between high and low culture thus resides in "the objects at issue (what is culturally interesting to us is socially structured), in the discourses in which judgments are cast, and in the circumstances in which they are made."[438] For Frith, the object of analysis is not necessarily the music itself, but the discourses around it, as our expectations and reception of music are not inherent within the music.

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[430] Turner, 10.
[431] Ibid., 156.
[432] Ibid., 23.
[433] Ibid., 18.
[434] Ibid., 144.
[435] Simon Frith, *Performing Rites: On the Value of Popular Music* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 15.
[436] Ibid., 15.
[437] Ibid., 19.
[438] Ibid.

Consistent with Frith, in *Let's Talk about Love*, Carl Wilson views popular culture as equivalent to the realm of high cultural competition. Applying Bourdieu's theory of taste and distinction to an exploration of musical taste, he redefines "coolness" as symbolic power and underlines the necessity of holding social and cultural capital to justify liking something that high culture deems is uncool.[439] In short, the mass-cultural field is essentially another zone of competition.[440] To take Marshall's example of the teen idol in *Celebrity and Power*, we can see that it represents more than a tactic of appeal to draw in preteens and young female pop audiences. According to Marshall the teen idol has a dual function: to attract the youth market[441] and to raise the cultural capital, or authenticity, of other types of music, such as rock music.[442] As Frith would argue, the starting point of analysis must be the discourses that ascribe meaning to the terms of value.[443]

In this review of celebrity scholarship, I have identified some major shifts in the study of celebrity since the mid-twentieth century. While the complexity of the current media landscape necessitates that we open up the study of celebrity beyond the individual meanings of the celebrity persona, I argue that any study of celebrity needs to consider the larger phenomenon of which it is a part. This involves exploring the discursive construction of celebrity and its industrial production as well as its interconnections with a variety of cultural activities, valorization rituals, and other cultural artifacts.

**1.5 Fandom Theory**

In *Soap Fans: Pursuing Pleasure and Making Meaning in Everyday Life*, Lee Harrington and Denise Bielby employ an approach that was not only uncommon at the time, but continues to be rare; they combine the study of fandom with the study of celebrity, providing important dialogue between the two areas. Influenced by their approach, in this dissertation I strive to unite these two areas of study by exploring both discourses of celebrity and fandom and their overlap and interconnection.

Fandom research has a long history and consists of a vast multi-disciplinary body of work of considerable scope. Emerging from cultural studies, fan studies is a more recent and narrower

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[439] Carl Wilson, *Let's Talk About Love: Why Other People Have Such Bad Taste* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), 94.
[440] Ibid., 97.
[441] Marshall, *Celebrity and Power*, 168.
[442] Ibid., 171.
[443] Frith, 26.

field of inquiry[444] that brings together ideas from media studies, literary theory, the social sciences and humanities, ethnography, and communication studies and focuses on popular culture fandom in the US and Britain.[445] In *Understanding Fandom: An Introduction to the Study of Media Fan Culture*, Mark Duffett makes this differentiation between fandom research and fan studies, situating the newer field of fan studies within the larger multi-disciplinary field of fandom research.[446] As Harrington and Bielby note, the early 1990s is "now routinely cited as the watershed era in fan studies."[447] They position their own study of soap opera fans as shaped by this era of fan studies, despite the fact that it originated before this time.[448] They also highlight the influence of the "powerhouse scholarship of the 1980s / 1990s in cultural studies, audience reception studies, literary theory, and feminist media criticism."[449] Furthermore, they bring attention to the significance of the work of Janice Radway.

*Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature* is Radway's ethnographic study of female readers of romance novels, first published in 1984. In this study, Radway sets out to examine women's interpretations of romance novels, basing her exploration on Stanley Fish's notion that "textual interpretations are constructed by interpretive communities using specific interpretive strategies."[450] While she initially conceived reading as a process of interpretation, once she began her research, she became aware of how the women in her study discussed the meaning of the act of romance reading rather than the meaning of the romance novel itself.[451] This led Radway to reformulate her study away from the interpretation of romance novels towards understanding how romance reading represents a "way of temporarily refusing the demands associated with their social role as wives and mothers."[452] Thus, Radway had to separate the interpretation of the novel from the act of reading.[453]

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[444] Mark Duffett, *Understanding Fandom: An Introduction to the Study of Media Fan Culture* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 2.

[445] Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse, *The Fan Fiction Studies Reader* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2014), 3-4.

[446] Duffett, 2.

[447] C. Lee Harrington and Denise D. Bielby, "Soap Fans, Revisited," in *A Companion to Media Fandom and Fan Studies*, ed. Paul Booth (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2018), 78.

[448] Ibid.

[449] Ibid.

[450] Janice Radway, *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 7.

[451] Ibid.

[452] Ibid., 11.

[453] Ibid.

Through her study, Radway explicates how reading romance novels functions as an act of resistance[454] and a means of fulfilling one's unmet needs through fantasy.[455] By understanding the role that romance novels play in the lives of these women, Radway is able to identify "the ways in which various groups appropriate and use the mass-produced art of our culture."[456] She reasons, "By reinstating those active individuals and their creative, constructive activities at the heart of our interpretive enterprise, we avoid blinding ourselves to the fact that the essentially human practice of making meaning goes on even in a world increasingly dominated by things and by consumption."[457] While Henry Jenkins receives much attention for his exploration of how fans employ mass culture, it is essential to consider Radway's contributions as she demonstrates the broad scope of this behaviour among less visible communities.

With the publication of *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture* in 1992, Jenkins challenged the very foundations of fandom research, transforming both our perceptions of media fans and the methods used to study fans. Its watershed effect stems from two overarching contributions to fandom scholarship. First, inspired by trends in anthropology and sociology towards a new ethnography where there is "no privileged position ... to survey a culture," Jenkins "outs" himself as a fan, drawing on his own experiences and active involvement in fan communities to analyze fan practices.[458] Jenkins's new approach captured the attention of scholars in the field, overshadowing other notable works published the same year, such as Camille Bacon-Smith's *Enterprising Women*. Subsequently, it led to a rethinking of earlier objective methods for studying fandom, advancing a more participatory approach and motivating fan scholars to contemplate the boundary between academics and fans.

Second, Jenkins reworks Michel de Certeau's theory of popular resistance from *The Practice of Everyday Life*, offering a discerning representation of media fans as "the poachers of old."[459] For Jenkins, de Certeau's concepts of textual poaching and nomadic reading provide us with the language for exploring the ways in which "the subordinate classes elude or escape institutional control, for analyzing locations where popular meanings are produced outside of

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[454] Ibid., 12.
[455] Ibid., 77.
[456] Ibid., 222.
[457] Ibid., 221.
[458] Henry Jenkins, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture* (London: Routledge, 1992), 4.
[459] Ibid., 26.

official interpretive practice."[460] In his application of de Certeau's work, Jenkins explains how "fans operate from a position of cultural marginality and social weakness."[461] "Within the cultural economy," Jenkins explains, "fans are peasants, not proprietors, a recognition which must contextualize our celebration of strategies of popular resistance."[462] Operating from a position of cultural and social marginality, fans appropriate cultural texts—that is, they poach from the dominant culture—and actively produce their own meaning;[463] they are not mindless consumers, but active producers.[464] In this way, fans blur the line between consumers and producers, creating what Jenkins describes as a participatory culture, one that "transforms the experience of media consumption into the production of new texts, indeed of a new culture and a new community."[465] What Jenkins believes is significant about fans in relation to de Certeau's model "is that they constitute a particularly active and vocal community of consumers whose activities direct attention onto this process of cultural appropriation."[466] "Fans are not unique in their status as textual poachers," Jenkins writes, "yet, they have developed poaching to an art form."[467]

Jenkins's application of de Certeau to media fandom diverges in a couple of respects. First, while de Certeau's readers are "isolated from each other," Jenkins understands fan reading as "a social process through which individual interpretations are shaped and reinforced through ongoing discussions with other readers."[468] Second, de Certeau's separation between readers and writers does not apply to fandom.[469] Finally, fans hold onto the objects they construct from poached materials of mass culture,[470] whereas for de Certeau "the reader's meaning-production remains temporary and transient," unlike the material permanence of writing.[471] The model of fandom Jenkins represents in *Textual Poachers* is largely one of resistance. In part, this model can be understood as a reaction to popular representations of audience members and consumers as passive recipients of culture. In turn, as a fan himself, Jenkins provides a way for fans to self-

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[460] Ibid.
[461] Ibid.
[462] Ibid., 27.
[463] Ibid., 26.
[464] Ibid., 23.
[465] Ibid., 46.
[466] Ibid., 27.
[467] Ibid.
[468] Ibid., 45.
[469] Ibid.
[470] Ibid., 49.
[471] Ibid., 44.

identity and represent themselves as fans, in ways that heavily contrast with popular representations of fans as losers and deviants.

But what happens when this participatory culture expands beyond the fan community and media producers begin to appropriate fan culture? These are some of the central issues Jenkins confronts in *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, published in 2006, almost fifteen years after *Textual Poachers*. When Jenkins wrote *Textual Poachers* in the early 1990s, scholars were predicting a digital revolution where new interactive media would replace the outdated, passive, broadcast media.[472] However, in the moment of *Convergence Culture*, Jenkins explains that what we are experiencing is not a simple replacement of old with new media, but a more complicated convergence of the two.[473] It is this paradigm shift that Jenkins seeks to make sense of. In order to theorize about this emerging paradigm, Jenkins introduces us to a new vocabulary, which includes three central concepts: media convergence, participatory culture, and collective intelligence. Media convergence relates to the "flow of content across multiple media platforms," media industries, and mobile media audiences.[474] Not merely a technological process, convergence denotes a cultural shift in the interaction of consumers with media content scattered across different platforms.[475] Thus, convergence is both a cognitive process occurring "within the brains of individual consumers" and an interactional process emerging within a participatory framework.[476]

Building on the concept of participatory culture developed in *Textual Poachers*, Jenkins casts away the separation between producers and consumers and creates a unifying concept of participants. At the same time, he emphasizes the power differentials between participants that impact their degree of participation[477] and stresses the lack of consensus surrounding the terms of participation.[478] That is, while consumers want the right to full participation, producers want to control how and when they can participate. This understanding of participatory culture leads to Jenkins's interest in collective intelligence, a concept based on the work of Pierre Lévy. Collective intelligence rests on the idea that one person cannot know everything but everyone

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[472] Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 5.
[473] Ibid., 6.
[474] Ibid., 2, 254.
[475] Ibid., 3.
[476] Ibid.
[477] Ibid.
[478] Ibid., 279.

has something to contribute, and therefore together, through a collective meaning-making process, we can cultivate collective knowledge and power.[479] Jenkins explores the complex relationship among these three concepts in a series of case studies, including: an analysis of the *Survivor* spoiler community as an example of collective intelligence; the illusion of participation in *American Idol*; transmedia storytelling in *The Matrix* franchise; the interaction between the media industry and the grassroots community in the context of *Star Wars* fandom; the *Harry Potter* wars; and finally, the 2004 and 2008 American Presidential Campaigns.

Jenkins proposes this new vocabulary to understand the moment in media history at the time of *Convergence Culture*. Nevertheless, I cannot help but wonder if he has completely abandoned the concepts so fundamental to his previous work. Initially, I felt his loose usage of the terms strategies and tactics signaled his desertion of de Certeau's conceptualizations. Upon further study, I realized his deliberate use of these concepts marks a change in the flow between grassroots and corporate media, between producers and consumers. Although Jenkins's depictions of corporate tactics and consumer strategies appear ambiguous and disorientating on the surface, and some might criticize him for this, I argue that his juxtaposition of these terms indicates this change in the flow of cultural materials. In *Textual Poachers*, Jenkins shows how fans poach from the dominant culture, but in *Convergence Culture* he demonstrates how corporate producers also poach from fan culture. In participatory culture, the flow among participants, whether they are producers or consumers, is multidirectional. As Jenkins explains, "Fan works can no longer be understood as simply derivative of mainstream materials, but must be understood as themselves open to appropriation and reworking by the media industries."[480] Moreover, in *Convergence Culture,* Jenkins does align strategies to the powerful and tactics to the weak, but adds the key point that both the powerful and the weak can be found in grassroots and corporate media, among producers and consumers. In his afterword, Jenkins criticizes the inclination among scholars to classify all grassroots media under the narrative of resistance, which ignores the fact that "citizens sometimes deploy bottom-up means to keep others down."[481] In this respect, the concept of participants is powerful as it allows us to erase the assumed binary between producers / consumers and its conflation with the powerful / the weak. Nonetheless, Jenkins warns us that the ideal power of participation has yet to be totally realized;

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[479] Ibid., 4.
[480] Ibid., 153.
[481] Ibid., 293.

both producers and consumers continue to fight for control as we endeavor to grasp how to "live in this era of media convergence, collective intelligence, and participatory culture."[482]

Essential to this new understanding of participatory culture is Jenkins's assertion that fans and their participatory practices can no longer be considered marginal to consumer culture, but are active agents in shaping it. Fans have always represented the most active sector of media audiences, adapting new media technologies before others and motivating new forms of cultural production.[483] Fans insist on the right to full participation. Thus, for Jenkins, for fans, and for fandom scholars this understanding of fans is not new, but what is new is the heightened visibility of fan culture. The proliferation of new technologies and new distribution channels is responsible for both the increased visibility of fan culture and the expansion of participatory consumer culture.

Correspondingly, as expanding audiences experience the power of these new technologies, they feel increasingly entitled to full participation.[484] Jenkins presents the case study of *American Idol* as a "fantasy of empowerment."[485] While *American Idol* promises participation by soliciting fans to select the winner, the reality of fan involvement is minimal. Despite its façade of participation, this attempt to accommodate the demands of fans for commercial reasons reveals that "fans are the central players in a courtship dance between consumers and marketers."[486] Jenkins's analysis of *American Idol* calls attention to the restricted interaction (as opposed to participation) of consumers with media under controlled circumstances.[487] Yet, allowing consumers to participate on their own terms is a different story. Here, I am intrigued by Jenkins's argument that this moment of media change and convergence reaffirms "the right of everyday people to actively contribute to their culture."[488] How does the growth of participatory culture allow us to reconsider the role of the fan in everyday life?

In *Textual Poachers*, Jenkins offers a conception of fandom as an alternative social community.[489] This "Weekend-Only World" operates as an escape from everyday life, defining

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[482] Ibid., 176.
[483] Ibid., 135.
[484] Ibid., 24.
[485] Ibid., 64.
[486] Ibid., 73.
[487] Ibid., 137.
[488] Ibid., 136.
[489] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers*, 280.

fans in contradistinction to its norms and values.[490] As a result of the expansion of participatory culture as a space of everyday engagement, in *Convergence Culture* we see fans clearly situated in everyday life: rather than attempting to escape mundania, they inhabit mundania. This momentous shift reconceptualizes fandom from a promised utopia where "nobody can live permanently"[491] to a reality where everyday people can benefit from new technologies,[492] converting them into resources integral to our everyday lives.[493] The characterizations of fans in *Textual Poachers* in terms of the "old rhetoric of opposition and co-optation," which views consumers as relatively powerless in the marketplace, exerting little influence over media content,[494] contrasts sharply against the perspective of fans and consumers in *Convergence Culture*, where both share the experience of a new digital environment and its capacity for enlarging "the scope and reach" of their everyday practices.[495]

Participation is now understood as part of the routine way media operate.[496] Jenkins draws on Lévy's description of grassroots communication as an illustration of how the new system might function, not only in response to crises and exceptional moments, but to the mundane events of the everyday.[497] Moreover, it is the immersion of fans and consumers in participatory and popular culture that allows for their grounding in everyday life. Persuasively, Jenkins affirms, "We feel passionately about popular culture; we embrace its characters; we integrate its stories into our lives; we rework them and make them our own."[498] In fact, for Jenkins, our appropriation of cultural materials and their integration into our everyday lives is what defines popular culture.[499]

Significantly, Jenkins's contention that participation is now a vital part of our everyday lives forms the essence of *Convergence Culture*. Fans picture a world, he argues, "where all of us can participate in the creation and circulation of central cultural myths."[500] Jenkins uses YouTube as an exemplar for demonstrating the roles that everyday people play in this altered

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[490] Ibid., 280, 268.
[491] Ibid., 282.
[492] Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 140.
[493] Ibid., 4.
[494] Ibid., 226.
[495] Ibid.
[496] Ibid., 257.
[497] Ibid., 226.
[498] Ibid., 244.
[499] Ibid., 331.
[500] Ibid., 267.

media landscape and as a signifier for alternative sites of production, allowing him to discuss the changes that were occurring at this time.[501] Belonging to a larger cultural economy, YouTube forms the principal site for creating and disseminating grassroots media.[502] It is a distribution channel, a "meeting ground" of many different communities, it is a media archive, it is a type of "spreadable media" shared across multiple platforms, and most importantly, it normalizes activities once considered on the fringes of society.[503] Jenkins provides case studies of both the 2004 and 2008 American presidential campaigns to demonstrate the increasing involvement of new media technologies in our everyday lives. He shows how activists employed popular culture and new technologies to motivate voters in the 2004 presidential campaign, but concludes that political participation remained a special event outside of our everyday lives.[504]

By contrast, the 2008 campaign cleverly employed YouTube, creating the Democratic CNN / YouTube debate, which invited the American public to take "a seat at the table" by sending in their questions via YouTube.[505] Both professional and amateur videographers submitted questions; while some participants were experimenting with YouTube for the first time, others had acquired their skills through the ordinary everyday experiences of producing home videos or participating in various fan communities.[506] Notably, Jenkins provides this example to emphasize the powerful and persisting influence of old media. Despite the high expectations of this call for participation, the traditional gatekeepers of old media crushed these hopes by selectively screening the videos for the CNN broadcast (in counter logic to that of YouTube). In this era of convergence, Jenkins effectively shows us the power of participation while exposing the barriers to its full realization.

As Jenkins demonstrates, in the years since *Textual Poachers*, media fandom has developed into a much larger phenomenon. With the rise of the internet in the late 1990s, fandoms experienced a "crossover between traditional media fandoms and other kinds of fandoms, namely comics, celebrities, music, and anime."[507] Today, understanding fandom has become increasingly complex due to an ever shifting media landscape. In *Playing Fans:*

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[501] Ibid., 275.
[502] Ibid., 274.
[503] Ibid., 274-76.
[504] Ibid., 245.
[505] Ibid., 271.
[506] Ibid., 279.
[507] Francesca Coppa, "A Brief History of Media Fandom," in *Fan Fiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet*, ed. Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse (Jefferson: McFarland, 2006), 55.

*Negotiating Fandom and Media in the Digital Age*, Paul Booth reinforces how "researchers must continue to refine the methods for understanding and facilitating fan meaning not because previous scholarly research is incorrect but because the identity / practice of fandom is always shifting."[508] One of the main shifts is that the "popularity of fandom has exploded. It is no longer considered 'weird' to be a fan."[509] As fandom becomes a "more mainstream position," it has also become a "less meaningful identity," as more media consumers call themselves "fans."[510] In his afterword to *Seeing Fans: Representations of Fandom in Media and Popular Culture*, Matt Hills observes how this has led to the new figure of the "superfan," which "seems to reproduce older images of the fan-as-excessive-consumer."[511] Alternatively, he advocates for the category of "participants," instead of continuing to "conceptualize the cultural agents who shape, circulate, and resist fan representations" as distinct categories.[512]

For Booth, the relationship between fans and culture industries today continues to operate as a form of convergence culture,[513] whereas for Hills, this relationship takes place within "an increasingly 'hybrid media system' where multiple media logics are at work."[514] Hills explains how this hybrid media system leads to a "'context collapse' between fandom, academia, and media production / commentary" and a consequent renegotiation and redrawing of these boundaries.[515] This reflects Booth's definition of contemporary media fandom "as a continual, shifting *negotiation* and *dialogue* within the already-extant industrial relations."[516] For Booth, this means that "both media fans and the media industries must continually negotiate, navigate, and adjust to the presence of each other in tandem with changing paradigms of technological discourse in our digital society."[517] He emphasizes the importance of examining industry /

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[508] Paul Booth, *Playing Fans: Negotiating Fandom and Media in the Digital Age* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2015), 2.
[509] Paul Booth and Lucy Bennett, "Introduction: Seeing Fans," in *Seeing Fans: Representations of Fandom in Media and Popular Culture*, ed. Lucy Bennett and Paul Booth (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016), 2.
[510] Booth, 1.
[511] Matt Hills, "Afterword: Participating in Hybrid Media Logics?," in *Seeing Fans: Representations of Fandom in Media and Popular Culture*, ed. Lucy Bennett and Paul Booth (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016), 271.
[512] Ibid., 271-72.
[513] Booth, 5.
[514] Hills, 267.
[515] Ibid., 270-71.
[516] Booth, 1.
[517] Ibid.

audience in terms of "the 'play' between their moments of interface," rather than treating them as unique and distinct sites.[518]

Despite the mainstream identity of fans, negative stereotypes continue to persist; thus, analyzing representations of fans remains an important part of contemporary fan studies. For Booth and Lucy Bennett, "fandom sits in an uneasy position in the media industries. Both courted and held at arm's length, fans are still seen as deviant and pathological, even as their enthusiasm is channeled into more 'authorized' avenues."[519] Hills notes how representations of improper fan behaviour function as a type of pedagogy that disciplines fans.[520] While mass media continue to represent fans in ways that "more 'normal' (re: more disciplined) audiences can safely mock,"[521] the media now directly address fans; fans are now more "often invited to see *as* (specific kinds of) fans in today's news and commentary media."[522]

Booth observes how scholars have traditionally defined fandom one of two ways.[523] On the one hand, scholars have understood fandom as an identity: "fans are people who have an emotional attachment to a media text."[524] On the other hand, scholars have understood fandom as a practice: "fans are people who produce their own meanings and texts."[525] Another prevalent definition of fandom conceptualizes it as a group, social institution, or organized community comprised of individual fans. For the media fans in Bacon-Smith's study, the term "fandom" signifies multiple levels of social organization with each level designated a fandom.[526] In this conception, media fandom is an entire community composed of smaller fandoms that centre on different genres, source products, media delivery channels, and specific practices.[527] Other scholars, like John Tulloch and Jenkins, reinforce this idea of fandom as "a social, cultural and interpretive institution."[528] In *Spreadable Media*, Jenkins, Sam Ford, and Joshua Green

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[518] Ibid., 2.

[519] Booth and Bennett, 3.

[520] Matt Hills, "'Twilight' Fans Represented in Commercial Paratexts and Inter-Fandoms: Resisting and Repurposing Negative Fan Stereotypes," in *Genre, Reception, and Adaptation in the "Twilight" Series*, ed. Anne Morey (Farnham: Ashgate, 2016), 114.

[521] Booth and Bennett, 4.

[522] Hills, "Afterword: Participating in Hybrid Media Logics?," 270.

[523] Booth, 3.

[524] Ibid.

[525] Ibid.

[526] Camille Bacon-Smith, *Enterprising Women: Television Fandom and the Creation of Popular Myth* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 22.

[527] Ibid., 22-23.

[528] John Tulloch and Henry Jenkins, *Science Fiction Audiences: Watching Doctor Who and Star Trek* (London: Routledge, 1995), 23.

differentiate the notion of a fan (an individual who has a fervent relationship to popular culture) from a fandom (a community of devoted and dedicated fans), suggesting that fandoms can be understood as publics "bound together through their 'shared sociality' and 'shared identity.'"[529] Conceptualizing fandoms as publics calls attention to the myriad ways audience members participate.

Fandom can also be understood as an ethos or a "discursive logic that knits together interests across textual and generic boundaries,"[530] governs the community, and produces and positions individual subjects as fans. Fandom is "a particular reading position"[531] that involves the "regular emotionally involved consumption of a given narrative or text,"[532] and "a way of identifying oneself on a deep level as being a fan and enacting that role."[533] To separate these two definitions (fandom as community and as ethos), Bacon-Smith uses the term "interest group" to describe the social organization of fandom.[534] For Daniel Cavicchi, rather than a "ready-made category," in practice fandom is "a process of distinction in which a fan must constantly question and monitor his or her experience, background, attitudes, and behaviours" in relation to all other members of the audience.[535] He situates fandom as a relationship between fan and celebrity that exists in tension between a multiplicity of relationships involving the industry, general audience members, and other groups of fans.[536]

Building on Michael Warner's conceptualization of publics, I define fandom, specifically Cohen fandom, as *a* public. While *the* public is a form of "social totality," such as the nation, and a public is a concrete group of people enclosed in time and shared public space, *a* public "comes into being only in relation to texts and their circulation."[537] (Cohen) Fans do not exist apart from the discourses of celebrity that address them.[538] In this way, Cohen fandom is a public that comes into being through the circulation of discourse that addresses them as a public. Cohen fandom is

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[529] Henry Jenkins, Sam Ford, and Joshua Green, *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 166.
[530] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers*, 40.
[531] Cornel Sandvoss, "Toward an Understanding of Political Enthusiasm as Media Fandom: Blogging, Fan Productivity and Affect in American Politics," *Participations* 10, no. 1 (2013): 270.
[532] Ibid., 258.
[533] Duffett, 293.
[534] Bacon-Smith, 23.
[535] Daniel Cavicchi, *Tramps Like Us: Music and Meaning among Springsteen Fans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 107.
[536] Ibid.
[537] Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002), 66.
[538] Ibid., 72.

a "space of discourse organized by discourse. It is self-creating and self-organized,"[539] which produces a sense of belonging.[540] Membership in Cohen fandom does not necessitate "co-presence" in space,[541] but does require participation in the discourse that addresses the fan, that is, celebrity discourse.[542]

Warner describes how a public involves relationships between strangers.[543] Since the public is self-organized by discourse and addresses people who participate in the discourse, the constitution of a public involves strangers since the participants are unknown ahead of the discourse's address.[544] In order to "make those unknown strangers into a public it must locate them as a social entity."[545] However, we are only strangers until the discourse addresses us, thus becoming part of the public.[546] Expanding Louis Althusser's model of interpellation from the individual to a public, Warner identifies how in being addressed by discourse we recognize ourselves as the addressee; however, "it is equally important that we remember that the speech was addressed to indefinite others."[547] Knowing that this address is not for us alone is what makes it public speech and constitutes our belonging within a public.[548]

As a public, Cohen fandom is "an ongoing space of encounter for discourse."[549] Warner underlines that a single text alone cannot create a public.[550] Thus, the celebrity phenomenon, as an embodiment of various discourses, creates a fandom through its address to a public and the public's engagement and re-engagement with these discourses. The address of celebrity discourse to a public constitutes fandom in part by "postulating and characterizing it."[551] However, the ongoing life of a public depends on the "temporality of the circulation that gives it existence."[552] For the celebrity phenomenon to have a fandom it "must continue to circulate through time"[553] and "become the basis for further representations," and for that reason it cannot

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[539] Ibid., 68-69.
[540] Ibid., 70.
[541] Ibid., 71.
[542] Ibid., 89.
[543] Ibid., 74.
[544] Ibid.
[545] Ibid., 106.
[546] Ibid., 76.
[547] Ibid., 77-78.
[548] Ibid., 78.
[549] Ibid., 90.
[550] Ibid.
[551] Ibid., 91.
[552] Ibid., 96.
[553] Ibid., 97.

be "emitted in one direction."[554] This calls attention to circulation as a constitutive act. Warner points out that although a "public seems to be self-organized by discourse," it does require "preexisting forms and channels of circulation."[555] As a result, the success of celebrity discourse depends on the recognition of fans as addressees and "their further circulatory activity."[556] This means that fans "recognize themselves as being already the persons they are addressed as being and as already belonging to the world that is condensed in their discourse."[557] In this respect, celebrity discourse structures and produces Cohen fandom as *a* public, a public that comes into existence through the participation of Cohen fans in this celebrity discourse, a discourse that is addressed to them.

### 1.5.1 Acafandom

The following two statements can be used to describe me. One, I am a PhD student—an academic—writing my dissertation on Leonard Cohen, and two, I am a fan of Leonard Cohen, an identity that precedes my research. Why is this important? How does this impact my research? In what ways might this twin identity illuminate meaning or lead to self-reflexivity in the research process? While Jenkins was the first to expose his dual identity as a fan and academic, an "acafan," in *Textual Poachers*, this specific concept does not appear in the book.[558] On his blog, *Confessions of an Aca-Fan*, Jenkins discusses the origins of the acafan concept, asserting its necessity in the early 1990s when researchers, more often than not, "treated fans less as collaborators than as bugs under a microscope" and portrayed them as "inarticulate, incapable of explaining their motives or actions."[559] This pathologization of fan communities led to the development of a new generation of fandom scholars (coined *acafen* by Jenkins*)* who acknowledge their "dual allegiance," implicate themselves in their research, and not only take fandom seriously, but feel a deep sense of responsibility to the communities they study.[560] Jenkins reflects how at the time fandom scholars "felt that there were things we could not understand about popular culture from the outside looking in. Tapping our lived experiences, we

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[554] Ibid., 100
[555] Ibid., 106.
[556] Ibid., 114.
[557] Ibid.
[558] Henry Jenkins, "Acafandom and Beyond: Week One, Part Two (Anne Kustritz, Louisa Stein, and Sam Ford)," *Confessions of an Aca-Fan*, June 15, 2011, http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2011/06/acafandom_and_beyond_week_one_1.html.
[559] "Acafandom and Beyond: Week Two, Part One."
[560] Ibid.

argued, returned cultural studies to its roots."[561] For example, he points out how in "Culture is Ordinary," Williams reflects on his own experiences and personal background: "Think about what he has to say about his youthful embrace of libraries and museums as opposed to the way he got treated when he went to tea shops."[562] Jenkins also underlines the influence of queer studies at the time.[563]

In 2011, Jenkins hosted a series of conversations among fandom and popular culture scholars on his blog around the acafan concept, considering whether the term continues to be useful, and importantly, how its meaning as a concept, subject position, and theoretical perspective has shifted over time. The scholars participating in these discussions agree:[564] the concept of the acafan needs to expand beyond a basic description of someone who is both a fan and an academic. For example, Jonathan Gray voices concern that this rudimentary understanding, which he claims has gained predominance in the media studies community, "obscures the degree to which everyone studying the media has some such relationship."[565] Matt Hills takes Gray's point further, arguing that if being a fan merely amounts to liking something, then "perhaps all scholars are acafans, whether they are studying television or quantum mechanics."[566] Under this definition, he argues, scientists "passionate about their specialism would be acafans." For Gray, this superficial definition explains his reluctance to use the concept, whereas for Hills it invites additional questions concerning critical distance.

Thinking beyond this simplistic notion requires examining the critical mission of acafandom, as both a subject position and theoretical perspective from which to engage in research, and identifying its theoretical and methodological distinction from other areas of popular culture and audience research. In the words of Hills, how is acafandom as a theoretical perspective and methodology "interpretatively distinctive?"[567] For Hills, the theoretical

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[561] Ibid.
[562] Ibid.
[563] Ibid.
[564] Ford; Gray; Hellekson; Hills Jenkins; Kustritz; Rand; Stein.
[565] Gray qtd. in Henry Jenkins, "Aca-Fandom and Beyond: Jonathan Gray, Matt Hills, and Alisa Perren (Part One)," *Confessions of an Aca-Fan*, August 29, 2011, http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2011/08/aca-fandom_and_beyond_jonathan.html?rq=Aca%2F-fan.
[566] Hills qtd. in ibid.
[567] Hills qtd. in Henry Jenkins, "Aca-Fandom and Beyond: Jonathan Gray, Matt Hills, and Alisa Perren (Part Two)," *Confessions of an Aca-Fan*, August 31, 2011, http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2011/08/aca-fandom_and_beyond_jonathan.html?rq=Aca%2F-fan.

distinctiveness of the acafan position in practice involves "simultaneous engagement with two (differentiated) interpretive communities focused on the same textual object(s)."[568] Demonstrating how the interpretations of fans and academics challenge and inform one another, acafandom becomes "an ongoing way of thinking through the problematics of studying media while being positioned within variant interpretive communities."[569] Thinking through these problematics demands engaging in self-reflexivity. Self-reflexivity is key in negotiating multiple positions and different interpretive communities constrained by different rules and norms. Louisa Stein reinforces this point, asserting that "the one universal that the acafan position brings with it is the need for a constant self reflexivity in regards to considering one's relation to one's object."[570] Acafandom is a theoretical standpoint that not only requires ongoing self-reflexivity, but places it at the forefront of its critical mission.

Proper distance, for Hills, "implies critical and multi-dimensional reflexivity" and "scholar-fandom remains important to the extent that it is able to engage critically with the contemporary limits of what can be said in academic and fan communities."[571] The relevance of acafandom thereby resides in its ability to confront and push the limits of *both* fan and academic norms and discourses. Hills brings this back to the initial goal of acafandom "as part of a challenge to powerful academic norms."[572] For me, speaking as an acafan (first-person, autoethnographic account) challenges academic norms of rationality (as well as objectivity) by exploring my own subjective, embodied, emotional response to Cohen's death. Correspondingly, this provides space for self-reflexivity in contemplating how my emotional response to Cohen's death bears on my research process. Moreover, using acafan as an identifier signals upfront my interest in negotiating how I am addressed as an audience member of these three separate publics (fan, academic, acafan). That is, it marks my engagement in these discourses.

Employing the acafan concept to think through my multifaceted participation in the Cohen phenomenon allows me to bring emotion to the forefront. As Karen Hellekson argues, "What unites the academic and the fan is the unbearable pleasure of the text—unbearable yet

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[568] Ibid.

[569] Ibid.

[570] Stein qtd. in Henry Jenkins, "Acafandom and Beyond: Week One, Part One (Anne Kustritz, Louisa Stein, and Sam Ford)," *Confessions of an Aca-Fan*, June 13, 2011, http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2011/06/acafandom_and_beyond_week_one.html.

[571] Hills qtd. in "Aca-Fandom and Beyond (Part One)."

[572] Ibid.

faced and negotiated, a (pre)text responded to with text."[573] My emphasis on emotion and embodied, subjective emotional experience further challenges academic norms, especially within literary studies. As Jenkins notes, in "Literary Studies, fan-scholars have had to overcome the affective fallacy, which has historically rendered our emotional responses to literary texts mute and irrelevant."[574] The concept of the acafan reinforces the value of understanding and exploring our emotional reaction towards the text, as it impacts us and our research regardless of whether we acknowledge it or not. Being intensely aware of our emotional connection, it "seems uncomfortable not to acknowledge our participations and affective investments."[575] The various interconnections between fan, scholar, and object are manifold, and scrutinizing these relationships has the potential to reveal personal insights. Jenkins realizes the discomfort we feel when discussing these relationships and our emotional connections. He suggests that "it can start to feel like we are saying too much, either because we are directing attention away from our objects of study and onto us or because we are 'oversharing' things which academic culture tells us should be private matters."[576] Yet, self-reflexivity tells us that these things matter. Jenkins shares his hope that acafandom can help balance these two imperatives, as "personal revelation [is] a vital part of the critique."[577]

Moving away from analyzing the emotional investments of other fans to probe one's own fannish emotions as a scholar is a deliberate and vital step on the part of the acafan. As stated above, part of the reason for developing this theoretical standpoint stems from pathologizing representations of fans in the literature resulting from the disconnection between fan and scholar. Explaining "why media studies was so pathologizing in its construction of fans in the absence of the acafan move," Jenkins maintains that "when you start speculating about someone else's feelings, you end up imagining that someone else as more vulnerable, gullible, and susceptible to influence than you see yourself."[578] He explains in part why the academic inquiry of popular culture produces anxiety, as popular culture "demands our emotional engagement as compared to the more distanced viewership imagined to be the domain of high culture."[579] By its very nature,

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[573] Hellekson qtd. in Jenkins, "Acafandom and Beyond: Week Two, Part One."
[574] Jenkins, "Acafandom and Beyond: Week Two, Part Two."
[575] Ibid.
[576] Ibid.
[577] Ibid.
[578] Ibid.
[579] Ibid.

popular culture engages the emotions of the audience; therefore, how can we research popular culture without acknowledging our own emotional experience? Jenkins astutely asserts:

> You cannot write about soap operas or melodramas without a theory of tears, about horror without a theory of fear and dread, about Hitchcock without a theory of suspense, or comedy without a theory of laughter. And again, work which writes about someone else's feelings is apt to distort the nature of what it is describing in relation to popular culture, to be dismissive and simplistic.[580]

As a vestige of its objective, scientific roots, academic research has a tradition of denying the emotions of the researcher, thereby compelling the researcher to investigate the emotions and emotional experiences of others. The conceptualization of the acafan is an attempt to correct this by concentrating on the researcher's own fandom and their own emotional interactions with the object of study.

The main appeal of the acafan concept for me lies in its ability to consider the affective experience of the researcher, something academic research often neglects. In the course of undertaking my research, Cohen's death forced my emotions to the forefront in complex ways that I cannot ignore. I examine my emotional experience not only for the sake of self-reflexivity in my research process, but also because an analysis of my own emotional experience, as well as the discourses that shape it, illuminate theories of emotion through an embodied perspective. Jenkins reminds us that studying our own fannish emotions is not only about analyzing the pleasure we find in the text but both the "fascination and frustration."[581] He contends: "[T]he most nuanced and challenging acafan posture to achieve is one of ambivalence, which is not at all 'wishy-washy' but rather tries to deal with deep and conflicting responses to the work."[582] This brings me back to Slavoj Žižek's parallax view as a way to approach ambivalence without trying to resolve it.[583]

As an ambivalent position in itself, the acafan stance assists in thinking through ambivalence as a theoretical problem. The acafan position accentuates ambivalence as an embodied emotional state where our emotions, beliefs, and values as a researcher come into contact with our emotions, beliefs, and values as a fan, at times creating tension. Instead of

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[580] Ibid.
[581] Ibid.
[582] Ibid.
[583] Žižek, 4.

believing one of our beliefs is more real or true than the other, the parallax view discounts the singularity of truth.[584] As an acafan, I must resist the temptation to resolve this experience of ambivalence and instead capture and reveal its inherent tensions.

Yet, I must slightly trouble my use of the acafan concept and position. Through my research process, I became aware of how the acafan position may be inadvertently used as a form of distinction to assert that your knowledge as a scholar, or acafan, is more valuable than that of "ordinary fans." This merely reinforces stereotypical understandings of fandom as a less valuable form of cultural interpretation. Through my analysis, I became aware of how I position my research as "an excuse" to engage in fan activities, which consequently relies on and perpetuates the notion of the fan as an obsessive consumer. By using my research as a justification to engage with the Cohen phenomenon, I was implying that my behaviour would not otherwise be appropriate if it occurred outside the bounds of research activities. I was thus using my position as an acafan to legitimize my fan behaviour. Therein, the concept of the acafan reproduces the implicit assumption that these two positions would otherwise be mutually exclusive. Derek Johnson likewise questions the acafan position, asking whether we use this position to "look at our own cultural tastes and practices and say that they are somehow superior to those of the less enlightened."[585] If the main argument of acafandom is that the cultural interpretive practices of fans are approximate to those of scholars, and that their knowledge is no less a form of expertise, then why do we need such a concept at all?

In "Against Aca-Fandom," Ian Bogost advances a slightly different position. He encapsulates this in the query: if acafan scholarship reproduces a similar form of adoration as that of fan interpretations, then why do we require such a position in academic scholarship? Differentiating the role of the cultural critic from the academic critic, Bogost explains how the job of the critic, "in part, is to explain and justify his own tastes, and to act as a steward for those tastes on behalf of a constituency of readers," whereas the academic critic has "a special obligation to explain something new about the works we discuss," despite whether we like the work or not.[586] He develops his point: "There are plenty of fans of *The Wire* and *Mad Men* and *Halo* and *World of Warcraft* out there. The world doesn't need any more of them. What it does

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[584] Ibid., 26.
[585] Johnson qtd. in Henry Jenkins, "Gender and Fan Culture (Round Thirteen, Part Two): Anne Kustritz and Derek Johnson," *Confessions of an Aca-Fan*, August 31, 2007, http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2007/08/gender_and_fan_culture_round_t_3.html.
[586] Bogost.

need is skeptics, and the scholarly role is fundamentally one of skepticism."[587] Here, Bogost traces the problem of anti-skeptical scholarship on popular culture to the notion of the "acafan," arguing that fans (or scholars for that matter) cannot be skeptical of their object of fandom.

Bringing forth Jason Mittell's assertion that "taste is often more of a motivating factor for our scholarship than we admit," Bogost hammers the point: "[T]he media scholar ought to resist aca-fandom, even as he or she embraces it."[588] This does not involve rejecting the pleasurable or painful aspects of experiencing the text, but that this experience must bring forth "a discomfort" that leads to analysis and skepticism, rather than praise or blame for the work. On that point, he argues that "embracing aca-fandom is a bad idea … because it's too great a temptation." Instead, he argues, we must "remain dissatisfied."[589] Bogost's critique of the acafan rests on the notion that it is difficult to be critical of something we love, that it is too tempting to be celebratory and merely champion a popular text with which we deeply connect. Yet, in some ways, what Bogost is arguing for is a more responsible acafan approach, one that considers the bad with the good, a skeptical approach that captures the ambivalence of popular culture.

Inspired by the debates on Jenkins's blog, I develop the following multidimensional conceptualization of acafandom. Following Hills, I position acafandom as a theoretical perspective that brings self-reflexivity to the forefront of the research process in a way that reveals the difficulties of undertaking research while belonging to multiple interpretive communities. As Sam Ford argues, the acafan perspective both incites academics to contemplate the limits of their fan position and validates the knowledge that they gain as a "self-professed" fan.[590] While I may not be heavily active in fan communities, my own fan behaviours and emotions provide me with insights into the Cohen phenomenon that would not have resulted from a strictly academic perspective. At the same time, I am aware of the limits of my own personal experience.

Following Anne Kustritz, my acafandom is more than an identity; it is a discursive marker.[591] Being a fan and being an academic are aspects of my identity that both impact and represent me in distinct ways. Correspondingly, specific discourses (mourning, academic, fan) address these parts of my identity, sometimes in contradictory and confusing ways. Here, the

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[587] Ibid.
[588] Ibid.
[589] Ibid.
[590] Ford qtd. in Jenkins, "Acafandom and Beyond: Week One, Part One."
[591] Kustritz qtd. in "Acafandom and Beyond: Week One, Part Two."

acafan becomes a site of struggle between "the dominant constructions of each," academic and fan, rational and emotional.[592] By positioning my acafan experience as a site of emotional struggle, I emphasize the role of emotions in academic work. While emotion is always understood as central to the fan experience, the academic experience teaches us to devalue them.

Following Stein, the acafan is "not a category of scholar or a defined community, nor even a fixed position, but rather a descriptor of an ongoing, ever shifting critical and personal process."[593] The academic and fan positions "always exist in relation to each other" and that relationship is in constant flux.[594] For Stein, her acafandom encourages her to "constantly probe at that relationship, to explore whether it is one of solidarity or conflict or more likely a mix and match of contradictory and aligned values."[595] Following Hills's suggestion that we "need to stop thinking spatially about acafandom as if it is the intersecting portion in a Venn diagram, and consider acafandom temporally,"[596] my engagement with the concept of the acafan represents an attempt to approach my paradoxical reactions to Cohen at particular moments in time.[597]

The acafan position also serves as a vehicle to explore the discursive construction of various binaries, such as: high / low culture; insider / outsider; fan / academic; and emotion / reason.[598] For Hellekson, analysis must lead to self-analysis, "knowledge of imbrication in taste, class, authority, power, gender, and affect."[599] She expands this thesis:

> English still owes perhaps too much to New Criticism in its approaches (valorizing the text), just as media studies still bases critical approaches on the spectator (valorizing the viewer), yet all fields concerned with making meaning rely on the complex interplay between the elements of the rhetorical situation: text, creator, consumer, context. Ultimately that is what the acafan conversation is about: what can we learn about these things when viewed through this particular lens?[600]

The acafan perspective therefore directs me back to the overall aims of my research. On the one hand, it is about opening up what constitutes the text beyond primary texts and re-imagining the

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[592] Ibid.
[593] Stein qtd. in Jenkins, "Acafandom and Beyond: Week One, Part One."
[594] Ibid.
[595] Ibid.
[596] Hills qtd. in Jenkins, "Aca-Fandom and Beyond (Part One)."
[597] "Acafandom and Beyond: Week Two, Part Two."
[598] Hellekson qtd. in "Acafandom and Beyond: Week Two, Part Two."
[599] Ibid.
[600] Ibid.

text, in this case the Cohen phenomenon, as a dynamic, complex interplay between many elements. On the other hand, it points towards "the whole middle-zone of cultural space"[601] and examining the in-between spaces—the edges of things—and their interplay.[602] This involves discovering that things are often not one or the other but all of it and everything in between.

**1.6 Sociology of Emotion**

As stated above, one of the greatest assets of the acafan standpoint stems from its capacity to examine and negotiate the emotional experiences of both fandom and academia. In studying how representations of Cohen fans accentuate their emotionality in a disparaging fashion and in exploring my own embodied emotional experience of Cohen's death as a fan and an academic, I situate my work within the broader scholarship of the sociology of emotions, a well-established area of research that began in the mid-1970s.[603] Jack Barbalet's work on emotions, for example, reinforces how understanding emotion is "absolutely essential for sociology because no action can occur in a society without emotional involvement."[604] In fact, "*emotions link structure and agency.*"[605] Emotions both identify the problems we face and offer solutions.

In "Emotions and Social Movements," Jeff Goodwin and James M. Jasper recognize the "strategic purposes" of emotions, investigating their role within social movements.[606] They argue that emotions "are crucial to the interactions between social movements and others, just as they are to all social interactions."[607] Barbalet endorses this idea that emotions exist not only in "individual acts of conformity but in social interactions more broadly."[608] Our emotional experiences arise from the structure of social relations as well as the "power and status in which they are implicated," and therefore, our "accounts of situated actions" would be inadequate without paying attention to the role of emotions.[609] Goodwin and Jasper also identify the link between emotions and social hierarchies, noting how our emotional experiences are closely tied

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[601] English, 12.
[602] Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar and Elizabeth A. Povinelli, "Technologies of Public Forms: Circulation, Transfiguration, Recognition," *Public Culture* 15, no. 3 (2003): 392.
[603] Barbalet, "Introduction: Why Emotions Are Crucial," 6.
[604] Ibid, 2.
[605] Ibid., 3.
[606] Jeff Goodwin and James M. Jasper, "Emotions and Social Movements," ed. Jan E. Stets and Jonathan H. Turner (New York: Springer, 2007), 612.
[607] Ibid., 623.
[608] Barbalet, "Introduction: Why Emotions Are Crucial," 3.
[609] Ibid., 4.

to our social status.[610] Barbalet maintains that overall we can more completely grasp all social phenomena when we acknowledge their emotional dimensions, as it is these emotional aspects that determine their social significance.[611]

In *Emotion, Social Theory, and Social Structure: A Macrosociological Approach*, Barbalet identifies three approaches to emotion and reason: the conventional, the critical, and the radical. The conventional approach divides emotion and reason, whereas the critical approach views emotion as supporting reason and the radical approach perceives them as continuous.[612] The conventional approach—which opposes reason and emotion, disregarding and suppressing emotion—continues to have the "widest currency."[613] According to Barbalet, this approach "leads sensible people to reject emotion and to regard it as an inappropriate category of analysis."[614] The conventional approach can be found in a specific tradition of sociology that links the power of individual social actors to their "self-control in defining purposes and executing them, under the aegis and direction of values, and against distracting impulses and emotions."[615] This perpetuates the notion that in order to be a rational citizen in a capitalist society, one must utilize self-control in nullifying one's emotions.

While the conventional approach is evident in many accounts, Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* is a classic work that incorporates this approach.[616] Barbalet sees a major deficiency in formulations of the conventional approach: the blindness to the idea that all actions, including reason, rely on emotions. He questions, "How could a person deal competently with any practical problem without the emotion of confidence in their actions, without the emotion of trust in the actions of enabling others, without the feeling of dissatisfaction with failure to encourage success?"[617] A major limitation of the conventional approach to emotion then is its assumption that reason excludes all emotions, including "calmness, security, confidence."[618]

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[610] Goodwin and Jasper, 626.
[611] Barbalet, "Introduction: Why Emotions Are Crucial," 6.
[612] Barbalet, *Emotion, Social Theory, and Social Structure: A Macrosociological Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 29.
[613] Ibid., 30.
[614] Barbalet, "Introduction: Why Emotions Are Crucial," 1.
[615] Ibid.
[616] Ibid.
[617] Ibid.
[618] Ibid., 1-2.

Observing how this conventional approach is "remarkably durable," Barbalet sets out to ascertain why it is so persistent and widespread.[619] Drawing on Simmel, Barbalet identifies how the instrumental rationality of capitalist market relations separates and juxtaposes emotion and reason.[620] He highlights the "social institution of the market" and the resulting gendered separation of emotion and reason in terms of the public (market) and the private (household).[621] Focusing on the capitalist labour market, he discovers that "the ascendance of the market and its association with reason and rationality is taken to lead also to the depreciation, even stigmatization of emotion, if not its elimination."[622] Correspondingly, due to the low market value of activities associated with emotion, "emotion itself is regarded as being of little worth."[623] Barbalet concludes that despite lacking a firm basis to argue for the conventional approach to emotion and reason, social and cultural representations of emotion and reason continue to perpetuate a distinct separation between the two.[624]

The conventional approach relies on a classical definition of emotions as innate biological phenomena that we must manage and suppress in order to be rational citizens productive in capitalist society. Lisa Feldman Barrett describes it as such: "Emotions are thus thought to be a kind of brute reflex, very often at odds with our rationality. The primitive part of your brain wants you to tell your boss he's an idiot, but your deliberative side knows that doing so would get you fired, so you restrain yourself."[625] This classical view of emotions, she argues, is so pervasive that not only can you find it in "virtually every introductory college textbook on psychology, and in most magazine and newspaper articles that discuss emotion," but it is also entrenched in our social institutions.[626] Nevertheless, there is significant scientific evidence that disputes this viewpoint.

As an alternative to the classical view of emotions, in *How Emotions are Made: The Secret Life of the Brain*, Feldman Barrett proposes a theory of constructed emotion, drawing on social construction, psychological construction, and neuroconstruction theories. While the

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[619] Barbalet, *Emotion*, 54.
[620] Ibid., 55.
[621] Ibid., 56.
[622] Ibid.
[623] Ibid.
[624] Ibid., 60.
[625] Lisa Feldman Barrett, *How Emotions Are Made: The Secret Life of the Brain* (New York: Houghton Mufflin Harcourt, 2017), xi.
[626] Ibid., xi-xii.

classical view is prevalent because for many, it seems to fit our embodied experience of emotions (automatic, triggered, etc.), the theory of constructed emotion depicts the operation of emotion quite differently.[627] In describing her reaction to the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, Feldman Barrett explains how the theory of constructed emotion works:

> I felt sadness in that moment because, having been raised in a certain culture, I learned long ago that 'sadness' is something that may occur when certain bodily feelings coincide with terrible loss. Using bits and pieces of past experience, such as my knowledge of shootings and my previous sadness about them, my brain rapidly predicted what my body should do to cope with such tragedy. Its predictions caused my thumping heart, my flushed face, and the knots in my stomach. They directed me to cry, an action that would calm my nervous system. And they made the resulting sensations meaningful as an instance of sadness.[628]

For Feldman Barrett, an "emotion is your brain's *creation* of what your bodily sensations mean, in relation to what is going on around you in the world."[629] Instead of reactions to the world, emotions are concepts that "guide your actions and give your sensations meaning."[630] While the classical perspective maintains that emotions such as anger are genetically predetermined, the theory of constructed emotion suggests that they only feel innate because "you grew up in a particular social context where those emotion concepts are meaningful and useful, and your brain applies them outside your awareness to construct your experiences."[631] Therefore, emotions that appear universal are based on shared concepts.[632]

Differentiating between emotion (as a construct) and affect (as a general feeling), Feldman Barrett defines affect as a simple feeling with two main features. The first is valence, an indicator of the level of pleasant or unpleasantness you feel, and the second is arousal, a barometer of how calm or agitated you feel.[633] For example, having a gut feeling or a hunch about someone or something is an affect. According to Feldman Barrett, these feelings of affect are "simple summaries of your budgetary state … When your budget is unbalanced, your affect doesn't instruct you how to act in any specific way, but it prompts your brain to search for

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[627] Ibid., xiii-xiv.
[628] Ibid., xiii.
[629] Ibid., 30.
[630] Ibid., 31.
[631] Ibid., 33.
[632] Ibid., 38.
[633] Ibid., 72.

explanations."[634] In turn, your brain uses concepts to construct, organize, and identify the specific emotion from this feeling of affect. In this respect, affect cannot tell you what your sensations and feelings mean or how to act in connection with them. You must first make this feeling meaningful. Feldman Barrett argues that one "way to make meaning is to construct an instance of emotion."[635]

In *Affect and Emotion*, Margaret Wetherell formulates a similar understanding of human emotion and affect as "*embodied meaning-making*."[636] For Wetherell, emotion is an affective practice where "bits of the body (e.g. facial muscles, thalamic-amygdala pathways in the brain, heart rate, regions of the prefrontal cortex, sweat glands, etc.) get patterned together with feelings and thoughts, interaction patterns and relationships, narratives, and interpretative repertories, social relations, personal histories, and ways of life."[637] Conceptualizing emotion as affective practice highlights its interconnection with social practices and meaning-making, its dynamism and circulation, its situatedness, and its connection to power. This opens up questions, such as: "What affective practices confer 'distinction' on those who perform them and how has this changed over time?";[638] "Who is emotionally privileged, who is emotionally disadvantaged and what does this privilege and disadvantage look like?"[639] Wetherell argues that "human affect is inextricably linked with meaning-making and with the semiotic (broadly defined) and the discursive. It is futile to try to pull them apart."[640]

Corresponding with my aim to foreground the often-unacknowledged role of emotions in academic work, Valérie de Courville Nicol's embodied in/capacity theory recognizes the role of emotions in both emotional and rational behaviour, that is, in all types of agency. Working against the "conventional association of emotions with 'irrational,' 'excessive,' 'impulsive,' 'feminine,' or 'self-destructive' forms of agency," de Courville Nicol reveals how such a perspective "obscures the fundamental involvement of emotions in all forms of agency, including those we might think of as 'rational.'"[641] Alternatively, she defines emotions as a "structuring energy" that provides the foundation for our agency in moving towards the feeling

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[634] Ibid., 73.
[635] Ibid., 83.
[636] Wetherell, 4.
[637] Ibid., 13-14.
[638] Ibid., 16.
[639] Ibid., 19.
[640] Ibid., 20.
[641] de Courville Nicol, 3.

of capacity, or empowerment.[642] As "felt perceptions and embodied knowledge," emotions "consist of the structured urges to confront, to avoid, or to prevent problems and can constitute a mix of these orientations."[643] Emotions, as felt capacity or felt incapacity, motivate us to find a solution to our problems, as they are the embodied experience, the "felt form," of these problems.[644]

De Courville Nicol defines the feeling of incapacity as the powerlessness we feel when we sense that we do not have the ability to escape (confront, avoid, or prevent) anticipated pain (danger), whereas the feeling of capacity is the empowerment we feel when we sense that we have the ability to move towards anticipated pleasure (security).[645] In other words, incapacity is a "fear-based urge to overcome danger" and capacity is a "desire-based urge to implement security."[646] For example, as a felt sense of incapacity, the feeling of sadness involves our "inability to prevent the loss of a force" that we are attached to.[647] In order to move away from sadness, we have to discover the felt capacity that allows us to "take charge."[648] The feeling of sadness leads to the search for a way to overcome danger, for example, by identifying our desire to experience happiness. This feeling of capacity functions as a promise that there is a way through the painful experience. In the words of Cohen, the felt sense of in/capacity represents the crack (the pain) through which the light (promise of hope) gets in.

In contrast to the classical view of emotions, I draw on the work of de Courville Nicol, Feldman Barrett, and Wetherell and define emotion from an embodied constructionist theoretical perspective that approaches emotions as conceptually-based events and affective practices that are dynamic, interactive, situated, goal-orientated, and discursive. I define emotions as constructed ideas and categories that we use to make sense of embodied sensations. While I value Feldman Barrett's distinction between affect and emotion, as embodied sensations and constructed categories respectively, at times I use these terms interchangeably to indicate how our embodied experience of emotion and affect does not differentiate between these two processes. Following this scholarship, I maintain that the emotional concepts that we use to make sense of our embodied sensations and feelings of affect are ideas and categories we learn through

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[642] Ibid.
[643] Ibid.
[644] Ibid.
[645] Ibid., 4.
[646] Ibid.
[647] Ibid.
[648] Ibid., 2.

sociocultural life experiences. Our emotional concepts are influenced by our family and upbringing but also through social interactions, cultural texts, and our past emotional experiences. In turn, they are continually shaped by various discourses and are influenced by a diverse range of sociocultural factors from the country where I live to the cultural products I consume to the social institutions in which I interact.

## 1.7 Circulation Theory

Examining celebrity and fandom in terms of cultural taste, distinction, and value means being cognizant of the role of circulation in the constitution of celebrity. Offering an alternative framework to study celebrity, theories of circulation facilitate a more nuanced understanding of the interconnected processes of production and consumption in the discursive constitution of celebrity and extend the analysis of celebrity beyond its meaning or cultural function. In *Circulation and the City*, Alexandra Boutrous and Will Straw share Jorg Heiser's concern that cultural analysts remain fixated on the "end points in the lives of cultural artifacts," production and consumption.[649] Taking a different approach, they encourage the investigation of cultural artifacts as they circulate and ponder what this might reveal.[650]

In "The Circulatory Turn," Straw argues that paying attention to the circulation of cultural artifacts does not concern how they provide physical forms to preexisting ideas, knowledges, and discourses, but rather how cultural artifacts, as mobile forms, move through social space and interconnect with other artifacts, ideas, knowledges, and discourses.[651] Focusing on the circulation of cultural artifacts through social space encourages a shift away from the more traditional analysis of their content and meaning. Instead of concentrating on the content of cultural forms, Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar and Elizabeth Povinelli suggest that we turn our attention "to the edges of forms as they circulate so we can see what is motivating their movement across global social space and thus what is attached to them as both cause and excess."[652] For Straw, we can no longer consider the edge of the form as its meaningless outside frame—that basic surface which holds it together.[653] Instead, edges are the meeting grounds

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[649] Alexandra Boutros and Will Straw, eds., *Circulation and the City: Essays on Urban Culture* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), 3.
[650] Ibid.
[651] Will Straw, "The Circulatory Turn," in *The Wireless Spectrum: The Politics, Practices, and Poetics of Mobile Media*, ed. Barbara Crow, Michael Longford, and Kim Sawchuk (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 23.
[652] Gaonkar and Povinelli, 392.
[653] Straw, 23.

where interactions with other forms occur as well as the surface that propels its motion in particular directions.[654] As Gaonkar and Povinelli assert, circulation does not take place in an "empty space in which things move."[655] Thus, considering the edges of cultural forms means understanding their occupation in time and space, their materiality, and their interconnections to other forms.[656]

To pay attention to the circulation of a cultural form presents a challenge to reconceptualize the cultural form as more than just a container of meaning (and to move beyond a method that would set out to trace the movement of that meaning through different socio-historical contexts).[657] Straw states that the reasons for choosing an anti-interpretive approach vary.[658] For example, my reasons for undertaking a circulatory approach to the celebrity phenomenon of Cohen, as opposed to an interpretational approach that would seek to identify the meaning of Cohen's celebrity, lies within my aim to trace its interconnections with discourses of celebrity in Canada, the rules that dictate what we can say about celebrity, the spaces in which we discuss celebrity, the practices and subject-positions that illuminate celebrity as well as notions of cultural value, cultural institutions, and emotions. Straw suggests that for some scholars, a devoted focus to interpreting the meaning of cultural forms (as well as asserting the intentionality of that meaning) has come at the cost of analyzing its materiality and presence.[659]

Straw argues that cultural analysis should involve examining the circumstances in which cultural forms take up social space, how they intersect with other forms, and the conditions under which they move through social space relative to one another.[660] Gaonkar and Povinelli warn that we should not read "social life *off*" of the cultural form, but follow its own social life.[661] Rather than examining the cultural form for what it can tell us about other things / forms / phenomena, circulation instructs us about the social life of the form itself; that is, its movement through social space is revelatory. Straw clarifies the key issue. The issue at stake here is not a question of how social life records itself within communication and expression.[662] Rather, it

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[654] Ibid.
[655] Gaonkar and Povinelli, 392.
[656] Boutros and Straw, 8.
[657] Straw, 23.
[658] Ibid.
[659] Ibid.
[660] Ibid.
[661] Gaonkar and Povinelli, 387.
[662] Straw, 23.

involves how the actual movement of cultural forms imagines and constructs places of interconnection, which in turn produces social life.[663] For example, by focusing on the circulation of the Cohen phenomenon I reveal its interconnection with other discourses, how it occupies social space, and how it moves in relation to other cultural artifacts.

Straw establishes an understanding of circulation as the dynamic process in which production and consumption subsume into "meaningful moments."[664] Circulation is in essence the expression of the fluid relationships between production and consumption.[665] This conceptualization destabilizes the production / consumption binary and reveals that consumption "is not the end of a process."[666] Straw elucidates how circulation enables a distancing from notions of production and reception in cultural analysis, instead seeing the movement of the cultural form through social space as both constituting the space and constituting the form.[667] However, he warns that circulation "is not just a third level of analysis (like 'distribution' in the study of cultural industries)."[668]

This speaks to the continuity of the articulation of the cultural artifact—a notion that dismisses the ideas of production and reception as singular moments in the life cycle of a cultural artifact. Instead, circulation accentuates its ongoing constitution, with moments (plural) of reception as co-constitutive. Circulation also disregards the ideas of author and audience as creators and receptors—instead all of these factors continually shape the cultural artifact. There is not one moment of creation and one moment of reception, but circulation defines these processes as ongoing, as cultural artifacts intersect with others, moving through and shaping social life. Nevertheless, studying the circulation of a cultural form is an entirely different process than studying its production and reception, and these terms begin to lose their significance.[669] Straw emphasizes how the movement of a cultural form "is not one which bridges a source and destination, but the realignment of forms in relationship to each other."[670]

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[663] Ibid.
[664] Ibid., 25.
[665] Ben Highmore, *Cityscapes: Cultural Readings in the Material and Symbolic City* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 9.
[666] Leve, "The Circuit of Culture as a Generative Tool of Contemporary Analysis: Examining the Construction of an Education Commodity," 8.
[667] Straw, 25.
[668] Ibid.
[669] Ibid., 26.
[670] Ibid.

The movement of the Cohen phenomenon does not merely connect Cohen with his fans / audience, but it realigns both in relation to one another in a different fashion. Circulation is not necessarily about connection, but more about the movement of cultural forms in relation to one another in a way that constitutes cultural life or provides it with flair.[671] Thus, as Gaonkar and Povinelli argue, in approaching a culture of circulation, the importance lies in tracing the interconnections and co-existence among a growing number of textual and cultural forms in terms of their movement and dynamic and flexible nature, rather than examining the individual cultural form in terms of its "autonomy and specificity."[672]

Straw presents two main approaches to understanding the nature of circulation. While one views circulation as movement along predetermined, fixed pathways, the other emphasizes the randomness of circulation and lack of structure.[673] Calling attention to the varying interpretations of circulation involves appreciating how it is a controlled process with a set infrastructure that channels movement, and a set of movements that can be repeated, as well as a process that is less structured and stable and exhibits a sense of randomness and unrestrained fluidity.[674]

Coming full circle, Straw explicates how over time, even random movement can become structured and bound to a pattern of movement.[675] If circulation provides a sense of movement as free from barriers and fluid mobility, then we have to remember the other side—that circulation also involves delays and stoppages. Circulation requires a certain vigilance, an "attentiveness to the ways in which media forms work to produce particular tensions between stasis or mobility."[676] Being aware of the role of circulation therefore requires paying heed both to the fluidity of movement and to moments of interruption or stoppage of movement. Alert to the edges of cultural forms and their circulation means that interacting with celebrity online we can at times feel the "boundaries of the nation."[677] In this respect, Lee and York point to the use of geo-blocking by political and corporate institutions as a strategy to regulate access to and control the rate of flow of cultural production on the internet.[678] Being mindful of circulation as the

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[671] Ibid.
[672] Gaonkar and Povinelli, 193.
[673] Straw, 27.
[674] Ibid.
[675] Ibid.
[676] Ibid., 28.
[677] Lee and York, "Introduction," 11.
[678] Ibid.

orientation of analysis of the Cohen phenomenon necessitates understanding how it produces particular tensions between movement and stillness.

Similarly, Benjamin Lee and Edward LiPuma urge taking a perspective of circulation that grasps more than the movement of objects, individuals, and ideas or the transmission of meaning.[679] In discussing transnational celebrity, Katja Lee describes how being a transnational subject involves not only "having one's national identity subject to contestation," but also the incorporation of "a kind of mobility and flexibility across spaces and cultures."[680] For Lee, "*Trans* denotes both moving through space or across lines, as well as changing the nature of something."[681] This conceptualization of the prefix trans clarifies that circulation is more than just the movement of cultural artifacts, but represents a process that shapes artifacts through their movement across time, space, borders, cultures, nations, media, and so forth. Lee and LiPuma offer a more complex perspective of circulation, characterizing it as a "cultural process with its own forms of abstraction, evaluation, and constraint, which are created by the interactions between specific types of circulating forms and the interpretive communities built around them."[682] Circulation thus not only transmits meaning, but also constructs it; circulation is a constitutive act.[683] Being attentive to the role of circulation elucidates the transitional (movement), translational (between the languages of various star systems in Canada, big and small), transactional (economic to aesthetic value), transmedial ("a thoroughgoing awareness of the ways in which shifts in media produce celebrity in complex, changing ways"),[684] transnational, transcultural, and transgressive aspects of celebrity.

Lee and LiPuma identify the roots of circulatory approaches to culture within the study of economics, which "has grasped that it is the dynamics of circulation that are driving globalization—thereby challenging traditional notions of language, culture, and nation."[685] They point out that one legacy of circulation from an economic perspective is that it has been traditionally understood to transmit meaning rather than play a role in the creation of meaning.[686]

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[679] Benjamin Lee and Edward LiPuma, "Cultures of Circulation: The Imaginations of Modernity," *Public Culture* 14, no. 1 (2002): 192.
[680] Lee, 41.
[681] Aihwa Ong qtd. in Lee 41.
[682] Lee and LiPuma, 192.
[683] Ibid.
[684] Lee and York, "Introduction," 6.
[685] Lee and LiPuma, 191.
[686] Ibid., 192.

To counter this understanding, we need to reconceptualize circulation as a cultural phenomenon, what Lee and LiPuma refer to as cultures of circulation.[687] At the same time, we need to introduce the idea of performativity to a "cultural account of economic processes" to show how circulation is a constitutive act.[688]

Lee and LiPuma's perception of circulation, with its emphasis on the interconnections between cultural forms, is comparable to Straw's conceptualization; however, they add another layer of interconnectivity, that of cultural forms and the communities that interpret them. For Lee and LiPuma, it is these communities who structure the circulation of cultural forms that configure a culture of circulation.[689] Developing this idea of circulation and interpretative communities, they write: "Cultures of circulation are created and animated by the cultural forms that circulate through them, including the abstract nature of the forms that underwrite and propel the process of circulation itself," but cannot be reduced to these forms.[690] In this way, the circulation of cultural forms assumes the "existence of their interpretive communities, with their own forms of interpretation and evaluation."[691] In turn, the interpretive communities dictate the rules of interpretation, create institutional structures, and regulate the boundaries of circulation.[692]

While their Marxist analysis of "the performative construction of capital as a self-reflexive temporal agency that … motivates the circulation of social forms characteristic of the modern"[693] ventures beyond the scope of my purposes here, their conceptualization of cultures of circulation is a useful addition to Straw's conceptualization of circulation. Lee and LiPuma's work sheds light on the process of circulation as a constitutive act. Introducing the notion of performativity to understand the constitutive role of circulation helps emphasize how the circulation of cultural forms has a performative function. For example, just as performatives "seem to create the very speech act they refer to,"[694] the circulation of the cultural form appears to create the cultural form itself. In this respect, the circulation of the Cohen phenomenon can be understood as having a role in the constitution of the nation, Cohen fandom, and various other

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[687] Ibid.
[688] Ibid.
[689] Ibid.
[690] Ibid.
[691] Ibid.
[692] Ibid.
[693] Ibid., 193.
[694] Ibid.

interpretive communities. Futhermore, Lee and LiPuma's focus on the circulation of capital suggests that a circulatory analysis may help to break down a binary understanding of economy and culture.[695]

By opposing the concept of production as a singular moment (in an industrial process), theories of circulation help explain how the cultural process of circulation encompasses multiple moments of production, consumption, evaluation, and interaction and thus plays a pivotal role in the construction of celebrity. Drawing on this theoretical framework, I aim to reveal the "social life" of the Cohen phenomenon as it circulates by way of its textual and material embodiments.[696] This approach to circulation finds its roots in the work of cultural studies scholars, such as Stuart Hall (one of the founders of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies), Paul du Gay, and others. The circuit of culture model introduced by Paul du Gay, Stuart Hall, Linda Janes, Anders Koed Madsen, Hugh Mackay, and Keith Negus in *Doing Cultural Studies: The Story of the Sony Walkman*, for example, developed in response to an overemphasis on processes of production. The circuit of culture is a "*relational* model that focuses on the interplay between practices of regulation, consumption, production, identity-work and representation in the assembling or putting together of contemporary material cultural artefacts."[697] The second edition of this book revisits the usefulness of the circuit of culture model, intentionally leaving the debate open-ended.

While some of the terms may need to be updated (e.g. they question whether the terms producer and consumer should be subsumed into one category of the "prosumer"[698]), the central belief underlying the model, and how it draws attention to the dynamism of cultural artifacts, remains of utmost importance. While speculation on the role of circulation in cultural processes is not entirely new, what is new is the incorporation of theories of circulation into an analysis of celebrity and literary culture. Comparable to du Gay et al.'s investigation of the cultural constitution of the Sony Walkman at each moment in the circuit (representation, identity, production, consumption, regulation), this study interrogates the cultural constitution of the Cohen phenomenon at various moments, in different contexts, in connection to different interpretive communities, and through multiple media formats.

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[695] Ibid., 191.

[696] Johnson qtd. in Leve, "The Circuit of Culture as a Generative Tool of Contemporary Analysis: Examining the Construction of an Education Commodity," 3.

[697] Paul Du Gay et al., *Doing Cultural Studies: The Story of the Sony Walkman* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2013), xiii.

[698] Ibid., xxiii.

Chapter Two: The Con, or the Cohen Watched. The Early Industrial Circulation of the Cohen
Phenomenon

I find it very interesting. I find it sinister and of course I find it flattering, because there is a point where every man
shares the Aga Khan's delight at selling his bathwater. – Cohen[1]

## 2.1 Introduction: Peering Behind the Text[2]

At the end of the 1965 National Film Board (NFB) documentary *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr.
Leonard Cohen* the narrative of the film shifts, and Cohen breaks the fourth wall. We see Cohen
viewing the film as a voiceover informs us: "At the completion of the shooting of this film,
Cohen was invited to a screening room to take a look at himself."[3] Here, we watch Cohen
watching himself. The Cohen being watched is in a bathtub, and the Cohen watching narrates:
"This is a situation which, forever the reason, a man has allowed a number of strangers into his
bathroom. It's true we are making a film about my life and the film purports to examine my life
closely and the bath is part of my life but still, regardless of the reason, here in 1964 a man has
invited a group of strangers to observe him cleaning his body."[4] As the screening progresses, we
watch as Cohen writes *caveat emptor* on the bathroom wall. The director asks Cohen, "What did
you mean by that inscription? Was that a message to the audience?"[5] Cohen replies:

> Yes. Caveat emptor. Let the buyer beware. I think that I had to for a moment act as a
> double agent, for both the filmmakers and the public. I had to warn the public that …  it's
> like that little beep that goes through certain recorded phone messages that you hear on
> the radio. I thought I would make this little beep and let the man watching me know that
> this is not entirely devoid of the con.[6]

"Not entirely devoid of the con." This is a statement that could be applied to both the
documentary and to Cohen's aloof persona, which comes to life in radio and television
interviews, the persona that incenses interviewers, like Pierre Berton earlier in the film, with his
evasive answers. When Cohen declares, "I haven't a single concern," Berton reacts strongly,
questioning Cohen: "Oh come on now. What do you care about, really? Don't you care about

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[1] Donald Brittain and Don Owen, *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen* (Canada: National Film Board of
Canada, 1965), 41:27.
[2] Mole, 2.
[3] Brittain and Owen, 39:54.
[4] Ibid., 40:52.
[5] Ibid., 41:49.
[6] Ibid., 41:53.

anything? How can you be a good poet and not care about something?"[7] Cohen cheekily responds: "No, I do the poetry, you do the commentary."[8] Calling attention to the con contributes to Cohen's authenticity by trying to resolve the ambivalent persona this film presents, implying that *this* is who Cohen really is. However, in approaching celebrity as an inherently paradoxical phenomenon, I identify how this representation of Cohen does not resolve his ambivalence, but reconstitutes Cohen's mythology as an enigmatic creature.

When I first saw this film in 2006, over forty years after it was released, I was an undergraduate student at McGill, Cohen's alma mater. I was sitting at home channel surfing when I came across the documentary on the Independent Film Channel (IFC). I was immediately transfixed. I was familiar with Cohen's music, having grown up in a household where it was often played, and likely read a poem or two. However, this was my first introduction to Cohen the public persona, and it impelled me to learn as much as I could on the subject. The bathtub scene in particular caught my attention. The air of authenticity Cohen creates in this scene by breaking down the fourth wall and suggesting this film was "not entirely devoid of the con" spoke to me, especially as a young musician and student living in Montreal. Through my own fantasizing, I envisioned Cohen as a young man who, early in his career, became the subject of a documentary. In his persona, I saw reflections of my friends, also young artists, and imagined what they would have done if given this same opportunity. I suspect they would have been equally playful with the boundary between reality and fiction, public and private. This scene allowed me to see Cohen not so much as an eminent figure in Canadian culture but as a person with a witty and playful sense of humour.

*Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen* was not only my introduction to Cohen's personality, but in 1965 this film became a vehicle for introducing the public persona of Cohen to a wider Canadian audience. The film first aired on CBC on February 16, 1966; the CBC showed the "forty-minute film on a Wednesday night after a Bob Hope comedy special."[9] Cohen made his inaugural musical performance on national television the same year, on the CBC program *Take 30*, hosted by Adrienne Clarkson.[10] While Cohen published his first book of poetry eight years earlier, was the subject of radio interviews and newspaper articles over the

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[7] Ibid., 8:15.
[8] Ibid., 8:25.
[9] Mount, 127.
[10] Deshaye, *The Metaphor of Celebrity*, 102.

years, and made his debut on CBC television in 1965,[11] *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen* represents the first in-depth introduction of the persona of Leonard Cohen, which delved into his personal life. It also distinguished Cohen as the first Canadian poet to be the subject of a full-length documentary in Canada. This film formed a fundamental part of the establishment of Cohen's celebrity and launched a new era of literary celebrity in Canada. It marked a moment of increased media attention to his life, the portrayal of which then began to feed the Cohen phenomenon. As with most celebrity, this interplay between interest in Cohen's life and consumption of his art initiated a feedback loop whereby audiences began to read his work through the lens of the subjectivity established in this film. In this sense, his celebrity persona "folded back into the literary creation."[12]

In this chapter, I examine the industrial structures and discourses that contribute to the early biographical production of Cohen, paying special attention to the ways in which Cohen's early career as a poet is discursively managed by various institutions and agents in the field of cultural production. In addition to the NFB documentary, the objects selected for my analysis cover archival materials from the Leonard Cohen Papers at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, newspaper articles, press releases, and book advertisements from Cohen's early career as a writer, the CBC digital archives, and materials that position Cohen in relation to his hometown of Montreal. In examining how these materials work together to constitute Cohen's early literary celebrity, I attempt to demystify certain beliefs surrounding authorship and celebrity, such as the notion of genius, by drawing attention to the labour involved in authorship.

## 2.2 The Cohen Industry

"Out of the crowds of Montreal has come a singular talent with four books under his belt and a growing reputation," begins Michael Kane's voiceover narration of *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen*.[13] Kane and Cohen take turns narrating the documentary film. While Kane provides background information and description, Cohen recites poetry. The film establishes a feeling of intimacy as Cohen's recitation of his poetry and passages from his first novel overlaps and intermixes with a visual portrayal of his life, slowly conflating the two. We hear Cohen read passages from his novel *The Favourite Game* while we watch his own home movies. "Here is a

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[11] Ibid., 215.
[12] Mole, 20.
[13] Brittain and Owen, 2:57.

movie filled with the bodies of his family," narrates Cohen.[14] In *The Favourite Game* these bodies belonged to Breavman's family; here, they refer to Cohen's family. Not surprisingly, audiences and critics have long considered *The Favourite Game* to be autobiographical, despite Cohen's protests to the contrary.[15]

In *Heavenly Bodies*, Richard Dyer observes how the "media construction of stars encourages us to think in terms of 'really.'"[16] This is what Leonard Cohen is really like, purports the NFB. Taking us "behind the scenes," biographies and documentaries appear to disclose the reality of a star's life, employing a "rhetoric of sincerity or authenticity"[17] that reproduces the flawed notion that a star "can be located in some inner, private, essential core."[18] The intimacy between Cohen and the audience heightens as we see Cohen in his underwear and then topless washing his face, private acts usually hidden from the public eye. Later, the film places us behind the scenes. As we watch Berton interview Cohen and Irving Layton, the CBC camera slightly blocks our view.[19]

Since Cohen was a relatively new figure to Canadian audiences at the time, the film continually emphasizes his cultural importance throughout this forty-five minute documentary. Through Kane's narration the audience learns that Cohen has been endorsed by both the international and Canadian presses, the University of Toronto has purchased his personal records, he has recorded several of his poems on records, and that this year alone (1964) he has earned $17,000 and received numerous awards. This simultaneous reference of economic capital (earnings) and cultural capital (awards) within the same breath is instructive. As the "disinterested activity *par excellence*,"[20] a result of its restricted audience and low profits, the subfield of poetry deals strictly in cultural capital, viewing economic capital as the enemy agent in the struggle for literary legitimacy in the field of cultural production.[21] Owen Percy's work, introduced in Chapter One, is particularly relevant to this analysis.

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[14] Ibid., 13:02.
[15] "Youth Special: Playing the Favourite Game," CBC Digital Archives, accessed September 10, 2018, http://www.cbc.ca/archives/entry/playing-the-favourite-game (Television episode originally aired on CBC November 12, 1963).
[16] Dyer, *Heavenly*, 2.
[17] Ibid., 10.
[18] Ibid., 12.
[19] Brittain and Owen, 8:11.
[20] Bourdieu, *The Field*, 51.
[21] Ibid., 42.

In "Re: Focusing (on) Celebrity," Percy positions literary prizes as the "primary vehicles of most literary celebrity because they quantify quality in a cultural field where subjectivity normally plays a nearly unquantifiable role"[22] and where "prestige still serves as the dominant form of capital and force of exchange."[23] Percy maintains that "poetic celebrity is profitable primarily in cultural capital and prestige within a market that we might see as increasingly estranged from the financial."[24] Despite attempts to separate economic and cultural capital, as York argues in *Literary Celebrity in Canada*, the impacts of economic forces on the field of literary production are undeniable.[25] Bourdieu recognizes the porous nature of capital, suggesting "symbolic capital is to be understood as economic or political capital that is disavowed, misrecognized and thereby recognized, hence legitimate, a 'credit' which, under certain conditions, and always in the long run, guarantees 'economic' profits."[26] York elaborates: "Like literary celebrity itself, as Bourdieu would argue, the language of cultural capital and achievement is built upon an unacknowledged substratum of economic capital."[27]

The permeability of economic and cultural capital becomes especially apparent within the literary prize economy, as its currency is both prestige and monetary. Prizes and awards bestow much more than honor, often being accompanied by a sizable cheque. In his dissertation "Prize Possession," Percy illustrates the interrelations between economic and cultural capital in literary prize culture in Canada. For Percy, literary awards act as a "collision," "an imagined collapse,"[28] and "a bridge between Bourdieu's fields."[29] Highlighting the cyclical nature of literary awards in terms of their ability to translate and convert economic and cultural capital, he describes how the literary award translates the cultural and symbolic value of the award-winning book into economic capital through higher book sales and more publicity.[30] In turn, this heightened economic value generates more cultural capital for the book by increasing the likelihood of it winning another award.[31] Percy observes how the economic size of the prize directly affects its cultural prestige: the higher the economic value, the more culturally and symbolically valuable

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[22] Percy, "Re: Focusing," 189.
[23] Ibid., 188.
[24] Ibid., 190.
[25] York, *Literary*, 28.
[26] Bourdieu, *The Field*, 75.
[27] York, *Literary*, 173.
[28] Percy, "Prize," 14.
[29] Ibid., 16.
[30] Ibid., 48.
[31] Ibid.

the prize becomes.[32] Although poetry is not a field associated with high economic value, Cohen's economic success has the potential to be exchanged into greater cultural capital and vice versa.

While it might seem counterintuitive to concentrate on Cohen's economic earnings in establishing his cultural value, acknowledging Cohen's economic earning power helps construct him as a popular rather than as an elite poet. In the documentary, the suggestion of Cohen's economic success constitutes one of the many ways of depicting Cohen as an accessible, popular poet. Cohen's representation as such appeals to a post-Massey Commission Canadian public wary of highbrow culture, and can be tied to the discourse of Canadian cultural nationalism with its anti-American undertones. More specifically, the NFB's construction of Cohen as a national cultural figure is a response to the Massey Commission, with his celebrity persona as a popular poet appearing attractive to a Canadian public interested in popular culture.

During his voiceover narration, Kane hints at Cohen's own sense of his growing posterity and future value with the comment: "Cohen collects his letters and makes sure he is heavily photographed. He does this simply because he feels he is becoming an important writer and that such material will someday be of value. And yet he is totally devoid of arrogance and is deeply concerned with the style of his soul."[33] This remark appears as a prophecy in retrospect, but at the time we can see his developing fame (economic success) and (elite) cultural capital being downplayed by statements that he is incapable of self-conceit. In fact, the film works hard to erase Cohen of any trace of pretension, whether associated with American notions of celebrity or high cultural elitism.

Cohen's mysterious, enigmatic persona unfolds as the film characterizes him as a poet who "despises literary pretense,"[34] "has not read extensively," is "not self-consciously cultured," and "listens largely to pop music."[35] At one point, Cohen laughingly quips: "All I have to tell you now is that I was good in sports and I've completely ruined the cliché of the poet forever."[36] Percy describes how poetry "is often erroneously construed as culturally elitist and civil to the point of unrelatability from the 'outside.'"[37] How the documentary works to portray Cohen as a relatable figure is key. Instead of demystifying poetry as a high cultural, elite activity, the

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[32] Ibid., 54.
[33] Brittain and Owen, 21:53.
[34] Ibid., 27:45.
[35] Ibid., 30:30.
[36] Ibid., 29:04.
[37] Percy, "Re: Focusing," 188.

documentary presents Cohen and his poetry as demonstrability different from the writings of other poets and high cultural thinkers. In *Don Owen: Notes on a Filmmaker and His Culture,* Steve Gravestock observes how in *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen* the "conventional notion of the tormented, serious poet is partially mocked by [Cohen's] interest in and comfort with pop culture. He's seen listening to pop music while writing, perusing tabloids at newsstands and wandering into a rundown theatre to watch an overtly trashy genre film, *Beyond Mombasa*."[38] I would also add that at the very end of the movie Cohen strolls into an arcade and begins to play an electro-mechanical rifle arcade game, blurring labour and leisure.

At the same time, the documentary depicts Cohen's industrious nature. As we watch Cohen sitting at a desk and writing, Kane informs us: "Cohen works his talent very hard. He writes and rewrites for about 5 hours a day."[39] This focus on Cohen's labour forms a departure from typical representations of celebrity that centre on leisure and points to the difference between the representation of American celebrity (leisure) and Canadian celebrity (labour), as well as celebrity and literary celebrity.

In Chapter One, for example, I accentuate Hamilton's identification of a merit discourse concerning Canadian celebrity. This discourse perpetuates the notion that in Canada, celebrity relies on merit, not personality, and consequently the ideal Canadian celebrity is one who contributes to nation building.[40] In turn, this creates an image of Canadian celebrity as more "deserving" than American celebrity, and ultimately "morally superior."[41] Bringing this back to the socio-historical context, it is significant that prior to Confederation up to the time of World War II, the major issue facing Canadian nationalism was "political autonomy from Britain," whereas postwar, Canadian nationalism shifted to a concern about "cultural autonomy from the United States."[42] This discourse of cultural nationalism influenced the construction of Canadian cultural figures, and Cohen's celebrity persona, as developed in this film, can be understood as a response to this discourse, with its aims of national unity through the production of national culture and the celebration of national cultural figures.

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[38] Steve Gravestock, *Don Owen: Notes on a Filmmaker and His Culture* (Toronto: Toronto International Film Festival, 2005), 45.
[39] Brittain and Owen, 34:45.
[40] Hamilton, 200-201.
[41] Ibid., 202.
[42] Mount, 14.

At the same time, concentrating on the labour of the literary celebrity points to the limits of visually representing literary celebrity. York explains: "The activity that has given rise to the writer's well-knownness—writing—is exactly that which cannot be represented to advantage in the primarily visual marketing media."[43] As a result, documentary filmmakers typically gain nothing more than a snapshot of the writer at their workspace, "seated at a desk or in front of a computer."[44] In focusing on Cohen's writing as labour, the documentary obscures the other forms of labour and agents involved in producing Cohen's work, and the Cohen phenomenon at large, and as a result clearly situates Cohen as Author.

In "Bureaucratic Celebrity," Ira Wagman calls attention to the invisible forms of labour in forging a career in culture in Canada, including "having to apply for grants or complete reams of administrative work to get things off the ground, published, produced, distributed, and exhibited."[45] Signs of this invisible labour only become apparent when it is successful, but even then just "in the marginal areas of Canadian cultural texts," such as the front pages of a book or back cover of an album in the form of a logo.[46] Tucked away on the copyright page of *The Favourite Game* lies evidence of this type of labour, notably in the statement: "We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Book Publishing Industry Development Program and that of the Government of Ontario through the Ontario Media Development Corporation's Ontario Book Initiative. We further acknowledge the support of the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council for our publishing program."[47] The use of "we" stands out, underscoring the multiplicity of agents, and their unrecognized labour, in publishing a book.

The narration of *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen* further grounds Cohen's labour within his talent. This tension between hard work and talent represents an integral part of the construction of literary celebrity. York maintains that "the need both to recognize sudden fame as a testament to talent and to temper fame's legendary swiftness with proof of cultural value, in the form of literary apprenticeship steeped over a longer period of time" produces a fundamental tension of literary celebrity.[48] On the one hand, accentuating Cohen's talent

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[43]York, *Literary*, 13.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Wagman, 204.
[46] Ibid., 205.
[47] Cohen, *Favourite*.
[48] York, *Literary*, 4.

contributes to his cultural capital and the value of his poetry. As Joe Moran explains in *Star Authors*, the "individualization of the author or artist as a person with special gifts or qualities (what Bourdieu calls the 'charismatic illusion') is the focal point of this separation of cultural from economic capital."[49] An innate quality, talent comes from within an individual and is uncontaminated by outside, market forces; the artwork is autonomous, the labour is unalienated. On the other hand, calling attention to the various types of labour that produce the Cohen phenomenon—poetry readings and tours, book signings, television interviews—elucidates the commercial aspects of authorship. In other words, Cohen's work is not totally devoid of the con, or com(merical) influences.

In "Re: Focusing (on) Celebrity," Percy discusses the dominant belief that unalienated labour is "the core of the poetic act."[50] By juxtaposing Cohen's more commercial forms of labour (e.g. poetry readings, interviews, etc.) alongside his artistic labour (e.g. writing, observing) the NFB documentary complicates this idea of unalienated labour, or labour untouched by the marketplace. In *Heavenly Bodies*, Dyer explains how despite the active role film stars have in "making themselves into commodities, they are both labour and the thing labour produces."[51] However, celebrity discourse conceals the labour of stars, with their leisure taking precedence. Like Dyer, Mole stresses this tension between celebrity labour and celebrity as product, recognizing that "the celebrity experiences the subjective trauma of commodity capitalism in a particularly acute fashion. He is both a producer of commodities and himself, in a sense, a commodity."[52] Reflecting on this, York clarifies how for the literary celebrity this becomes "a powerful internalization of the classic Marxist notion of alienated labour"—the very thing believed to be absent in the production of poetry.[53]

Studying Margaret Atwood, York expands this idea. Referring to Dyer, York explains: "In [his] terms, Atwood as writer is 'both labour and the thing that labour produces,' and in order to retain her cultural legitimacy and capital, she constantly needs to sever the connection between the two, reminding her audience that her global celebrity is inauthentic compared to the labour of writing."[54] As York observes, celebrity in the field of literary production is especially

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[49] Moran, 4-5.
[50] Percy, "Re: Focusing," 268.
[51] Dyer, *Heavenly*, 5.
[52] Mole, 4.
[53] York, *Margaret*, 9.
[54] Ibid., 15-16.

ripe with such inconsistencies and battles between cultural and economic capital.[55] In order to maintain cohesion, texts about the literary celebrity "tend to reinscribe a narrative of the writer devoted to aesthetic criteria beset by the forces of commercialism."[56] York contends that it is "only by comparing how various forms of capital operate at different cultural sites can we discern that complicated balancing act of defending one's interest in disinterestedness."[57] While she provides the case of Atwood contrasting her own celebrity with that of "rock stars or movie stars,"[58] we could offer the example of Cohen turning down the Governor General's Award for poetry in 1968, claiming "the poems themselves forbid it absolutely."[59]

Emphasizing Cohen's natural talent and hard work is one method of offsetting the production of Cohen as commodity / celebrity. Mentions of Cohen's talent circulate beyond the film through its promotional materials. The poster for the film presents the documentary as an informal account of Cohen's life, claiming that "Cohen has the gift of poetry" and "no matter what he is doing, there is little doubt of his primary interest in poetry and the poetic impulse."[60] In a press release from McClelland and Stewart advertising a screening of the film on CBC, dated shortly before the release of *Beautiful Losers* in 1966, the publisher promotes the film as "one of the finest documentary films ever produced" by the NFB and the first of its kind— proclaiming that never before has a Canadian poet been the subject of a documentary film.[61] The press release celebrates Cohen's recent recognition "as one of Canada's most talented young writers" and informs audiences that this film is a remarkable "opportunity to get to know one of today's most famous writers."[62] References to Cohen's talent, extraordinary gift, accomplishments, and "unpretentious life of the artist absorbed in his art" circulate through these materials.[63] The press release extolls his forthcoming *Beautiful Losers* as "one of the most important novels ever written in Canada."[64] Analogous to how the documentary film depicts Cohen at work, writing and observing, these promotional materials uphold the film's realistic

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[55] Ibid., 16.
[56] Ibid., 18.
[57] Ibid., 21.
[58] Atwood qtd. in York, *Margaret*, 21.
[59] Cohen qtd. in Sylvie Simmons, *I'm Your Man: The Life of Leonard Cohen* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2012), 223.
[60] Gravestock, 46.
[61] Press release from McClelland and Stewart about *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen*, 1966, Ms coll 122, box 11, folder 45, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid.

portrayal of Cohen in his natural state of "working and playing, observing and absorbing, and always writing."[65]

This image of Cohen's natural talent and dedication to writing also appears in reviews of Cohen's first novel, *The Favourite Game*. In a document entitled "What the reviewers say about … *The Favourite Game*," the British Book Service compiles a list of twenty selected quotations from the most positive newspaper reviews of Cohen's first novel across Canada and the United States.[66] While some reviewers reflect on Cohen's Canadian identity ("At last a major novel has been written by a Canadian"[67]), others focus on the merit of his writing, distinguishing Cohen as a writer who "shows the promise of great talent for his new field."[68] Two reviews underscore the "wide appeal" of *The Favourite Game*, especially among university students,[69] announcing that it "will be read on a thousand North American campuses this fall."[70]

Of significance is the continual circulation of the image of Cohen as the embodiment of natural talent and hard work. *The Vancouver Province*, for example, identifies Cohen as a poet with "self-acquired discipline" and "original talent."[71] Two different quotes from *The Montreal Star* praise Cohen's "fine phrase-making talent," which indicates that he "clearly has the stuff of an ingenious writer."[72] For the *Vancouver Province*, it is the "beauty and rhythm of the words, the grace of his writing that make this a book worth noting and an author worth remembering."[73] These newspaper reviews attribute the success of Cohen's writing to a combination of his poetic talent and labored discipline. This is important for two reasons. First, it is not Cohen's talent alone that contributes to his cultural worth, but a combination of his artistic ability and diligence. Second, it is only Cohen's labour that gains the praise of the press. There is no mention of other forms of labor involved in literary production that relate to his success and fame. This representation contributes to a discourse of genius that frames talent as a natural ability that resides within an individual; it is innate. Cohen's own emphasis on hard work and discipline

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[65] Ibid.
[66] Document from British Book Service containing selected quotes from reviews of *The Favourite Game*, Ms coll 122, box 6, folder 1, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
[67] *Sherbrooke Daily Record* qtd. in ibid.
[68] *The St. Catharines Standard* qtd. in ibid.
[69] *Sherbrooke Daily Record* qtd. in ibid.
[70] *The New York Times* qtd. in ibid.
[71] *The Vancouver Province* qtd. in ibid.
[72] *The Montreal Star* qtd. in ibid.
[73] *The Vancouver Province* qtd. in ibid.

slightly complicates this discourse; however, in contrast to American discourses of celebrity, which focus on leisure and wealth, celebrity discourses in Canada accentuate hard work.

Government support of the arts through cultural policy in Canada compounds the tensions between cultural and economic capital, hard work and talent. Wagman explains how celebrities, "who are supposedly reflective of 'Canadian' values," emerge "against the backdrop of support programs that aid in the publication, marketing, and distribution of a range of Canadian texts—from films to books to artworks and television shows."[74] Correspondingly, Patricia Cormack and James Cosgrave argue that Canadian celebrity should be understood in connection to "the state as broadcaster and maker of celebrities."[75] Supporting Wagman's argument that the current literature on celebrity has little if any meaningful applicability in the Canadian context, in "Theorizing the State Celebrity" Cormack and Cosgrave reveal how celebrity in Canada diverges "from that of the commercial realm," where celebrity is understood through concepts of individualism, consumption, and commodity.[76] The production of celebrity in Canada is more complex than attributing it solely "to capitalism and the commodity form," as Canadian celebrities operate as "objects of state."[77] This adds another layer of complexity to the notion of the autonomous artist. As Wagman points out, any hint that the achievement of cultural success relies on state involvement is antithetical to "ideas about the autonomous and independent acts of creativity," which underlie the mythology of being an artist.[78]

The image of Cohen as a talented figure who invests considerable labour in his craft can be situated in a broader discourse of Canadian celebrity as a product of creativity and industriousness. For example, York describes how "Canadians are positioned as honest labourers whose fame is to be distinguished from a less labour-reliant form of American celebrity."[79] While the dominant discourse of American / Hollywood celebrity perpetuates the idea that stardom is an innate and magical quality,[80] Canadian discourse maintains that celebrity emerges through hard work. Developing this further, Danielle Deveau analyzes the tension between striving toward the goal of success and the notion that pursuing fame in the United States is

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[74] Wagman, 201-202.
[75] Cormack and Cosgrave, "Theorising," 322.
[76] Ibid., 323.
[77] Ibid., 325.
[78] Wagman, 201.
[79] York, *Literary*, 172.
[80] Richard Dyer, "A Star Is Born and the Construction of Authenticity," in *Stardom: Industry of Desire*, ed. Christine Gledhill (New York: Routledge, 1991), 135.

problematic.[81] She explains how this tension discursively positions Canada as a site for "creatively principled work" and the United States as a site for the pursuit of wealth.[82] Canadian culture thereby becomes "overly defined by what it is not—The US."[83] In Chapter One, I trace the roots of this discourse of celebrity in Canada to the discourse of cultural nationalism that materializes in postwar Canada with the Massey Commission.

In *Arrival*, Nick Mount pinpoints anti-Americanism as one of the driving forces of Canadian literature in the 1960s.[84] For example, this anti-American sentiment among Canadian writers at the time spurred the anti-US anthology *The New Romans*, edited by Al Purdy. In the introduction, Purdy describes his vision for this book as a reflection, "in absolutely biased terms," of how "Canadian writers—and it follows, many other Canadians too—feel about the U.S. and Americans."[85] For this opinion-based anthology, Purdy encourages Canadian writers to express their personal feelings and thoughts about the United States and its citizens on any issue pertaining to the subject.[86] In response, Purdy remarks that "most Canadians cannot talk about the U.S. outside the context of themselves as Canadians."[87]

Lee and York develop the thought that "Canada is by no means the only nation to feel the weight of American celebrity cultures shaping and influencing how celebrity is conceived, measured, discussed, produced, and consumed at home, but there is certainly an argument to be made for the longstanding impact of our cultural and geographical proximity to them."[88] How culture industries and celebrities in Canada distinguish themselves discursively often entails stressing our cultural value, our diligence, and our talent. Not surprisingly, when a Canadian celebrity begins to demonstrate values associated with American celebrity, such as individualism, self-promotion, consumption, etc., backlash and criticism can ensue. Mirroring this sentiment, author Sheila Heti comments that in Canada "you can't make a spectacle for yourself. You have to let other make a spectacle of you for you."[89]

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[81] Deveau, 179.
[82] Ibid., 179.
[83] Ibid., 173.
[84] Mount, 190.
[85] Al Purdy, ed., *The New Romans: Candid Canadian Opinions of the U.S.* (Edmonton: M. G. Hurtig 1968), i.
[86] Ibid., ii.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Lee and York, "Introduction," 16.
[89] Heti qtd. in Wagman, 203.

The main institutions in Canada that produce this spectacle include the CBC and the NFB. Cormack and Cosgrave clarify the role of the CBC, as set out in The Broadcasting Act, "to educate and entertain, and to create national identity and unity," pointing out how its slogan "Canada Lives Here" encapsulates this intention.[90] In a shifting media landscape, the CBC has developed a large online presence, which includes its Digital Archives. The CBC Digital Archives describes itself as a "collaboration of creative teams in Toronto working together with archivists and educational writers across Canada."[91] It is clear by looking at the website that the Digital Archives is more than just a repository of radio and television interviews but, following its mandate, has an explicit pedagogical aim in making this material available to both the Canadian public and to educators. There is a section of the website dedicated to teachers, complete with lesson plans by grade.[iii] The website also has an "On This Day" section, curating what events in Canada's history the CBC would like us to remember, and omitting those they would like us to forget.

Cohen has his own section on the CBC Digital Archives website, titled "Leonard Cohen: Canada's Melancholy Bard," which has thirteen features on Cohen. Each entry contains a copy of the original broadcast (often edited), a title that differs from the name of the original broadcast, a description (titled "The Story"), and additional facts under the heading "Did You Know?" which guide our interpretation of the broadcast. The earliest entry on Cohen dates back to a 1958 episode of the radio program *Anthology*, in which he performs a poetry reading.[92] *Anthology* was a half-hour radio show dedicated to the literary arts; hosted by Robert Weaver, it first aired in 1954.[93] As Mount notes, *Anthology* "aired, and often introduced, almost every Canadian writer of its time."[94] Cohen's first appearance on the show occurred on October 29, 1957,[95] which also marked his first appearance on CBC radio.[96]

The title, "Poet Leonard Cohen Splashes on to World Stage at 22," accentuates Cohen's young age as a testament to his talent. "The Story" recounts how "Cohen began writing

[90] Cormack and Cosgrave, "Theorising," 325.
[91] "About," CBC Digital Archives, 2017, http://www.cbc.ca/archives/about.
[92] "Poet Leonard Cohen Splashes on to World Stage at 22," CBC Digital Archives, 2018, accessed August 20, 2018, http://www.cbc.ca/archives/entry/poet-leonard-cohen-splashes-on-to-world-stage-at-22 (Segment of the radio program *Anthology*, originally aired on April 22, 1958).
[93] Mount, 116-117.
[94] Ibid., 117.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Deshaye, *The Metaphor of Celebrity*, 216.

seriously" and "raised eyebrows with his first collection of poetry, Let Us Compare Mythologies (1956)" when he was a young undergraduate student at McGill.[97] In the "Did You Know?" section, CBC relates some information on Cohen's family background, tracing Cohen's interest in writing to his scholarly maternal grandfather Rabbi Solomon Klonitsky-Kline, distinguished for his Talmudic writings. The entry also contains a quote from poet Eli Mandel describing a nineteen-year-old Cohen, who started his career "as a burnt-out writer."[98] Together these two "facts," help construct the idea that Cohen has a natural talent for writing, implying that writing is in his blood, that he was born a writer.

Other entries in "Leonard Cohen: Canada's Melancholy Bard" have misleading titles and descriptions. For example, the entry titled "Leonard Cohen in Greece" is a 1961 radio interview with Jed Adams. "The Story" tells of Cohen's travels through Europe and settlement on the Greek island, Hydra. It mentions Cohen's girlfriend, "a Norwegian blond named Marianne Jensen … one of the first in a long line of beautiful women in Cohen's life."[99] In the "Did You Know?" section, there is a quote from Cohen: "You have to write about something. Women stand for the objective world for a man. They stand for the thing that you're not and that's what you always reach for in a song."[100] Yet, this quote does not appear in the radio interview. In fact, the radio interview is neither about the women in Cohen's life or his time in Greece. While this description may form part of "the story" of Cohen's life, it is not a complete account of the archives' content. What Cohen does discuss in the featured radio interview is his poetry, his recently published collection, *The Spice Box of Earth*, and the word *poet*. Here, Cohen weighs his interest in poetry, or perhaps lack thereof, his disinterestedness—his refusal of the title "poet."

In many of the CBC Digital Archives interviews, Cohen presents himself as an accessible cultural figure who works to balance his pursuit of poetry as an elite activity with an interest in economic success and popular culture. In his interview with Adams, Cohen takes part in what York, following Bourdieu, refers to as the "complicated balancing act of defending one's interest

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[97] "Poet Leonard Cohen."
[98] Ibid.
[99] "Leonard Cohen in Greece," CBC Digital Archives, 2018, accessed September 20, 2018, https://www.cbc.ca/archives/entry/leonard-cohen-in-greece (Jed Adams interviews Cohen on the radio program *Assignment*, originally aired on June 16, 1961).
[100] Ibid.

in disinterestedness."[101] In this interview, Cohen differentiates between being a poet and a being a writer:

> I would like to say something about the word poet. I always describe myself as a writer rather than a poet, and the fact that the lines I write don't come to the edge of the page doesn't qualify me as a poet. I think the term poet is a very exalted term and should be applied to a man at the end of his work. When you look back over the body of his work and he has written poetry then let the verdict be that he is a poet. But I would never assume that title until it's been awarded to me by a very good and long performance.[102]

In a 1966 interview with Beryl Fox, Cohen revisits these sentiments. Divorcing himself from the term "poet," Cohen explains how good writing stands for itself: "Print is a minor form of invisibility. I think that if you really get good then you do disappear."[103] In other words, good writing erases the individual who wrote it. Cohen repeats this idea again in the same interview, positing: "If it's good enough it becomes anonymous."[104] By arguing that good writing can eclipse the Author, Cohen, while upholding his poetry as the product of unalienated labour, attempts to remove himself, as commodity, from its celebration.

At one point in his interview with Fox, Cohen becomes quite agitated and expresses: "Listen. I didn't end up a poet. You know … That isn't the restroom. I wasn't looking for this. This is just a kind of um a kind of ID card that you've got to carry somehow because people are continuing to ask you for an ID card but that is just ... I've often said this …I mean … poetry is not an exclusive domain of writers or poets and poetry is a verdict not a choice."[105] Statements such as these form part of Cohen's cultural balancing act, and in turn help discursively position Cohen as an accessible poet, a great writer who rejects the title of poet and its implied meanings (high culture, prestige, elitism, etc.), and endorses the value of the work over the value of himself as an artist / author / celebrity.

In another interview, a 1963 CBC television youth special, filmed at McGill University, Cohen expresses his dissatisfaction with Canadian reviews of his novel *The Favourite Game* and compares them with American reviews. Discussing reviews from Canada, Cohen describes them

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[101] York, *Margaret*, 21.
[102] "Leonard Cohen in Greece."
[103] "Leonard Cohen on the Road to Singing Sensation," CBC Digital Archives, 2018, accessed September 20, 2018, https://www.cbc.ca/archives/entry/leonard-cohen-on-the-road-to-singing-sensation (Segment from *This Hour has Seven Days*, originally aired on May 8, 1966).
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid.

as a "kind of hat-patting review: this is very good. This is his first novel."[106] In contrast, reviews in the United States where "they don't know that [he is] a poet" and that this is his first novel, Cohen finds the reviews "much more objective and much less patronizing."[107] These reviews concentrate on the work itself rather than reading the work through the lens of the Cohen phenomenon, which has not yet circulated into American culture. In a self-reflexive and meta-moment for me and prophesizing moment for Cohen, he states: "It's a third novel I promise you future generations of writers and PhD students—it's a third novel disguised as a first novel and it's very highly crafted and very highly disciplined and everything I want to say is there. It's not just that first time careless frenzy."[108] Since Cohen perceives a difference in reception between Canada and the United States, it is useful to look at two print advertisements from *The Favourite Game* found in the Leonard Cohen Papers at the University of Toronto, one from Canada and the other from the United States.

The Canadian advertisement places the title of the book, *The Favourite Game,* at the top centre with the text, "By Leonard Cohen," directly under it, left justified, in a slightly smaller font.[109] In contrast, the American advertisement positions the title of the book, in large bolded letters, at the bottom of the advertisement with Cohen's name in much smaller print below it.[110] In general, the America advertisement appears to contain less text, featuring a larger image, three reviews, and a description of the book, something missing in the Canadian advertisement. Lending his own cultural capital, the first quote comes from American author John Knowles, who refers to Cohen as "a brilliant writer."[111] The second quote is from Ben Hecht, author, screenwriter, among other distinctions, who characterizes Cohen as "a sharp narcissistic writer and also a witty man."[112] Since Cohen is largely unknown in the United States at this point in time, the advertisement relies less on the recognition of Cohen's name than the names of the reviewers to sell the book, drawing on their cultural capital to promote an unknown author. It

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[106] "Youth Special: Playing the Favourite Game."
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Canadian print advertisement for *The Favourite Game* from the British Book Service, Ms coll 122, box 6, folder 1, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
[110] American print advertisement for *The Favourite Game*, Ms coll 122, box 6, folder 1, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid.

follows that the American advertisement is selling both the book and the author, while the Canadian advertisement uses Cohen's name as a selling point.

Five quotes from reviewers form the majority of the Canadian advertisement, two Canadian (*Montreal Star*; *Vancouver Province*) and three American (*Saturday Review*; *San Francisco Examiner*; and *The New York Times*). The three American reviews are sandwiched between the two Canadian reviews. It is noteworthy that this Canadian print advertisement comprises more reviews by American newspapers than Canadian. Whether or not this is a result of the more favourable American reviews, as Cohen argues, it does reinforce the point that critical acclaim in the United States fosters more cultural capital for Cohen in Canada and that international recognition enhances fame locally.[113]

Both advertisements feature drawings of a man and a woman. The Canadian depiction shows a small drawing of a man and woman in a tender embrace, whereas the American advertisement features a larger image, portraying a man lying across a bed, shoulders up, facing the reader with a pensive stare. He is reminiscent of Cohen. In the background a naked woman is sitting on the edge of the bed, putting on her clothes. This drawing is much more sexually explicit. Beside the image, a description of the novel in large, bold font appears: "A story about becoming a man … of growing through love … of exploring the past to discover the future."[114] Instead of a book description, the Canadian advertisement has a call to action at the bottom, instructing readers to "*Ask for a copy today at your favourite bookstore*."[115]

These print advertisements, the NFB documentary, press releases, and other early materials of the Cohen industry in Canada work together to construct Cohen as a writer and promote his cultural capital. These images present him not only as a newcomer on the Canadian poetry scene but as one who has wide cultural appeal through his accessibility as a poet and a writer who is free of high cultural, literary self-importance. He may be a poet but he also has a taste for pop culture. Analyzing certain aspects of how Cohen's early career as a poet is discursively and professionally managed is instructive. His ability to cut across the cultural hierarchy—presented by the Cohen industry in celebratory terms—thwarts potential threats to loss of cultural distinction and upholds him as a new type of (Canadian) cultural figure. Nevertheless, the emphasis on both Cohen's hard work and talent downplays any associations to

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[113] Deveau, 168.
[114] American print advertisement for *The Favourite Game*.
[115] Canadian print advertisement for *The Favourite Game* from the British Book Service.

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American notions of celebrity. In this way, Cohen's early celebrity interconnects with the discourse of cultural nationalism prominent at the time.

### 2.2.1 Archive as Object

As *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen* indicates, Cohen sold his papers to the University of Toronto early in his career at the age of twenty-five. The first items that the library acquired in the early 1960s were manuscripts, including drafts of the yet-to-be-published *Beautiful Losers*.[116] Mount reports that Cohen sold the manuscript for $6,000, "easily twice what the book earned him in sales."[117] Currently, the materials archived for the Leonard Cohen Papers are held in approximately 140 bankers boxes at the University of Toronto's Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library.[118] Found among these materials is an article discussing the University's acquisition of Cohen's papers, published in the *Toronto Daily Star* on April 21, 1966.[119]

In "A Hot Market for Manuscripts" Robert Fulford discusses the emerging trend of universities acquiring manuscripts from living writers, such as Cohen. He writes, "A few years ago a writer had to be safely dead before college students studied his work. Now it's not only commonplace to teach contemporary fiction and poetry; it's also standard practice for university libraries to collect the manuscripts and notebooks of living writers, even young ones like Cohen."[120] Fulford suggests part of the motivation behind the University of Toronto's acquisition derives from the concern that American universities might want to obtain materials by prestigious Canadian writers. He writes, "Toronto librarians recognized that if they didn't begin collecting Canadian manuscripts soon, most of the good ones would go to the United States."[121] Like the exportation of Canadian talent, the University of Toronto could not let the raw materials of Canadian cultural production find a home outside the country. Identifying how "selling their papers helped writers be writers," through providing some financial support, Mount reports that by 1970 the University of Toronto "had bought manuscripts from Hugh MacLennan (McGill wasn't interested), John Newlove (who used the money to buy himself a new set of teeth), Earle Birney, Gwendolyn MacEwen, Margaret Atwood, Leonard Cohen."[122]

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[116] Stacey Gibson, "He's Our Man," *University of Toronto Magazine*, September 9, 2006, 45.
[117] Mount, 71.
[118] Gibson, 45.
[119] Robert Fulford, "A Hot Market for Manuscripts," *Toronto Daily Star*, April 21, 1966.
[120] Ibid., 37.
[121] Ibid.
[122] Mount, 70-71.

While Fulford may be skeptical of the University of Toronto's purchase of the Leonard Cohen Papers, Boston University corresponded with Cohen in 1967, unaware of the University of Toronto's purchase, in the attempt to procure his papers for their library. This letter can also be located among the Leonard Cohen Papers at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library. Howard B. Gotlieb, Chief of Special Collections at Boston University, writes to Cohen in a letter dated May 26, 1967: "I am sure that many institutions have been in contact with you asking that they might become the repository of your manuscripts and correspondence files. I write to say that Boston University would be honored to establish a Leonard Cohen Collection, and to plead our particular cause for these reasons."[123] Gotlieb then lists the growing infrastructure and cultural capital of Boston University as a "national" institution as well as their aim to "collect the papers of outstanding contemporary literary figures, house and curate these materials under the optimum archival conditions, and attract to us scholars in the field who would utilize our institution as a research base."[124] He ends his letter on a personal note, divulging his own personal enjoyment of Cohen's work. By storing these types of meta-documents in an archival repository, the Leonard Cohen Papers at the University of Toronto helps to establish its legitimacy as a worthwhile and important scholarly, national, and cultural project. Gotlieb's letter in particular helps bolster Cohen's cultural capital as fame, popularity, and celebrity outside Canada reinforces his cultural worth.

Like the CBC Digital Archives, the use of the descriptor "Canadian," and the NFB documentary, the Leonard Cohen Papers can be understood as an institutional act of claiming Cohen for the nation, to ensure his place in a "history of Canada's contribution to the arts."[125] Katja Lee identifies the multiple ways we claim certain individuals for the nation.[126] For example, this involves labeling them as Canadian by media, audiences, and fans as well as mobilizing them within Canadian institutional contexts.[127] Lee explains how some celebrities, and I would include Cohen in this category, "are quite easily folded into our mythologies of nationhood … not because they harbour or betray some essential Canadianness but simply because their

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[123] Letter to Leonard Cohen from Howard Gotlieb, dated May 26, 1967, Ms coll 122, box 12, folder 6, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Lee, 39.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid.

national identities are uncontested."[128] Because nationality matters, "we police its boundaries and craft elaborate mythologies to shore them up, a process which inevitably pulls into its wake the names and identities of particular individuals."[129] Just as the CBC Digital Archives claims Cohen as "Canada's Melancholy Bard," bringing him into the cultural history of the nation, the Leonard Cohen Papers affirms that Cohen's true home is in Canada, establishing him firmly within Canadian cultural heritage.

In "Rediscovering Nell Shipman for Canadian Cultural Heritage," Amy Shore explores the concept of economies of cultural heritage. Studying the changes in cultural heritage as a practice throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, she discovers a shift "from *private* transfers of goods, land, and holdings through inheritance to *public* collection, organization, and presentation of objects in museums."[130] In the contemporary period however the practice of cultural heritage requires an artifact that enables an official body (e.g. city, state, nation) to "claim authority and transform the artifact into 'cultural property.'"[131] Shore's analysis traces how an individual can become an artifact for cultural claiming through the reification of the individual as image.[132] In this context, I would argue that in conjunction with the NFB documentary, Cohen's first novel *The Favourite Game* made it possible to insert Cohen into economies of Canadian cultural heritage by producing a specific image of Cohen as a Montrealer and bolstering his connection to the nation.

When *The Favourite Game* was first published, the autobiographical similarities of Cohen and his character Breavman, especially their connection to Montreal, helped establish Cohen as an object to be claimed and protected by Montreal and by Canada. In *Uses of Heritage*, Laurajane Smith characterizes the object of cultural heritage not as a static entity anchored to the past, but as something continuously evoked in the present. She reasons, "What makes these things valuable and meaningful … are the present-day cultural processes and activities that are undertaken at and around them, and of which they become part."[133] As a discourse, "heritage is heritage *because* it is subjected to the management and preservation / conservation process, not

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[128] Ibid., 40.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Shore, 23.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage* (London: Routledge, 2006), 3.

because it simply '*is*.'"[134] In these passages, Smith reminds us of the ways in which cultural heritage operates within contemporary contexts and thus how it serves particular discursive interests at different points in time. As part of the official celebrations commemorating the 375th anniversary of Montreal, in November 2017 the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal launched its Leonard Cohen exhibition, *Leonard Cohen: Une brèche en toute chose / A Crack in Everything,* commissioning artists to produce work inspired by Cohen's legacy. *A Crack in Everything* is just one of many contemporary examples of how Cohen is continually reinserted into economies of cultural heritage in Montreal, Quebec, and Canada.

The national claiming of Cohen also occurs in an international context through travel advertisements for Canada, Quebec, and Montreal. For example, a Tourisme Québec print advertisement with the tagline "Let Our Winter Enchant You," uses Cohen to sell the appeal of travelling to Quebec. The only individual mentioned in the advertisement is Cohen, in a line that reads: "Stately cathedrals rise in tribute to a long-standing religious heritage immortalized by Leonard Cohen in a famous song."[135] Images of Cohen and Montreal have become so intertwined that we often cannot mention one without the other. Christine Langlois echoes this sentiment, observing the inscription of this connection onto "every album liner note and book-jacket cover from the famous artist" for the past fifty years.[136] In fact, Langlois's article, "First We Take the Main: Leonard Cohen's Montreal—Through the Eyes of his Lifelong Friend," takes the reader on a descriptive tour of "Leonard Cohen's Montreal."

Travel discourses market Montreal to potential tourists by encouraging them to embark on a journey of Leonard Cohen's Montreal. In an article in WestJet's onboard magazine *Up!* Shelley Boettcher declares that Montreal is Cohen's favourite place, compiling a list of quotes in which Cohen depicts his beloved Montreal spots.[137] In an article on the Canadian Tourism Commission's website, Suzanne Morphet professes her own desire to see "Leonard Cohen's Montréal," remarking: "You can take Manhattan or Berlin, but I'll take Montréal."[138] Just as

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[134] Ibid.

[135] Tourisme-Québec, "Let Our Winter Enchant You."

[136] Christine Langlois, "First We Take the Main: Leonard Cohen's Montreal–through the Eyes of His Lifelong Friend," *Readers Digest* August 21, 2009, 61.

[137] Shelley Boettcher, "Leonard Cohen's Favourite Place: Leonard Cohen Discusses His Favourite Spots in Montreal, Quebec," *Westjet's Up*, August 1, 2006, http://www.upmagazine.com/story/article/leonard-cohens-favourite-place.

[138] Suzanna Morphet, "Leonard Cohen's Montréal: Head to Quebec, See for Yourself," *Canadian Tourism Commission's Media Site*, *Canadian Tourism Commission*, 2012, http://mediacentre.canada.travel/content/travel_story_ideas/leornard_cohen_mtl.

Montreal claims Cohen (Montreal's Leonard Cohen), Cohen claims Montreal (Leonard Cohen's Montreal). Here, particular destinations in the city become associated with Cohen, such as Bagel Etc., The Main, Westmount, Portugal Park, and Old Montreal.

Published in 2009, Morphet's article about "Canada's musical giant" interestingly suggests otherwise, stating Montreal is not known for being Cohen's hometown and that it "doesn't boast about its singing, songwriting superstar son."[139] Although the Tourisme Québec advertisement mentioned above as well as the many other instances of claiming Cohen as a Montreal poet would indicate to the contrary, this statement coincides with the view that Canada is modest about its own celebrities. This appeals to sentiments that Canadian celebrity is unlike its commercialized celebrity counterpart, Hollywood. The fact that Morphet's article is no longer accessible online speaks to the limits and ephemerality of some of the materials of the Cohen phenomenon.[iv] What the ephemerality of some of these materials suggests is the shifting basis of Cohen's fame. This forces the question: do the roots of Cohen's celebrity within the Canadian literary field continue to have relevance to his contemporary celebrity?

Approaching poetic celebrity as a subset of literary celebrity and using Cohen as an example, Percy argues that "poetry and fame still do not seem to cohere unless the practice is tacked onto a recognized writer's accomplishments in other genres."[140] Joel Deshaye examines what he refers to as the era of celebrity in Canadian poetry, pointing out however that "Cohen's celebrity as a poet reached its peak during that era immediately after he released his first album, *Songs of Leonard Cohen*."[141] Cohen published *Selected Poems: 1956-1968* the following year, which sold 200,000 copies within the first three months.[142] By comparison, *The Favourite Game*, published in 1963, sold 200 copies in Canada.[143] Discussing the lack of readership for Canadian literature in the mid-twentieth century, Mount proposes it was in the years following World War I that "poetry decided to trade a large audience for a learned audience. Poets surrendered the accessible pleasures of their medium—rhyme, narrative, sentiment—to popular music."[144] This lack of a large audience, Mount contends, did not trouble Canadian poets as they "believed what history had shown: that great poetry in their century came from writers that most people never

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[139] Ibid.
[140] Percy, "Re: Focusing," 189.
[141] Deshaye, *The Metaphor of Celebrity*, 54.
[142] Michael Ondaatje, *Leonard Cohen* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979), 5.
[143] Nadel, 142.
[144] Mount, 90.

read. Being Canadian, in other words, was no impediment to being a poet."[145] Nevertheless, Percy's argument brings forth an important point about the basis of Cohen's status as a celebrity; that is, in consideration of his cultural and financial success as a musician, does his status as a literary celebrity in Canada during the 1960s continue to form a basis for his fame? Is the value of poetic celebrity, "profitable primarily in cultural capital and prestige within a market that we might see as increasingly estranged from the financial,"[146] enough to produce and sustain celebrity?

Within this context of cultural claiming, the significance of housing the Leonard Cohen Papers in Canada comes into focus. Fulford's article on the purchase of Cohen's papers and manuscripts has particular relevance. Emphasizing the tension between long term cultural resonances (high culture) and fleeting fame (mass culture), he points out that buying the manuscripts and papers of young, living authors is a new, contemporary phenomenon, one traditionally reserved for the established "greats."[147] In the past, eminent literary figures established their cultural relevance throughout and beyond their lifetimes, whereas cultural figures today experience the process of "celebrification,"[148] where one becomes a celebrity, much earlier. The hesitation to determine the lasting cultural relevancy of Cohen is evident in the following comment: "Several students have already consulted this material, two of them because they were hoping to write graduate theses on Cohen. Both were dissuaded by their professors, on the grounds that Cohen was still too young for this sort of attention. He is 31."[149] Yet, here I am, over fifty years later, consulting this archive and writing my PhD dissertation on Cohen.

The celebration of Cohen early in his career reflects a new, emerging culture of celebrity in Canada. Marshall estimates that it is only in the last forty years or so that "Canada has gone through a somewhat limited 'celebritization'" process; through celebrating public individuals, cultural systems in Canada have garnered attention, configured cultural production, and sustained the attentiveness of a national audience.[150] While the concept celebrification refers to the individual level and "the process by which ordinary people or public figures are transformed

[145] Ibid.
[146] Percy, "Re: Focusing," 190.
[147] Fulford, 37.
[148] Olivier Driessens, "The Celebritization of Society and Culture: Understanding the Structural Dynamics of Celebrity Culture," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 16, no. 6 (2012): 643.
[149] Fulford, 37.
[150] Marshall, "Foreword: The Celebrity Nation," viii.

into celebrities," celebritization occurs at the social and cultural levels.[151] Oliver Driessens views celebritization as a "meta-process that points to certain changes in the nature of celebrity and its societal and cultural embedding (or its qualitative dimension)."[152]

At the time of Fulford's article, the circulation of discourses juxtaposing great literary figures with contemporary, fleeting fame reflected the cultural anxiety around the popularization and celebrification of literary figures as well as the increasing Americanization / celebritization of Canadian culture. This sense of anxiety corresponds with Moran's argument that literary celebrities embody a "nostalgia for some kind of transcendent, anti-economic, creative element in a secular, debased, commercialized culture,"[153] reinforcing the long-established conception of the literary celebrity as inhabiting an elite, superior form of fame that exists outside the marketplace. In this respect, the literariness of Cohen's national celebrity in the 1960s functioned as a perfect antidote to fears of the Americanization (mass culture) of Canadian culture.

Nevertheless, by virtue of selling Cohen's papers to an academic institution, they became monetized in the process, converting them from art into a commodity. Since Cohen was still in the early stages of his career and had yet to establish a lasting cultural legacy, the commodification of his work and image problematizes the notion of literature, the literary process, and literary culture as free from economic forces. This signals the importance of exploring how the tensions between cultural and economic capital evolve within the Cohen phenomenon, and yet, depending on the origins of the discourse (i.e. popular vs. high cultural realm), the question of whether it constitutes an issue or not remains moot.

The Cohen Papers also contain personal letters in which Cohen reflects on the burgeoning interest in preserving his drafts, notes, and personal correspondence. In a letter from 1963, addressed "Dear People," Cohen expresses a "curious Canadian thing" that has happened: "The University of Saskatoon has established a Poetry Research Centre or something and they want to buy all my manuscripts, letters, laundry lists, and so forth."[154] He then instructs the unknown recipient to "get all the shit in the cabinet in the studio and send it to me. It's suddenly worth about a thousand dollars."[155] In another, perhaps draft, letter to "Dear People" dated the

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[151] Driessens, 643.
[152] Ibid., 644.
[153] Moran, 9.
[154] Letter to Dear People (long) from Leonard Cohen, dated December 11, 1963, Ms coll 122, box 11, folder 14, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
[155] Ibid.

same day Cohen muses about his growing fame; it is hard not to read it through the lens of "the con" established in the NFB documentary. He writes:

> God, I've become public. I can't stand the sound of my own voice. I am the Voice of my Generation in Canada, and TV stations pay me 100 dollars a half hour for any blasphemous nonsense I can dream up. This Sunday I address the Jewish Public Library and I shall have become a Rabbi at last. But I love this limited fame in my own city. I was mailing a letter yesterday and a man came up to me and said, "I bet there's not a decent poem in that envelope."[156]

By referencing his "limited fame" and the disparaging comment about the quality of his poems, Cohen expresses his acute awareness and amusement that despite his recent fame, not everyone is a fan. While this may be an appeal at modesty, Cohen hints at the inherent blurring of private and public that goes along with his growing fame.

The establishment of the Leonard Cohen Papers at the University of Toronto assisted in enhancing Cohen's cultural and national (and economic) capital at a time of increasing celebritization in Canada. That the University of Toronto purchased his papers shortly before he became the subject of a documentary is noteworthy. While having a special archive housing Cohen's private letters, original drafts, awards, clippings, and so forth may seem unexceptional in 2018, in the early 1960s, as Fulford's article indicates, it was rather unusual for a living author, let alone someone at the outset of his career. Yet, as Mount discerns, the University of Toronto's purchase of this collection of Cohen's papers formed part of a growing trend, as university libraries began "collecting avant-garde and small press Canadian literature" as well as manuscripts.[157] Looking back, however, it is tempting to read the creation of the Cohen Papers as prophetic of his long, illustrious career.

Currently, the collection has an array of materials, both accessible elsewhere (i.e. materials such as newspaper clippings and photographs) and not (i.e. personal letters, original drafts, etc.). Travelling to the University of Toronto and sorting through the Leonard Cohen Papers feels like a type of pilgrimage that offers a backstage, unmediated glimpse of Cohen and his thoughts, ideas, and sentiments. While I know this is patently not possible, as I emphasize in Chapter One, celebrity discourse depends on this notion of a knowable individual behind the

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[156] Letter to Dear People (short) from Leonard Cohen, dated December 11, 1963.
[157] Mount, 70-71.

celebrity image.[158] The Cohen Papers is a collection that is curated, censored, and protected by copyright. As a fan and a scholar, I was delighted to have access to these materials, digging through, feeling and reading materials touched by Cohen's very own hand.

At the same time, I felt the limits of my exploration. For example, in big bolded letters on the finding aid for the Cohen Papers it states: "Note: Box 13 is restricted until after the death of Leonard Cohen and the authors of the letters."[159] Other examples of such constraints ranged from times when I inadvertently blocked the librarian's view of my workspace or when I was not allowed to use the self-scanner to scan any documents to take home. I was told there had been some abuse in the past, and this was to protect the materials from becoming public. I became more and more aware of the Cohen Papers, like celebrity itself, as a strange private / public hybrid. Was this regulation on scanning protecting Cohen or safeguarding the archive as an institution, as a place that one has to physically travel to and acquire the necessary authorization to sift through documents, a place that simultaneously constitutes the Cohen phenomenon but also impedes its circulation. I finally obtained special permission to scan certain materials, reasoning that they were already published materials and not personal documents.

In what ways do these archival practices also contribute to the value of Cohen as a celebrity in Canada? As Foucault elucidates in *The Archeology of Knowledge*, "in our time, history is that which transforms *documents* into *monuments*."[160] The Leonard Cohen Papers at the University of Toronto contain value both as documents and as a monument to Cohen. This takes me back to my overall aim in this dissertation, that is, to analyze the discursive constitution of Cohen and celebrity in Canada more generally. Instead of taking the documents from the archive and using them to reveal "the truth" about Cohen, I examine them from the perspective of how people utilize these documents to circulate particular discourses about Cohen. In other words, how have these documents been used to discursively constitute Cohen as a celebrity? This does not involve deciphering the meaning of these documents, or pondering Cohen's intentions in writing them, nor does it involve interpreting the meaning of the monument created from these documents. It is the process through which these documents become transformed into the monument that represents and memorializes Cohen that interests me. The turning of

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[158] Dyer, *Heavenly*, 12.
[159] Finding Aid: Leonard Cohen Papers, Ms coll 122, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
[160] Foucault, *Archaeology*, 7.

documents into monuments, like the process of the word made flesh, conjures fascinating imagery in association with literary celebrity. For me, both phrases exemplify the process through which written texts become imbued with authority and then become embodied and fixed within a physical form that is both human and divine, a physical form that deserves worship.

In *Reading in Alice Munro's Archives,* JoAnn McCaig reflects on how archives not only preserve documents and materials, but also create value in doing so. Building on the work of Brien Brothman, she clarifies how in archives, "inclusion, exclusion, and arrangement are based on socially determined concepts of value. … Archivists are not simply 'acquiring' and 'preserving' records, they are 'creating value.'"[161] Moreover, the value created is not simply cultural or symbolic value, but economic value as well. For McCaig, the economic value of archives has very real impacts, for one, selling papers to an archival institution can be more remunerative to a Canadian author than book sales.[162] At the same time, this economic value must be downplayed as an act of disinterestedness, as symbolic capital is "economic or political capital that is disavowed."[163] Drawing on Bourdieu, she writes, "by denying an interest in anything but art for its own sake, the artist may make economic success possible."[164] In other words, economic success is only possible for the author once there is a denial of economic motives. McCaig points to the restricted access to Munro's financial files as an example of how she attempts to suppress any economic interests.[165] If, as McCaig argues, the most damning accusation against an author is that of commercialism, then Cohen participates in a disavowal of a disavowal of the economic. He has never claimed to be beyond popular culture, commercialism, or economic interests. This is clear by the inclusion of contracts, grants, and mentions of personal finance in his papers.

Certain materials archived in the Cohen Papers provide indicators of Cohen's cultural worth: letters from the Canada Council awarding Cohen a $1,000 scholarship;[166] offers to reprint, in deluxe editions, his out-of-print books;[167] invitations to participate in workshops, readings,

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[161] McCaig, 14.
[162] Ibid., 15.
[163] Bourdieu, *The Field*, 75.
[164] McCaig, 30-31.
[165] Ibid., 30.
[166] Letter to Leonard Cohen from H. Charbonneau, dated May 26, 1961, Ms coll 122, box 10a, folder 22, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
[167] Letter to Leonard Cohen from David Spiegelman, dated July 31, 1961, Ms coll 122, box 10a, folder 35, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

and lectures;[168] an invitation from Harry Rasky asking Cohen to be the subject of his next film;[169] his 1993 Governor General's Award;[170] and the plaque from his 1986 Genie Award for Best Song.[171] Less obvious examples of Cohen's cultural capital are rejection letters from publishers, academic programs, and grant agencies as well as negative reviews. More specifically, a letter from Paul Engle in the Department of English at the State University of Iowa shows an offer for entry into the Master of Fine Arts (Poetry and Modern Literature) program, but an inability to provide Cohen with a scholarship. Among the reasons given are Cohen's lack of a "glorious" record and the quality of the other applications, "with many of them submitting poetry as good as, often better than" Cohen's poetry.[172] Another example of a less celebratory response to Cohen's first volume of poetry is a letter addressed to Louis Dudek, editor of the McGill Poetry Series, who published *Let us Compare Mythologies*. This caught my attnetion, since this letter was not addressed to Cohen. Written by author Emery Neff, it expresses his delight "with the typography of the McGill Poetry Series, and hope[s] that it will continue with volumes that are more readable."[173] His closing comment suggests that perhaps Cohen would not want this volume of poetry to be disseminated due to its unreadable style.

Another interesting inclusion in the archives is an unpublished article by Morris Fish for the *Montreal Star*, which Cohen vetoed, with an attached letter from Fish to Cohen dated April 17, 1963. Throughout the unpublished article, Fish reinforces Cohen's ties to Canada and Montreal. Accentuating Cohen's national value as a cultural icon, Fish writes: "Leonard Cohen has already been hailed as a major Canadian poet. He was placed on this pedestal last year, at the age of 27, just after he published his second volume of poetry, The Spice Box of Earth. Now he has written a novel."[174] When Fish travelled to Cohen's home on the Greek island of Hydra to

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[168] Letters asking Leonard Cohen to participate in readings, seminars and folk festivals in the late 1960s, Ms coll 122, box 12, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

[169] Letter from Harry Rasky to Leonard Cohen, inviting him to be the subject of his next film, dated 1968, Ms coll 122, box 12, folder 12, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

[170] 1993 Governor General's Award (gold label pin in case), Ms coll 399, box 2, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

[171] 1986 Genie Award Plaque (Statuette Missing), Ms coll 399, box 3, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

[172] Letter to Leonard Cohen from Paul Engle, dated May 17, 1957, Ms coll 122, box 10a, folder 33, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

[173] Letter to Louis Dudek from Emery Neff, dated June 3, 1956, Ms coll 122, box 10b, folder 26, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

[174] Letter to Leonard Cohen from Morris Fish with an unpublished article for the *Montreal Star*, dated April 17, 1963, Mc coll 122, box 10a, folder 34, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

interview him, he found that despite Cohen's new country of residence, it in no way diminished his identity as a Canadian citizen. Fish quotes Cohen, "I think it is dangerous for a writer to cut himself off from his origins. Mine are in Montreal. I love this city. I love what is happening there. It will always be the scene of my personal mythology, and it will always nourish me."[175] It is unclear why Cohen rejected this article.

In the letter to Cohen, Fish discloses that his initial plan was to submit the article without Cohen's permission, outlining the various factors he weighed in making such a decision. Highly conflicted, he writes: "My decision is based on the feeling that the article represents a valuable exploitation of the newspaper medium. It does not distort. If published, it would give an immense public the opportunity represented by exposure to what an important person has to say."[176] In the final part of the letter, Fish reconsiders his decision to submit the article, admitting: "It will mean quite a bit to me to have that article published, but I don't want to send it off the way I was going to. Instead I am sending all the material to you. Please do as you see fit."[177] What Cohen saw fit was to place the article and attached letter in his collection of papers, later purchased by the University of Toronto.

At first glance the presence of some of these materials in the Cohen Papers may appear strange as they lack the same celebration of Cohen's talent found elsewhere. Yet, as McCaig points out, when we become absorbed in the genius of the author, it obscures the ideologies underpinning authorship. "Part of what the archive does," she argues," is combat the notion that "authorial intention resides in the published version of a work."[178] Using the myth of Alice Munro as a "slow and meticulous craftsman" as an example, McCaig accesses the archive to reveal that Munro published her first collection of stories in 1968 not because she takes painstaking care in her writing, but because of "a complex system of domestic realities"—raising three children in a patriarchal society that places certain domestic demands on women.[179] This example illustrates the value of examining archives to demystify beliefs surrounding authorship and celebrity discourses of innate talent, genius, and magical discovery by drawing attention to the labour involved in authorship and the moments of rejection on the path to publication.

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[175] Ibid.
[176] Ibid.
[177] Ibid.
[178] McCaig, 50.
[179] Ibid., 51.

For McCaig, the "archive is a space where the juncture of ideological pressures that underlie authorship are legible."[180] From this standpoint, the archive becomes a place where "the hard work, the endless drafts and rejections, the desperate periods of block, the effort to integrate one's own vision with the real demands of the market place" become visible.[181] The Leonard Cohen Papers present a different narrative of Cohen's life as a writer through the inclusion of multiple drafts of published work, rejection letters, contracts, letters to and from his publisher, personal letters asking for money, and other related materials. Whether or not this version of events is any more "real" than the narratives constructed in biographies and interviews is not the point, although the Cohen Papers do express Cohen's life in slightly messier terms than a neatly painted portrait of his life. What these documents do point to are the invisible forms of labour that York and Wagman identify, such as the less visible process of grant writing necessary for artists working in Canada.

Cohen's frequent talk of finances, or his lack thereof and seeking of, early in his career does not appear to have run the risk of eroding his cultural capital. While he often opines that there is no money to be made in Canadian poetry, this discussion is not limited to Cohen but is indicative of the larger discourses circulating through the field of literary production in Canada at this point in time. In the context of the 1950s and 1960s, McCaig points out:

> [S]elf-deprecating stories of the small size of the Canadian cultural audience abounded. For example, Sandy Stewart quotes Weaver as saying of *Anthology* that he was "the only producer who knew all of the show's listeners by their first names." Stewart then adds, however, that "[i]n fact, the show had an audience that exceeded 52,000." … It is probable that such self-effacing mythology is partly what allows the "logic of the pre-capitalist economy" to function unproblematically in Weaver's mentorship of Canadian writers.[182]

Like McCaig, Frank Davey recognizes the significance of this "pre-capitalist" economy of Canadian literature, a time when it was not difficult to preserve "the illusions of 'autonomy' and 'disinterestedness'" because there was little money to be gained.[183] So what was Cohen to do? Become a musician, of course, for the money.

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[180] Ibid., 50.
[181] Ibid., 54.
[182] Ibid., 31.
[183] Davey qtd. in McCaig, 49.

Chapter Three: You're My Obsession. Am I Your Fan?

Dear Leonard Cohen,
Please come to our house for supper some day soon. We love your new record and not only that, we just learned
how to use our new pressure cooker only it's really not new—Helen, our super's friend gave it to us because it
scared her. – Allan Erlbaum and Jeannie Bartlet[1]

I would get letters of longing from around the world, and I would find myself walking the streets of New York at
three in the morning, trying to strike up conversations with the women selling cigarettes in hotels. I think it's always
like that. It's never delivered to you. – Cohen[2]

## 3.1 Introduction: Cohen as Media Friend

On September 28, 2017, the Museum of Jewish Montreal held a vernissage to mark the opening

of the photography exhibition *Leonard Cohen: Rituels d'absence*, featuring the photographs of

Montreal-based artist and photographer Morgane CG. *Leonard Cohen: Rituels d'absence*

documents the evolving memorial at Cohen's Montreal doorstep, which fans and mourners built

as news of his death spread in November 2016.[3] The vernissage served as a type of memorial

service for Cohen and involved a storytelling circle featuring four speakers who shared their

stories of Cohen. The final storyteller of the evening was local writer Joshua Levy. In his story,

Levy focused on his personal reaction to Cohen's death, acknowledging the ritual of wanting to

be with family and friends after the death of a loved one. He explained how he felt this need to

surround himself with loved ones, a need that became complicated by the fact that Cohen was a

celebrity, not a friend or family member.

Acting on his emotional urge to visit Cohen's Montreal home, Levy encountered other

individuals who felt this same desire. Levy described how he arrived that night before a large

crowd had gathered. Those in attendance were neighbours, friends, and acquaintances of Cohen,

who graciously welcomed Levy into their circle of grieving. It did not matter whether Levy

actually knew Cohen; as a fan, he experienced this loss as if Cohen had been his friend. The

night of the vernissage, Levy spoke as a Cohen fan, reflecting similar sentiments to how other

fans discuss their connection to Cohen. He referred to himself as representing the everyman,

referencing the credentials of the speakers who came before him, but perhaps he was

representative of the *every fan*.

[1] Fan letter from Allan Erlbaum and Jeannie Bartlet, dated February 9, 1968, Ms coll 122, box 12, folder 43,
Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
[2] Cohen qtd. in Wayne Robins, "The Loneliness of the Long-Suffering Folkie," in *Leonard Cohen on Leonard
Cohen: Interviews and Encounters*, ed. Jeff Burger (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2014), 305.
[3] "Leonard Cohen: Rituels d'absence," Morgane CG, 2017, accessed August 20, 2018,
https://www.morganecg.com/leonardcohen/.

In "From Distant Heroes to Intimate Friends: Media and the Metamorphosis of Affection for Public Figures," Joshua Meyrowitz describes how mourning for a "media friend" differs from grieving the loss of a friend or relative as there are no set rules and norms or "clear ways to comfort the bereaved."[4] Instead, fans create their own rituals "to banish the demons of grief and helplessness," such as gathering in "the streets or parks, or [holding] vigils near the media friend's home or place of death."[5] While in Chapter Four I study discourses of mourning that permeate the Cohen phenomenon after Cohen's death, in this chapter I focus on discourses of intimacy and the discursive construction of Cohen fans prior to his death. I examine both the feeling of intimacy between fans and Cohen as "media friend" and the perception of this intimacy by others, attempting to ascertain whether Cohen fans have been able to escape the othering experienced by different groups of fans (i.e. *Star Trek* fans).

On the night of the vernissage, Levy emphasized that Cohen's greatest contribution was not his poetry or his music, but his self—Cohen as an individual and the way he lived his life. Throughout the evening, the storytellers circulated the idea that Cohen was a figure who, despite his fame and success, was very approachable. He was a friend with whom you spent time by listening to his music or reading his poems. For instance, Levy claimed that the first time he "met" Cohen was when he first read his poetry. Through reading Cohen's poetry or listening to his songs, fans feel that they know him intimately, and that if they saw him in person, they could approach him. To his fans, Cohen was unlike other celebrities in that he was someone you could see or meet in the flesh, especially if you lived in Montreal. Everyone who lives in the Plateau neighbourhood of Montreal seems to have a Cohen story. Versions of this perception of Cohen have persisted since Cohen's introduction to a wider audience through his early CBC television and radio interviews and the 1965 NFB documentary, *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen*. Since celebrity discourse manufactures the drive to "really know" the person behind the celebrity, the discursive construction of Cohen's approachability, with his wink-and-nod acknowledgment of the façade of celebrity, heightens his appeal.

Through this example of the storytelling circle, an articulation of a specific discourse of intimacy around Cohen begins to emerge, one that is reflective of both the early discursive

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[4] Joshua Meyrowitz, "From Distant Heroes to Intimate Friends: Media and the Metamorphosis of Affection for Public Figures," in *Heroes in a Global World*, ed. Susan Drucker and Gary Gumpert (New York: Hampton Press, 2008), 116.
[5] Ibid., 117.

construction of Cohen, as an accessible and popular poet, and the paradoxical construction of celebrity, as the unknowable individual and the knowable star. In Chapter Two, for example, I identify how *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen* both creates and then appeals to the audience's desire for a glimpse of the "real" Leonard Cohen by breaking down the fourth wall at the end of the film and offering a "behind-the-scenes" peek. This contributes to a sense of authenticity by attempting to resolve Cohen's ambivalent persona, a persona the film itself helps create, through this backstage glimpse of his "true self." While these depictions of Cohen fold back into his mythology, for the fan, a glimpse of Cohen's "true self" produces a feeling of intimacy.

Evidence of this intimate connection appears in early fan letters to Cohen from the late 1960s. "Dear Mr. Cohen," writes Janet from North Carolina in 1968, "This is a more-or-less fan letter."[6] She continues: "I admit that I am jealous of those who know you, who can remember a time that the two of you spent together. I would like to touch your mind, but I suppose I already have. And besides, from your songs I've seen your Within and it's doubtful that I could properly adjust to your Without. So I will continue to know you through your published soul and watch concerned as you progress and change."[7] In this letter, Janet reinforces the notion that Cohen "reveals himself in his poetry"[8] and that in turn she can access Cohen through his songs, she can see his soul, his "within." This creates a sense of intimacy between her and Cohen that is central to both discourses of celebrity and fandom.

Tom Mole elucidates the role of intimacy in reducing the distance between cultural producers and audience members, authors and readers, celebrities and fans.[9] He conceptualizes the hermeneutic of intimacy as "an intertextual paradigm for reading celebrity texts," which provides the foundation for a process of fantasizing among fans.[10] The hermeneutic of intimacy creates the sense that Cohen is directly addressing "you," as an individual member of the audience, that you can access his private thoughts through his published works. Discussing the hermeneutic of intimacy in the context of Lord Byron, Mole argues that "it worked by suggesting that his poems could only be understood fully by referring to their author's personality, that

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[6] Fan letter from Janet McFerren, dated April 2, 1968, Ms coll 122, box 12, folder 32, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Mole, 24.
[9] Ibid., 16.
[10] Ibid., 25.

reading them was entering a relationship with the author and that that relationship resembled an intimate connection between individuals."[11] In a 1966 interview with Beryl Fox on CBC television, Cohen reinforces this belief by describing how by its very nature writing leaves traces of the writer's struggle, unlike other types of creation. He explains, "Other kinds of people don't leave that kind of evidence, like brick builders, I mean brick layers. You can't really read the anguish of the man's life in the wall, but because of the nature of writing the thing is made articulate."[12] Instead of "mass-produced standardized products," Cohen's songs and poems operate as "conduits" that open up ways of relating to Cohen as an individual—being able to meet him and to access his inner thoughts through his work.[13] In turn, this establishes a para-social relationship between fan and celebrity; that is, a one-sided relationship that provides the illusion of intimacy and interaction.[14] Attesting to the fan's experience of intimacy, a broad range of materials, from fan letters to obituaries to Levy's story, centre on the approachability of Cohen, and his presence as a friend.

In this chapter, I identify two discourses of Cohen fandom. First, through examining the implicit assumptions embedded in archival fan letters from the late 1960s, I locate a discourse of intimacy between fans and Cohen that positions Cohen as a friend. I maintain that we should investigate the fan's relationship with the celebrity in their own words. If we take into account the fan's interpretations of their own experiences of reading and listening to Cohen's work, then the celebrity cannot be dismissed as a cover for the fan's fantasies; rather, the fan's interactions with the celebrity can be valued on their own terms, for how it makes them feel.[15] While this does not close off the possibility of (mis)interpreting the fan, it represents an attempt to do "justice to the ways historical subjects understand and partially control their own behavior in a social and cultural context that has powerful determining effects on individual social action."[16] Rather than a one-sided fantasy relationship, the fan's intimate attachment to Cohen depends in large part on the celebrity's capacity to articulate and conceptualize the fan's own thoughts and feelings.

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[11] Ibid., 23.
[12] "Leonard Cohen on the Road to Singing Sensation."
[13] Mole, 156.
[14] Duffett, 89.
[15] Radway, 70.
[16] Ibid., 5-6.

Second, through an analysis of the media coverage surrounding Montreal 2000: The Leonard Cohen Event (Montreal 2000), I identify a second discourse that positions Cohen fandom within a broader media discourse of the obsessive, emotional, and deviant fan. While the first discourse of Cohen fandom depicts a personal understanding of what fandom means to the fan, this second discourse is derisive of these personal feelings, reducing fans to stereotypical portrayals. Through an examination of seven Canadian newspaper articles reporting on the event, I demonstrate how Cohen fans have not been immune to the stereotyping of fandom common among media fans, such as fans of *Star Trek* or soap operas. I contend that the characterization of Cohen fans as emotional and obsessive relates to cultural anxiety surrounding proper audience behaviour, which polices the boundaries of high and popular culture and the public and the private, and social anxiety around appropriate forms of emotional attachment. More specifically, I argue that in some respects Cohen fans represent an embodiment of the cultural tension inherent in Cohen's career change from poet to musician. In this context, Cohen fans become a scapegoat for the cultural anxiety that Cohen embodies as a dual literary and pop icon, and more generally a target for the anxiety around the transgression of the private / public binary inherent in celebrity. Through my analysis, I explicate how discourses of celebrity constitute Cohen fandom and how, in turn, fandom circulates the Cohen phenomenon, highlighting the interconnectivity between discourses of celebrity and fandom.

**3.2 Fandom, Intimacy, and Fantasy**

In writing about Cohen fans and intimacy, Meyrowitz's concept of the media friend proves useful. He argues that the intricate and multilayered role that certain celebrities play in our everyday lives has three distinctive dimensions: celebrity, hero, and friend.[17] For Meyrowitz, the media friend represents "the strangest and most significant dimension of these relationships: the sense of intimate knowledge and empathic connection."[18] He explains how our relationship with the media friend develops as a "direct, one-to-one tie … that exists apart from, and almost in spite of, how widely known the person is."[19] Like a "real-life" friendship, the bond is more about *our* feelings about the person, who they are, what they represent, and importantly how their "'presence' makes us feel."[20]

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[17] Meyrowitz, 102.
[18] Ibid., 101.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid.

In *Production of Presence: What Meaning Cannot Convey*, Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht conceptualizes presence as a "spatial relationship to the world and its objects," which has an "immediate impact on human bodies."[21] Moreover, presence can be produced through "the act of 'bringing forth' an object in space."[22] For Gumbrecht, the act of the production of presence "points to all kinds of events and processes in which the impact that 'present' objects have on human bodies is being initiated or intensified."[23] The production of presence calls attention moreover to the desire for immediacy.[24] Gumbrecht's interpretation of presence, its production, and its impact reveals how fans can produce Cohen's presence through listening to his music or reading his poetry; in turn, producing Cohen's presence initiates an immediate sense of intimacy.

While we place the media hero on a pedestal, the media friend is by our side, "hanging out together at home, riding in the car, sharing an adventure."[25] Discussing the para-social aspects of the media friendship, Meyrowitz construes how this type of friendship seems more intimate and less complicated than a "real" friendship due to its "unidirectional nature."[26] At times however he slides dangerously close to pathologizing fans, arguing that much of the behaviour of "normal" and "deranged" fans coincides,[27] ignoring the real mental health issues of the relatively rare individuals who obsessively stalk, harass, or even murder celebrities. Despite this, I find his concept of the media friend helpful, as it attempts to explain a normal, everyday phenomenon.

It is not unusual to feel a bond with the mediated personalities we see and hear on a daily basis. Within the current social media landscape, a majority of our personal relationships have become digitally mediated, with friendships now maintained predominantly online. As Charles Soukup explains in "Hitching a Ride on a Star: Celebrity, Fandom, and Identification on the World Wide Web," since we spend a large amount of time communicating online and over long distances, "the internet has made the idea of intimacy at a distance more normal and acceptable."[28] Although the materials I examine in this chapter predate the proliferation of social

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[21] Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, *Production of Presence: What Meaning Cannot Convey* (Stanford University Press, 2004), xiii.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid., xiv.
[25] Meyrowitz, 102.
[26] Ibid., 105.
[27] Ibid., 102.
[28] Charles Soukup, "Hitching a Ride on a Star: Celebrity, Fandom, and Identification on the World Wide Web," *Southern Communication Journal* 71, no. 4 (2006): 237.

media and the rise of micro-celebrity, they demonstrate that these feelings of intimacy between celebrity and audience have a long history. While mass media play a role in establishing this intimacy and making it visible, it is not the sole determining factor. The concept of the media friend is useful for interrogating the relationship between fan and celebrity. It reveals that this sense of intimacy, which is one-sided, is not pathological or reserved for the mentally unwell, but is a normal, everyday occurrence most visible after the death of a high-profile celebrity. Part of the larger celebrity phenomenon, the media friend aids in the celebrity's circulation, providing a way for audiences to approach and humanize the phenomenon of Leonard Cohen.

Industrial celebrity discourse circulates and capitalizes on the feeling of intimacy between audience and celebrity in selling the celebrity commodity, and fans own discourses of fandom hinge on their personal, para-social experience of intimacy with the celebrity. Yet, popular (and occasionally academic) discourses of fandom ridicule these same feelings of intimacy, marking the fan as other, and denigrating or pathologizing their behaviour. Writing in the early 1990s, Lee Harrington and Denise Bielby express that the "contemporary image of media fans is not a pretty picture. By reputation, fans cannot tell the difference between fiction and reality and are consumed with the minute details of make-believe worlds."[29] They perceive that while media coverage of fans throughout the 1970s was "fairly benign," since the 1980s there has been a move toward focusing on "fans' extreme or violent behavior."[30] In the 1980s, this shift in the public perception of fandom overlapped with "a growing market for news and gossip about celebrities."[31] The second discourse of Cohen fandom that I examine in this chapter, Cohen fans as obsessive and emotional, can be situated within this socio-historical context. Yet, as Daniel Cavicchi argues in "Foundational Discourses of Fandom," these negative representations of fans have a lengthier history.

Cavicchi discovers how the use of the term fan as a "descriptive label … emerged in the vibrant, slang-filled culture of late nineteenth-century professional baseball."[32] He reports on the characterization of the term "fan" at the time, claiming that news stories in the early 1900s "sensationally emphasized fandom's alleged extremism with metaphors of religious zealotry,

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[29] C. Lee Harrington and Denise D. Bielby, *Soap Fans: Pursuing Pleasure and Making Meaning in Everyday Life* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 1.

[30] Ibid., 2.

[31] Ibid., 2-3.

[32] Daniel Cavicchi, "Foundational Discourses of Fandom," in *A Companion to Media Fandom and Fan Studies*, ed. Paul Booth (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2018), 27.

mob disorder, or illness, but they usually softened it with humor or overriding conclusions about fans' sociality and democratic values."[33] This account forms a striking parallel to representations of fans in the 1980s and 1990s.[34] However, instead of moving forward to position these early representations of fans as the origins of a contemporary understanding of fandom, Cavicchi moves in the other direction, recognizing "the long *emergence* of the term 'fan.'"[35] In other words, he situates discourses of "the fan" in the 1910s "as the culmination of what came before rather than the origins of what came after."[36] Cavicchi moves beyond an etymological study of the term "fan," a move uncommon in fan studies,[37] and examines "some of the key ways in which Americans publicly made sense of audience avidity in the fifty years before the 1880s, when 'fan' first emerged in the world of slang."[38] In doing so, he widens the scope for fan studies and traces a longer history of fan representations.[39]

In "Representations of Fans and Fandom in the British Newspaper Media," Lucy Bennett addresses the historical complexity of the relationship between news media and fans, which often results in the circulation of a particular image of fandom, one premised on fans as "pathological, hysterical, or as social losers and misfits."[40] She discerns that while this image of the fan has a long history, it reached its pinnacle in the 1980s.[41] Today, as fandom is becoming increasingly visible and more mainstream, how are images of fandom also changing? Bennett observes a lack of contemporary scholarship on fan representations in newspaper media, and presents her study as a corrective.[42]

*Seeing Fans: Representations of Fandom in Media and Popular Culture*, edited by Bennett and Paul Booth, responds to how popular culture continues to circulate negative characterizations of fans, "the geek, the nerd, the dweeb, the loser."[43] Ruth Deller's study, "Outdoor Queuing, Kicker-Throwing, and 100th Birthday Greetings: Newspaper Narratives of Mature Female Fans," appears in this collection. In her article, Deller explores representations of

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[33] Ibid., 29.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid., 42.
[38] Ibid., 30.
[39] Ibid., 42.
[40] Lucy Bennett, "Representations of Fans and Fandom in the British Newspaper Media," in *A Companion to Media Fandom and Fan Studies*, ed. Paul Booth (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2018), 107.
[41] Ibid., 108.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Booth and Bennett, 1.

mature female music fans and discovers that "instead of being portrayed as a source of threat or deviance," the characterizations depict these women as a joke.[44] Pointing out that there has not been a full-length study of how mass media represent fans, Bennett and Booth's collection "works towards unraveling the range and breadth of these representations," and uncovers the very real impact of these representations on fans and their role in informing fans and nonfans alike.[45] In his afterword, Matt Hills concludes that while "[p]athologizing stereotypes of fandom may not have entirely been supplanted," today these "problematic, negative, and patriarchal devaluations seemingly coexist with more positive, celebratory iterations of fandom."[46]

In *Understanding Fandom*, Mark Duffett stresses the importance of fandom as both personal and social. Consequently, he sees the value of a more integrated approach to fandom, one that considers not only personal but broader social structural factors (sociocultural, historical, political); such a perspective, he argues, understands "what it means to be a visible social subject and engaged member of the media audience" within various socio-historical contexts.[47] In his chapter "Fan Stereotypes and Representations," Duffett addresses the concern that despite a more positive recognition of fandom in society, fans continue to be marginalized.[48] In "I'm Too Sexy for My Stereotype," Lynn Zubernis and Katherine Larsen call attention to the harmful impacts of stereotypical representations on female fans, as they become internalized as shame.[49] Turning to the interconnections between shame, emotion, and sexuality, they elucidate how the cultural fear of female sexuality plays a pivotal role in criticizing female fans and their behaviour.[50] Zubernis and Larsen employ the discourses of "desiring up" (young women desiring things above their maturity level, which is considered normal) and "desiring down" (grown women desiring things below their maturity level, which is perceived as pathological) to explore some of the ways female fans experience shame from the judgment of others.[51] According to the authors, the feeling of shame operates as a protective measure that polices the boundary between

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[44] Ruth Deller, "Outdoor Queuing, Kicker-Throwing, and 100th Birthday Greetings: Newspaper Narratives of Mature Female Fans," in *Seeing Fans: Representations of Fandom in Media and Popular Culture*, ed. Lucy Bennett and Paul Booth (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016), 108.

[45] Booth and Bennett, 2.

[46] Hills, "Afterword: Participating in Hybrid Media Logics?," 267.

[47] Duffett, 282.

[48] Ibid., 45.

[49] Lynn Zubernis and Katherine Larsen, "I'm Too Sexy for My Stereotype," in *Fandom at the Crossroads: Celebration, Shame and Fan/Producer Relationships* (2012), 57.

[50] Ibid., 59-60.

[51] Ibid., 60.

the public and private self and directly impacts the identity of female fans; shame encourages them to hide their true identities for fear of being exposed and ridiculed.[52] While some fans may exercise the "First Rule of Fandom" (tell no one)[53] or choose to "police the boundaries of their own fannishness,"[54] others are beginning to challenge this process of shaming.[55]

While contemporary scholarship continues to explore representations of fans in the media, Harrington and Bielby concur that some academic representations of fandom have cooperated "with the popular press and the general public in dismissing and ridiculing media fans."[56] In their seminal work "Mass Communication and Para-social Interaction: Observation on Intimacy at a Distance," Donald Horton and Richard Wohl first introduced the concept of para-social interaction, now regularly employed to describe the relationship between fan and celebrity, often in pathologizing ways. Writing in 1956, Horton and Wohl identify as a salient feature of mass media (defined here as radio, television, and film) its ability to foster an illusory "face-to-face relationship with the performer."[57] They emphasize that through mass media, audiences come to interact with characters, actors, and television hosts in ways traditionally reserved for one's peers. The term "para-social" indicates that these relationships are one-way, and provide a foundation for the audience to fantasize.[58] Horton and Wohl trace the beginnings of these types of relationships to the theatre, but argue that the new mass media present more opportunities for para-social interaction.[59]

Horton and Wohl focus on the development of a new category of entertainment personality, which includes television hosts, "whose existence is a function of the media themselves."[60] They refer to these new types of performers as "personae," identifying their uniqueness in their ability to "claim and achieve an intimacy with what are literally crowds of strangers."[61] While this intimacy is "an imitation and a shadow of what is ordinarily meant by

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[52] Ibid., 60.
[53] Ibid., 62.
[54] Ibid., 71.
[55] Ibid., 80.
[56] Harrington and Bielby, *Soap Fans*, 3.
[57] Donald Horton and Richard Wohl, "Mass Communication and Para-Social Interaction: Observation on Intimacy at a Distance," *Psychiatry* 19, no. 3 (1956): 215.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid., 216.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.

the word," it is powerful and influential.[62] Horton and Wohl explain how audiences come to "'know' such a persona in somewhat the same way they know their chosen friends: through direct observation and interpretation," for instance: demeanour, outward look, verbal and non-verbal communication, attitudes and behaviour—basically the deportment of that person in different settings.[63] Due to the strong sense of intimacy felt in this one-sided relationship, and one largely based on fantasy, for Horton and Wohl, para-social relationships are dangerous, particularly when they become "compensatory" for real life relationships.[64]

Examining the work of Horton and Wohl, Duffett considers how the concept of para-social interaction negatively impacts representations of fans. He explains how the anxiety behind the notion of para-social interaction emanates from a fear of audiences becoming unable to distinguish between reality and fantasy, that "'unreal' celebrities and strangers are actually equal to 'real' family and friends *insofar that they are all ideas in our heads*."[65] Duffett contends that all fans fantasize, and in fact derive great pleasure from doing so;[66] however, the ability to fantasize does not limit one's capacity to differentiate between reality and fantasy.[67] Duffett identifies the anxiety arising from para-social interaction as a key factor in what he labels the slippery slope model, a model that supports the idea "that fans lose their grip on reality as they fantasize."[68]

In the slippery slope model, "parasocial interaction, social isolation and fantasizing" slowly turn into "intrusive, obsessive, stalking behaviours" that represent the "darker side" of the fan's psychological state.[69] What lies beneath the concern about deviant fan behaviour, Duffett claims, is "a fear about the power of the media itself."[70] He unveils how the para-social hypothesis has strong parallels to the media effects argument, which asserts that "rather than simply informing or inspiring audience members, the media *makes* them do things."[71] In this respect, the slippery slope argument "points to the perils of heavy media usage, not fandom per

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[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid., 222.
[65] Duffett, 106.
[66] Ibid., 42.
[67] Ibid., 91.
[68] Ibid., 96.
[69] Ibid., 94.
[70] Ibid., 101.
[71] Ibid.

se,"[72] although fans are often early and heavy users of new media.[73] This helps to explain why fans often become scapegoats for cultural anxieties and fears surrounding mass media and proper audience behaviour and in the process become stereotyped and othered.

The study of fandom requires a theory of fantasy, as a form of imagination, that situates it as a normal process of everyday life, and not a pathological process, nor one reserved for children. While studies on the role of social imaginaries have redeemed the role of imagination in everyday life, the function of fantasy has yet to be revitalized. In *Modernity at Large*, Arjun Appadurai's analysis focuses on two key interconnected social forces, mass mediation and mass migration, which he argues impact the "*work of the imagination* as a constitutive feature of modern subjectivity."[74] For Appadurai, the imagination in the context of new global flows of images, sensations, and persons plays a new and critical role. Rejecting the contention that "electronic media are the opium of the masses," Appadurai argues that the consumption of mass media throughout the globe has the potential to "provoke resistance, irony, selectivity, and, in general, *agency*."[75] He reasons that while fantasy carries the "inescapable connotation" of thought removed from action, the imagination "has a projective sense about it," evoking action, rather than escapism.[76] Advancing his view of the imagination as a social practice, Appaduari affirms:

> No longer mere fantasy … no longer simple escape … no longer elite pastime … and no longer mere contemplation … the imagination has become an organized field of social practices, a form of work (in the sense of both labor and culturally organized practice), and a form of negotiation between sites of agency (individuals) and globally defined fields of possibility … The imagination is now central to all forms of agency, is itself a social fact, and is the key component of the new global order.[77]

While Appadurai's exploration of the imagination as a social practice is important, it unfortunately celebrates imagination at the cost of fantasy.

As Appadurai's definition of imagination reveals, the term fantasy implies a sense of vicariousness—a compensatory imagining that happens in place of something real. This

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[72] Ibid., 196.
[73] Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 137.
[74] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 3.
[75] Ibid., 7.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid., 31.

understanding of fantasy as escapism often provides the basis for stereotypical images of fans as "losers" who use fantasy to compensate for something lacking in their reality. For example, in "Fandom as Pathology: The Consequences of Characterization," Joli Jensen observes the implications of calling oneself a fan.[78] "Were I to call myself a fan," she argues, "I would imply that … I must have these relationships because my lonely, marginal existence requires that I prop myself up with these fantasy attachments to famous dead people."[79]

In *The Plague of Fantasies*, Slavoj Žižek moves away from this perception of fantasy.[80] Using a simple analogy, he explains: "fantasy does not mean that when I desire a strawberry cake and cannot get it in reality, I fantasize about eating it; the problem is rather: *how do I know that I desire a strawberry cake in the first place? This* is what fantasy tells me."[81] Relating this to fandom, I do not fantasize about meeting Cohen because I cannot meet him in real life. Rather, my fantasizing about Cohen points to my real desire to meet Cohen. Fantasy is not compensatory for real life experiences; rather, fantasy points to the desire in real life to have the particular experience I fantasize about. In other words, "fantasy does not simply realize a desire in a hallucinatory way … a fantasy constitutes our desire, provides its coordinates; that is, it literally 'teaches us how to desire.'"[82] While common notions of fantasy position it as a form of escapism, defining it in distinction to reality and "real life," Žižek counters this argument with the view that "fantasy is on the side of reality … it sustains the subject's 'sense of reality.'"[83]

In turn, my identification of my desire leads to the formation of my identity as a fan. My fantasy about meeting Cohen is also an attempt to form an identity, as "fantasy tells me what I am to my others."[84] If my fantasizing about Cohen tells me what I am to him, a fan, this correspondingly gives me a sense of identity that structures my reality. However, if I remove this fantasy frame, I might start to "perceive reality as an 'irreal' nightmarish universe with no firm ontological foundation; this nightmarish universe is not 'pure fantasy' but, on the contrary, *that which remains of reality after reality is deprived of its support in fantasy*."[85] Instead of

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[78] Joli Jensen, "Fandom as Pathology: The Consequences of Characterization," in *The Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media*, ed. Lisa A. Lewis (London: Routledge, 1992), 23.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Slavoj Žižek, *The Plague of Fantasies* (London: Verso, 2008), 7.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid., 84.
[84] Ibid., 9.
[85] Ibid., 84.

contrasting "reality and its fantasy supplement," Žižek offers an approach to fantasy that illuminates how fantasy, rather than *causing* a rift in reality, is a result of a "*hole* in reality."[86]

In *Soap Fans*, Harrington and Bielby identify how pleasure "is rooted in the ability to fantasize."[87] They contend that in spite of the centrality of fantasy to fandom, "its function has been oversimplified and misunderstood. We tend to think of fantasy as a simple process by which one places oneself in a narrative to escape the humdrum of ordinary life. In this sense, fantasy bridges the distance between the (pleasurable) absent and the (unpleasurable) present."[88] Such an understanding of fantasy leads to ridicule "for spending time doing 'unimportant' things."[89] In contrast, Harrington and Bielby suggest that "fantasy *as such* is neither good nor bad; it's simply part of human life … Fantasy neither compensates for empty lives nor provides temporary flight from them but rather adds a crucial dimension to life in providing a setting for desire."[90] They ask: "Why can't we take fantasy seriously as a reality in itself?"[91] In this respect, Harrington and Bielby also recognize the interconnections between fantasy and desire. While they argue that fantasy provides a foundation for desire,[92] Žižek maintains that fantasy constitutes our desire, indicating a more functional role.[93]

Reinforcing how fantasy creates pleasure, Harrington and Bielby suggest that one of the central types of pleasure exists in those "activities and experiences that allow individuals to challenge the boundaries between internal and external realities."[94] In developing their analysis, they draw on psychoanalytic object-relations theory, which addresses "the potentially confounding observation that people live simultaneously in an external and an internal world."[95] Specifically, they build on the work of Donald Woods Winnicott and his concept of the transitional object.[96] For Winnicott, there are three spaces of reality: "inner reality, external life, and an intermediate area of experiencing that keeps the inner and outer worlds separated yet

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[86] Ibid., xiv.
[87] Harrington and Bielby, *Soap Fans*, 122.
[88] Ibid., 124.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Ibid., 125.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Žižek, *The Plague of Fantasies*, 7.
[94] Harrington and Bielby, *Soap Fans*, 133.
[95] Greenberg and Mitchel qtd. in Harrington and Bielby, *Soap Fans,* 133-34.
[96] Harrington and Bielby, *Soap Fans*, 134.

interrelated."[97] In turn, transitional objects help negotiate the "objective and subjective, real and fictional."[98] Applying this concept to fandom, Harrington and Bielby explore how cultural artifacts function as transitional objects that fans use to negotiate fantasy and reality. In this way, the celebrity does not belong entirely in external reality, nor solely within fantasy. Relating this to fans, Hills elaborates:

> It is therefore of paramount importance for mental health that our inner and outer worlds do not stray too far from one another, and that they are kept separate but also interrelated. That fans are able to use media texts as part of this process does not suggest that these fans cannot tell fantasy from reality. Quite the reverse; it means that while maintaining this awareness fans are able to play with (and across) the boundaries between "fantasy" and "reality."[99]

The illusion of intimacy between celebrity and fan helps to break down the opposition between fantasy and reality and allows fans to play with and discover pleasure within this space.[100]

### 3.3 Dear Leonard: Fan Letters from the late 1960s and Discourses of Intimacy

In the heart of the Leonard Cohen Papers at the University of Toronto is an archival collection of approximately thirty fan letters Cohen received in the late 1960s. In this section, I examine the implicit assumptions of these fan letters. I identify any emerging patterns and reveal how the Cohen phenomenon impacts the statements in these letters, and accordingly, how these statements constitute the Cohen phenomenon. Following Foucault, I explore the conditions that allow for the particular statements fans make in these letters and the interconnections between their statements, questioning if there any particular statements that fans avoid.[101] Through my analysis, I encounter a powerful sense of intimacy, as fans address Cohen as a close friend, self-identify as Cohen fans, and search for meaning in Cohen's work that might reveal his "true self." Interestingly, there are at least three letters from women named Suzanne, suggesting a specific process of interpellation in which Cohen's song "Suzanne" calls out to (hails) women of the same name, as they become the subject of his address.

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[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Hills, *Fan Cultures*, 106.
[100] Harrington and Bielby, *Soap Fans*, 152.
[101] Foucault, *Archaeology*, 27-28.

From handwritten and endearing to typewritten and humourous, these fan letters portray how particular fans felt about Cohen in the late 1960s in their own words, demonstrating their felt experience of intimacy. Four letters seek interpretation of Cohen's work, asking for the "true" meaning behind certain lyrics, whereas six letters express the personal significance of Cohen and his work. While five letter-writers mention that they are fans of Cohen, four include a story of how they became a fan. Surprisingly candid, two fan letters extend invitations to Cohen to drop by for dinner; such frank letters could easily have been mistaken as those from a close friend. "Please come to our house for supper some day soon," write New Yorkers Allan and Jeannie with presumed familiarity.[102] "We love your new record, and not only that, we just learned how to use out new pressure cooker only it's really not new—Helen, our super's friend gave it to us because it scared her," they add.[103] In a postscript they warn not to drop by on "the last Wednesday of any month because we have to see Rudolph Arnheim at school."[104] The last line indicates their address.

Equally forthright, Susan and David Harris of Millington, Michigan write to Cohen with a request to come over "for a couple of beers and a hamburger."[105] Susan explains how David got the idea to invite Cohen over after watching a program on him. They describe how they were "both impressed with what [Cohen] had to say" and admit that "neither of us have read any of your works, [but] we both plan to."[106] In this correspondence, we can see the shifting basis of Cohen's fame, with his persona taking primacy over his literary work. They conclude the letter by confiding: "You are the type of person most people wish they had the courage to be—free and living the way you feel you ought to. I think we envy you that. At any rate, we would welcome you in our home any time."[107] Reflecting Meyrowitz's notion of the media friend, both of these letters appear to be written to a close friend, rather than a stranger. This is consistent with developments in communication media over the last hundred years, which Meyrowitz suggests have facilitated "an increasingly intense sense of intimacy with those who would otherwise be strangers."[108] While I refuse to pathologize these letter writers or argue that they cannot

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[102] Fan letter from Allan Erlbaum and Jeannie Bartlet, dated February 9, 1968.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Fan letter from Susan and David Harris, dated Sunday, September 10, Ms coll 122, box 12, folder 29, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Meyrowitz, 103.

distinguish between fantasy and reality (after all, as Žižek asserts, fantasy illuminates our desires[109]), these fans clearly feel a strong sense of intimacy towards Cohen. The circulation of Cohen as an approachable figure undoubtedly aids in this sense of intimacy, prompting otherwise unknown individuals to invite Cohen over for dinner.

Although these invitations for dinner do not represent the typical fan letter found among the Cohen Papers, other letters contain various expressions of intimacy. At least four of the twelve letters mention that this is the first "fan" letter the sender has ever written. The word "fan" often appears in quotation marks, indicating a need for fans to distance and distinguish themselves from stereotypical discourses of fandom. One letter reads: "I have never written a 'fan' letter before and really don't want to say anymore than that you have reached me and I hope that you will continue to do so, as I feel that of the world's greatest faults is a lack of communication."[110] Another fan expresses, "I'm sure you receive many 'fan' letters; I've never written one before."[111] A third letter again indicates that this is a first: "Dear Mr. Cohen, I have never before written anyone a fan letter, but I feel that I must write to you to tell you how very much I've enjoyed your new Columbia album, 'Songs of Leonard Cohen.'"[112] While a Grade 13 student from Ontario does not directly say it, the sentiment remains: "Should I add 'caveat emptor' (if I remember this spelling correctly?)? This isn't one of those kind of letters."[113] Here, she references the NFB documentary and the moment Cohen breaks the fourth wall, as if to say "of course this is a fan letter," although she says the opposite. What these first-time fan letters demonstrate is the strong connection between audience and celebrity, felt personally on behalf of the fan, an attachment strong enough to motivate them to write their first fan letter. Nevertheless, this statement ("This is my first fan letter"), like the use of quotation marks around the word "fan," serves as a method of separating oneself from those "other" fans.

In his study of Bruce Springsteen fans, *Tramps Like Us*: *Music and Meaning Among Springsteen Fans*, Cavicchi asserts that "among Springsteen fans, the idea of connection means

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[109] Žižek, *The Plague of Fantasies*, 7.

[110] Fan letter from Lynda Picaw, dated September 20, 1967, Ms coll 122, box 12, folder 36, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2.

[111] Fan letter from Cheri Pilla, dated March 23, 1968, Ms coll 122, box 12, folder 37, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

[112] Fan letter from Keith Peterson, Ms coll 122, box 12, folder 35, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

[113] Fan letter from Lorna Foley, dated September 28, 1967, Ms coll 122, box 12, folder 44, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

more than just having an affinity for Springsteen's music; it means making the music a deeply felt part of one's life, of having an ongoing, shared relationship with Springsteen the artist."[114] Moreover, stories about becoming a fan, told in conversation with other fans, posted online, published in fanzines, or revealed in fan letters, "represent a specific genre of fan discourse" and are "personal narratives that center on a 'conversion' or significant change in one's attitude and behavior" that resulted in understanding oneself as a fan.[115] The telling of such stories can also be understood as describing a process of interpellation, where one is addressed as a fan and, in turn, becomes a fan.

In *On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, Louis Althusser formulates the process through which individuals become subjects.[116] For Althusser, "ideology 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way as to 'recruit' subjects (it transforms them all) through the very precise operation that we call *interpellation* or *hailing*."[117] His famous example of hailing is of the police officer addressing an individual in the street: "'Hey, you there!'"[118] Within such moments of address, individuals become subjects through their recognition that they are the subjects of this address.[119] In a similar fashion, we can understand how celebrity discourse interpellates fans. That is, celebrity ideology interpellates subjects as fans through fans' recognition of themselves as subjects of the celebrity's address. In "State Celebrity, Institutional Charisma and the Public Sphere," Patricia Cormack and James Cosgrave, draw on Althusser's conceptualization of the ideological state apparatus to explore how CBC television and radio personalities hail the audience / citizen.[120] Using the example of Jian Ghomeshi, they highlight the former CBC radio host's opening tagline "Well, hi there."[121] In formulating his concept of the ideological state apparatus, Althusser contrasts it with the repressive state apparatus, noting that while both employ violence and ideology, ideological state apparatuses (e.g. educational, political, communications, cultural, etc.) function by ideology first and foremost.[122] Cormack and Cosgrave accentuate how "CBC audiences are ritualistically and

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[114] Cavicchi, *Tramps Like Us*, 41.
[115] Ibid., 42.
[116] Louis Althusser, *On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, trans. G. M. Goshgarian (London: Verso, 2014), 190.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid., 191.
[120] Cormack and Cosgrave, "State Celebrity," 1049.
[121] Ibid., 1048.
[122] Althusser, 244.

habitually brought into existence as particular types of subjects (audience / citizen) through a process of calling out ('hailing') and recognition."[123] As a result, they establish the role of celebrity on the CBC as a "friendly state apparatus."[124] In this way, we can approach Cohen's appearances on the CBC in terms of how they also function to interpellate audience members as fans. By addressing audience members as fans, celebrity discourse interpellates subjects as fans and produces (Cohen) fandom.

Many of the Cohen fan letters contain such narratives of interpellation. For instance, one fan writes to Cohen: "I first heard you sing last year on 'Camera Three' and since that time I've been a confirmed fan. I'm now in the process of trying to obtain your book of poems The Spice Box of Earth."[125] In this example, the fan describes how, through Cohen's appearance on television, Cohen addressed him as a fan, allowing him to recognize himself as the subject of that address, that is, as a fan. Here, celebrity discourse interpellates the audience member as a fan. After connecting with Cohen through his music, this fan is now in a process of discovery, seeking out more materials related to the Cohen phenomenon. While another fan cannot remember when she first read Cohen's work, or whether she first saw him on television, she clearly recalls the moment she "discovered" Cohen, recalling that "no one, or rather no one I knew, knew who you were much less that you were an artist."[126] Subsequently, she details her attempts to convert her friends, wanting "to share with them the experiences I found in your work."[127] Another fan letter expresses, "I have just discovered you and I am thrilled. My first exposure was through Judy Collins' recording of your song Suzanne. I first heard the song in March but never knew anything about you its author until becoming friendly this summer with a Canadian who also greatly admires your work."[128] These discovery stories uncover the initial connection between fans and Cohen and mark the turning point in which individuals recognize themselves as fans through a process of interpellation.

Cavicchi warns that approaching the fan's relationship with the musician or celebrity as "'false,' 'unreal,' or 'artificial'" is an error.[129] In his view, these adjectives, "instead of descriptively characterizing the connection fans feel *in their own terms*, prescriptively assign the

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[123] Cormack and Cosgrave, "State Celebrity," 1052.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Fan letter from Keith Peterson.
[126] Fan letter from Lorna Foley, dated September 28, 1967, 2.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Fan letter from Lynda Picaw, dated September 20, 1967.
[129] Cavicchi, *Tramps Like Us*, 55.

connection a negative value by comparing it with supposedly more real, more genuine, 'face-to-face' interaction."[130] As evident in these fan letters, the emotional attachment fans feel to Cohen should not be trivialized. What the concept of para-social interaction misses is the understanding that the relationship between fans and celebrities is more about the fans and their own emotions and life experiences. For some fans, their intimate connection to Cohen lies in his ability to emotionally conceptualize their own feelings in ways they have been unable to attain. For example, one fan comments that when she read *Spice Box of Earth*, "I could not believe that one author could express so well what I feel about so many things, but have trouble when I try to express them myself. I cry when I feel something beautiful and it seems as though so much of your work moves me to cry."[131] The Nobels, a couple living in Portugal, communicate similar sentiments, stating that Cohen's new album "has reached us and moved us in a way we have never experienced before."[132] Ted Nobel describes how Cohen's lyrics and music in general "have been moving to say the least."[133] He informs Cohen: "[Y]ou give me more evidence that our problems of 'broken hearts' lie less with pathology than with feeling. I only hope your message reaches many; I see the need daily."[134]

More than mass-produced cultural objects, Cohen's albums resonate with his fans, inspiring them to write letters divulging, in the words of one fan, "how deeply, I am touched."[135] Just as Springsteen fans "feel that he is singing to them personally,"[136] Cohen fans feel an intimate, personal connection to him and his music. One fan, for example, expresses how she felt when her friends became fans, shattering the illusion of intimacy between her and Cohen. She expresses, "It was ironic and I guess I should have been happy that they had become acquainted with your work but I wasn't … I wanted you, so to speak, to myself."[137] Her disappointment that Cohen was no longer speaking and singing to her alone is unmistakable.

An examination of these fan letters uncovers the value Cohen fans place on their feelings of personal connection to Cohen. More than consumers of Cohen's work, Cohen fans reveal

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[130] Ibid.
[131] Fan letter from Lynda Picaw, dated September 20, 1967.
[132] Fan letter from Gail and Ted Nobel, dated March 11, 1968, Ms coll 122, box 12, folder 34, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 1.
[133] Ibid., 2.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Fan letter from Cheri Pilla, dated March 23, 1968.
[136] Cavicchi, *Tramps Like Us*, 52.
[137] Fan letter from Lorna Foley, dated September 28, 1967, 2-3.

themselves as individuals who have an intimate attachment to Cohen and his art, a connection that resonates in their everyday lives. Hearing fans talk about their connection to him brings to light how Cohen's music functions as a channel through which they can access, express, and make sense of their own feelings, and in turn contributes to the common discourse of being a fan. Cavicchi makes the observation that there is something deeply personal about fandom "that quickly leads people into the realm of the private, that focuses their discussion and thinking on their personal experiences and thoughts," and in this way, the meaning of the music and experience of the music become inseparable.[138] In his study of fansites, Soukup is in agreement, showing how fans utilize celebrity as a mode of personal expression.[139] Yet, notwithstanding this discourse of what fandom means to individual fans, dominant discourses still position fandom as "a model for the dangers of mass consumerism"[140] and fans often become exploited as scapegoats for different types of cultural and social anxiety.[141] This is in spite of fans' own perceived value of their fandom, especially "the ways it addresses the existential reality of their daily lives, how it creates needed meaning, identity, and community in a world in which such things are absent or ephemeral."[142]

### 3.4 Cohen Fandom Online: Genesis to Montreal 2000

The practice of writing a fan letter is a private activity; therefore, these early fan letters to Cohen are largely invisible today. They can only be accessed at the University of Toronto, and while they demonstrate the intimate connection between fan and celebrity, there are limits to their capacity to continue to circulate the Cohen phenomenon. Over the last twenty years, fan practices have become increasingly observable and in turn fans now design their practices to be observed.[v] The establishment of the World Wide Web (WWW) in the 1990s not only led to the growth of individual fandoms, but also increased their visibility. Notably, some of the first internet websites were unofficial fansites, and among them was "The Leonard Cohen Files."[143] In this respect, the "history of the Leonard Cohen homepages matches the history of the extension of the WWW itself," claims the creator of "The Leonard Cohen Files," Jarkko

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[138] Cavicchi, *Tramps Like Us*, 134.
[139] Soukup, 330.
[140] Cavicchi, *Tramps Like Us*, 185.
[141] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers*, 17.
[142] Cavicchi, *Tramps Like Us*, 185.
[143] Montreal 2000: The Leonard Cohen Event official event program, May 12-14, 2000, Ms coll 399, box 1, folder 6, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 12.

Arjatsalo.[144] Just as Cohen's rising stardom came at a time of increasing celebritization in Canadian culture in the 1960s, the WWW accelerated the growth of Cohen fandom in the 1990s.

In September 1995, Arjatsalo created the first iteration of his website, originally titled "The Leonard Cohen Fan Information Files."[145] Not only is this website run with the permission of Cohen's management company, Stranger Management, but Sony included a link to it in the booklet for Cohen's 1997 album *More Best Of*.[146] Arjatsalo traces the roots of his fansite "to the period when network technology was not yet racing with printed media."[147] Pre-internet, "The Leonard Cohen Newsletter," printed by Jim Devlin in the United Kingdom, was an important source of information for Cohen fans between 1984-94. After publishing thirty-seven issues filled with "invaluable news items about Cohen's tours, records, cover versions of his songs, and collectable items," Devlin ended the newsletter in 1994.[148] This left a huge gap in the Cohen fan community, with only one fanzine left in circulation "Intensity."[149] Seeking to fill this void, Arjatsalo started working on his website. He chronicles some background details:

> Soon after Devlin's Newsletter was discontinued, I opened my Internet connection in Finland. I was quick to realize what a magnificent channel for any Cohen information the WWW would be. My finding of the already existing Cohen sites and the Usenet news group indicated that other Cohen fans might need and be anxious to take advantage of such resources. I collected some basic materials during the summer of 1995 and launched the site on September 3, 1995, with my initial content on about 70 different pages.[150]

In 1997, Cohen began contributing to the website, posting poems, song lyrics, and drawings, some of which had not previously been made public. When Cohen left Mt. Baldy on June 18, 1999 after spending five years in isolation, he contacted Arjatsalo who announced it on the front page of the website and was the first to break the news.[151] By the year 2000, the website had expanded to over 700 pages, becoming the ultimate resource for everything Cohen, which it remains today. Describing the "joyful expression of surprise" visitors have to the website, Arjatsalo reports that a lot of "Cohen fans have never met anyone else with a deep interest in his

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[144] Ibid.
[145] Ibid., 13.
[146] Ibid.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid., 12.

work, and they are thrilled to find hundreds or thousands of like-minded people on the net."[152] In comparison to Cohen fansites, Cohen's official website, run by Sony, is nearly devoid of information.

The earliest version of "The Leonard Cohen Files" website that can be accessed through the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine is from March 3, 2000.[153] This may be due to a change in the website's url; the front page of the website from 2000 notes that the site "now has a new, easy-to-remember URL: www.leonardcohenfiles.com."[154] The website from 2000 looks almost identical to the current one. The title and photo of Cohen at the top of the page remain unchanged; however, the colour scheme has shifted from red and black to the current blue and black. The front page of the website from 2000 shows that since the launch of the site on September 3, 1995, it registered 100,000 visits on July 7, 1998; 150,000 on March 4, 1999; and 200,000 on September 3, 1999. The visitor count on the webtracker at the bottom of the page from March 3, 2000 reads 298,376, but an entry beside it acknowledges an extra 40,106 visitors from September 3, 1995 until April 5, 1997, when the webtracker started counting.[155] The current website counts 5,325,962 visits as of August 24, 2018.[156]

In *Convergence Culture*, Henry Jenkins points out that fans "have always been early adapters of new media technologies," and that the new participatory fan culture facilitated by the WWW originates from underground fan practices that have existed through the twentieth century; accelerated by the internet, this "hidden layer of cultural activity" has been thrust into the foreground.[157] The internet did not create Cohen fandom; it simply served to augment its membership on a much larger scale, working from the foundation of zines and newsletters previously in circulation. In 2018, where my Facebook newsfeed is often replete with posts from Cohen fans on the "I need a regular dose of Leonard Cohen" Facebook group, it is important to be reminded that it was not long ago when the rise of the WWW fostered connections between individual Cohen fans and enabled the large-scale development of a Cohen fandom comprised of geographically distant fans.

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[152] Ibid., 14.
[153] "The Leonard Cohen Files," updated March 3, 2000, accessed September 26, 2018, https://web.archive.org/web/20000303211435/http://www.nebula.simplenet.com:80/cohen/frame.html (Accessed through the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine).
[154] Ibid.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Arjatsalo.
[157] Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 137.

### 3.5 Montreal 2000: The Leonard Cohen Event

In May 2000, over 200 Cohen fans from around the world gathered in Montreal to celebrate Cohen in his home city. As co-organizer Bill Van Dyk explains in his introduction to the event program, the original idea for the millennial event arose on the Leonard Cohen Usenet news group (alt.music.leonard-cohen) in November 1998.[158] For the organizers, Bill Van Dyk (Canada), Anne Jayne (Canada), Dick Straub (USA), and Jarkko Arjatsalo (Finland), Montreal 2000 was an opportunity to bring together in-person a diverse group of international Cohen fans that regularly meet online. Since Montreal 2000, there has been a Leonard Cohen Event every two years, each taking place in a different city around the world, from Hydra (2002) to Edmonton (2008) and Madison, Wisconsin (2012) to Budapest (2018).[159] There have been additional biennial "meetups" in Hydra, starting in 2005. These events are all organized through "The Leonard Cohen Files" fan website and forum.

Montreal 2000 took place from Friday, May 12 to Sunday, May 14, 2000 at McGill University. On Friday afternoon, participants were welcomed to the event by Cohen's manager Kelley Lynch—who is now infamously known for secretly pilfering Cohen's life savings and was subsequently fired by Cohen in 2004. Lynch treated participants to the "world debut" of three new songs by Cohen.[160] The evening programming on Friday included a concert by singer-songwriter Nancy Write, who performed her songs "Leonard Cohen's Never Going to Bring my Groceries In" and "Get Down Offa That" written for Cohen's sixty-fifth birthday, among others, and a preview performance of a dramatization of Cohen's novel *Beautiful Losers* by the Laboratory of Enthusiastic Collaboration. Saturday's events included a discussion on the "Major Themes in the work of Leonard Cohen," featuring academics Stephen Scobie, Ira Nadel, and Brian Trehearne; a screening of the film *Leonard Light My Cigarette*; a tribute performance by the band Damn Personals; and an open mic night.[161] While it was not listed in the event program, Saturday night also involved a dinner of celebration at Moishes restaurant, one of Cohen's favourite restaurants. On the final day of the event, there was a "self-guided walking tour of Leonard's Montreal," a poetry jam, a discussion of Cohen's novels, and an opportunity to win books and CDs Cohen had autographed.[162]

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[158] Montreal 2000: The Leonard Cohen Event official event program, May 12-14, 2000, 3.
[159] Arjatsalo.
[160] Montreal 2000: The Leonard Cohen Event official event program, May 12-14, 2000, 2.
[161] Ibid.
[162] Ibid.

With the entire event planned online, the organizing committee only met in person the day before it began. Discussing the aim of the event, Van Dyk attempts to distinguish Montreal 2000 from stereotypical commercial fan conventions where fans hunger for autographs. He rationalizes: "We were all far too sophisticated and intelligent to regard it as a simple opportunity for fans to collect souvenirs and seek autographs, and too respectful of Mr. Cohen to see it as an opportunity to trade bootlegs and gossip about his personal life."[163] Instead, he stresses the cultural and interpretive aspects of the event, as "an occasion to mingle with Cohen fans from around the world in the city of Leonard's birth, to celebrate his remarkable achievements in literature and music, and enrich our understanding of the major themes of his works."[164] Addressing the event's participants, Van Dyk advises that the event will become whatever you, the Cohen fan, brings to it, positioning the event as a chance to meet Cohen fans from around the world.

While the individual participants and attendees of Montreal 2000 constitute a public as a group of people "bound by the event,"[165] they also form part of Cohen fandom as *a* public brought into existence through the circulation of the Cohen phenomenon as a discursive address and their participation in this discourse. Referring to Montreal 2000 as an "opportunity to converse with people from around the world who care as deeply [as] you do" about Cohen's work, Van Dyk accentuates the difference between these two levels of publics.[166] At the same time, he emphasizes that this event is not just about Cohen but the fans themselves as members of *a* public.[167] It is about celebrating both Cohen (as a discourse that addresses this public) and fellow Cohen enthusiasts (as other members of this public). The event program acknowledges the importance of relationships among fans in the community, stating: "[W]e also hope to find *you* stimulating and exciting, and chatting enthusiastically with the others who have come together for this special celebration. Say hello to the stranger sitting next to you. This person might be from Australia or Texas or Germany or Alberta or California or Croatia … but he or she will be a fan of Leonard Cohen."[168] The person next to you might be a stranger, but they also belong to the same public.

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[163] Ibid., 3.
[164] Ibid.
[165] Warner, 66.
[166] Montreal 2000: The Leonard Cohen Event official event program, May 12-14, 2000, 3.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Ibid.

As to be expected when over 200 Cohen fans descend upon Montreal for a weekend, Canadian newspapers covered the event extensively. A cartoon representing a Cohen fan, created by the *Montreal Gazette*'s renown political cartoonist Aislin (Terry Mosher), provides a sharp contrast between how Cohen fans and the organizers of the event see themselves and how the general public may perceive them. Captioned "The Hanger-on," the cartoon depicts a middle-aged woman, wearing a flower crown, sandals, and a dress sitting on a bench with a guitar beside her, presumably in Parc du Portugal across from Cohen's house. A police officer stands behind the bench and tells her: "C'mon, now, lady. Everyone else has gone home. Leonard Cohen isn't coming!"[169] This cartoon is a twist on what Jenkins refers to as "the myth of the 'orgiastic' fan, the groupie," which, he argues, "survives as a staple fantasy of rock music reporting and criticism."[170] Discussing the differences between stereotypes of male and female fans, Jenkins maintains that while stereotypical depictions of male fans portray them as "de-gendered, asexual, or impotent, the eroticized fan is almost always female."[171] Such gender stereotyping produces restrictive imagery "of screaming teenage girls" or more pejoratively, "the groupie servicing the stars backstage."[172] A prime example of the latter is the representation of Pamela Des Barres as the "world's most famous groupie."[173]

What supposedly makes this cartoon funny is that the female groupie is a former flower child of the sixties, now middle-aged and desexualized. Depicted as harmless, she becomes a target of ridicule for her patheticness in waiting for, or potentially stalking, Cohen. In her study of mature female fans of solo male singers, Deller identifies similar characterizations of female fans in the media and demonstrates how they function as a "source of humor," by positioning "these women as eccentric curiosities who've never grown out of teenage crushes."[174] Aislin's cartoon contrasts sharply from the aim of the event as set out by Van Dyk in the event program, and carries cultural baggage in the pathological and gender distorted representation of fans, for example, as hypersexualized (or asexual), deranged, emotional fanatics. Yet, as fandom research

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[169] Cartoon of Leonard Cohen fan by Aislin, titled "The Hanger On, and published in the *Montreal Gazette*, Ms coll 399, box 1, folder 13, Leonard Cohen Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
[170] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers*, 15.
[171] Ibid.
[172] Ibid.
[173] Pamela Des Barres, *Take Another Little Piece of My Heart: A Groupie Grows Up* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2008), 13.
[174] Deller, 198.

tells us, this positioning of fans as pathological has a long history, one rooted in cultural anxiety.[175]

While the media coverage surrounding Montreal 2000 hints at the perception of Cohen fans as cultural aficionados, or Cohen experts, most newspaper articles resort to conventional depictions of fans as emotional, obsessive, and eccentric, critical of their emotional enthusiasm for Cohen. Although these articles contain references acknowledging the expertise of Cohen fans, their knowledge continues to be trivialized in contrast to the more serious, academic expert. Correspondingly, fans own attempts to distinguish themselves as more serious than the average pop culture fan often become a target for ridicule. A study of the media coverage of Montreal 2000 and the event program indicate that both journalists and fans utilize taste as a social tool.

Drawing on the work of Pierre Bourdieu, Jenkins demonstrates how stereotypical images of fans serve to reproduce dominant cultural hierarchies. According to Jenkins, fans challenge the boundaries between high and low culture by engaging popular culture with the critical interpretive practices normally reserved for high culture; in turn, this disturbance of cultural boundaries produces anxiety, which we project onto fans who face ostracism for their "abnormal" preferences and passions.[176] Cavicchi argues that fans use popular culture as a resource, a "guide for making sense of the world," and that this causes cultural anxiety since high culture traditionally assumed this role.[177] The negative stereotyping of fans thereby restores the hierarchy between high and low culture, and the marginalization of emotional fan culture mitigates its threat to rational social order.

Employing Bourdieu's notion of taste, Jenkins stresses how taste is a key mechanism for preserving social distinctions and shaping class identities.[178] "Good" taste is not a fixed category, however, but is "rooted in social experience and reflect particular class interests."[179] Those who have good taste "'deserve' a privileged position within the institutional hierarchy and reap the greatest benefits from the education system, while the tastes of others are seen an 'uncouth' and underdeveloped."[180] For media fans, the prevailing assumption is not only that their objects of interest are not in good taste (e.g. a television show), but their ways of relating to those objects

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[175] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers*, 17.
[176] *Textual Poachers*, 17.
[177] Cavicchi, *Tramps Like Us*, 130.
[178] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers*, 16.
[179] Ibid.
[180] Ibid.

are inappropriate, e.g. "interpretive practices usually reserved for high culture."[181] Jenkins

clarifies this point: "Taste distinctions determine not only desirable and undesirable forms of

culture but also desirable and undesirable ways of relating to cultural objects, desirable and

undesirable strategies of interpretation and styles of consumption."[182] In "Fandom as Pathology"

Jensen takes a similar position, arguing that what differentiates fans as unauthorized experts and

authorized cultural aficionados is twofold, "the object of desire and the modes of enactment."[183]

Thus, we can view the negative discursive construction of fans as an attempt to regulate the

boundaries of taste, maintain the cultural hierarchy,[184] and uphold rationality as the key to social

order.

While journalists seek to distinguish Cohen scholars as rational cultural experts from

Cohen fans as passionate followers, Cohen fans work to differentiate their fandom from other

forms of mass cultural fandom. Although journalists and fans use taste in different ways, at times

they both rely on the emotion / reason binary to erect and maintain cultural hierarchies. As

Bourdieu articulates, the pursuit of distinction takes place in different fields, composed of social

institutions and networks, the structure of which is "nothing other than the structure of the

distribution of … capital."[185] While it might be difficult for Cohen fans to gain cultural capital

within the dominant cultural field, or official culture, they gain their own cultural capital within

the field of fandom.

While stereotyping fans as deviant performs a function in restoring the cultural hierarchy,

fans are also active in constructing their own cultural boundaries, demarcating their fandom from

the dominant culture as well as other types of fandom. In "The Cultural Economy of Fandom,"

John Fiske demonstrates how official culture erects barriers that "separate fans from the field of

play"[186] and how in turn fan culture constructs its own levels of distinction through the

accumulation of knowledge-based, popular cultural capital. Fiske builds on Bourdieu's work,

notably the concept of the cultural economy, a "cultural system [that] promotes and privileges

certain cultural tastes and competences,"[187] extending Bourdieu's model by including popular

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[181] Ibid.
[182] Ibid.
[183] Jensen, 19.
[184] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers*, 16.
[185] Bourdieu, *The Field*, 30.
[186] John Fiske, "The Cultural Economy of Fandom," in *The Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media*, ed. Lisa A. Lewis (London: Routledge, 1992), 41.
[187] Ibid., 31.

cultural capital produced by fans. For Fiske, fans are active producers who use cultural capital and have the capacity to produce their own institutional forms and organizational structures.[188]

Referring to fandom's institutional forms and structures as "the shadow cultural economy,"[189] Fiske shows how fans (as active producers and effective discriminators) draw the boundaries defining their own fandom and construct social structures similar to those of official culture. This echoes Cavicchi's contention that in practice fandom operates as a process of distinction.[190] Jenkins subtly alludes to this notion that fan communities reproduce cultural hierarchies in *Textual Poachers*; however, his focus remains on how fandom positions itself as a site of resistance and emancipation from dominant cultural hierarchies. Identifying how fans reproduce cultural and social hierarchies within their own communities has fundamental implications, as it reveals the prevalence of taste as a social tool within different social and cultural fields.

Despite attempts by event organizers to distinguish Cohen fans as unique and Montreal 2000 as culturally superior to other types of fan events, the popular discourse surrounding the event relies on stereotypical discourses of fandom to make sense of it. Drawing on the ultimate fan stereotype as well as making indirect references to the roots of media fandom, in the *Globe and Mail* article "He's Their Man," Stephanie Nolen describes Montreal 2000 as "a *Star Trek* convention populated entirely by devotees of Sylvia Plath."[191] As Jenkins points out in *Textual Poachers*, *Star Trek* fans, or "Trekkies" are the stereotype of fandom par excellence and have been satirized and ridiculed in the media. Using an episode of *Saturday Night Live* as an example, Jenkins identifies a number of popular stereotypes about *Star Trek* fans.[192] These consist of the ideas that "Trekkies" are "brainless consumers who will buy anything associated with the program or its cast" and have amassed a large amount of "worthless knowledge."[193] They are "social misfits" whose engagement in fandom limits other types of social and cultural experiences and who assign "inappropriate importance on devalued cultural material."[194] "Trekkies" are men who are either "feminized and/or desexualized," are "infantile, emotional

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[188] Ibid., 33.
[189] Ibid., 45.
[190] Cavicchi, *Tramps Like Us*, 107.
[191] Stephanie Nolen, "He's Their Man," *The Globe and Mail*, May 15, 2000, R1.
[192] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers*, 10.
[193] Ibid.
[194] Ibid.

and intellectually immature," and cannot "separate fantasy from reality."[195] Jenkins recognizes that while some of these aspects may have a partial basis in reality, they are extremely "selective, offering a distorted picture of their community, shaping the reality of its culture to conform to stereotypes already held" in society.[196] For Jensen, it is the belief that fans cannot distinguish fantasy from reality that leads to their construction as deviant.[197] Through Nolen's comparison of the event to a stereotypical *Star Trek* fan convention, Montreal 2000 becomes envisioned as a mythological gathering place of extreme and childish fans who dress up in costumes and seek autographs, consuming and purchasing everything in sight.

Compounding this depiction of the event as a *Star Trek* fan convention is the comparison of Cohen fans with Sylvia Plath devotees. What does mentioning Sylvia Plath, whose history of mental illness and eventual suicide is quite different than Cohen's personal struggle with and ultimate relief from depression, add to this depiction? Why not describe the event as a *Star Trek* convention populated by Leonard Cohen fans? First and foremost, it creates an unnecessarily dreary image of the event, one devoid of the fun, energy, and excitement you could expect at a *Star Trek* fan convention. Secondly, it feminizes Cohen fans in a derogatory fashion. Finally, it augments the deviant and dark side of fandom, its perceived association with stalking, madness, and murder. The use of the word devotee, rather than fan, connotes a cult-like, religious atmosphere, and magnifies the roots of the term fan in madness and hysteria. This reference to Plath contributes to the dominant discourse of the fan as mentally unstable, emotional, "socially maladjusted, and dangerously out of sync with reality."[198] While the comparison to a *Star Trek* fan convention frames the event as a place for commercial, brainless consumption, the association with Plath reinforces a depiction of the fan as emotionally obsessive, mad, and unstable.

As Jenkins notes, numerous stereotypes have been fused to the term "fan" since its origins. News reports and popular culture depictions build "on the word's traditional links to madness and demonic possession," in turn characterizing fans as "psychopaths whose frustrated fantasies of intimate relationships with stars or unsatisfied desires to achieve their own stardom

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[195] Ibid.
[196] Ibid., 11.
[197] Jensen, 18.
[198] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers*, 13.

take violent and antisocial forms."[199] Images in popular culture "represent fans as isolated, emotionally and socially immature, unable to achieve a proper place for themselves in society, and thus prone to replace grim realities with rich media fantasies."[200] Drawing on examples of films such as *The Fan*, Jenkins reveals that the image of the fan in popular culture continues to carry cultural baggage as a "target of ridicule and anxiety, of dread and desire" in a range of diverse forms such as "a religious fanatic, a psychopathic killer, a neurotic fantasist, or a lust-crazed groupie."[201]

Short for "fanatic," the term fan originates in the Latin *fanaticus*, meaning "of or belonging to the temple, a temple servant, a devotee."[202] However, the word also contains negative connotations related to extreme forms of religious worship, and as the term evolved to represent any form of "excessive and mistaken enthusiasm," its association with madness and hysteria prevails.[203] Jenkins argues that while the shortened form of the word, fan, was "originally evoked in a somewhat playful fashion and was often used sympathetically by sports writers," contemporary notions of the fan continue to carry negative and demeaning implications, with undertones of "religious and political zealotry, false beliefs, orgiastic excess, possession, and madness."[204]

Reinforcing the origins of the term fan in "excessive forms of religious belief and worship,"[205] Nolen characterizes the Cohen fans attending the event as "an eclectic bunch of acolytes."[206] Like the word devotee, an acolyte generally refers to "a devoted follower or admirer"; more specifically, an acolyte is an individual who "attends a priest and performs subordinate duties, as assisting at the altar, lighting and bearing candles."[207] Accentuating the roots of the term fan in religious fanaticism, Nolen describes how Cohen fans make reference to "Him, in a way that let you hear the capital letter."[208] In "A Mingling of Cohenists," Mark McNeil publishes a statement from a fan on the Cohen newsgroup who proclaimed that "Leonard

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[199] Ibid., 13.
[200] Ibid., 14.
[201] Ibid., 15.
[202] Ibid., 12.
[203] Ibid.
[204] Ibid.
[205] Ibid., 12.
[206] Nolen, R1.
[207] "Acolyte," in *Oxford English Dictionary* (2018).
[208] Nolen, R1.

Cohen is GOD!" describing the post as getting "a little carried away."[209] McNeil utilizes this claim as an example of a perceived breakdown between fantasy and reality, which constitutes fan behaviour as dangerous.

These representations of Cohen fans as religious fanatics also build on Cohen's mythology as god, saint, prophet, or potential messiah, a mythology with which Cohen himself plays. For example, on his 1992 album *The Future*, he refers to himself as "the little Jew who wrote the Bible,"[210] positioning himself close to God. Another factor that influences this mythology is his religious familial lineage. His maternal grandfather, Rabbi Solomon Klonitsky-Kline, was a Rabbi and a scholar, and his paternal grandfather,[211] Lyon Cohen, founded the first Jewish paper in Canada, *The Jewish Times*, and was the president of the Shaar Hashomayim Synagogue.[212] As this mythology of Cohen circulates, it creates a feedback loop that perpetuates itself, as audiences increasingly approach Cohen as saint. For example, in *A Broken Hallelujah: Rock and Rock, Redemption, and the Life of Leonard Cohen*, Liel Leibovitz interprets Cohen through the figure of the prophet, asking "what is the prophet Cohen telling us?"[213] A *New York Times* article from March 2018 similarly asks: "Is Leonard Cohen the New Secular Saint of Montreal?"[214] The article ends with a quote from Edward Singer, "a retired businessman [who] wrote a novel based on 'Suzanne.'" Singer proclaims: "Some people ask, What would Jesus do? I ask myself, What would Leonard do?"[215]

The portrayal of Cohen fans as religious fanatics, including Nolen's depiction of them as a "wildly devout group of Cohenists" has further implications.[216] The term follower in the context of fandom and celebrity perpetuates the stereotype of the fan as brainless consumer. Here the fan is a blind follower, an indiscriminate buyer of anything to do with the celebrity. Contrary to Van Dyk's perception of the event as more than an opportunity to trade memorabilia and collection autographs,[217] Nolen's comparison of Montreal 2000 to a commercial fan convention

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[209] Mark McNeil, "A Mingling of Cohenists," *The Spectator*, May 13, 2000, W03.
[210] Cohen, "The Future."
[211] Nadel, 12.
[212] Ibid., 10.
[213] Liel Leibovitz, *A Broken Hallelujah: Rock and Rock, Redemption, and the Life of Leonard Cohen* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014), 17.
[214] Dan Bilefsky, "Is Leonard Cohen the New Secular Saint of Montreal?," *New York Times*, March 6, 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/06/arts/music/leonard-cohen-montreal.html.
[215] Singer qtd. in Bilefsky.
[216] Nolen, R1.
[217] Montreal 2000: The Leonard Cohen Event official event program, May 12-14, 2000, 3.

highlights this aspect. In describing the event, she accentuates the cost of attendance—a hundred dollars—which includes gifts, featuring logos from Cohen's album *The Future*: "a small lapel pin showing intertwined hearts, and a big silver ring, emblazoned with a hummingbird in flight."[218] Additionally, she calls attention to the interior of the event, where a "vast array of Cohen documentaries, translations, criticisms, bootlegs, t-shirts, and blurry black-and-white photos were being displayed, sold, traded, admired."[219] Nolen's principal preoccupation with the commercial rather than the cultural aspects of the event is overly simplistic and one-dimensional, reducing fan activity to the act of consumption. In contrast, Nolen represents the Cohen scholars as the active producers of meaning at the event.

The media coverage of Montreal 2000 draws a boundary demarcating different attendees of the event, fans and scholars. This boundary represents a division between consumers and producers, useful knowledge and worthless knowledge, and emotion and reason. Patchen Barss's article in the *National Post* differentiates the knowledge of Cohen fans and scholars, in turn dictating who holds the cultural authority to speak about Cohen. The title of the article, "When the Fans Get Pedantic: High Culture and Pop Culture Met Last Weekend at a Montreal Conference Where the Leonard Cohen Scholars Faced the Leonard Cohen Enthusiasts," not only creates a hierarchy and binary between scholars and fans, authorized aficionados and unauthorized experts, but positions them in a battle pitted against one another for cultural authority.[220] The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines a pedant as a "person who excessively reveres or parades academic learning or technical knowledge" and "one who is excessively concerned with accuracy over trifling details of knowledge."[221] Therefore, to describe Cohen fans as "pedantic" both implies that the type of knowledge they possess has little value ("trifling details") and constructs them as obsessive devotees ("excessively concerned") who make a show ("parades academic learning") of the trivial knowledge they have on the subject of Cohen.

In "First, They Take McGill Campus: Cohen Fans Gather from Around the World," Lynn Moore describes one fan as knowing "oodles about Cohen."[222] Clearly, the word "oodles"

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[218] Nolen, R1.
[219] Ibid.
[220] Patchen Barss, "When the Fans Get Pedantic: High Culture and Pop Culture Met Last Weekend at a Montreal Conference Where the Leonard Cohen Scholars Faced the Leonard Cohen Enthusiasts," *National Post*, May 17, 2000.
[221] "Pedant," in *Oxford English Dictionary* (2018).
[222] Lynn Moore, "First, They Take Mcgill Campus: Cohen Fans Gather from around the World," *Montreal Gazette*, May 14, 2000, A1.

differentiates the type of knowledge Cohen fans possess (superficial) from the type of knowledge Cohen scholars hold (authoritative). For the media, the type of knowledge that Cohen fans retain consists mainly of facts or trivia. For example, in referencing an open mic night, Nolen observes how "[f]or every nervous performer, there were 100 friendly people ready to supply a forgotten line."[223] While scholar Stephen Scobie refers to "the audience's level of knowledge and sophistication," his example of their expertise is fairly superficial, reduced to trivia such publication dates.[224] Overlooking the sophistication of the knowledge Cohen fans possess is significant as their knowledge determines the type of power and authority they can exert. In Carl Wilson's application of Bourdieu's notion of taste to the study of Céline Dion, he emphasizes that like economic value, "cultural and social capital's value depends on scarcity, on knowing what others don't."[225] In this context, the type of knowledge Cohen fans have ("oodles") is not as rare as the type of knowledge the Cohen scholars accumulate; thus the fan's knowledge of Cohen comes to be interpreted as a less valuable type of knowledge, one reserved for everyday folks and not experts. Through juxtaposing Cohen fans and their "oodles" of knowledge with Cohen scholars whose knowledge generates cultural and social capital, news coverage of this event reinforces the hierarchical relations between fans and scholars.

The news media also perpetuate a differentiation between Cohen fans and scholars through the emotion / reason binary. In the article "Kitchener Man Organizes 'Love-in' for Leonard Cohen, but Artist Won't Be There," Conway Daly clearly demarcates two sides of the event, the "love-in" (the fan side) and the "serious side" (the academic side).[226] Daly describes the Cohen fans attending the event as "mostly folks intrigued by the pop personality … the guy who has set millions of hearts quivering," whereas "on the serious side," English professors, who value Cohen for his literary achievements, will be giving academic presentations on interpretations of Cohen's literary work.[227] This distinction between emotional fans and serious scholars is reminiscent of Nolen's article. Nolen dismisses the non-serious side of the event by magnifying the emotionality of this "wildly devout group" and using numerous emotional

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[223] Nolen, R1.
[224] Scobie qtd. in Barss, A17.
[225] Wilson, 91.
[226] Conway Daly, "Kitchener Man Organizes 'Love-in' for Leonard Cohen, but Artist Won't Be There," *The Record*, May 11, 2000, B07.
[227] Ibid.

descriptors to describe fans.[228] For example, she identifies a "gentle geologist," "shy delegates," a "flustered American," and a "distressed" Finnish woman.[229] The word "passionate" appears in at least three articles to describe Cohen fans, polarizing fans from "serious" Cohen scholars.

When discussing the Cohen scholars who attended the event, Nolen's descriptors shift away from the emotional language she uses to describe Cohen fans to words that conjure contemplation. For example, Nolen refers to a dinner at Moishes as a "closing banquet at summer camp," discussing it alongside an academic panel on Cohen's literary work where "things got serious."[230] Comparing the event to summer camp reinforces the image of fans as emotionally immature and childish, whilst accentuating the intellectual superiority and rationality of Cohen scholars and their capacity to appreciate the full implications of Cohen's work. In *Understanding Fandom*, Duffett discusses a psychological view of fandom that positions it as a childish phase of development that "revolves around a 'safe,' distanced rehearsal for real life (i.e. the parasocial relationship)."[231] Placing this view alongside the slippery slope model creates the impression that "dedicated fans therefore seem—paradoxically—immature, vulnerable, and potentially dangerous."[232] Such a view reinforces the need for more rigorous attention to Cohen's work, one that does not emotionally debase his literary worth.

Undercurrents of this tension between adoration and intellectual attention continue to inform the portrayal of the event. In "When the Fans Get Pedantic," Barss takes the argument to extremes, stating that any adoration of Cohen, even from respected figures including Adrienne Clarkson, Governor General of Canada at the time, "has in some ways hurt Cohen's status in the serious literary world."[233] Barss perceives Cohen's work as a poet and musician as "incompatible legacies,"[234] and thus scholarly and fan-orientated interpretations of his work as irreconcilable. Barss reinforces the point that the divide between serious connoisseurs of Cohen's work (scholars) and consumers of his work (fans) is representative of the split between Cohen's iterations as poet (high culture) and rock star (pop culture). He explains how "*Beautiful Losers*, Cohen's 1966 postmodern novel, changed the face of Canadian Literature" and that "his poetry was widely recognized by academics long before he became a rock-star Zen Buddhist sex

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[228] Nolen, R1.
[229] Ibid.
[230] Ibid.
[231] Duffett, 95.
[232] Ibid.
[233] Barss, A17.
[234] Ibid.

symbol. But as he became famous in the pop world he was forgotten by the professors."[235]
Barss's statement that academics acknowledged Cohen's value decades before his popular
success as a musician reflects a form of distinction common among indie-rock fans. Wilson
explains how the "indie-rock cliché of 'I *used* to like that band' i.e. until people like *you* liked
them—is a sterling example of distinction in action."[236] This statement further demonstrates that
part of the cultural anxiety surrounding Cohen fans rests in their embodiment of Cohen's
celebrification and popular success. In this perspective, Cohen fandom originates largely from
his career as musician, while scholarly attention primarily concerns his literary work. In this way,
Cohen fans represent the cultural tension located in Cohen's shift from literary icon to popular
musician.

Barss begins his article in the *National Post* with the statement: "Not many literati have
greatest hits albums. Margaret Atwood has never had a top-40 song, and it's safe to assume that
Bryan Adams won't ever win the Booker Prize for literature."[237] With this statement, Barss
perpetuates the idea that the source of fame comes from popular culture, while cultural prestige
accrues from high cultural accolades, like the Governor General's Award or Booker Prize.
Written at a time before the complicated mixing of high and popular culture, prestige and fame,
and aesthetics and economics became acceptable within certain fields, this article sustains the
idea that someone like Margaret Atwood could never achieve international celebrity based on her
authorship. Today, the basis for contemporary celebrity has shifted. In 2017, Atwood won an
Emmy for the television adaptation of her book *A Handmaid's Tale*, appearing at the award
ceremony, and in 2016, Bob Dylan won the Nobel Prize in Literature. While Barss's assertion
that celebrity can only be associated with popular culture is a product of its time, it nevertheless
reinforces the binary between fans as emotional consumers "intrigued by the pop personality"[238]
and scholars as authorized experts who actively produce meaning through critical interpretation.

The split between Cohen fans and scholars also appears in the publication structure of
Stephen Scobie's edited collection of essays on Cohen. While Barss asserts that it "reflects
Cohen's strange position as an artist," I argue that it deepens a perceived split within the Cohen
audience. Scobie published his collection in two forms: "as an issue of the academic journal

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[235] Ibid.
[236] Wilson, 94.
[237] Barss, A17.
[238] Daly, B07.

*Essays on Canadian Writing*, and as a mass-market book aimed at Cohen's music fans."[239] While Scobie attempts to address two different publics, an academic public and a fandom public, importantly, the book, *Intricate Preparations: Writing Leonard Cohen*, and the journal issue of *Essays on Canadian Writing*, contain the same content. Barss describes the timing of the book's publication to coincide with Montreal 2000, but is quick to note that despite the university setting and an academic panel, "the 'Leonard Cohen Event' was not an academic conference."[240] This statement appears to be based on the assumption that while there was an academic panel, there were no academics in the audience; therefore, it cannot be an academic conference.

In contrast to Scobie, Ira Nadel sets out his aim in writing Cohen's biography as one of accessibility, describing it as "a book to be bought at an airport."[241] He wants people to read it "not because it is an assignment, not because it appeared on a syllabus for a course, but because Leonard's life is an interesting life."[242] Like Scobie, Nadel sees himself as addressing a non-academic audience; although, perhaps Nadel is responding to a scholarly pressure, which perceives his fandom as an object that must exist outside the academy. Both Scobie and Nadel contribute to the discursive separation of Cohen fans and scholars, defining them as vastly different audiences. While Barss interprets the publication of "Scobie's hybrid essay collection" as an indication of the reconciliation of "Cohen's seemingly incompatible legacies"[243] and audiences, the implication remains that a scholar cannot be a fan, or vice versa; you can be one or the other. This represents Cohen fans and Cohen scholars as belonging to two different publics.

Although there is a perceived split between the attendees of the event, some Cohen fans have more prestige and capital than others. While Nolen's article features interviews with fans, McNeil's article centres primarily on interviews with Cohen scholars, event organizers, and esteemed attendees—those who have the most prestige. The quotes from fans that he does use are from the online Cohen newsgroup and are mostly out of context. The chosen quotes portray the fans as social misfits, relying on erroneous or extreme analogies such as Cohen as God noted earlier.[244] In contrast, McNeil draws heavily on his interviews with Nancy White, a musical satirist whose songs have been featured on CBC radio (including "Leonard Cohen's Never

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[239] Barss, A17.
[240] Ibid.
[241] Nadel qtd. in Barss, A17.
[242] Ibid.
[243] Barss, A17.
[244] McNeil, W03.

Gonna Bring My Groceries In"); event organizer Bill Van Dyk; scholar and biographer Ira Nadel; Canadian Literature professor Allan Hepburn; and Finnish fansite designer Jarkko Arjatsalo. By focusing on these individuals and ignoring the "average" Cohen fan, McNeil positions them as the authoritative voices on Cohen. Although McNeil refers to Arjatsalo as just "another fan looking forward to the event,"[245] Nolen suggests that he is "a mythic figure for the delegates" and "the next best thing, in [Cohen's] absence."[246] This implies that Arjatsalo has a higher status, or more capital, among Cohen fans. Arjatsalo's personal contact with Cohen, who regularly submits writing for circulation on his website, adds to his cultural capital and prestige. This distinguishes Arjatsalo from other Cohen fans, and reinforces the point that "the mass cultural field is just another zone of competition for distinction, no more or less venal than others."[247] That is, cultural distinction operates in similar ways within different fields.

"Don't call them Cohenheads. They prefer to be known as Cohenists," warns the first line of McNeil's article.[248] Identifying oneself as a "Cohenist" can be understood as a method of distinction, as Cohen fans attempt to differentiate themselves from other types of pop culture fandom, working against attributions of superficiality. Similar to how journalists "other" Cohen fans in a process of distinction, Cohen fans work to distinguish themselves from other types of less serious, pop culture fandom. This opening sentence also alludes to "Deadheads," the nickname given to fans of the Grateful Dead (known for following the band around on tour and heavy drug use), an insinuation that Cohen fans want to quash. Alternatively, self-identification as a Cohenist suggests an association with high cultural interpretation rather than solely emotional devotion—a Cohenhead. Following Fiske's reasoning, through the designation of Cohenist, Cohen fans seek to draw the boundaries defining their own fandom, separating themselves from other types of fandom to establish their uniqueness as fans—more cultural aficionado than emotional devotee. In a similar vein Jenkins argues that these categories not only provide a means of "policing the ranks" but offer an account of why "one's own pleasures [are] less 'perverse' than those of others."[249] He elaborates this point: "There is always someone more

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[245] Ibid.
[246] Nolen, R1.
[247] Wilson, 97.
[248] McNeil, W03.
[249] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers*, 19.

extreme whose otherness can justify the relative normality of one's own cultural choices and practices."[250]

In Alan Hustak's article "United in their Love of Cohen," co-organizer Van Dyk offers another alternative perspective of Cohen fans. In order to define Cohen fandom, Van Dyk relies on a process of distinction that contrasts Cohen fans with "fan club kids."[251] He asserts that Cohen fans "don't adulate or worship him the way kids in a typical fan club adulate a rock star. These are people who respond intelligently to Cohen's work, people who aren't afraid to analyze it, argue passionately about it and express their own views about him and his work. They're dedicated, though. Some of the people coming have been saving up for a year to get to Montreal."[252] Van Dyk's statement reveals how Cohen fans also use taste as a method of distinction. While journalists try to differentiate between Cohen fans and scholars by depicting fans as more emotionally driven, Cohen fans seek to separate themselves from less-serious pop culture fandom by presenting themselves as more culturally inclined.

Yet mainstream culture does not recognize fans' attempts at distinction. McNeil's opening line clearly mocks Cohen fans and their attempt to set themselves apart from other pop culture fans. The sentence serves as a warning (*don't you dare call them Cohenheads*), implying that fans might elicit an untoward response if provoked—passionate, angry, emotional. Despite attempts by Cohen fans to differentiate themselves, McNeil vacillates between characterizing the group as intellectual and emotional. He describes how the group meets to discuss Cohen "in a quiet corner of the Internet," where sometimes they dissect "imagery or Cohen's use of language" and other times they "get a little carried away."[253] The excessiveness of getting carried away is reminiscent of those "frustrated fantasies," "unsatisfied desires," and other anti-social behaviour that Jenkins identifies in the root of the term fan(atic).[254] McNeil uses the melodramatic example of a fan claiming that Cohen is God to erase any attempts by fans to distinguish themselves as serious and to perpetuate the association between fandom and religious fanaticism and madness.

Yet, there is another, more subtle layer of distinction at play. By devaluing fans as

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[250] Ibid.
[251] Van Dyk qtd. in Alan Hustak, "United in Their Love of Cohen," *Montreal Gazette*, May 8, 2000, B6.
[252] Ibid.
[253] McNeil, W03.
[254] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers*, 12.

emotional, passionate, and therefore less serious than the scholars at the event, journalists are able to advance their own cultural capital by positioning fans as "other." Paralleling their role as cultural critic to that of Cohen scholars, journalists are able to exert their own power and authority over the subject matter, becoming the critical authority on the Cohen event. Using the example of the low cultural capital of heavy metal music, Wilson draws on Deena Weinstein's essay "Rock Critics Need Bad Music" to explain how "critical authority depends on the power to exclude, not just to canonize. It hinges on turning your readership into an incrowd, smarter than some less-discerning audience."[255] By placing fans as other, not only are Cohen scholars and the journalists positioned as the authorities, but so are the readers. Wilson reasons that the "verdict often turns on which experts have more prestige, making their tastes more *believable*."[256] Since Cohen scholars have more prestige in the form of academic, cultural, and symbolic capital, their tastes and forms of engagement are more credible than those of Cohen fans. Correspondingly, Cohen fans do not have the same types and levels of capital, as their modes of engagement cannot be seen as equivalent. As Fiske points out, fans have their own form of cultural capital— popular cultural capital; however, this type of capital can only be recognized among fans.

In *Let's Talk about Love*, Wilson translates the work of Bourdieu into the language of the twenty-first century by redefining distinction as cool. For Wilson, coolness has the capacity to grant "status-symbolic power."[257] Coolness is comprised of cultural and social capital and has the capacity to generate economic capital.[258] At the same time, being "uncool has material consequences," including lack of respect.[259] In this vein, stereotyping fans as social misfits, loners, obsessive, emotional, and so forth, reduces Cohen fans to uncool status. Yet, a main attraction to Cohen is his own sense of coolness. Cohen's perception as the epitome of cool may stem from his overlapping interest in both high and popular culture. Wilson reflects on the omnivore model of taste, "in which the coolest thing for a well-off and well-educated person to do is to consume some high culture *along* with heaps of popular culture."[260] From his interests in poetry to pinball, Cohen embodies this ideal form of coolness; therefore, cultivating an interest in Cohen also relates to the pursuit of coolness.

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[255] Wilson, 16-17.
[256] Ibid., 75.
[257] Ibid., 93.
[258] Ibid.
[259] Ibid.
[260] Ibid., 98.

Wilson demonstrates how as a fan, your love for Cohen "is part of your cultural capital, but it only gains value in the competition for distinction if it is *legitimated* in the contexts that matter to you."[261] In other words, "you want your taste affirmed by your peers and those you admire," i.e. other Cohen fans, especially those with more cultural capital. At the same time, it is just as important that those with bad taste believe your love of Cohen is a frivolous activity, as it "proves you've distinguished yourself from [them] successfully, and can bask in righteous satisfaction."[262] Cohen fans can disassociate themselves from critical media representations, dismissing the journalists as uncool because they "just don't get it," which can be affirming for them as fans. In fact, the Aislin cartoon appears on the front page of the website for Montreal 2000,[263] demonstrating how this form of recognition, albeit negative yet affirming, translates to popular cultural capital within the field of Cohen fandom.

Analogous to how Cohen fans can distance themselves from disparaging portrayals by asserting that the critic "doesn't get it," critics or anti-fans employ similar reasoning to distinguish themselves. Writing for the *Montreal Gazette*, Peggy Curran begins her article "Go Free? I Wasn't Caught" with the confession: "I don't get the Leonard Cohen thing. Never did. Never will."[264] Written in response to Montreal 2000, Curran's article addresses other non-fans of Cohen. She confides that initially she thought she was "a bit of a freak," questioning whether she was "the only Montreal woman between the ages of 40 and 75 who never dreamed of going down to a place by the river with the beat poet of Belmont Ave."[265] After finding a group of likeminded women, she confidently asserts her cultural capital by positioning Cohen fans as having bad taste. Part of the article relies on rendering Cohen invisible by confusing him with other celebrities such as "the guy in *The Graduate*," or Spock. She jests that next year "we hope to host the first international convention of the Women Who Love Leonard Cohen Too Little."[266] While the intent of this article is to be humourous, looking beyond its flippancy to see how Curran employs taste is instructive.

Rather than hurt Cohen fandom, we could argue that this article serves to enhance its value to Cohen fans. Wilson suggests that the concept of distinction might "demystify Kant's

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[261] Ibid., 95.
[262] Ibid.
[263] "Leonard Cohen Event: Montreal 2000," updated May 8, 2000, accessed October 24, 2018, https://www.chromehorse.net/cohen/.
[264] Peggy Curran, "Go Free? I Wasn't Caught," *Montreal Gazette*, May 16, 2000, A3.
[265] Ibid.
[266] Ibid.

claim that taste always desires others' agreement."[267] Conversely, the premise of coolness is the idea that someone else must be less cool for you to be cool.[268] You do not want everyone to like what you like, or it would not be cool. Wilson argues "that the last thing you want is that agreement to be universal."[269] While Curran's claim that she does not "get the Leonard Cohen thing,"[270] and her pretense of not caring, may operate as an appeal to her own coolness, it also demonstrates to Cohen fans that they have successfully distinguished their tastes. Curran's opinion does not necessarily influence their belief that Cohen is cool. However, if this same statement were to come from someone else with a higher level of coolness, say Canadian music writer and radio broadcaster Alan Cross, it might have a different impact. Since Curran clearly does not "get it," she must have bad taste.

While I demonstrate how Cohen fans are subject to "othering" in a process of distinction, which regards their knowledge as useless, their attachment to Cohen as overly emotional, and their interaction with him as solely through the mode of consumption, the question remains: what truly separates Cohen fans from Cohen scholars? Perhaps part of the answer lies in Jensen's argument. Jensen sees fandom as an everyday social and cultural phenomenon and suggests that forms of fandom are prevalent across a spectrum of social groups and relate to high and popular culture alike. However, she identifies important differences regarding their social perception. Due to their perceived rationality and emotionally restrained nature, the assumption is that persons attached to elite and prestigious forms of high culture are normal and safe, and hence benign or benevolent in nature.[271] At the same time, those attached to popular and mass-mediated objects have the perception of being obsessive and overly emotional, and thereby, deviant and dangerous.[272] Building on the idea that the differences between "them" (the fans) and "us" (scholars) involve maintaining the cultural hierarchy, she asserts that the difference lies in the nature of the object of attention. This entails a process of evaluation or judgment, for instance, designating certain objects as safe (i.e. "elite, prestige-conferring objects"), and others as not (i.e. "popular, mass-mediated objects").[273] While Jensen compares fans and aficionados who have

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[267] Wilson, 95.
[268] Ibid., 94.
[269] Ibid., 95.
[270] Curran, A3.
[271] Jensen, 20.
[272] Ibid.
[273] Ibid.

different objects of attention, in my application of her work in the context of Montreal 2000 the objects of attention remain the same: Cohen.

Jensen identifies a second vital difference between the fan and the aficionado, which she locates in the distinction between love (emotional) and affinity (rational). By comparing fans and aficionados, Jensen demonstrates that the divide between respectable and unacceptable forms of devotion hinges on the duality of rationality and emotion and points to the erroneous distinctions that persist between pop culture fans and high cultural aficionados (authorized experts).[274] She identifies two dominant conceptions of the fan in the literature on fandom: "an obsessed loner" and the "frenzied crowd member."[275] The obsessed loner, defined as an "isolated, alienated 'mass man'" or woman,[276] has "an intense fantasy relationship with a celebrity,"[277] whereas the conception of the frenzied crowd member emphasizes irrational loyalties to sports teams or rock stars, vulnerability to manipulation, and displays of uncontrollable passions and energies.[278] Again the idea surfaces that this is symptomatic of social dysfunction, a reflection of fears about modernity.

Not only are fans "in love with celebrity figures," they are "believed to be obsessed with their objects."[279] In this way, fandom becomes tied to excess and strong displays of emotions, for example, imagery of "hysterics at rock concerts."[280] In contrast, affinity centres on "rational evaluation, and is displayed in more measured ways—applause and a few polite Bravos."[281] This dictates that there is a good way to be an audience member (quiet, reserved, rational) and a bad way (loud, passionate, emotional). For Jensen, the division of fans and experts not only coincides with the emotion / reason binary, but also involves class distinctions. She argues that the separation between appropriate and inappropriate cultural attention resides in the implicit separation between reason and emotion, which in turn functions on the basis of the "presumed difference between the educated and uneducated, as well as between the upper and lower

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[274] Ibid., 21.
[275] Ibid., 9.
[276] Ibid., 15.
[277] Ibid., 11.
[278] Ibid., 15.
[279] Ibid.
[280] Ibid.
[281] Ibid.

classes."[282] Moreover, Jensen explains how fear of the fan derives from the fan's inability "to distinguish the real from the imaginary, and lets emotion overwhelm reason."[283]

The belief that fans are unable to tell the difference between the real celebrity and the image of the celebrity has potentially dangerous consequences, as it suggests that the passion fans feel for a celebrity drive them to engage in deviant behaviour. In short, fear of the fan arises from the fear of a breakdown between reality and fantasy.[284] Comparing a Barry Manilow fan with a Joyce scholar, Jensen poses the questions: Is a "scholar, collector, aficionado 'in love' with the object of his or her desire? Is it the existence of passion that defines the distinction between fan and aficionado, between dangerous and benign, between deviance and normalcy?"[285] We can also ask: Is the Cohen scholar in love with Cohen? Is it passion that forms the distinction between Cohen fan and Cohen scholar? As mentioned earlier, the word passionate populates the articles to describe Cohen fans. However, as Duffett astutely points out, although fans may feel that they are in love with Cohen, they are actually "in love with their own pleasures."[286] It is this misperception—that the passion fans feel for Cohen blurs the line between fantasy and reality while rational obsession does not—that causes such anxiety.[287] Jensen concludes her argument by asserting that if "fandom is defined as an interest in, and an attachment, to a particular figure or form,"[288] then her own "aficionado-hood is really disguised, and thereby legitimated, fandom."[289] Through a mask of seriousness, alongside prestige and cultural capital, fandom becomes aficionado-hood.

What is generating this cultural anxiety about fans of Cohen in particular? What is it about Cohen fans that drive the need to police the boundaries of taste? In the past, some types of media fandom were targets of ridicule based on the object of "obsession," a television show such as *Star Trek*, for example, which scholars believed did not warrant cultural attention and analysis. However, in the case of Cohen, it may not be that Cohen is an unworthy object of study, but rather it is the *type* of devotion and *who* gives him that kind of attention that contributes to the perception that it violates dominant cultural hierarchies and norms. As Jenkins argues, "Taste

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[282] Ibid., 21.
[283] Ibid., 18.
[284] Ibid.
[285] Ibid., 20.
[286] Duffett, 98.
[287] Jensen, 21.
[288] Ibid., 22.
[289] Ibid., 23.

distinctions determine not only desirable and undesirable forms of culture *but also desirable and undesirable ways of relating to cultural objects*, desirable and undesirable strategies of interpretation and styles of consumption" (emphasis added).[290] It is not that Cohen and his work are undeserving objects of inquiry, but that the more desirable kind of attention is academic scholarship and high cultural analysis rather than popular attention. According to this perception, being an object of popular devotion contributes to the depreciation of Cohen's cultural capital as a poet.

Jenkins establishes how the stereotypical, discursive conception of the fan involves a "projection of anxieties about the violation of dominant cultural hierarchies."[291] Through my analysis I reveal that there may be some anxiety about treating Cohen, a figure of significant literary importance, as a pop icon. What slightly troubles this analysis however is Cohen's own crossing of these boundaries between pop and high culture at this point in his career. When Cohen became a musician, some critics experienced a "purist reaction"[292] to his career change, depicting Cohen's musical career as a debased form of cultural production that appeals to the masses (i.e. too commercial). In this respect, the transgressions of Cohen fans mirror Cohen's own transgressions, as both trespass the boundary between pop and high culture, a violation that threatens to disturb the prevailing cultural hierarchy. Fans come to emulate Cohen's cultural transgressions and mixing of tastes, which makes them vulnerable and a target for this backlash. Jensen clarifies the ramifications of stigmatization and scapegoating "as a way of reliving anxiety by a display of hostility or aggression. It is a form of displacement, a blaming, a scapegoating that allows explanation in ambivalent or contradictory circumstances."[293] By displacing the cultural anxiety, originating in Cohen's own mixing of pop and high culture, onto fans—i.e. blaming their obsession with Cohen as the source of his pop culture presence and celebrification—Cohen is no longer a figure of cultural anxiety, his ambivalent persona resolved.

**3.6 The Work of Fandom**
While most critics would argue that Cohen deserves serious attention, even his pop music, it is both the type and the origins of the attention to Cohen that creates discomfort and leads to fan

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[290] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers*, 16.
[291] Ibid., 17.
[292] Susan Lumsden, "Leonard Cohen Wants the Unconditional Leadership of the World," in *Leonard Cohen: The Artist and His Critics*, ed. Michael Gnarowski (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1976), 71.
[293] Jensen, 24.

stereotyping in the media coverage of Montreal 2000. Speaking of Cohen as if he were someone they know intimately, fans obscure "the boundaries between fact and fiction"[294] as well as public and private. Jensen argues that the separation of the fan and expert rests on both "the status of their desired object" and "the supposed nature of their attachment."[295] She exposes how these ideas relate to Enlightenment ideas of rationality.[296] Following this line of thought, the emotionality of fans indicates "a dangerous blurring of the line between fantasy and reality," while the rational obsession of aficionados does not.[297] This generates another source of anxiety and discomfort. As a result of the perception of fans as emotional, and therefore not rational, fans' para-social relationships to the celebrity create the societal fear that their obsession will lead to dangerous and violent anti-social behaviour.

Jensen argues that by stigmatizing and stereotyping fans as social misfits, obsessive individuals, and potentially deviant, we limit our understanding of "how value and meaning are enacted and shared in contemporary life."[298] Claiming that we do not know enough about "affection, attachment, sentiment and interest, *as they are manifested in people's lives*," she asks: "How and why do we invest meaning and value in things, lives, ideals? Does our selection of particular figures and forms connect with other aspects of ourselves?"[299] Jensen turns to fandom to answer these questions, asserting that fandom "is an aspect of how we make sense of the world, in relation to mass media, and in relation to our historical, social, cultural location."[300] In essence, understanding fandom means understanding ourselves as individuals in capitalist consumer culture.

In this chapter, I develop an analysis of Cohen fandom, defining it as a public addressed by celebrity discourse. Within this public, fans participate in discourses of celebrity and fandom and circulate Cohen through these discourses, in turn shaping the Cohen phenomenon. I demonstrate how Cohen fans embody the cultural tensions found in Cohen's various iterations as poet and musician and in his ability to cross cultural boundaries. I identify the ways in which Cohen fans are subject to negative stereotyping and how this may dissociate Cohen from this inherent cultural tension, resolving some of his ambivalence. While I realize materials, such as

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[294] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers*, 18.
[295] Jensen, 21.
[296] Ibid.
[297] Ibid.
[298] Ibid., 26.
[299] Ibid., 25-26.
[300] Ibid., 27.

newspaper articles, cannot effectively capture the individual meanings of fandom, what they do illuminate is the constitution of Cohen fandom as a public addressed by particular discourses of celebrity and fandom.

Similar to how media representations of Montreal 2000 circulate particular images of Cohen and Cohen fandom, the interpretive and productive activities of Cohen fans circulate the Cohen phenomenon. These activities include rituals of mourning, which I discuss in the next chapter. Cavicchi argues that "it might prove more useful to think about the *work*, rather than *worth*, of fandom, what it *does*, not what it *is,* for various people in particular historical and social moments."[301] By conceptualizing fandom as a public, I attempt to refocus my analysis towards the work of fandom. Importantly, as a public, fandom's work involves negotiating, (re)shaping, and constituting—that is, circulating—discourses of celebrity. Thinking about the work of fandom means concentrating on everyday fan practices as acts of participation in a public. Exploring fan activities means keeping in mind not only their individual meaning but also their overall role in circulating the celebrity phenomenon.

Reiterating that fan activity is more than just passive consumption, Jenkins highlights how "the media industry is increasingly dependent on active and committed consumers to spread the word about valued properties in an overcrowded media marketplace."[302] Early on Cohen himself recognized the power and value of "The Leonard Cohen Files" website, not only as an information repository but as a way to connect with his fans and to circulate unpublished material. When Cohen left Mt. Baldy on June 18, 1999, he contacted Arjatsalo who announced it on the front page of the website.[303] Arjatsalo writes:

> The news spread within hours among Cohen's fans and followers all over the world, boosted by additional notices on the web-based Leonard Cohen newsgroup, other unofficial websites, and various electronic mailing lists.…Not more than the same five years ago when Cohen moved to Mt. Baldy, it would have been impossible to disseminate news of his dwelling change to such a large international group of people so quickly and efficiently.[304]

This also speaks to the power of Cohen fandom to circulate the latest news on Cohen.

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[301] Cavicchi, *Tramps Like Us*, 9.
[302] Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 138.
[303] Montreal 2000: The Leonard Cohen Event official event program, May 12-14, 2000, 12.
[304] Ibid.

As Jenkins emphasizes in his research, fans are not mindless, emotional consumers, but active producers of culture. More than "simply an audience for popular texts," they are "active participants in the construction and circulation of textual meanings."[305] Montreal 2000 in particular is a testament to this. The organizers of Montreal 2000 brought together fans from around the globe and organized the event entirely online through channels specifically created and devoted to Cohen. The event circulated the Cohen phenomenon through the productive and consumptive practices of Cohen fandom. The event program, which includes a collection of fan poems written in tribute to Cohen, underscores the productive activities of Cohen fans.

Battling the stereotype of the obsessed loner, songwriter Nancy White exclaims, "I am not obsessed with Leonard Cohen," despite writing two songs about him.[306] As part of the event, White performed her show, entitled *Leonard Lite*, which consisted of her original songs about Cohen, Cohen's songs, and songs "that she thinks may appeal to Cohen's listeners."[307] There was a second tribute concert to Cohen at the event by the band Damn Personals, and according to the program, their set included covers of Cohen as well as original songs inspired by Cohen.[308] The event also staged a theatrical interpretation of Cohen's novel *Beautiful Losers* by The Laboratory of Enthusiastic Collaboration (LEC). Established in 1996, LEC "probes the unique phenomenology of the performance event" and "explores the practice of audiences and performers as they converge on an undefined point."[309] This description of the LEC demonstrates how it obscures the distinction between audience and performer, producer and consumer. According to the website for the event, there was also a film screening of *Leonard, Light My Cigarette*, workshops and panel discussions of his work, an open mic night, a poetry jam, and a walking tour of Leonard's Montreal, among other activities. This speaks to the interpretive and participatory involvement of fans at the event, rather than passive, cultural dupes who came to Montreal in hopes of catching a glimpse of Cohen, although one could always hope that our man would stop by.

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[305] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers*, 24.
[306] Montreal 2000: The Leonard Cohen Event official event program, May 12-14, 2000, 4.
[307] Ibid.
[308] Ibid., 5.
[309] Ibid., 6.

Chapter Four: Our Eyes are Soft with Sorrow

> Krantz, let's get out of here. The buildings are starting to claim me. – Cohen[1]

> Some say that no one ever leaves Montreal, for that city, like Canada itself, is designed to preserve the past … in Montreal there is no present tense, there is only the past claiming victories. – Cohen[2]

> When we study fandom or bring our fannish commitments into our academic work, perhaps we are just trying to smooth out the rough edges of an experience that never quite delivers on what it promises—that precisely cannot deliver on that promise if only because fantasy and impossibility are the fuel upon which fandom thrives, burns and, ultimately, crashes. – Jack Halberstam[3]

## 4.1 Introduction: A Lullaby For Suffering[4]

This chapter traces the affective atmosphere surrounding Cohen's death in November 2016 and considers the ways in which I experience Cohen's death emotionally. I write this chapter from an embodied, emotional perspective that draws upon Valérie de Courville Nicol's embodied in/capacity theory. In the first part of the chapter, I analyze the media representation of the emotional reaction to Cohen's death, undertaking an emotional discourse analysis to identify the dominant affective atmosphere, various emotional experiences, and ways of implementing security in mourning Cohen. In the second part of the chapter, I reflect upon my own embodied perspective as both a fan of Cohen and a PhD student undertaking my doctoral research on Cohen. I utilize embodied in/capacity theory to describe my experience of Cohen's death, uncovering how Cohen weaves his way into and affects different moments of my life, at times serving as a sign of security that I am pursuing the right path. Writing from this dual perspective allows me to engage with Henry Jenkins's concept of the acafan (academic and fan) and makes room for the reflexivity required in understanding how Cohen's death not only impacts my research on a practical level, but also in ways not typically accounted for in academic settings (i.e. emotionally).

In the previous chapter, I detect a potential reason why the dominant culture pathologizes Cohen fans, one based on the perception that Cohen fans engage in undesirable forms of appreciation for Cohen. This position rejects (emotional) fan interpretations in order to privilege

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[1] Cohen, *Favourite*, 115.
[2] Ibid., 125.
[3] Halberstam qtd. in Henry Jenkins, "Aca-Fandom and Beyond: Christine Bacareza Balance, Jack Halberstam, and Sarah Banet-Weiser," *Confessions of an Aca-Fan*, July 26, 2011, http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2011/07/aca-fandom_and_beyond_christin.html.
[4] Cohen, *The Flame: Poems and Selections from Notebooks*, 143.

(rational) academic analysis. By contrast, in this chapter, I show how acafandom seeks to bring fan and academic interpretations of the same text into conversation in a nuanced and illuminating way. I focus on my dynamic subject position as a Cohen acafan at a specific moment in time: Cohen's death. In reflecting upon my own emotional and embodied responses to Cohen's death, I consider how emotion circulates in relation to the Cohen phenomenon, especially around Cohen's death. This relates to my overall aim to accentuate the role of circulation in the constitution of celebrity phenomena.

Nevertheless, we must question whether the acafan concept functions as another form of distinction that validates the voices of certain fans (acafans) over others (normal fans). Throughout my research process, I recognize how, at times, I position my research as a way to expand my fannish pleasures and as an excuse to engage in more fan activities. Through this self-reflexive recognition, I call attention to how the acafan position can potentially operate as a form of distinction that legitimizes my interest in Cohen as a fan. This forces my own reflection of how I am caught up in pathologizing discourses of fandom by my own fear of being "othered." Since I feared that buying tickets to all five concerts of *Leonard Cohen: Five Albums, Five Concerts* at the Gesù would paint me as an obsessive fan, I unintentionally used my position as an academic studying Cohen to justify my behaviour to myself. In this respect, I need to be aware of how at times I seek to validate my fannish behaviour under the guise of academic work. Thus, for me, being an acafan permits me to engage in fan behaviour without risk of being othered. At the same time, my holding this belief reinforces pathological representations of "other" fans.

Analyzing the media representation of the emotional reaction to Cohen's death, I survey a series of Canadian newspaper articles, online magazine articles, and television news broadcasts that announce Cohen's passing and report on the emotional reaction to his death. These materials form part of the Cohen phenomenon, as the "wider discursive ensemble which articulates these materials,"[5] and directly address the grieving Cohen fan. In examining these materials, I contemplate how they might contain discourses on proper grieving behaviour and serve as a template, evincing a means of exercising power or implementing security, for the grieving Cohen fan. I then turn to my own lived, embodied experience. Employing an autoethnographic approach, I use my personal experience to write alongside popular reactions to Cohen's death.

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[5] Briggs, 443.

After tracing the significance of Cohen's presence at key moments in my life, my autoethnography follows the time frame between the announcement of Cohen's death and shortly after the one-year anniversary of his death. During this time I am addressed by regulating discourses that dictate proper grieving behaviour and public display of emotions, which intersect with regulating discourses that construct the notion of the ideal PhD candidate. These discourses profoundly impact me as an academic and a fan and contribute to my experience of the Cohen phenomenon in the wake of Cohen's death.

Cohen's death in particular causes my identities as a Cohen fan and a Cohen scholar to rub up against each other in complex ways, bringing this relationship to the forefront and forcing reflexivity in new and meaningful ways. This elucidates Erica Rand's assertion that the acafan position exposes "a layer of deeply felt contradiction in the practice."[6] After Cohen's death I feel a tension between my anxiety as a scholar and my grief as a fan. This conflict produces a complex emotional experience. For example, I feel like a failure as an academic for not putting my research into practice during a powerful and opportune moment because I feel conflicted as a fan who is mourning.

Positioning Cohen's death as an object of fear, I call attention to how I implement security in mourning his death as a fan and as an academic, contemplating how these experiences differ and influence one another. After Cohen's death, multiple tribute events occurring around Montreal address me as a fan and offer a means of exercising power in confronting Cohen's death. However, as an academic researching Cohen, I encounter these same events as objects of fear and signs of danger, as I anxiously question my ability to complete my dissertation. As such, I retain an interest in the Cohen phenomenon and how I emotionally experience Cohen's death in Montreal in the months following, while connecting this to the development of an emotional capacity to continue working on my dissertation.

## 4.2 Public Mourning

Good evening, we begin with the sad news of a death in the Canadian family. – Lisa LaFlamme[7]

In *Understanding Celebrity*, Graeme Turner makes the blunt observation that notwithstanding the omnipresence of celebrity in contemporary culture and its reliance on the relationship between celebrity and consumer, "there is a degree of reluctance to regard the celebrity-

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[6] Rand qtd. in Jenkins, "Acafandom and Beyond: Week Two, Part Two."
[7] *CTV National News with Lisa Laflamme*, "Leonard Cohen Has Died," aired November 10, 2016, on CTV.

consumer relationship … as a normal component of modern social relations."[8] This is a point I maintain throughout the last chapter in underscoring the pathologization of fans, a disparaging perspective upheld by the perceived separation between emotion and rationality. The death of a celebrity is a moment in which the para-social relationship between fan and celebrity becomes publically visible; the public mourning of Princess Diana is an exemplar of this. As Turner discerns, the public outcry after Diana's death "has been excessively scrutinized, analysed, and discussed."[9] His overview is worth quoting at length:

> Many were surprised by the public expression of emotion that was, in most people's memory unprecedented. Others were surprised by what they regarded as the public's gullibility; to them, the outpouring of emotion was bogus, the product of media orchestration. While, for some, Diana's particular form of celebrity was what attracted their interest and affection, for others it was precisely this celebrity which made it unthinkable that anyone should respond to her as if she was a "real person." Many intellectuals on the left, in particular, experienced this as an extremely discomforting and puzzling phenomenon, and they found it difficult to sympathise with the mourners or understand their grief as anything but some curious form of mass delusion.[10]

From a cognitive perspective, it may seem absurd and irrational that thousands of people are mourning the death of someone they never really knew. However, from an emotional perspective we can better understand the embodied experience of fan mourning as a source of agency in dealing with the death of a beloved celebrity and the associative threat of loss of (fan) identity.

De Courville Nicol argues that despite the impression that the emotions we experience when watching television, listening to music, or enjoying other forms of popular entertainment are "inauthentic or artificial," these emotional experiences are "just as real as others."[11] This common perception arises from a lack of "nuanced attention" towards emotional experience and "its modalities, its relational content, its triggers, and the agential forms to which it gives rise."[12] In this chapter, I draw upon de Courville Nicol's conceptual framework in *Social Economies of Fear and Desire* as a tool for analyzing the emotional experiences of Cohen fans after his death,

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[8] Turner, 102.
[9] Ibid., 108.
[10] Ibid.
[11] de Courville Nicol, 50.
[12] Ibid., 1.

as represented in media accounts, as well as my own, paying attention to how other discursive or social practices influence these emotional experiences.

I write this chapter from the premise that the "appeal of some public figures is so powerful that their life stories come to represent eras, generations, and even nations."[13] On November 10, 2016, CTV news reporter Lisa LaFlamme began her evening news broadcast by announcing Cohen's passing, framing it as a "death in the Canadian family."[14] Cohen's death is more than a simple news item; it represents a "symbolic moment that inspires reflection on societal norms, hopes and fears."[15] In "The Life and Death of Media Friends," Joshua Meyrowitz recognizes how "the media that gave birth to the relationship" between celebrity and fan also "provide the most ritualized channels for mourning a media friend's death. Radio and television present specials, retrospectives, and commentaries"[16] and social media provide a space for fans to share their own narratives of loss. Since "media offerings become agenda-setters for collective remembrance" and "play an active role in shaping our understanding of the past … and hence in setting the agenda for future acts of remembrance within society,"[17] examining the media response to Cohen's death is imperative.

In this section, I analyze the Cohen phenomenon through Canadian media coverage of Cohen's death in November 2016. I identify an array of emotions and emotional experiences and explore the circulation of an overarching affective atmosphere, questioning whether the media coverage offers the public any specific means of exercising power in mourning Cohen's death. For de Courville Nicol, affective atmospheres develop from a collective sense of fear and desire, danger and security, and emerge through social "interactions with human and nonhuman objects of fear and desire that are attuned to specific emotional orientations."[18] The environment of Cohen's death, the social interactions among Cohen mourners, and the media representation of both give rise to specific feelings and emotional orientations. The capacity of Cohen fans "to understand what others feel, as well as their capacity to understand the feelings that become

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[13] Carolyn Kitch, "'A News of Feeling as Well as Fact': Mourning and Memorial in American Newsmagazines," *Journalism* 1, no. 2 (2000): 183.

[14] *CTV National News with Lisa Laflamme,* November 10, 2016.

[15] Kitch, 173.

[16] Joshua Meyrowitz, "The Life and Death of Media Friends: New Genres of Intimacy and Mourning," in *American Heroes in a Media Age*, ed. Susan J. Drucker and Robert S. Cathcart (Cresskill, New Jersey: Hampton Press, 1994), 76.

[17] Astrid Erll and Ann Rigney, "Introduction: Cultural Memory and Its Dynamics," in *Mediation, Remediation, and the Dynamics of Cultural Memory*, ed. Astrid Erll and Ann Rigney (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009), 3.

[18] de Courville Nicol, 81.

attached to" Cohen, along with the places, objects, and materials associated with him, "provides them with important information that will affect their capacity to exercise embodied autonomy."[19]

If, as some have argued, the public has "been conditioned to 'learn' their reaction from the media,"[20] and "news coverage of a celebrity's funeral is a script for a national memorial service,"[21] then how might the media response immediately following Cohen's death shape the dominant emotional reaction to Cohen's death and offer ways of mourning this loss? Following embodied in/capacity theory, I pose the following questions in my analysis: What felt forms of in/capacities structure the representation of an overarching affective atmosphere circulating Cohen's death and produce the narrative of Cohen's death and legacy? What emotional experiences do these media representations of Cohen's death—and its impact on the public—frequently convey? What potential means of implementing security do these media accounts offer? Connecting this to the broader aims of my research, I raise the following question: What representations of Cohen become privileged after his death; that is, what images become officially remembered for purposes of cultural heritage, commodification, or private consumption in a process of mourning?

For many individuals, after Cohen's death, he became a pain-producing force, in addition to a pleasure-producing force, as his death functions as an object of fear and sign of danger that produces an emotional experience. For de Courville Nicol, fear is a painful emotional experience associated with the anticipation of pain and contains the urge to avoid this pain.[22] It is "anticipatory and a form of remembering."[23] In turn, signs of danger and objects of fear trigger this feeling of incapacity.[24] While the news of Cohen's death operates as a sign of danger, his death is an object of fear that questions: how can we go on without Cohen in the world? At the same time, Cohen is an object of desire; his poetry and music serve as signs of security that comfort us. The announcement of Cohen's death on his official Facebook page on November 10, 2016 is a sign of danger that triggers emotional experience. The affective atmosphere that

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[19] Ibid., 81-82.
[20] James Thomas, "From People Power to Mass Hysteria: Media and Popular Reactions to the Death of Princess Diana," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 11, no. 3 (2008): 363.
[21] Kitch, 187.
[22] de Courville Nicol, 16.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid., 18-19.

circulates this breaking news is unsurprisingly one of sorrow and sadness as a felt experience of loss that no one has the ability to prevent.

The Facebook statement, posted at 8:34 PM EST on November 10, 2016, reads: "It is with profound sorrow we report that legendary poet, songwriter and artist, Leonard Cohen has passed away. We have lost one of music's most revered and prolific visionaries. A memorial will take place in Los Angeles at a later date. The family requests privacy during their time of grief."[25] Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's official statement on the death of Cohen reinforces this feeling of sorrow, as he remarks: "It is with deep sorrow that I learned today of the death of the legendary Leonard Cohen."[26] The use of the word sorrow to describe this deep form of sadness has particular significance, as it is a word that Cohen repeatedly uses in his work. For example, in his 1967 song "Hey, That's No Way to Say Goodbye," Cohen sings: "Your eyes are soft with sorrow / Hey, That's No Way to Say Goodbye," while in the more recent 2012 song "Going Home," he describes how he is "Going Home / Without my sorrow."[27] In this respect, the use of the word sorrow to depict the emotional resonance of Cohen's death produces a sense of intimacy for fans, as it intensifies their recognition of themselves as members of the public to which this is addressed; it signals their membership within a community of mourners.

This statement on Cohen's Facebook page thus produces a very different affect than the original statement, posted two minutes earlier and subsequently revised to the one that appears today. The original, unedited statement reads: "Leonard Cohen was an unparalleled artist whose stunning body of original work has been embraced by generations of fans and artists alike. We are proud and feel extremely privileged to have celebrated his artistry over a career spanning six decades. The Sony Music Canada family joins the world in mourning Leonard Cohen's passing."[28] While the final statement creates a sense of intimacy among mourners, the original statement is much more commercial in appearance and clearly written by Sony Music. Rather than announcing Cohen's death, it positions Sony Music as one of many mourners, although not

[25] Leonard Cohen "It Is with Profound Sorrow," Facebook, November 10, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/leonardcohen/posts/it-is-with-profound-sorrow-we-report-that-legendary-poet-songwriter-and-artist-l/10154767870839644/.

[26] "Statement by the Prime Minister of Canada on the Death of Leonard Cohen," Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, updated November 10, 2016, accessed August 10, 2018, https://pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2016/11/10/statement-prime-minister-canada-death-leonard-cohen.

[27] Leonard Cohen, "Hey, That's No Way to Say Goodbye," *Songs of Leonard Cohen* (Columbia Records, 1967).

[28] "Leonard Cohen Was an Unparalleled Artist " Facebook, November 10, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/leonardcohen/posts/it-is-with-profound-sorrow-we-report-that-legendary-poet-songwriter-and-artist-l/10154767870839644/.

one most can relate to. Conversely, the final statement, by referencing the grief of Cohen's family, deepens this feeling of sorrow. The original statement is much more impersonal, whereas the final statement serves as an invitation to join an intimate community of mourners.

Alongside the official announcement, the media reports of Cohen's death and the national reaction to it develop and circulate an affective atmosphere of sorrow, sadness, loss, and grief. Some newspaper articles contain letters from readers, whereas others draw on the emotional reactions of celebrities to validate the public feeling of sadness. In the article "We've Lost an Honest and Lovely Soul," reader Kathy Graham shares how she "was so saddened by Leonard Cohen's death," that she wept upon hearing the news, and Nigel Russell frames this loss as a great tragedy.[29] A quote from Gordon Lightfoot, who was "deeply saddened" by Cohen's passing, circulates in several articles including "Another Magical Voice Stilled."[30] Other articles disseminate Twitter responses from both national and international celebrities. For example, the article "Stars Pay Tribute to Leonard Cohen" points out how Carole King tweeted "'R.I.P' Leonard Cohen and Canadian singer Alanis Morissette typed his name alongside a crying emoji."[31] Stemming from the fear that we cannot prevent the loss of Cohen, a phenomenon to which we are attached, the feeling of sadness saturates the news of Cohen's death shortly after his passing.

In addition to a "sad loss"[32] that "hit the saddest of notes,"[33] others describe Cohen's death as "a particularly pointed affront" and "a sucker punch";[34] a "heavy gut punch";[35] a "cruel joke";[36] "huge";[37] and "insupportable."[38] While sadness is "the fear associated with the

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[29] "We've Lost an Honest and Lovely Soul," *Toronto Star*, November 19, 2016, IN 7.

[30] Peter Goffin, Ebyan Abdigir, and Sophie van Bastelaer, "Another Magical Voice Stilled," *Toronto Star*, November 12, 2016.

[31] "Stars Pay Tribute to Leonard Cohen," *The Brampton Guardian*, November 11, 2016, 1.

[32] Grierson qtd. in Victoria Valido, "Meet the Toronto Man Behind the Camera of Leonard Cohen's 'I Am a Hotel' Music Film," *CBC News*, November 12, 2016, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/man-behind-camera-leonard-cohen-1.3848035.

[33] David Friend and Gwen Dambrofsky, "Canadian Musicians Pay Tribute to Leonard Cohen," *The Moncton Times*, November 12, 2016, C12.

[34] John Semley, "Remembering Leonard Cohen, the Poet Laureate of Loneliness," *The Globe and Mail*, November 10, 2016, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/music/remembering-leonard-cohen-the-poet-laureate-of-loneliness/article32811810/.

[35] Shane Koyczan qtd. in Dale Boyd, "Penticton Artist to Honour Cohen's Legacy," *Penticton Western News*, November 24, 2016.

[36] Elizabeth Renzetti, "The Solace of Art: Leonard Cohen in a Time of Darkness," *The Globe and Mail*, November 12, 2016, A2.

[37] Ian McGillis, "Our Man Is Gone," *Montreal Gazette*, November 11, 2016, A1.

[38] Sean Michaels, "'He's Still Here': Montreal Pays Tribute to Its Poet," *Toronto Star*, November 12, 2016, A4.

perception that one lacks the capacity to prevent the loss of a force to which the self is attached,"[39] grief is "the fear produced by the perception that one lacks the ability to confront the loss of a cherished force through the integration of this loss."[40]In other words, sadness involves the incapacity to prevent loss, and grief relates to the incapacity to confront, or deal with, loss. Further, grief encompasses the loss of a "cherished force,"[41] which implies a heightened form of attachment to the lost object.

Framing the national reaction to Cohen's death as one of "national melancholy," CTV National News anchor Sandie Rinaldo situates the incapacity of the nation to confront and deal with the loss of Cohen as the feeling of grief.[42] In the *Globe and Mail*, Sean Michaels recounts how during a "week where everything has seemed so black, Leonard's loss at first seemed insupportable."[43] Reflecting how "unbelievably grief-stricken"[44] people feel from the news of Cohen's death, poet Shane Koyczan details his physical experience of grief. He expresses: "If you've ever been in a relationship where you really love a person and it goes south and it ends and it ends badly. That emotional feeling manifests in a physical way and I had a very physical reaction to hearing the news about Leonard Cohen."[45] In "Remembering Leonard Cohen, the Poet Laureate of Loneliness," John Semley conveys how "the details did not matter in our grief. He's gone. Period."[46] Tied to the fear that we do not have the ability to confront the loss of Cohen, the feeling of grief is highly palpable in the media representation of the reaction to Cohen's death. At the same time, our grief over Cohen's death represents a unifying force across the nation; we mourn Cohen together.

In addition to operating as an object of fear that gives rise to emotional experience, Cohen's death functions as a sign of danger in a world that is rapidly changing beyond recognition. This leads me to discuss other factors that impact the emotional experience of Cohen's passing, such as the death of other well known musicians over the previous year and the

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[39] de Courville Nicol, 55.
[40] Ibid., 34.
[41] Ibid.
[42] *CTV National News with Sandie Rinaldo*, "Leonard Cohen," aired November 11, 2016, on CTV.
[43] Michaels, A4.
[44] Bowman qtd. in Amanda Grant, "Leonard Cohen a 'Singular, Special Man,' Toronto Musicologist Says," *CBC News*, November 11, 2016, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/programs/metromorning/toronto-musicologist-leonard-cohen-remember-1.3847228.
[45] Koyczan qtd. in Boyd.
[46] Semley.

election of Donald Trump two days before the announcement of Cohen's death. Semley eloquently reflects the interplay between these events:

> In a year that has inured us to death and dying, where we've watched cultural icons drop like flies and gawked in horror as the fool's hope of a better world withered on the vine, Leonard Cohen's passing, at 82, feels like a particularly pointed affront. It's not just that Cohen, who released his final album, *You Want It Darker*, just a few weeks ago, was cresting through a new period of renewed artistic productivity. It's that, after decades of music and poetry and his two novels and his rightful ascent to the top of the pantheon of artistry (Canadian or otherwise), Cohen still felt relevant and vital.[47]

Cohen released his final three albums in the span of four years, whereas previous to 2012, he had not released an album since 2004. All three albums peaked at the top of the *Canadian Billboard Charts*, and were his only albums to do so.[48] Thus, for Semley to claim that "Cohen still felt relevant and vital" is certainty not an understatement.[vi]

Semley alludes to how the inability to prevent the decline of society compounds the incapacity to confront the loss of Cohen. He explains how "just when the world seems in dire need of poets and dreamers, we lose the most reliable tour guide into journeys of the heart, to the end of love. The irony is only Leonard Cohen can make sense of losing Leonard Cohen."[49] In "The Lost Poets," Vinay Menon reinforces the feeling that Cohen's death comes at a time "when we need him most,"[50] and Elizabeth Renzetti positions Cohen's death as the universe playing "a cruel joke by removing a force of light just when the world seems so broken."[51] "A week that began in hope, then sagged in disbelief," she writes, "ended in tears with the news that Leonard Cohen was dead."[52] If Cohen's thought-provoking reflections on the world provide the capacity to confront loss, then his passing conjures fear surrounding our own in/capacity to confront and avoid various forms of loss in his absence.

As Taryn Simon's mixed-media installation *The New York Times, Friday, November 11, 2016* denotes, the election of Donald Trump as the President of the United States and the death of Cohen one day before the election are discursively and emotionally intertwined.

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[47] Ibid.
[48] "Leonard Cohen: Chart History," Billboard, accessed October 17, 2018, https://www.billboard.com/music/Leonard-Cohen/chart-history/canadian-albums.
[49] Semley.
[50] Vinay Menon, "The Lost Poets," *Toronto Star*, November 12, 2016, A1.
[51] Renzetti, A2.
[52] Ibid.

Commissioned for the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal's (MAC) 2017 exhibition *Leonard Cohen: Une brèche en toute chose / A Crack in Everything,* Simon's installation draws our attention to the front page of the *New York Times* on this date. Alongside his obituary, the front page presents both a photo of Cohen, in which he "lifts his hat in a gesture of greeting or farewell," and a photo of the first meeting of President-elect Trump and President Obama.[53] Writing on the election of Trump, Mark Bergin expresses the overwhelming emotional experience of the two simultaneous events, relating: "I can no longer contain the confusion and pain in my heart over what's happening in the USA. Cohen's death was the breaking point. Tears flow down my face. Life will go on, but at the moment, it all seems too much to take in."[54]

Scott Stevenson more explicitly positions Cohen's death as a sign of danger, praying that "his death, and Trump's victory, do not signal the end of our era in North America of seeking fairness and reason, of trying to build respect and trust. Cohen himself warned only weeks ago, 'You want it darker.' It seems America did."[55] Stevenson entitles his article, "There is a crack in everything (American politics?); That's where the light gets in (Leonard Cohen)"; however, he is not alone in referencing this famous line. In the *Maclean's* article "Saying Goodnight to the Grocer of Despair," Michael Barclay reports how during the "week Leonard Cohen died, it seemed everyone wanted to quote 1992's 'Anthem': 'There's a crack in everything / That's how the light gets in.'"[56] Positioning it as "an inspirational lyric that fits nicely beside a JPEG of flowers growing through concrete," he suggests that fans circulate the quote online in an attempt "to retain some semblance of hope after the death of their idol, announced two days after the U.S. election results."[57] This feeling of hope symbolizes a potential solution to powerlessness in confronting loss,[58] in this case, the loss of Cohen.

Another factor influencing the media response to Cohen's passing, setting a tone of remembrance and memorialization, is the announcement of his death the evening before Remembrance Day, a detail that worked itself into the discourse. LaFlamme begins her CTV

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[53] John Zeppetelli and Victor Shiffman, *Leonard Cohen: A Crack in Everything* (Montreal: Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, 2018), 54.
[54] Mark Bergin, "Trumped: A Plea for Calm," *The Frontenac Gazette*, November 17, 2016, B6.
[55] Scott Stevenson, "There Is a Crack in Everything (American Politics?); That's Where the Light Gets in (Leonard Cohen)," *Sherbrooke Record*, November 16, 2016, A6.
[56] Michael Barclay, "Saying Goodnight to the Grocer of Despair," *Maclean's*, November 16, 2016, https://www.macleans.ca/culture/arts/goodnight-to-the-grocer-of-despair/.
[57] Ibid.
[58] de Courville Nicol, 23.

National News broadcast on November 10, 2016 with the image of poppies projected onto the Peace Tower as she notifies the Canadian public of Cohen's death. She reports: "Leonard Cohen didn't serve, but for so long he was a survivor on the battlefield of the soul. Before he ever cut his first record, he was a provocative poet, a journalist of the human condition. From Cohen's Facebook page tonight, a simple and poignant announcement, 'We have lost one of music's most revered and prolific visionaries.'"[59] The following evening on Remembrance Day, Rinaldo ends her news segment on the public mourning of Cohen in Montreal with a recording of Cohen reciting "In Flanders Fields."[60] Both Shaughnessy Bishop-Stall and Barclay make near identical statements on the connection between Remembrance Day and Cohen's passing, noting how the news "our man was gone"[61] came "the day before Remembrance Day."[62] In 2016, Remembrance Day in Canada assumed an additional layer of meaning, as Canadians longingly remembered Cohen.

While the dominant representation of the affective atmosphere surrounding Cohen's death is one of sorrow, sadness, grief, and "national melancholy"[63] as Canada mourns one of its family members, a closer analysis reveals a range of emotional experiences from sorrow to appreciation to hope. These positive, pleasure-producing emotions correspond to feelings of capacity in the desire to mourn the death of Cohen and memorialize his legacy. In moving from grief to mourning, our incapacity to deal with loss through grief transforms into a capacity to mourn and thus confront the loss of our treasured Cohen. Our desire to mourn is "tied to the pursuit and identification of the means of power through which security can be implemented, as well as to the exercise of these means."[64] If mourning is the feeling that one has the capacity to confront the loss of a beloved force then the hope arises that Cohen can again become a pleasure-producing force, an object of desire. While "hope is the expression of the potential for a solution to a lack of power," which in turn motivates us,[65] desire is "the urge to act that grows out of the

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[59] *CTV National News with Lisa Laflamme,* November 10, 2016.
[60] *CTV National News with Sandie Rinaldo,* November 11, 2016.
[61] Michael Barclay, "Canadians Share How Leonard Cohen Touches Our Lives," *Maclean's*, November 17, 2016, https://www.macleans.ca/culture/arts/canadians-share-how-leonard-cohen-touched-our-lives/.
Shaughnessy Bishop-Stall, "How To Go On, After Leonard Cohen," *Maclean's*, November 16, 2016, https://www.macleans.ca/culture/arts/how-to-go-on-after-leonard-cohen/.
[62] Barclay, "Canadians Share."
[63] *CTV National News with Sandie Rinaldo,* November 11, 2016.
[64] de Courville Nicol, 22.
[65] Ibid., 23.

pleasurable anticipation of pleasure."[66] In other words, it is our pain, our grief that drives us to locate this emotional experience as the source of our powerlessness. In locating grief as the source of our incapacity, we can then identify the capacity through which we can transform our inability to confront our loss; our feeling of in/capacity is a call to action. While grief is the fear that we cannot confront the loss of a cherished force, mourning is the desire that emanates from our belief that we have the capacity to confront this loss.[67]

Transforming our powerlessness into capacity allows us to move away from the danger that Cohen's death represents. For instance, Michaels declares that at first the loss of Cohen appears "unsupportable"; however, "in the pale of morning, his death almost seemed like a lightening. Here is an ineluctable example of what one life can be. Here is some proof of a life's subtlety and significance."[68] Similarly, in "How To Go On, After Leonard Cohen," Bishop-Stall describes how initially the news of Cohen's death "was hollowing, brutal."[69] Yet, as she began to attribute some purpose to Cohen's death, the notion that "a cosmic battle is being viciously fought on a parallel plane," which requires Cohen more than we do, she could confront his death.[70] For Stephen Ramsay, member of the Montreal band Young Galaxy, Cohen's passing "cast a peaceful light on what's been a pretty difficult week in the world … In the face of all these politics and mudslinging and hateful rhetoric, it reminded me there's something beautiful out there."[71] Adam Cohen's statement that his dad "passed away peacefully"[72] solidifies this feeling, as does Don MacPherson's article in the *Montreal Gazette*, "Leonard Cohen, at Least, Found Peace this Week."[73] In identifying our grief over the loss of Cohen there is hope that we too can find peace.

Feelings of love and appreciation flow through the reaction to Cohen's death, providing hope. Adam Cohen's official statement shapes this feeling as he thanks Cohen fans "for your

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[66] Ibid., 21.
[67] Ibid., 34.
[68] Michaels, A4.
[69] Bishop-Stall.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ramsay qtd. in Christopher Curtis, "Icon Embraced City's Romance and Mystery," *Montreal Gazette*, November 12, 2016, A3.
[72] Adam Cohen qtd. in "Leonard Cohen Dies," *The Brampton Guardian*, November 11, 2016.
[73] Don MacPherson, "Leonard Cohen, at Least, Found Peace This Week," *Montreal Gazette*, November 12, 2016.

kind messages, for the outpouring of sympathy and for your love of my father."[74] In turn, he shares his own wish to thank his father "just one last time."[75] He continues:

> I'd thank him for the comfort he always provided, for the wisdom he dispensed, for the marathon conversations, for his dazzling wit and humor. I'd thank him for giving me, and teaching me to love Montreal and Greece. And I'd thank him for music; first for his music which seduced me as a boy, then for his encouragement of my own music, and finally for the privilege of being able to make music with him.[76]

Adam Cohen's statement sets the tone for an outpouring of appreciation from fans, friends, and family.

Brian Johnson situates his *Maclean's* article as "a grateful appreciation for a career and life that found joy in both pleasure and ugliness, in both the minor fall and the major lift."[77] Toronto's Poet Laureate, Anne Michaels, expresses to Cohen how "lucky we are to have your words and your voice still. How deeply you remain and how profoundly you are already missed."[78] While some individuals reflect at length on their admiration of Cohen, for others a simple "thank you" is sufficient to express their gratitude. Reminiscing about his life changing encounter with Cohen, Paul Saltzman declares: "Thank you, Leonard,"[79] while Jann Arden employs a more formal address, writing: "Safe travels, Mr. Cohen. And thank YOU."[80] Referring to the last time he saw Cohen in concert, MacPherson recollects: "[W]e knew we must not pass up another opportunity to express our gratitude to him with our applause, because it might be the last."[81] In this respect, voicing appreciation becomes a way of implementing security in mourning Cohen.

The media depiction of the reaction to Cohen's death hints at a handful of ways to implement security in mourning the loss of Cohen. These operate as signs of security for the reader, signaling that we have the ability to prevent the loss of Cohen through memorialization and confront the loss of Cohen through mourning. These means of achieving security

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[74] Adam Cohen qtd. in "Leonard Cohen Had Simple Funeral," *The Brampton Guardian*, November 14, 2016, 1.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Brian D Johnson, "'Leonard, We Appreciate the Gift.' in Appreciation of Leonard Cohen," *Maclean's*, November 11, 2016, https://www.macleans.ca/culture/arts/leonard-we-appreciate-the-gift-in-appreciation-of-leonard-cohen/.
[78] Anne Michaels, "Toronto's Poet Laureate Pays Tribute to a Literary Legend," *Toronto Star*, November 13, 2016, A3.
[79] Paul Saltzman, "Leonard Cohen," *The Globe and Mail*, November 29, 2016, S6.
[80] Jann Arden, "Leonard Cohen," *The Globe and Mail*, November 18, 2016, S7.
[81] MacPherson, A14.

encompass: storytelling; visiting physical landmarks (Cohen's home in Montreal, L.A., or Hydra; his gravesite; various locales in Montreal; etc.); purchasing his work; and finding solace in Cohen's own words, poetry, and music. These methods of realizing capacity and exercising agency might allow fans to move, for example, from a panicked sadness in the wake of Cohen's death to an excited happiness in discovering a way to keep him and his legacy alive through various forms of memorialization. Sadness / happiness is an emotional-norm pair that functions as a specific "orientation to the world."[82] The painful state of sadness forms a motivation "to find the means of moving away from pain … and move into a pleasurable form of capacity"— happiness—which subsequently prompts a drive to implement pleasure through identifying and realizing the means of power to do so.[83] In other words, experiencing the pain of Cohen's death through the feeling of sadness motivates our search to move away from sadness to happiness. Discovering that listening to Cohen's music elicits a feeling of happiness motivates us to enact it as a form of security in coping with the sadness of Cohen's death. If sadness is the "feeling that one lacks the capacity to prevent the loss of a force to which the self is attached," and happiness is "the desire associated with the perception that one has the capacity to prevent this loss,"[84] then listening to Cohen's music also becomes a way of preventing the loss of Cohen through reinforcing the importance of his musical legacy.

Storytelling is a prevalent means of implementing security in the wake of Cohen's passing, a strategy I also utilize in mourning Cohen. In "'The Heart Will Not Retreat': How We Loved Leonard Cohen," Johnson writes about his personal experiences with Cohen over the past twenty-five years as a journalist who interviewed him on several occasions. At the end of the article is a call to action, which states: "*If you have memories to share about how Leonard Cohen touched your life—his words, his music, or his personality—we would love to hear them here.*"[85] Johnson is not the only writer to make use of a personal narrative approach in dealing with Cohen's death, and at least a dozen other articles remember Cohen via personal narrative. This is not to mention the countless stories fans shared and continue to share on social media. While some recount meeting Cohen, others reveal the meaningful role Cohen and his work play in their lives.

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[82] de Courville Nicol, 60.
[83] Ibid., 67.
[84] Ibid., 55.
[85] Brian D Johnson, "'The Heart Will Not Retreat': How We Loved Leonard Cohen," *Maclean's*, November 16, 2016, https://www.macleans.ca/culture/arts/the-heart-will-not-retreat-how-we-loved-leonard-cohen/.

David Berry recalls how "Leonard Cohen came to [him] from [his] grandmother."[86] He reminisces: "Something about the plainness of those early albums fit her house. The music came out of a record player so big it counted as a piece of furniture, rumbling around the room while she cut up apples in the leather recliner her husband used to sit in. Leonard Cohen was grandmother music."[87] For Margo Harper, "Leonard Cohen haunted [her] teenage years,"[88] whereas for Renzetti "Cohen helped save [her] sanity at one point."[89] In "Grief, Commiseration, and Consumption Following the Death of a Celebrity," Scott K. Radford and Peter H. Bloch utilize the concept of "introjection" to describe this introspective practice among fans mourning the death of a celebrity. They designate introjection as a process that involves recounting stories and memories of the celebrity.[90] This process enables fans to "relive and reinterpret past interactions with the deceased and reinforce relevant memories."[91] Sharing stories about encounters or personal significance provides "a way of reinforcing the attachment and the fandom that had been held for so long, and reinforce[s] the performative nature of celebrity interactions."[92] The practice of storytelling has multiple functions. Not only is it a way of voicing appreciation, but it operates as a sign of security to readers who are also mourning, signaling that they are not alone and validating their feelings. Rooted in the desire to prevent the loss of Cohen, storytelling additionally becomes an act of memorialization.

As a form of remembering, storytelling is a way of keeping Cohen alive, of preventing our loss of him. In the introduction to *Mediation, Remediation, and the Dynamics of Cultural Memory*, Astrid Erll and Ann Rigney define remembering as "an active engagement with the past" in the present, rather than an act of "preserving and retrieving earlier stories."[93] Remembering is a performative act, not a reproductive one.[94] They explain the significance of remembering as a performative act: "If stories about the past are no longer performed in talking, reading, viewing, or commemorative rituals, they ultimately die out in cultural terms, becoming

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[86] David Berry, "We're All Birds on the Wire," *National Post*, November 12, 2016, A3.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Harper qtd. in Barclay, "Canadians Share."
[89] Renzetti, A2.
[90] Scott K. Radford and Peter H. Bloch, "Grief, Commiseration, and Consumption Following the Death of a Celebrity," *Journal of Consumer Culture* 12, no. 2 (2012): 147.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Erll and Rigney, 2.
[94] Ibid.

obsolete or 'inert.'"[95] If we stop talking about Cohen and sharing our stories of him, his memory may be "over-written" by emergent stories and celebrities that appear "more relevant to latter-day identity formations."[96] In the immediate aftermath of Cohen's death, this thought becomes too much to bear; for now, we talk about Cohen to keep him alive. Johnson explains how sharing memories of Cohen produces his presence. He writes: "As the memories and tributes came flooding in over the past week, Leonard felt more present than ever, along with his old songs, which provided solace and made prophetic sense of a world gone mad."[97] By asserting his ongoing relevance to contemporary life, we can keep Cohen alive in the present.

Storytelling also serves as a method of claiming Cohen. In Chapter Two, I discuss how the Cohen phenomenon circulates in economies of Canadian cultural heritage, which lay claim to him as cultural property to be protected by the nation. Within the reaction to his death, Cohen becomes reincorporated into mythologies of Montreal that establish his importance in the cultural history of the city. Similar to remembering as a performative cultural practice enacted in the present day, storytelling is a cultural act that brings together myths of celebrity and citizenship and transforms Cohen into an object to be claimed, not as an object of the past, but as a performative mythology enacted in the present. S. Michaels describes how walking through the streets of Montreal functions as a tribute to Cohen. He muses:

> Any time we moved alone at night through Montreal, it felt like a tribute to Leonard Cohen. The thought might not occur to us at first, but upon reflection, it was there. It was as if he had taught us the names for the colours the city wears, the particular browns, greys and gleaming bright white, the gone green of a small park's grass under midnight. It felt like a tribute to him to see lovers on the street, or a solitary drunk, or nuns or old men or sauntering tomcats. It felt like a tribute to be lonely or turned on.[98]

Here, walking functions as an act of tribute that circulates Cohen through the streets of Montreal, and S. Michaels's story reifies the act into cultural heritage. In turn, this reinforces the image of Cohen as flâneur, an image that *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen* helps to produce.

The documentary presents Cohen as a wanderer, an adventurer of the city streets. In the second scene, Cohen strolls through the crowds of downtown while the narrator identifies him as

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[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Johnson, "The Heart Will Not Retreat."
[98] Michaels, A4.

a singular talent that has emerged "out of the crowds of Montreal."[99] Over the course of the film, Cohen, wearing his now-famous blue raincoat, wanders through different Montreal neighbourhoods, observing and discovering the city around him. His presentation is one of a flâneur, a "constant wanderer,"[100] an "explorer of the crowd."[101] A year after Cohen's death, CBC released an audio walking tour of "Leonard Cohen's Montreal," guided by Martha Wainwright, through the Detour mobile walking tour application. In addition to transforming the act of walking through the streets of Montreal into a performance of remembrance and memorialization, circulating stories and myths in the process, the tour allows you to walk in Cohen's footsteps as a flâneur.

S. Michaels highlights how Montreal belongs to Cohen "in a way that cities are rarely anyone's."[102] Local Montreal discourse tells us that running into Cohen on the streets of Montreal was quite common. Many Montrealers carry their own Cohen story close to heart and tell "stories of encounters—exchanges of words, looks, mutual admiration under the awning of the gazebo at Parc du Portugal."[103] T'Cha Dunlevy relates how Neema, Cohen's recent protégé, "like so many Montrealers, met Leonard Cohen on the street."[104] Matthew Cope refers to his run in with Cohen on St. Laurent Boulevard as a "quintessential Montreal memory,"[105] and Barclay classifies "the face-to-face interactions [with Cohen] that Canadians carry around with them" as "emotional totems."[106] Josh Freed explains that while he did not personally know Cohen, "like many in our Plateau neighbourhood" he felt he did.[107] He recollects: "Years ago I'd see him walking the streets—dressed like an elegant beatnik—and I'd nod and he'd nod back sweetly. I never approached him, like many others, because we wanted him to feel comfortable in our 'hood."[108] In "Our Man is Gone," Ian McGillis recalls the "mythos" surrounding Cohen's house "on Parc du Portugal off Boulevard St-Laurent," where Cohen "was a regular sight in the

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[99] Brittain and Owen.
[100] Ibid., 29:35.
[101] Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), 21.
[102] Michaels, A4.
[103] Ibid.
[104] T'Cha Dunlevy, "Cohen Never Stopped Searching, Neema Says," *Montreal Gazette*, November 12, 2016, A6.
[105] Matthew Cope, "Hitching a Ride with a Legend," *Montreal Gazette*, November 17, 2016, A12.
[106] Barclay, "Canadians Share."
[107] Josh Freed, "In the Plateau, Cohen Was 'Just Another Guy'," *Montreal Gazette*, November 12, 2016, A2.
[108] Ibid.

neighbourhood."[109] Days after Cohen's death, Laura Beeston remarks how "the Main hums along as if nothing happened last week," suggesting that "somehow he still feels very present."[110] In the year following his death, not one but two large-scale murals of Cohen were instituted in Montreal, one on St. Laurent Boulevard (The Main) and the other on Crescent Street, further cementing Cohen as part of the cultural landscape of Montreal, an integral part of our heritage.

Cohen circulates as cultural legend through the streets of Montreal, attaching to particular locales. In "Life Among the Songs of Leonard Cohen," Emily Donaldson recalls the neighbourhood stories of Cohen, who in the 1970s "was a shadow presence."[111] She remembers: "In 1971, we moved to a triplex on a dead-end street. Neighbourhood lore had it that Cohen's ex-lover Suzanne had lived in the forlorn alleyway behind us, which faced the train tracks north of St-Henri. That the smell of tea and oranges had once commingled with the diesel of passing trains was a deeply appealing, if never corroborated notion."[112] Donaldson's narrative demonstrates how specific locations in Montreal get woven into myth due to their Cohen connection. Various cultural and commercial activities, such as the Cohen walking tour, reinforce this mythological association.

While the walking tour does not include Bagel Etc., S. Michaels notes that "everyone in Montreal knew that [Cohen] liked to eat breakfast at Bagel Etc."[113] Michaels admits to haunting the restaurant, where he would "linger over mish-mash, in the hope of seeing" Cohen.[114] Today, the restaurant regularly plays Cohen's music and features autographed photos of him on the wall. As news of Cohen's death spread on the night of November 10, 2016, many individuals flocked to locations associated with him, specifically his doorstep in the Plateau neighbourhood of Montreal. Rinaldo covered this gathering of mourners on the November 11, 2016 CTV evening news, describing how those attending shared "fond memories about his life and his intensely symbiotic relationship with the city of Montreal."[115] She broadcasts: "Today fans and friends gathered at some of the places Cohen once lived to, as the man himself once wrote and sang, laugh and cry about it all again."[116]

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[109] McGillis, A1.
[110] Laura Beeston, "The Main Man Still Lingers in Montreal," *Toronto Star*, November 13, 2016, A3.
[111] Emily Donaldson, "Life among the Songs of Leonard Cohen," *Toronto Star*, November 16, 2016, E5.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Michaels, A4.
[114] Ibid.
[115] *CTV National News with Sandie Rinaldo,* November 11, 2016.
[116] Ibid.

A common response to the death of a media friend, argues Meyrowitz, is to "gather in the streets or parks or hold vigils near the media friend's home or place of death," which helps to "banish the demons of grief and helplessness."[117] CTV news reporter Genevieve Beauchemin relates how "on the very steps Leonard Cohen once climbed to his apartment, fans mourn his passing, the loss of a part of Montreal's soul."[118] Beauchemin characterizes the loss of Cohen not only as a personal loss to family, friends, and fans, but as an all encompassing loss to Montreal and its cultural identity, its "soul."[119] Meyrowitz's illustration of vigils and shrines commemorating deceased celebrities forms a striking parallel to the media representation of the shrine and vigils held in Cohen's honour. Meyrowitz outlines how "crowds stand in silent witness or chant the dead hero's words or songs. The pain is paradoxical: It feels personal, yet it is strengthened by the extent to which it is shared with the crowd."[120]

Depicting the scene in front of Cohen's house, David Friend and Gwen Dambrofsky recount the "[d]ozens of fans [who] gathered at a park across from Cohen's Montreal home late Thursday. They placed candles, a felt hat and roses in front of his home. One woman who gave her name as Myriam said she did not want to live the moment alone."[121] Ingrid Peritz reports that "by 11 p.m., about 200 people [had] massed near Mr. Cohen's home. The air, aside from the soft chords of a guitar, was silent. Candles and bouquets of roses began to pile up in a shrine on the house's doorstep. Someone lit two sticks of incense. On a lamppost by the door, a mourner taped a note. In French, it read: Montreal: Leonard Forever. RIP."[122] S. Michaels notices how people naturally congregated at Cohen's doorstep, that "nobody rallied them on social media: They just went, to take up space in a place he once inhabited. As a tribute."[123] Observing that the doorstep memorial lasted for weeks, Neema apprehends its role as part of "a huge collective mourning."[124]

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[117] Meyrowitz, "The Life and Death of Media Friends," 75.
[118] *CTV National News with Sandie Rinaldo,* November 11, 2016.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Meyrowitz, "The Life and Death of Media Friends," 75.
[121] Friend and Dambrofsky, C12.
[122] Ingrid Peritz, "Mourners Gather in Montreal to Pay Tribute to Leonard Cohen," *The Globe and Mail*, November 11, 2016, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/mourners-gather-in-montreal-to-pay-tribute-to-leonard-cohen/article32811841/.
[123] Michaels, A4.
[124] qtd. in Kristin Falcao, "A Montreal Celebration of Leonard Cohen's Life and Work," *CBC News*, December 14, 2016, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/leonard-cohen-tribute-rialto-1.3897189.

The act of gathering with other fans and paying tribute to the lost media friend provides solace, is validating to those mourning Cohen, and acts as a sign of security that indicates Cohen's cultural worth; he is worthy of memorialization and remembrance. As Beeston remarks:

> However, if the fans who flocked to Quebec's most cosmopolitan city are any indication, his memory isn't going anywhere. They head up the Main with real cameras around their necks Saturday, making their pilgrimage to the memorial that's spontaneously and ephemerally set up outside his longtime home in Le Plateau's Little Portugal. The memorial has grown from humble beginnings since the news of Cohen's death broke late Thursday. Candles and wax, flowers in piles, cans of beer, bottles of wine, oranges and tea, bagels, a guitar, batteries for the boom box playing his tunes: it is a thing of beauty, this growing, shifting pile of a tribute.[125]

As long as we keep remembering Cohen, paying tribute to him in myriad ways, we will keep the Cohen phenomenon alive and circulating through Canadian culture. In the wake of his death, this feeling is a comfort, a sign of security, and a means of realizing agency in preventing the death of the Cohen phenomenon and confronting the death of Cohen.

As Meyrowitz points out, the celebrity as media friend (his concept), or the celebrity phenomenon (my concept), never really dies.[126] Photographs, audio-visual recordings, and writing—the media through which audiences come to know the media friend—all still exist; the images and voice of Cohen continue to circulate around us.[127] The feeling that Cohen is still with us is heavily present in the reaction to his death. S. Michaels declares: "I don't believe in afterlife, but Leonard doesn't seem to count. He's still here,"[128] while Patrick Martin advises Cohen: "Your music will live long after you."[129] His cousin, Andrew Cohen, admits that he "lived so long and so lyrically that it seemed he would be with us forever."[130] The sense of loss we feel is immense; yet, if the celebrity phenomenon never truly disappears and we never really knew the celebrity, what have we actually lost? Meyrowitz suggests that it is perhaps "the potential and hope for increased intimacy that dies, and the never-to-be face-to-face consummation of that

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[125] Beeston, A3.
[126] Meyrowitz, "The Life and Death of Media Friends," 76.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Michaels, A4.
[129] Patrick Martin, "Leonard Cohen," *The Globe and Mail*, November 21, 2016, S7.
[130] Andrew Cohen, "My Cousin Leonard Cohen," *National Post*, November 12, 2016, A2.

relationship that is most mourned."[131] He continues with the idea that we can counteract these feelings of loss and hopelessness, explicating: "The feelings of loss of a media friend and the dashed hopes for a potential deepening of the relationship are partially addressed through a variety of channels. There is a steady stream of 'never before published' photos, 'rare footage' of personal moments, bootlegged tapes of performances that were thought to have gone unrecorded, and reprocessed and remastered versions of old recordings."[132] This leads me to two other means of implementing security implicit in the reaction to Cohen's death: purchasing and consuming Cohen's artistic works.

Invoking the healing power of Cohen's music, the media representation points to the use of Cohen's words and music to find comfort. In "Another Magical Voice Stilled, " Peter Goffin, Ebyan Abdigir, and Sophie van Bastelaer observe that "Leonard Cohen has many lyrics and songs that are appropriate for times of mourning. And so when news of the beloved singer / songwriter's death broke Thursday night, many took to Twitter to pay tribute to the artist, with his words."[133] For A. Michaels, consolation is "the heart of song and at the heart of poetry … because singer and listener, writer and reader, are not alone. Leonard Cohen's art was communion—the bond between two. The direct address. The hand offered. The plea, the cry, the prayer."[134] Renzetti also underscores comfort as an important aspect of art, admitting how Cohen was a source of strength during a difficult time in her life.[135] "Saddened by his death," Elizabeth Shapiro affirms that she "will be listening to his songs this weekend."[136] At the vigil, CTV reports that "hundreds of mourners joined a spontaneous sing along paying tribute to the legendary musician with his own words."[137] In "Yes, Cohen Has Died, But He Is Not Gone," Andrew Potter maintains that Cohen's songs, and the act of singing and listening to them in the present day, is what keeps his memory alive. He writes: "What is left behind are the songs. Leonard Cohen has died, he hasn't gone anywhere. If you listen, you can still hear him speaking to you sweetly from a window, in the tower of song."[138] "I don't yet know how to live in a world

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[131] Meyrowitz, "The Life and Death of Media Friends," 77.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Goffin, Abdigir, and Bastelaer,  A4.
[134] Michaels,  13.
[135] Renzetti,  A2.
[136] Shapiro qtd. in "From Fetching Smoked Meat to Sidewalk Encounters: Your Stories of Leonard Cohen,"*CBC News*, November 11, 2016, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/leonard-cohen-memories-stories-1.3847060.
[137] *CTV National News with Sandie Rinaldo*, "Vigil for Leonard Cohen," aired November 12, 2016, on CTV.
[138] Andrew Potter, "Yes, Cohen Has Died, But He Is Not Gone," *Montreal Gazette*, November 12, 2016, A14.

without Leonard," writes Harper, "But I trust if we call gently to him on the other side, he will lean out that window in the Tower of Song and show us the way."[139] The "Tower of Song" is one of two prominent images from Cohen lyrics that circulate through the media representation of Cohen's passing. (It was also the name of the official Cohen tribute show, staged one year after his death.) The other prominent lyric is, "There's a crack in everything / that's how the light gets in."[140] Cohen's music can be interpreted as the light that flows through the crack in our broken hearts.

In their study of grieving fans, Radford and Bloch identify the role that consumerism plays in the mourning process of fans.[141] They discern how "material objects, places, or activities associated with the deceased become means of enhancing memories" and play a fundamental role in the process of mourning.[142] This process of "incorporation" occurs when "objects representative of the deceased are used as a means of keeping some part of that person alive."[143] The media representation of Cohen's death identifies an increase in sales of Cohen's albums and books shortly after his death. In "Leonard Cohen Albums Flying Off Store Shelves," John Meagher reveals that "HMV cannot keep up with demand for his CDs," with the HMV in the Fairview Mall in Pointe-Claire having a waiting list for Cohen's newest album, *You Want it Darker*.[144] Bruce Deachman mentions that while John Thompson, owner of The Record Centre in Ottawa, "hasn't noticed an immediate surge in sales of Cohen's albums following" his death, he fully expects it to come.[145] Sadaf Ahsan reports that Cohen's original version of "Hallelujah" has finally, after thirty-two years, reached the *Billboard Hot 100* in the week after his death.[146] The "*National Post* Bestseller" list for November 19, 2016 reveals a rapid increase in book sales for Cohen.[147] While *Beautiful Losers* topped the weekly bestseller list, Cohen's *Book of Longing* took the second spot. Notably, the third book on the list was *Crippled America: How to Make America Great Again* by Donald Trump, reinforcing the interconnection of these two events.

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[139] Harper qtd. in Barclay, "Canadians Share."
[140] Cohen, "Anthem."
[141] Radford and Bloch, 150.
[142] Ibid., 149.
[143] Ibid.
[144] John Meagher, "Leonard Cohen Albums Flying Off Store Shelves," *Montreal Gazette*, November 26, 2016, A8.
[145] Bruce Deachman, "Music Store Owners Expect Cohen Album Sales to Soar," *The Ottawa Citizen*, November 12, 2016, A10.
[146] Sadaf Ahsan, "Cohen's 'Hallelujah' Cracks Hot 100 for the First Time," *National Post*, November 24, 2016, B8.
[147] "The National Post Bestseller," *National Post*, November 19, 2016.

In "Scrambling for a Piece of History," Deborah Dundas warns: "If you'd like to own a piece of Leonard Cohen's work to remember him by, you'd be wise to act fast."[148] Observing the parallel between the art and book market, she reports:

> As in the art market, so with the book market: when a beloved artist or author passes away, people want to own something to remember them by—and so prices go up and competition grows fierce. Abe Books—the online used bookstore, with listings from booksellers around the world—has seen searches for Leonard Cohen go from none to "the top of the heap," according to Richard Davies, spokesperson for AbeBooks.com.[149]

In this context, owning Cohen's music and books is akin to possessing a part of him and forms another means of realizing security in mourning the loss of Cohen.

Yet, considering the troubling relationship between consumerism and fandom—the stereotypical image of the fan as obsessive consumer—how does Cohen's death reframe consumerism into memorialization? It is important to bear in mind that a main part of the "project central to fan studies of rehabilitating the popular and academic image of fandom has often been an attempt to show how inherently different it is from those practices that comply with the economics and politics of consumer culture."[150] Since it is impossible to separate fandom from consumer culture in its entirety, the focus of fan studies scholars has been on the fan as active consumer, or producer. The roots of fandom scholarship, from Radway to Jenkins, reside in the idea of active consumption, which disrupts the consumption / production binary. Derek Johnson notes how in contrasting fans against consumers, "we've gotten used to talking about them as producers."[151] Alternatively, Johnson stresses that we need to consider fandom in connection, not in opposition, to consumerism, as "fans' relationship in and to the industry is one of outside consumption."[152] Without suggesting that consumption is inherently empowering or resistant, he argues that consumption needs to be considered in addition to the productive side of fandom. In response to Johnson, Anne Kustritz "tease[s] consumption and consumerism apart," unraveling "the consumption of narratives, ideas, and images from the question of spending

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[148] Deborah Dundas, "Scrambling for a Piece of History," *Toronto Star*, November 19, 2016, E24.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Derek Johnson qtd. in Jenkins, "Gender and Fan Culture (Round Thirteen, Part Two): Anne Kustritz and Derek Johnson."
[151] Ibid.
[152] Ibid.

money."[153] While Kustritz argues that it is "imperative that we separate fans' roles as consumers of narratives and as consumers of products," Johnson maintains that it is almost impossible to so do.[154]

In illuminating the role of consumption in mourning Cohen's death, I am interested in how Cohen's death reconfigures fans into collectors and consumerism into memorialization. Here, I argue that purchasing celebrity products represents a desire for intimacy; for this reason, "fans' urges to be with the star cannot be reduced to consumerism."[155] In July 2018, the heirs of Marianne Ihlen, one of Cohen's most famous lovers and muse, placed several items Cohen gave her up for auction at Christie's Auction House.[156] Built upon an aura of fine art and expertise, Christie's mandate reflects the belief that "access to beautiful and special objects is an important part of people's personal and cultural life."[157] The press release for the auction addresses "collectors who have always dreamed of possessing materials relating to Leonard Cohen."[158] While the most expensive item sold was a sterling silver Cartier pocket mirror Cohen gave Marianne (£35,000), a signed copy of *Beautiful Losers*, addressed to Marianne, sold for £25,000.[159] The cultural prestige of Christie's as an institution indicates that these collector's items are highly valuable cultural objects.

But what are the implications of this for the average fan? How is the act of purchasing Cohen's album, a mass-produced cultural object, also transformed after Cohen's death? In Chapter Two, I elucidate how the hermeneutic of intimacy reframes the celebrity as friend, with cultural and commercial objects borrowing from the celebrity's cultural capital to appear less commercial. Taking this further, I argue that despite their status as mass-produced cultural objects, Cohen's albums now have an implied sense of rarity after his death, which turns them

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[153] Kustritz qtd. in Jenkins, "Gender and Fan Culture (Round Thirteen, Part Two): Anne Kustritz and Derek Johnson."

[154] "Gender and Fan Culture (Round Thirteen, Part Two): Anne Kustritz and Derek Johnson."

[155] Mark Duffett, "Transcending Audience Generalizations: Consumerism Reconsidered in the Case of Elvis Presley Fans," *Popular Music and Society* 24, no. 2 (June 1, 2000: 87.

[156] "'It Was a Beautiful Slow Movie'—the Story of Leonard Cohen and His Greatest Muse," Christie's, 2018, accessed October 22, 2018, https://www.christies.com/features/Leonard-Cohen-and-his-greatest-muse-9305-1.aspx.

[157] "About Culture & Philanthropy at Christie's," Christie's, accessed October 22, 2018, https://www.christies.com/about-us/culture-and-philanthropy.

[158] "Valuable Books and Manuscripts," Webwire, updated June 26, 2018, 2018, accessed October 22, 2018, https://www.webwire.com/ViewPressRel.asp?aId=225785.

[159] "Auction Results: Valuable Books and Manuscripts," Christie's, 2018, accessed October 22, 2018, https://www.christies.com/Results/PrintAuctionResults.aspx?saleid=27612&lid=1.

into collector's items. Fans therefore become collectors (not passive consumers) and collecting items associated with Cohen becomes an act of memorialization.

This relates to Duffett's findings in his study of Elvis fans. In "Transcending Audience Generalizations: Consumerism Reconsidered in the Case of Elvis Presley Fans," he discovers that Elvis fans are not "consumerists who constantly anticipate the thrill of a star like Elvis buying them happiness."[160] Conversely, they want to feel a personal connection with him, a sense of intimacy. In turn, buying his music "amplifies a feeling that they *already* possess; a personal connection, set in train by recorded music (whether on film, vinyl, or CD), which they long to fulfill by getting as close to their star as possible."[161] Rather than seeking "consumerist delight," by purchasing materials associated with Elvis— his "material legacy"—fans feel an intimate bond with Elvis.[162] This is especially significant after his death, as these materials also signify "the last tangible vestige of Elvis's aura."[163] As one of the last physical embodiments of Cohen's aura, Cohen's final album becomes a collector's item. Through purchasing these now-rarified material embodiments of the Cohen phenomenon, fans become collectors rather than consumers.

While I identify several suggested methods of enacting security, it is nevertheless important to underscore how these methods are socially normative and socially and culturally approved methods of confronting the loss of Cohen. De Courville Nicol details the role of emotional norms in shaping how we perceive "certain forces as dangerous, and … others as securing" and how this plays a part in our selection of specific means of power to achieve security.[164] Emotional norms dictate what methods of implementing security are socially acceptable and therefore limit the means of power available to individuals. In this respect, the media coverage of Cohen's death, and its representation of socially acceptable forms of mourning, can be understood as a method of emotion management. De Courville Nicol defines emotion management as the process of intentionally exercising power over our agency, or that of others, which triggers emotional experience and causes us to act.[165] In emotion management, she explains, "emotional experiences and the agential course with which they are already

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[160] Duffett, "Transcending," 86.
[161] Ibid.
[162] Ibid., 87.
[163] Ibid.
[164] de Courville Nicol, 111-112.
[165] Ibid., 114.

associated," that is feelings and the associated means of implementing security, "are purposefully triggered" in order to produce normative effects.[166] This creates social order through "the rewarding of certain actions and the punishing of others."[167] By emphasizing socially acceptable mourning rituals in the wake of Cohen's death, the media response activates our desire to mourn Cohen, (re)establishing cultural and social order by regulating public grief.

In "From People Power to Mass Hysteria: Media and Popular Reactions to the Death of Princess Diana," James Thomas reflects on the argument that "media mournings can be useful in giving people knowledge of the rules about when and how it is appropriate to express grief."[168] He identifies how the media pathologized the public mourning of Princess Diana,[169] presuming that it was fake since those mourning her were strangers and their public grief excessive.[170] As I mention above, the public display of grief in the wake of Diana's death was an unprecedented event that surprised many people.[171] Since then, celebrity and fandom have become increasingly mainstream and public reactions to celebrity deaths are more commonplace and easy to perform on social media. Yet, it is worth questioning whether "the resistance people demonstrate to public mourning in general, and celebrity mourning in particular," which Diana's death accentuates, has also shifted.[172]

For Thomas, the resistance to celebrity death centres on the notion that "these types of mourning are hugely atypical when compared to the everyday rules under which people are expected to grieve and mourn in contemporary society."[173] Usually, grief is understood to be a private emotion that should not be displayed in public. Carolyn Kitch identifies similar sentiments in her study "'A News of Feeling as well as Fact': Mourning and Memorial in America Newsmagazines." Discussing the news coverage of John F. Kennedy Jr.'s death, Kitch discovers an underlying "self-conscious criticism of public grief."[174] She provides the example of a *Newsweek* columnist who "accused Americans of wallowing in 'virtual grief,' an inauthentic public form of 'media-orchestrated empathy, abetted by celebrity-charged curiosity, bordering on

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[166] Ibid., 115.
[167] Ibid., 123.
[168] Thomas, 370.
[169] Ibid., 365.
[170] Ibid., 370.
[171] Turner, 108.
[172] Thomas, 370.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Kitch, 171.

voyeurism.'"[175] For instance, she observes that despite the heartwarming recollections of Kennedy's early years and the show of flowers adorning his apartment, journalists felt "the sentiment was excessive."[176]

Thomas draws attention to the shifting social norms around death, public displays of grief, and mourning. He proposes that older social traditions, which "required mourning behaviour in an extended group of people, a geographical and social community, regardless of the personal closeness of the group members to the deceased or the bereaved," have now been replaced by expectations that "the 'real' grievers are seen to be those personally affected—within the family unit or by a small number of private connections."[177] Catharine Lumby reinforces this point, maintaining that mourning, "at least in recent Anglo-Saxon history, is an emotion which has been traditionally defined by the closeness a mourner has to the deceased."[178] In "Vanishing Point," she studies the public reaction to the death of Princess Diana, which "has become a symbol of our anxieties about the way the mass media has changed our lives and confused our sense of what information is private and what should properly be made public."[179] While the death of Diana was a watershed moment that called forth questions concerning the public display of grief and who has permission to mourn, almost two decades later does Cohen's death prompt similar debates around public grief?

The framing of Cohen's death as a national loss and the image of Canada as a nation in mourning gives permission for everyone to mourn. Fans turn into mourners and friends, and nationwide feelings of sorrow and sadness validate their feelings. This perception of Cohen fans as friends is not new, however, as Cohen often addressed audiences and fans as "friends" (another act of interpellation). "'A Great Montrealer' Quietly Buried in Hometown" chronicles how Cohen's death "has sparked an outpouring from his fans the world over," whereas in Montreal "mourners continued to show up at the doorstep of his home to lay flowers and light candles."[180] In the immediate aftermath of Cohen's death, Canadian fans, alongside friends and family, have shifted into the privileged position of mourners. Johnson authenticates this intimate connection between fan and Cohen, noting how "every fan feels a private and permanent

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[175] Ibid.
[176] Ibid.
[177] Thomas, 370.
[178] Catharine Lumby, "Vanishing Point," in *The Celebrity Culture Reader*, ed. P. David Marshall (New York: Routledge, 2006), 541.
[179] Ibid., 531.
[180] "'A Great Montrealer' Quietly Buried in Hometown," *The Globe and Mail*, November 12, 2016, A3.

connection to him, which helps explain how his audience grew larger than ever in the last years of his life."[181] Douglas Todd discerns, without disparaging, that Cohen "certainly has a lot of friends. Some of them never met him."[182] Other official acts that validate the emotional experience of those mourning Cohen encompass the lowering of flags at Montreal City Hall and the National Assembly (a rare occurrence for an Anglophone Montrealer), an official book of condolence, and emotional responses from Members of the National Assembly, who "stood for a moment of silence Wednesday morning after representatives of each party in the house took turns expressing their affection and admiration—even quoting favourite songs—for Cohen."[183] As fans turn into mourners, as Montreal turns into a city of mourning, and as Canada sheds a tear for our national hero, a sense of empathy and compassion ensues. It is understood that we feel this loss together as a nation, as united, and as authentic (not pathological) in our grieving.

The above analysis subtly highlights particular images of Cohen that now hold a privileged position after his death, including Cohen as an emotional figure whose words contain the power to provide solace and healing; Cohen as Montreal's local hero; and Cohen as a national legend. I would like to conclude this section by setting forth the argument that the dominant image of Cohen circulated in the media representation of his death centres on the celebrity discourse of ordinary / extraordinary, which in the case of the Cohen phenomenon also takes the form of legend / humble man, sacred / mundane, saintly / ordinary. Lumby states quite emphatically: "If celebrities are ordinary people rendered extraordinary through media coverage, in death they can become positively supernatural."[184] As I mention in Chapter 3, representations of Cohen as saint, prophet, god, or potential messiah circulate as part of his mythology. At the same time, public discussion of his depression and his image as a modest and humble man bring him into the realm of the ordinary.

Depicting Cohen as "formidable in both the sacred and the mundane," Rufus Wainwright declares: "Like for most of us, for me he dwelled in a higher strata inhabited by some living but mostly passed icons who seemed to have this direct line to the galaxy, whilst at the same time

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181 Johnson, "The Heart Will Not Retreat."
182 Douglas Todd, "Cohen Embraced Cracks of Human 'Brokenness'; Singer Was a 'Trans Religious,' 'Trans-Cultural' Seeker," *Vancouver Sun*, November 26, 2016, C5.
183 Philip Authier, "National Assembly Expresses Affection, Admiration for Cohen; MNAs Quote Favourite Songs, and Pay Tribute to Great Quebecer, Montrealer," *Montreal Gazette*, November 17, 2016, A3.
184 Lumby, 537.

knowing exactly when to take out the trash."[185] Johnson describes how even "as a young man, he

had the wisdom of an elder, an alchemist mixing the sacred and the profane into an inky

potion."[186] Bishop-Stall muses on Cohen's obsession with the "wild swings of human experience,

no matter how lofty or depraved, traumatic or transcendental,"[187] while Berry views Cohen's

"ineffable pleasures and high cosmic jokes" as that, which connects us to one another.[188] Barclay

characterizes Cohen's appeal as both sacred and profane, light and dark, saintly and ordinary,

which appears as a "sonic embodiment of a constant thread through Cohen's work … the notion

that such a dichotomy, in fact, makes us whole."[189] Johnson suggests that Cohen's "most

endearing quality, in person and on stage, was his artful humility. He never seemed seduced by

his fame."[190] John Grierson mirrors this sentiment that Cohen never "considered himself a star.

He was a very humble man"; at the same time, Cohen "was one of the Canadian national

treasures."[191] This dual depiction of Cohen as saintly and ordinary allows us to mourn him as

both one of us and as one of the greats.

**4.3 Private Grief**

> I've been dreading the day I'd have to write about Leonard Cohen in the past tense. – Brian Johnson[192]

In preparation for this chapter, I am reading Jeanette Monaco's article "Memory Work,

Autoethnography and the Construction of a Fan-Ethnography," when I am abruptly brought to

tears by the author's memory of some difficult moments after her daughter's birth. She writes:

> I remember nothing much of anything else now except that I recall feeling a heaviness in
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> my body of the same type that weighted me down many of those mornings and I now
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> imagine myself slowly sitting up to turn off the TV after *The Sopranos*' credits roll down
>
> the screen. I see my hair in a mess and imagine there are dark circles under my puffy eyes.
>
> I then see myself sobbing, and searching through my pockets for tissues to wipe my eyes
>
> and runny nose. I am now looking at this newborn baby and I think about my father's

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[185] Rufus Wainwright qtd. in Goffin, Abdigir, and Bastelaer,  A4.
[186] Johnson, "The Heart Will Not Retreat."
[187] Bishop-Stall.
[188] Berry, A3.
[189] Barclay, "Saying Goodnight."
[190] Johnson, "The Heart Will Not Retreat."
[191] Grierson qtd. in Valido.
[192] Johnson, "The Heart Will Not Retreat."

mother, the woman after whom I named my daughter. I then say her name "Eva" and I tell my deceased grandmother how much I miss her.[193]

I am now sobbing inconsolably. That was also my grandmother's name, my father's mother. "But what does this have to do with Leonard Cohen?" I ask myself. I am suddenly reminded of the day my grandmother died: April 30, 2009. I went to see Cohen perform in concert that night. In this moment, I realize that the feeling of pleasure I associate with Cohen has a history of intermingling with grief, pain, and loss. This moment in my research process causes me to take a step back and reflect upon my personal history with the Cohen phenomenon.

I am a twenty-one year old amateur musician and undergraduate student at McGill when I first fall in love with the persona of Cohen. After watching *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen*, I find Cohen unbelievably relatable and charismatic. I see my friends in him. While I have always been familiar with Cohen's music and the notion of him as a Canadian figure, this moment represents a turning point not only in my adoration of Cohen, but in my life. I purchase the DVD and watch the documentary repeatedly over the next year. My experience of Cohen is intensely private and emotionally charged. I cautiously share the documentary with others, which feels akin to opening up and revealing my own soul.

I am at Camp Maromac in Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts, Quebec, working as a camp counselor. I sense Cohen's presence in the air, for he too worked at a children's camp in the Laurentian Mountains. I feel a deep connection to him here. I am reading *Beautiful Losers* for the first time. One night I am on night duty in the front office. With the phone lines finally quiet from parents checking in after panicked letters home from their children, I pick up the novel and try to make sense of it. At the end of summer, I lend my copy of the novel to my best friend. As she is in the process of returning it to me, someone kicks her bag onto the metro tracks. The book meets its unfortunate demise in the bowels of Montreal.

When I read S. Michaels's description of moving through the streets of Montreal feeling like a tribute to Cohen, I relate to this experience immensely and am transported once again.[194] It's 2007 and I am alone in my bedroom on Sherbrooke Street playing guitar. I have been working on a song titled "St. Laurent BLVD," inspired by images of Cohen walking through the streets of Montreal and passages from his novel *The Favourite Game*. The lights of downtown

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[193] Monaco, 113.
[194] Michaels, A4.

Montreal fill my bedroom. I continue working on the song, singing: "St. Laurent Boulevard at 3 am / Ain't what it used to be / like back then / When I walk down the street / I like to pretend / that I'm a character / in *The Favourite Game* / Watching the crowds / exit the bars / Ain't what it used to be / like back then." For me, Cohen has always haunted the streets of Montreal.

Although I think of myself as a musician, Cohen inspires me to start writing poetry. Summoning courage from Cohen, I submit my poems for publication. When one is accepted in a new literary magazine at McGill, I feel my connection to Cohen strengthen. There is a launch party for the magazine. I decide I am too shy to read my poem, entitled "Moe," in public. I am bringing a date to the launch party instead, I decide. Afterwards, we buy a six-pack of beer and watch *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen*.

I am spending night after night alone in my room learning to play Cohen songs on guitar. The idea of seeing him perform live is not an idea I entertain. He has not toured since 1993. I am about to graduate from McGill when Cohen announces he is touring again. Back in Montreal for my graduation ceremony, I visit my favourite record shop and used-book store, Cheap Thrills. I head straight for the bottom shelf, where they stock Cohen's novels. It has become tradition. This is where I bought my first Cohen novel and where I buy every Cohen book I find, even duplicates. Today, I hit the jackpot—a first edition of *The Favourite Game*. It becomes my graduation present to myself. The next day I anxiously wait for the ceremony to be over so I can board the greyhound bus. I am heading to Kitchener-Waterloo to visit my best friend and see Cohen in concert for the first time. The auditorium is smaller than I thought it would be, and I feel like the youngest person there in my black shorts with suspenders and black hipster glasses. I savour every moment.

I am in Winnipeg and it is the second time I am seeing Cohen perform. This time is different. I am different. I have spent the last two weeks watching my grandmother die. I woke up this morning from a dream about her only to discover she has passed away. Tonight I do not have to hide my tears and weep as Cohen recites "A Thousand Kisses Deep." It is two years later and I am deciding to write my PhD on Cohen, extending my fan pleasures of Cohen through academic research. As I apply to PhD programs I think about potential topics of research. I want to choose something I am passionate about and will not tire of in six years. Cohen seems like a perfect choice. For a long time now, I have found Cohen and his oeuvre of work a fascinating and absorbing area of study. Learning more about him and consuming his work is the epitome of

pleasure. Writing a dissertation on Cohen seems like an effective way to explore and deepen this sense of pleasure. Besides, it would be a good excuse to return to Montreal, as where else could one pursue a PhD on Cohen? I begin to daydream: I am sitting in Bagel Etc. writing. Cohen comes in. I smile. He nods. It is perfection. I am writing poems about these daydreams. They remain daydreams.

It is November 28, 2012 and I am finally seeing Cohen in concert in Montreal. The woman beside me is in tears, audibly crying. I am not crying. I am taking this experience for granted. I do not think this is the last time I will see Cohen in concert. Years later, I now know it was. Now he is dead, and I am still writing this dissertation. Cohen is dead and I feel weird. His death begins to threaten the pleasure that I feel towards him.

> Now I greet you from the other side of sorrow and despair with a love so vast and so shattered, it will reach you everywhere. – Cohen[195]

This dissertation begins with a narrative I wrote shortly after Cohen's death, which depicts my emotional reaction and experience of the news of Cohen's passing. My attachment to Cohen and decision to write my dissertation on his celebrity interconnects with my emotional history. This interconnection is what I probe in this final section. In attempting to understand the unsettling feelings I experience after Cohen's death, I argue that my dual-faceted identity as an academic studying Cohen and as a fan of Cohen is worth reflecting on, as the loss I experience impacts my ability to undertake my research in complex, and sometimes intangible, ways. While Cohen represents an object of desire that invokes pleasurable feelings for me, after his death Cohen becomes an object of fear that threatens my sense of security as well as my ability to complete my dissertation.

As a fan, I experience Cohen's death through the emotional-norm pair of grief / mourning. Grief / mourning is an emotional orientation to the world, and when I feel grief I "experience the embodied knowledge that I presently lack the agential means to achieve" mourning.[196] Once I locate the ability to feel desire through a process of mourning, I can look for a way in which to put this sense of security into practice.[197] That is, I experience grief as the fear that I will not be able to confront Cohen's death, while I realize my desire to implement security through my

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[195] Leonard Cohen, "Heart with No Companion," *Various Positions* (CBS Records International, 1984).
[196] de Courville Nicol, 60.
[197] Ibid.

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capacity to mourn his death and identify the means in which to do so. I experience grief /

mourning through the modality of panic / excitement. In this modality of emotional experience

individuals do not experience internal conflict, and "there is one object of fear and one object of

desire: the anticipated pain produced by the problem … [the loss of Cohen] and the anticipated

pleasure produced by the resolved problem … [the memorialized Cohen]."[198] I feel a panicked

sense of grief over the death of Cohen that I confront through mourning. I therefore desire to pay

tribute to and memorialize Cohen as a means of implementing the pleasurable force that is my

love of Leonard Cohen. I experience the news of Cohen's death as a sign of danger, whereas I

experience the public sadness over Cohen's death and the countless tribute events as a sign of

security that Cohen will live on through his legacy.

Since I "must necessarily interact with problems (objects of fear) to produce their

solutions (objects of desire),"[199] I attend any and every tribute event that I hear about, starting

with the vigil on Cohen's doorstep the night I received news of his death. I return a few times

over the following week, observing the amassing shrine as it grows with letters, bottles of wine,

tea and oranges, flowers, candles, and much more. I think about leaving something, but instead

decide to write Cohen a note in the official book of condolences at the Grande Bibliothèque. I

think about leaving copies of the fan letters I photocopied from the Cohen Papers at the

University of Toronto, a symbolic act of returning them to Cohen. Yet, I hesitate at the thought

of leaving anything or spending a significant amount of time at the vigil. I briefly stop by Parc du

Portugal in front of Cohen's home for the sing-along Kathy Kennedy organizes a few days after

Cohen's passing. The number of people in attendance and the growing shrine at his doorstep act

as signs of security, demonstrating that Cohen's legacy will carry on, that he will not be

forgotten. It shows that I am not alone in my sadness. Yet, I do not feel comforted by the

growing crowds of people also mourning Cohen. I have spent the last five years of my life

thinking about Cohen on a daily basis and now the whole world is thinking about him too. I do

not want to share.

Meyrowitz uses the term "media friend" to bring attention to the intimate connection

between fan and celebrity, the "one-to-one-tie" that evolves from our personal feelings

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[198] Ibid., 55.
[199] Ibid., 47.

concerning who the celebrity is, what they represent, and how they make us feel.[200] I describe above how my relationship with Cohen is intensely private. Now my intimate connection to Cohen feels destroyed, as the public mourning reveals that I am not alone in feeling this way. Meyrowitz suggests that "media friends tend to be accepted more widely after they are dead," which for long-term fans "is both upsetting and pleasing. On the one hand, there is a negative feeling of the relationship being diluted and co-opted … But on the other hand, there is the positive sense of vindication for believing in the importance of the media friend while he or she was alive."[201] After reading Meyrowitz I can finally put into words what I am feeling. I feel my private, intensely personal relationship "being diluted and co-opted,"[202] and it does not feel good. Shortly after Cohen's passing, a friend introduces me to an acquaintance and casually mentions that I am writing my PhD on Cohen. The acquaintance quickly makes the assumption that I recently started my research because of Cohen's death, robbing me of feeling "the positive sense of vindication for believing in the importance"[203] of Cohen before his death. This comment acts as a sign of danger. Can I finish this PhD?

It is October 17, 2016, and Leonard Cohen is trending on Facebook. I freak out. This is a sign of danger: Is Cohen dead? Will I ever see him perform again? Will I be able to finish my dissertation? It turns out that Cohen is not dead, but is ready to die, as quoted in David Remnick's *New Yorker* article, "Leonard Cohen Makes it Darker."[204] I have been telling myself that I better finish writing my dissertation before Cohen dies. My denial tells me that he will live forever. Thus, this pending deadline never had much potency before now.

Now Cohen is dead and I have not finished my PhD. I have missed my deadline. Not only is Cohen's death creating a sense of loss to my fan identity, as I now have to share my love of Cohen with many others, I also feel that I have lost control over my research. Monaco's own feelings of loss of fan status and loss of research control "illustrate the impossibility of separating the scholar's academic desires from their fan-related pleasures."[205] As much as I seek refuge in tribute events as a way to mourn Cohen as a fan, these same activities produce anxiety

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[200] Meyrowitz, "The Life and Death of Media Friends," 63.
[201] Ibid., 78.
[202] Ibid.
[203] Ibid.
[204] Remnick.
[205] Monaco, 129, 131.

within me as I struggle to reconcile my personal loss as a fan with feelings of panic over the control of my research.

As Cohen's cultural popularity and presence in the media surges, I feel my research slipping from my grasp. Academic discoveries and materials that I hold close to my heart are now circulating publically. As an academic I feel an intense pressure to be part of the cultural conversation around Cohen; this is the topic of many years of my research after all. As a fan, I feel conflicted by this pressure, which feels analogous to capitalizing on Cohen's death. These conflicting feelings paralyze me, and I carry on the only way I know how—by attending every Cohen tribute I can find, including: the Pop Montreal tribute show *God is Alive, Magic is Afoot* on December 15, 2016; the photography exhibition *Leonard Cohen: Rituels d'absence* on September 28, 2017; *Tower of Song: A Tribute to Leonard Cohen* at the Bell Centre on November 6, 2017; *Leonard Cohen: Five Albums, Five Concerts* at the Gesù; artist roundtables for the MAC exhibition; Cohen biographer Sylvie Simmons in conversation with Eleanor Wachtel at the MAC; the Max and Iris Stern International Symposium on April 6-7, 2018, and finally multiple visits to the MAC exhibition *Leonard Cohen: Une brèche en toute chose / A Crack in Everything*. Part research, part fan pleasure, attending these events allows me to carry on in discovering a means of capacity through which I can realize security as both a fan and an academic in the wake of Cohen's death.

As a fan I experience Cohen's death as the feeling of grief / mourning through the modality of panic / excitement. As an academic researching Cohen, I experience Cohen's death through the modality of anxiety / interest as there is an added implication of losing the object of my research and not knowing whether I have the capacity to face this threat. De Courville Nicol explains that in panic / excitement individuals do not experience internal conflict, whereas in anxiety / interest "agential inadequacy becomes a second object of fear, such that one can be said to be afraid of fear … while agential adequacy become a second object of desire."[206] In other words, in anxiety / interest individuals experience internal conflict, producing two objects of fear as well as two objects of desire.[207] My experience of the loss of Cohen creates the first object of fear, while fearing that I do not have the adequate means to deal with the loss of Cohen produces the second object of fear.

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[206] de Courville Nicol, 55.
[207] Ibid.

I have never had to deal with the death of my research object and I feel an anxious sadness when Cohen dies. I will continue to feel an anxious sadness until I find a way to deal with this problem.[208] As a fan I can identify a satisfactory means of resolving my grief / mourning through acts of memorialization; however, as an academic studying Cohen I perceive my grief / mourning as a problem in completing my dissertation. This leads to emotional blending in solving my problem and achieving a feeling of security. I must confront my grief / mourning "by perceiving my loss as a form of gain through triggering the feeling of failure / success (the felt in/capacity to confront the forces that put the self at a disadvantage)."[209] In other words, I must confront Cohen's death as the crack that lets the light into my dissertation.

I feel like a failure for not finishing my dissertation before Cohen dies, and I desire a feeling of success through completing my dissertation. If I achieve a sense of security through finishing my dissertation, what are the means of power I can use to enact this feeling of security? I can resolve my sense of failure by desiring success which leads me to exercise my agency in continuing to write my dissertation (in the face of adversity) and achieve security. As an academic, my emotional experience of losing Cohen is structured by the emotional orientation of failure / success. Here, the objects of fear and desire correspond with the unfinished and completed dissertation.

In addition to Cohen's death, signs of danger that I cannot complete my dissertation are blank pages, lack of progress, missing deadlines, perceived missed opportunities, the feeling that I am capitalizing on Cohen's death, and so on. Signs of security include many of the same signs I discuss above, as they reinforce my argument regarding the circulation of the Cohen phenomenon and provide many more examples in which to work through in my research. Thus, in emotionally managing myself, I create a new object of desire—the completed dissertation—to transform my grief / mourning over the loss of Cohen, and resulting feeling of loss of control over my research, into the desire to implement security. If, as a fan, I desire to memorialize Cohen (means of power) as a way of implementing the pleasurable force that is my love of Leonard Cohen (object of desire), and as a scholar I desire to feel success through implementing the pleasurable force—the completed dissertation—the dissertation in turn becomes a way to memorialize Cohen and is another means of implementing security as a fan.

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[208] Ibid.
[209] Ibid., 61.

While seeking the feeling of success helps resolve my anxious feelings by desiring and implementing this feeling as a form of security, if desiring the feeling of success were to prove unhelpful and I remained in this painful emotional experience, I would then move into an experience of distress, or the distress / relief modality of emotional experience. In turn, this would cause me to believe that I could not complete my dissertation, whereas the anxiety / interest modality only causes me to doubt my ability.[210] In the distress / relief modality of emotional experience, there are no means available to identify one's feelings of in/capacity and the painful experience feels unresolvable.[211] Since this modality arises due to the painful awareness that one cannot resolve the painful experience, it "promotes and thrives upon creativity" in the search for new emotional concepts through which to identify a means of resolving in/capacity.[212]

As an academic, resolving my fannish feelings of grief / mourning through failure / success "might also lead to the actualization of thoughts having to do with the ways in which loss has allowed me to grow" as a researcher.[213] I feel a plethora of conflicting and uncomfortable feelings after Cohen's death as I struggle to continue writing my dissertation. Reading through the theory on acafandom as well as embodied in/capacity theory helps shed light on the complicated ways in which pleasure as well as fear and desire shape my research. It allows me to understand this theory through an embodied, subjective perspective that I would not have otherwise. Understanding how my grief as a fan intersects with feelings of anxiety as an academic permits me to find a form of capacity to complete this dissertation. In some ways, this theory has become therapeutic in conceptualizing the fears that at times hold my research back and kindling the desire that propels me forward. In order to mourn Cohen as a fan, I must remember, I must tell stories. In order to complete my dissertation, I must continue writing about the ways in which we talk about Cohen. To mourn Cohen I must write, which is the very thing that also moves me toward the feeling of success. It has taken a while, but I am now confronting the loss of Cohen head on, as a fan and as an academic, through this chapter.

It is the day after the one-year anniversary of Cohen's death. I am at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal. Its exhibition *Leonard Cohen: Une brèche en toute chose / A Crack*

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[210] Ibid., 5, 59.
[211] Ibid., 59.
[212] Ibid.
[213] Ibid., 61.

*in Everything* is opening for a members-only preview in a few hours. I am attending an artist roundtable in the basement shortly before the opening of the exhibition. My phone is ringing. I decline. My phone rings again. I decline. The word "emergency" emerges on my screen, and I leave to take the call. My world falls apart. I leave the museum without seeing the exhibition. The next two months are a blur, as I try and hold everything together. I do not have time to attend the exhibition, and I feel like a failure. Attending the exhibition is a means of implementing security, and I cannot attend. Slowly my world turns upright again, and I can finally attend the exhibition. The museum now feels heavy. It carries the weight of trauma, Cohen and grief again intermixing. I read the description of the exhibition on the wall as I enter. Tears roll down my cheeks. "A crack in everything" I read, "that's how the light gets in." I feel myself let the light in and breathe out a heavy sigh.

## 4.5 Academic Affect

> As they become known to and accepted by us, our feelings and the honest exploration of them become sanctuaries and spawning grounds for the most radical and daring of ideas … This is not idle fantasy, but a disciplined attention to the true meaning of "it feels right to me." – Audre Lorde[214]

> I think I can only know why I want to talk about depression by describing it. *What* before *why*. – Anne Cvetkovich[215]

"*What* before *why*";[216] knowing why I want to talk about my feelings as an academic and a fan following Cohen's death is a result of describing my feelings. What has become increasingly apparent to me as I re-read my autoethnography is that Cohen's death did not cause my feelings. It brought to the surface feelings that had been lingering beneath for some time, feelings of inadequacy, failure, anxiety. Here, it becomes clear how as an academic, various discourses (cultural policy, academic, etc.) inscribe me with a sense of "ethical incompleteness," a type of "radical indeterminacy" that functions as "a drive towards perfection."[217] As a loyal student, I strive towards a never-ending process of gaining more knowledge, of writing more pages, of striving to be better. My ethical incompleteness fills me with the anxiety that I can always be doing more work; I can always be a better subject. This anxiety drives me to work harder to try

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[214] Lorde qtd. in Cvetkovich, 209.
[215] Cvetkovich, 16.
[216] Ibid.
[217] Miller and Yúdice, 15.

and remedy my ethical incompleteness.[218] Moreover, my ethical incompleteness invites me to identify my moral obligations as an academic, a student, a citizen, and in turn my management of myself forms part of how technologies of governance, such as discourse, manage the public.[219]

While she does not use the term ethical incompleteness, in *Depression: A Public Feeling*, Anne Cvetkovich refers to this feeling as "the obligation to write more, teach more, mentor more, and do more that is part of the speed-up in the workplace in academia and elsewhere."[220] For her, this is "business as usual in the academy—an ordinary story, not an exceptional one."[221] Similarly, in *Weariness of the Self: Diagnosing the History of Depression in the Contemporary Age*, Alain Ehrenberg suggests that with the rise of disciplinary models of behaviour and the notion that "the responsibility for our existence lies not only within us but also within the collective between-us," depression becomes understood as an "an *illness of responsibility* in which the dominant feeling is that of failure. The depressed individual is unable to measure up; he is tired of having to become himself."[222] In other words, depressed individuals cannot keep up with the demands of their ethical incompleteness. Correspondingly, Cvetkovich's interest is in how "for many of us (an 'us' that includes a range of social positions and identities in need of specification), everyday life produces feelings of despair and anxiety, sometimes extreme, sometimes throbbing along at a low level, and hence barely discernible from *just the way things are*, feelings that get internalized and named, for better or for worse, as depression."[223] Cvetkovich's assertion that "we live in a culture whose violence takes the form of systematically making us feel bad"[224] also describes a culture that governs citizens through inscribing them with a sense of ethical incompleteness that in turn performs the function of self-governance.

Cvetkovich describes how academia "breeds particular forms of panic and anxiety leading to what gets called depression—the fear that you have nothing to say, or that you can't say what you want to say, or that you have something to say but it's not important enough or smart enough."[225] Emphasizing how the stakes of academic work are intensely personal, she

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[218] Toby Miller, *The Well-Tempered Self: Citizenship, Culture, and the Postmodern Subject* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), xii.
[219] Ibid., xiii.
[220] Cvetkovich, 205.
[221] Ibid.
[222] Alain Ehrenberg, *Weariness of the Self: Diagnosing the History of Depression in the Contemporary Age* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), 4.
[223] Cvetkovich, 14.
[224] Ibid., 15.
[225] Ibid., 18.

asserts that "to feel that your work doesn't matter is to feel dead inside."[226] In turn, academics struggle with long-term projects, such as dissertations, that often leave us "feeling like we're never doing enough to make a difference."[227] One of Cvetkovich's target audiences for this book are graduate students, "whose relation to these conditions is often a very palpable sense of fear, anxiety, and, very frequently, diagnoses of depression."[228] She is acutely aware of how these conditions affect students, elaborating:

> I see this fear creep upon graduate students all the time, perfectly capable people who fall apart in the process of writing a first chapter or who wallow in partial dissertation drafts unable to put it all together. This form of nonproductivity may seem very specialized and almost phantasmatic in nature—how could people be so incapacitated by the relatively nonurgent task of doing some cultural readings?[229]

Yet, this is the reality of academic work for many. Taking this into consideration, Cvetkovich aims "to take seriously the forms of unhappiness and hopelessness produced by these relatively privileged and specialized projects and ambitions."[230]

In this respect, my autoethnography takes its inspiration from Cvetkovich's intention to "write about depression in a way that simultaneously captures how it feels and provides an analysis of why and how its feelings are produced by social forces."[231] From a cognitive perspective, the death of Cohen at the time of writing my dissertation—losing the object of my research during the research process—is not a "big deal" and is in fact manageable. After all, the vast majority of scholars study the works of long-deceased authors. This is why an emotional perspective that recognizes the institutional and discursive pressures of academia is essential. An emotional perspective reveals how Cohen's death brought my already-existing feelings of inadequacy and failure centre stage. Cohen's death did not cause my emotions, but it illuminated them. In turn, by depathologizing my negative feelings, "embracing rather than glossing over bad feelings," I can use them as a resource.[232] For example, by paying close attention to feelings "as both subject and method," Cvetkovich seeks to develop new critical methods and practices.[233]

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[226] Ibid.
[227] Ibid., 19.
[228] Ibid., 18.
[229] Ibid., 19.
[230] Ibid.
[231] Ibid., 14.
[232] Ibid., 2-3.
[233] Ibid., 5.

Cvetkovich theorizes the feeling of depression as an impasse, which encapsulates "the notion of depression as a state of being 'stuck.'"[234] She approaches the state of impasse not only as one of stasis, but also as one of hopeful potential.[235] In (re)conceptualizing depression as a state of impasse, not failure, she reveals its connection to creativity, as a way through the impasse. This can also be connected to de Courville Nicol's exploration of the distress / relief modality of emotional experience and the key role of creativity in discovering novel ways of achieving emotional security. Positioning creativity as a form of movement entrenched in the everyday, Cvetkovich suggests how it functions "to solve problems, have ideas, be joyful about the present, make things."[236] Correspondingly, the feelings I experience as an academic following Cohen's death act as an impasse "as a state of both stuckness and potential."[237] In writing about these feelings, I was able to explore the potential of this impasse, "maintaining a hopefulness about the possibility that slowing down or not moving forward might not be a sign of failure and might instead be worth exploring."[238]

For Cvetkovich, the negative feelings associated with the state of impasse occur "at moments when the social relevance of what we're doing and thinking is not clear. At such moments, a commitment to creativity, or to pursuing one's own ways of thinking and being, can be salutary."[239] For me, Cohen's death represents such a moment. Thus, the writing of my autoethnography functions as a creative way out of the state of impasse. It enables me to move through the impasse in a way that feels right to me. It allows me to think about "my scholarship as creative work whose only importance might be that it mattered to me. Or as Lynda Barry astutely puts it, 'We don't create a fantasy world to escape reality, we create it to be able to stay.'"[240] Like Cvetkovich, I must acknowledge that "one of the most important aspects of the humanities may be the way they provide room for creativity."[241]

As a form of creative movement through my emotional experience of impasse, my autoethnography reveals "the emotional investments that guide" my research.[242] Like

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[234] Ibid., 20.
[235] Ibid., 21.
[236] Ibid.
[237] Ibid.
[238] Ibid.
[239] Ibid., 22.
[240] Barry qtd. in Cvetkovich, 205.
[241] Cvetkovich, 21-22.
[242] Ibid., 24.

Cvetkovich's inclusion of her own experiences of depression in her study of depression, if I wrote about the Cohen phenomenon "without saying anything about my personal experience of it, it [would feel] like a key source of my thinking was missing."[243] In turn, my autoethnography allows me to uncover both how my Cohen fandom feels and how academic work feels. This operates in contradistinction to stereotypical representations of fandom and depathologizes the feelings of fans and the emotional experience of academic work. It lets me explore my experiences of both fandom and academia as both pleasure and pain, demonstrating the sometimes, simultaneous experience of both.

Through my focus on my emotional experiences of academic work and of Cohen's death, my analysis in this chapter can be connected to the broader affective turn in cultural criticism. Yet, as Cvetkovich notes, the term "affective turn" implies that the study of affect is new, ignoring its longer history. In the introduction to *The Affect Theory Reader*, Melissa Gregg and Gregory Seigworth trace the recent iteration of interest in affect to two essays: "Shame in the Cybernetic Fold" by Eve Sedgwick and Adam Frank and "The Autonomy of Affect" by Brian Massumi.[244] Demonstrating the large body of work that has resulted, Gregg and Seigworth distinguish eight of the main approaches to affect.[245] In linking my analysis to the affective turn, I identify my research as one of many voices in this extensive and growing body of scholarship on affect.

In particular, my autoethnography allows me to draw attention to the emotional experience of both fandom and academia as one of ambivalence. The acafan stance specifically acknowledges the acafan's experiences of ambivalence towards academia and fandom, experiences that are occurring concurrently and thus cannot be untangled. My feelings of ambivalence towards my object of fandom interlaces with my ambivalent experience of academic work. It is worth reiterating what Jenkins asserts as the acafan stance par excellence; that is, "one of ambivalence … [that] tries to deal with deep and conflicting responses to the work."[246] Initially, I took "the work" to refer to the object under study; however, I now realize that it refers to both the object under study (the Cohen phenomenon) and the process of academic study (my conflicting experiences of academic work). In this way, the autoethnographic work of

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[243] Ibid., 17.
[244] Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth, eds., *The Affect Theory Reader* (Duke University Press, 2010), 5.
[245] Ibid., 6.
[246] Jenkins, "Acafandom and Beyond: Week One, Part Two."

the acafan performs a slightly different function, as it stresses the ambivalence inherent in both parts of this dual experience without trying to resolve it. If celebrity discourse is inherently ambivalent and fandom is a public that arises through being addressed by celebrity discourse, our feelings towards celebrity are going to be fundamentally ambivalent; the role of the acafan then is to recognize this experience of ambivalence, in all its complexity, rather that trying to resolve it.

Conclusion: What We Do Not Talk About When We Talk About Leonard Cohen

> Be very careful challenging opinion on Leonard Cohen, it's like bringing up someone's ex-partner with a mistaken warm smile on your face. – Anakana Schofield[1]

> I love talking about the various ways in which I am unappreciated. – Cohen[2]

> Our ambivalence pisses them off. – Cohen[3]

## 5.1 Introduction: Crazy to Love You[4]

In the previous chapter, I explore my own embodied, emotional experience of Cohen's death through an autoethnographic analysis that centres on my position as an acafan. One of the reasons for doing so, I explain, is to make room for self-reflexivity in my analysis. For Matt Hills, autoethnography exposes the "fragility of discursive accounts" through an ongoing interrogation of our self-accounts and self-accounts of our self-accounts.[5] This involves identifying how we freeze self-analysis at certain junctures in our refusal to call dominant discourses into question as well as admitting "certain discourses are powerful because of the (non-discursive) investments that we make in them, and because of their structuring absences and familiar repetitions."[6] Hills clarifies the implications of this process:

> This process of persistent questioning throws the self into the realization that explanations of fan and consumer activity are themselves culturally conventional. This realization can open up the possibility of inscribing other explanations of the self; it can promote an acceptance of *the fragility and inadequacy of our claims to be able to 'explain' and 'justify' our own most intensely private or personal moments of fandom and media consumption*.[7]

For Ian Bogost, this is exactly why the acafan position requires more scrutiny and fandom scholarship more skepticism. My narrative in Chapter Four demonstrates the strength of my attachment to Cohen. However, this adoration at times presents a barrier to critical analysis through my exclusion of dissident discourses. Why do I stop analysis at negative discourses of

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[1] Anakana Schofield, "*Beautiful Losers*: Fifty Years Later, Leonard Loses His Erection," *Canadian Notes & Queries*, September 2016, http://notesandqueries.ca/essays/beautiful-losers-fifty-years-later-leonard-loses-erection-anakana-schofield/.
[2] Cohen qtd. in Jim Devlin, *Leonard Cohen: In His Own Words* (London: Omnibus, 1998), 6.
[3] Cohen qtd. in Lerner, 205.
[4] Cohen, *The Flame: Poems and Selections from Notebooks*, 115.
[5] Hills, *Fan Cultures*, 72.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.

Cohen? In this conclusion, I identify my hesitation in the previous chapter to explore the messy side of Cohen, the parts we do not want to talk about.

On a personal level, I do not like to think about these complicated aspects of our man because it undermines my attachment to him. On a critical level, it is difficult to voice my concerns regarding Cohen's womanizing past. How can I describe the twinge in my gut when I hear his answer to Adrienne Clarkson's question about how women inspire his writing in the 1989 documentary *Leonard*. In the documentary, Clarkson asks Cohen: "Are women always an inspiration to your writing? Is the female figure always in your writing?"[8] Cohen answers: "I am terrified to talk about women today." When Clarkson asks why, he answers: "Well the politics. The sexual, romantic politics…have become so plural…."[9] Hearing this in the current moment of #metoo makes me cringe. I begin to wonder whether it is only time before an accusation comes out against Cohen. But then again, perhaps his current post-modern saint image is too strong to penetrate. Thinking about Cohen's difficult relationships with women and how he treated certain women makes it harder to feel the same attachment to him, but more importantly it also strips away the validity of my dissertation topic. Why give more attention to another privileged, white, male artist, let alone one who had potentially problematic relationships with women? I feel uneasy when discussing these aspects of his identity. I am not alone in thinking this way. There is a reason why particular topics appear to be off-limits when we talk about Cohen. Yet, it is necessary to hold Cohen's contradictions in tension and not try and resolve them. Pushing through this discomfort, I consider some quieter discourses about Cohen, the things we do not like to talk about, and question whether these discourses will continue to be less and less popular after his death.

**5.2 Death of a Ladies' Man**

> Lists of Cohen women are not simply the stuff of gossip columns. Behind the troubador's songs comes the troubador and he can't be expected to strum his lute then return at the stroke of five to cut the grass while his wife bakes a meat loaf in their Westinghouse kitchen – Barbara Amiel[10]

A year after Cohen's death and the national melancholy is washing away. The cultural climate is one of women speaking out against abuse, assault, and harassment. The CanLit community in

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[8] SighsNorth, "'Leonard'- Adrienne Clarkson–Leonard Cohen Documentary, 1989," (YouTube, 2015), 31:00.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Barbara Amiel, "Leonard Cohen Says That to All the Girls," *Maclean's*, September 18, 1978, 58.

particular has come under intense scrutiny, as women's voices (some of whom have been vocal for years) are finally beginning to be heard, and some community members are pushing for zero tolerance regarding a range of inappropriate behaviour and attitudes, including sexism, racism, and homophobia. The most recent CanLit controversy involves my own university. In January 2018, Mike Spry wrote a blog post detailing both "the abuse of power and the normalization of sexualization of students by professors, editors, and publishers" in Concordia's creative writing program and his own role in it.[11] Despite the fact that women have been talking about the toxic climate of Concordia's creative writing program for years,[12] it took an article written by a man for Concordia to finally listen and take action (although the efficacy of that action is yet to be determined). In response, Montreal novelist Heather O'Neill came forward to tell her own story of harassment at Concordia in the 1990s.[13]

The CanLit scandal that originally prompted the current push for zero tolerance among CanLit community members, however, involved the University of British Columbia (UBC) and its suspension of professor and author Steven Galloway in 2015 after accusations of sexual assault, harassment, and bullying. In response, author Joseph Boyden, who more recently was the centre of another controversy involving his Indigenous heritage, wrote an open letter denouncing the university's actions. Eighty-nine "CanLit luminaries" initially signed this letter, including Margaret Atwood.[14] As Simon Lewsen documents in *The Walrus*, this letter "has ripped through the scene, turning peers against one another and cementing what feels like an irreparable generational rift. The once quiet precincts of CanLit are suddenly more rancorous than they've been in decades."[15]

In 2017, Hal Niedzviecki dismissed the notion of cultural appropriation and suggested that there should be an award—the "Appropriation Prize"—for the "best book by an author who

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[11] Mike Spry, "No Names, Only Monsters: Toxic Masculinity, Concordia, and CanLit," *CanLit Accountable*, January 8, 2018, http://www.canlitaccountable.com.

[12] Emma Healy, "Stories Like Passwords," *The Hairpin*, October 6, 2014, https://www.thehairpin.com/2014/10/stories-like-passwords/.

[13] Jason Magder, "Heather O'Neill, Harassed During Her Time at Concordia, Sickened by Latest Allegations," *Montreal Gazette*, January 10, 2018, https://montrealgazette.com/news/local-news/its-still-happening-author-addresses-concordia-sexual-harassment-allegations.

[14] Simon Lewsen, "The CanLit Firestorm," *The Walrus*, November 24, 2016, https://thewalrus.ca/the-canlit-firestorm/.

[15] Ibid.

writes about people who aren't even remotely like her or him."[16] Subsequent discussion on Twitter saw other CanLit authors offer monetary donations for the prize. Rightfully so, outrage ensued.

It is hard to keep up with these controversies and debates, but there is a forthcoming book that will add to this dialogue and explore the ramifications, *Refuse: CanLit in Ruins*, co-edited by Hannah McGregor, Julie Rak, and Erin Wunker. *Refuse* "examines the fallout from recent CanLit controversies such as #UBCAccountable, the 'Appropriation Prize,' and issues surrounding Joseph Boyden's claim to Indigeneity," and covers topics, such "literary celebrity, white power, appropriation, class, and rape culture."[17] So far, the outcome has yet to be determined. Atwood continues to defend herself as a bad feminist,[18] and Galloway still asserts his innocence and was awarded $167,000 in damages from UBC.[19] Framing the climate of the CanLit community as a "seismic political shift," Lewsen ends his article with a Tweet from Nick Mount that encapsulates the current moment in CanLit: "A generation that still believes the system works is bumping up against a generation that doesn't. Welcome to the '60s, again."[20]

Yet, the current pressure for zero tolerance within the CanLit community is a far cry from the attitude of the CanLit community of the 1960s. In Chapter Two, I call attention to Cohen's description of writing as "a minor form of invisibility."[21] In an interview on CBC television, Cohen justifies, "I think that if you really get good then you do disappear."[22] While I explain how this idea of invisibility relates to celebrity, it also demonstrates the idea that good writing can excuse the author from bad behaviour. In other words, creative genius provides a defense for problematic conduct. Nowhere is this clearer than in the case of Galloway. Lewsen offers a hypothetical comparison: "Imagine that Galloway wasn't a celebrated writer with a tenured position but rather that he was, say, a branch manager at a bank. Imagine that, during a night out

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[16] Niedzviecki qtd. in Zulekha Nathoo, "Cultural Appropriation Vs. Artistic Licence: How Far Have We Really Come?" *CBC News*, May 13, 2017, https://www.cbc.ca/news/entertainment/cultural-appropriation-media-1.4114158.

[17] Book*hug "We're Pleased to Announce the Forthcoming Publication of *Refuse: CanLit in Ruins*, Co-Edited by Hannah McGregor Julie Rak and Erin Wunker," Facebook, January 19, 2018, https://m.facebook.com/BookThug/posts/1743293649070839.

[18] Margaret Atwood, "Am I a Bad Feminist?," *The Globe and Mail*, January 13, 2018, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/am-i-a-bad-feminist/article37591823/.

[19] Gary Mason, "Author Steven Galloway Breaks Silence: 'My Life Is Destroyed'," *The Globe and Mail*, June 8, 2018, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/books/article-steven-galloway-says-his-life-is-destroyed-after-ubc-payout/.

[20] Mount qtd. in Lewsen.

[21] "Leonard Cohen on the Road to Singing Sensation."

[22] Ibid.

drinking, he'd slapped a colleague in front of her peers. Would the bank have fired him by 9 a.m. the next day? Probably. Would eighty-nine powerful people have rushed to his defence? Probably not."[23] Here we see the downfall of literary celebrity in action. Who is protecting whom, and at what cost?

In *Arrival*, Mount[vii] provides examples of the widespread tolerance of bad behaviour in the 1960s CanLit community. Describing the conduct of authors at writer-in-residence programs, he recounts:

> The most cited legacy of Al Purdy's residency at Montreal's Loyola College is the term's worth of empty beer bottles that appeared under his office window when the snow melted in the spring—"Purdy's crocuses," the students called them. At George Williams, Richler told his students that writing couldn't be taught and told friends he had rented out his office to a bookie. A few years later, at Carleton, he prepared for class by drinking gin and tonics on the train, gave all his students a B, and when asked to give a public lecture, used it to call the faculty useless and the students ignorant.[24]

With behaviour such as this, and most-likely even worse, accepted for decades, it is not surprising that today CanLit is dissolving into a blaze of controversy as younger generations of writers refuse to tolerate this community of complicity.

A few dissident views concerning Cohen's past are washing up. Silence is not neutral. If you see something, say something. Cohen has not always been a saint. As Myra Bloom writes in *The Walrus*, "before Cohen became a saint, he was just a flawed man."[25] In "The Darker Side of Leonard Cohen: How the Myth of the Male Genius Shields our Cultural Heroes from Scrutiny," Bloom produces an unpopular account of Cohen as a problematic figure of Canadian Literature whose messy image has been cleaned up—his troubled past and objectification of women forgotten. She describes how after Cohen's death a "full-blown canonization has taken place."[26] She continues: "The former enfant terrible of Canadian arts and letters—erstwhile refuser of Governor General's awards, ingestor of drugs on Greek islands, recipient of head on unmade beds—has transmogrified, through death, into a holy figure."[27]

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[23] Lewsen.
[24] Mount, 72-73.
[25] Myra Bloom, "The Darker Side of Leonard Cohen: How the Myth of the Male Genius Shields Our Cultural Heroes from Scrutiny," *The Walrus*, April 9, 2018, https://thewalrus.ca/the-darker-side-of-leonard-cohen/.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid.

As I reference in the previous chapter, Catharine Lumby reveals how in death celebrities "can become positively supernatural."[28] Like Princess Diana who was "sometimes characterised in quasi-religious terms during her lifetime," after Cohen's death the "spiritual metaphors really began to multiply."[29] A *New York Times* article recently declared Cohen the "New Secular Saint of Montreal,"[30] a description, which Bloom asserts, "is not hyperbole or metaphor but an accurate assessment of Cohen's immaculate status in the current zeitgeist."[31] Bloom questions the ways in which Cohen's current image as a saint hides and erases aspects of his past that are problematic, the things we do not talk about when we talk about Leonard Cohen, specifically his ladies' man persona.

At the end of *The Favourite Game*, Cohen's protagonist Breavman, thought to be an autobiographical character by some, realizes that he cannot be both a good writer and a good lover and vanishes from his relationship after making promises he can no longer keep. The state of longing for love is what fuels Breavman as a writer, so he must push women away to artificially create this sense of yearning. In other words, his muse only inspires Breavman if she is kept at a distance, through his longing for her. She serves no use to him as an actual romantic partner, his cruel actions justified through his artistic production. Bloom observes that in Cohen's work, "women are often depicted as muses—quasi-mystical figures who inspire the poet's imagination and then conveniently disappear."[32] While she finds Cohen's songs, especially "Don't Go Home with Your Hard-On," "cringe-inducing," she contends that they are "nowhere near as extreme as his fiction" in their objectification of women.[33]

Turning from his art to his private life, Bloom emphasizes Cohen's own disclosure that he was not a good romantic partner. It is unclear whether Bloom is critical of Cohen's representation of women in his poetry, fiction, and songs or his actual relationships with women, or both, as at times Bloom conflates Cohen's life and art. She maintains: "Given that our threshold for bad male behaviour is currently sitting at an all-time low, we can surmise that Cohen's 'ladies' man' persona—cultivated in an era when the term still connoted 'romantic

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[28] Lumby, 537.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Bilefsky.
[31] Bloom.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.

artist' rather than 'pickup artist'—would get less traction now."[34] For Bloom, it appears that Cohen's celebrity persona, the depiction of women in his art, and his personal relationships with women are all interconnected and she is equally critical of all. For me, conflating these three things weakens her argument, although this perhaps marks another moment where my fan status makes critical analysis more difficult. Bloom's point however is that this type of behaviour would not be tolerated today, so how can we support a cultural figure who once participated in, and was excused from, problematic behaviour.

Bloom frames Cohen's objectification of women through the figure of the muse as "a classic example of what historian Martin Jay calls the 'aesthetic alibi' men have been using since the nineteenth century to justify bad behaviour."[35] In the case of Cohen, Bloom infers that his persona as a literary genius permits him to objectify women under the pretense of the aesthetic alibi, whereas today, "the myth of the male genius has come under fire in the wake of movements such as #metoo and #timesup, which have established the role of such tropes in legitimating the abusive treatment of women."[36] Jay's notion of the aesthetic alibi does not address abusive behaviour on the part of the artist outside of the art form, but questions the boundaries between art and life in regards to the freedom of the artist. For him, the aesthetic alibi refers to something that "would be libelous or offensive in everyday life," which is "granted a special dispensation, if it is understood to take place within the protective shield of an aesthetic frame."[37] In this respect, the aesthetic alibi is more about artistic freedom within the work of art, than a way to "justify bad behaviour"[38] in the process of artistic creation. Although one might argue that engaging in problematic relationships with women under the guise of the muse in order to create art would fall under the aesthetic alibi, Jay does not explicitly address this.

Bloom uses the title of a 1978 *Chatelaine* article, "Death of a Ladies' Chauvinist," and the article's suggestion that Cohen's new book of poetry may indicate "the rejection of his former womanizing self," as evidence that "Cohen's dalliances" were not "always so well-received back in his heyday."[39] In spite of the current cultural climate, Bloom is shocked that we are not more critical of Cohen's past retroactively. She references a 2016 CBC Music profile on

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[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Martin Jay, "The Aesthetic Alibi," *Salmagundi* 93 (Winter 1992): 15.
[38] Bloom.
[39] Ibid.

Cohen that proclaims: "What woman wouldn't be flattered to be the focus of such a fiercely artistic, intellectual, romantic man?"[40] For Bloom, "Cohen's womanizing seems to have been grandfathered in."[41] To further substantiate her claims regarding Cohen's objectification and problematic past with women, she turns to his novel *Beautiful Losers*, which was also a target of recent criticism in Anakana Schofield's article, "Beautiful Losers: Fifty Years Later, Leonard Loses His Erection." While Schofield refers to *Beautiful Losers* as a "failed, fossilized encounter,"[42] Bloom declares that it is "more outrageous now than when it was first published" and resembles a "how-to guide for writers who want to tank their literary careers. Indigenous appropriation? Check. Misogyny and graphic sexual violence? Check."[43]

Both Schofield and Bloom question *Beautiful Losers* place within the current CanLit canon. Bloom provides some insights from literature professors:

> The book's status in the CanLit canon, formerly unquestioned, also seems less secure these days. One literature professor I polled said he doesn't teach the book anymore because "there are too many issues to navigate in it." Another decided to put a trigger warning on his syllabus, cautioning "[s]tudents who 'love Leonard Cohen' when they enter the course" that they might be "shocked to find some of his works ethically repellent." This proved true: a lot of his students, he told me, were indeed deeply offended, particularly by the treatment of Edith.[44]

Framing the novel as "pointless hell," Schofield suggests that perhaps "if you were stoned in a ditch in Grand Prairie in 1966, this novel was a revelation and Lord knows, perhaps it still is a revelation if you've had your head inside your armpit for eighty years."[45] Bloom gives Cohen the benefit of the doubt by exploring his goals and motives in writing such a novel, arguing that we "can glean enough from Cohen's life and writing, including the novel, to know that he did not endorse violence against women in general or Indigenous women in particular. You could even go as far as to say that he was ahead of his time in acknowledging Canada's colonial history before this issue really entered mainstream consciousness."[46] Nevertheless, Bloom stands firm and concludes, "By current yardsticks, though, it doesn't really *matter* whether Cohen was being

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[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Schofield.
[43] Bloom.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Schofield.
[46] Bloom.

ironic, because we have collectively rejected irony as a means of addressing systemic injustice."[47] This raises the question as to whether this matters, as the rejection of irony and its "power to uphold the very structures of power it ostensibly denounces"[48] comes after Cohen wrote the novel.

Does *Beautiful Losers* still have merit as an artifact of its cultural and socio-historical context? Is the novel no longer taught because it is proving more complicated to examine within the current climate and because students today are very much removed from the original context in which Cohen wrote the book, or because the novel is problematic in itself? Schofield provides one answer to this debate whether a "socio- or sacro-cartographic argument [can] be made for this novel being 'of its time;'" in her view: "Blank literary nationalism, geography, and 1966 are a weak basis for maintaining meritless work. Who cares if it was Canada's first introduction to postmodernism, let's skip ten years and harp on instead about our second introduction."[49]

In the current cultural moment of #metoo and #timesup, there has been growing controversy over our continued support and appreciation of cultural materials from the past that no longer feel appropriate in contemporary culture. Can we celebrate Cohen today notwithstanding the prevailing perception that aspects of his work are troublesome? Do we have to erase or sanitize certain parts of his identity to continue to pay tribute to him? Or, by celebrating Cohen in the present, "basking in the light of the elder Cohen's towering icon,"[50] do we silence these dissenting discourses, expunging them from history? Does this stem, as Schofield questions, from "a desire to protect or pardon literary Cohen because he's a national sonic treasure?"[51] Or does this function to protect the image of Canada, and of Montreal, as a rich, cultural landscape from which artistic genius can emerge?

Is it worth fighting over the now-long-ago behaviours and problematic creative works of deceased authors? I am reminded of current debates around the removal of statues of Sir John A. Macdonald, Canada's first Prime Minister, on account of his role in the formation of the residential school system. Here, we must assert the difference between celebrating a figure and erasing the past. Removing statues of Macdonald does not erase the past, but it stops the celebration of the past, disrupting its dominant cultural construction and asserting a different

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[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Schofield.
[50] Bloom.
[51] Schofield.

perception. In light of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, for example, as Canadian citizens, we have a newfound responsibility to critically interrogate our dominant representations of the past. It is no longer morally, ethically, and culturally responsible to uncritically celebrate representations of the past.

In *Heavenly Bodies*, Richard Dyer calls attention to the shifting basis of celebrity throughout the celebrity's life, where certain "elements predominate … at different periods in the star's career."[52] Cohen's celebrity has not relied on his literary works for some time, and this element of his career ceases to be relevant to the current discursive constitution of his celebrity. The dominant construction of Cohen today is the kind-hearted old man in a fedora, who brought audiences to tears over the course of his three-hour shows, which he performed into his late seventies. Our last image of Cohen is one of him working hard up until his final days, releasing three new albums over the course of four years; his latest album released only weeks before his death.

At the same time, this idea that Cohen's celebrity no longer rests on his literary works can be troubled slightly by the fact that his last creative work is a collection of poems, *The Flame*, published posthumously. In the forward to *The Flame*, his son, Adam Cohen, reiterates the importance of his father's work as a poet. Elucidating how writing these poems kept his father alive, Adam Cohen states: "He often remarked to me that, through all the strategies of art and living that he had employed during his rich and complicated life, he wished that he had more completely stayed steadfast to the recognition that writing was his only solace, his truest purpose."[53] This statement reinforces the importance of poetry to Cohen, thus potentially recentralizing his work as a poet as a vital element of his celebrity. There are also rumours of a posthumous album, signaling that perhaps Cohen's career is not quite finished.

As Dyer indicates, the later reputation of a celebrity can send audiences back to their original works "with a different kind of interest."[54] In the cultural climate of today, some critics are interrogating the former basis of Cohen's fame with a different perspective of creative genius, no longer allowing it as an excuse for bad behaviour. This magnifies what Bloom and Schofield articulate in their articles. By celebrating particular images of Cohen, others become hidden and turn into the things we do not talk about when we talk about Leonard Cohen.

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[52] Dyer, *Heavenly*, 3.
[53] Cohen, *The Flame: Poems and Selections from Notebooks*.
[54] Dyer, *Heavenly*, 3.

**5.3 I'm Good at Love, I'm Good at Hate, It's in Between I Freeze**

There is a reason Michael Rakowitz's multimedia installation stands out from the other installations among the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal's exhibition *Leonard Cohen: A Crack in Everything*. It is the only installation that is not wholeheartedly celebratory of Cohen. The exhibition catalog describes it as featuring "video projection, darkened monitor, archival artifacts and objects," which ruminate on "the iconic figure of Leonard Cohen and the ethical crisis of the post-Holocaust Jew in relation to Israel, Palestine and the greater Middle East."[55] When walking into the small room housing the installation, you encounter a video projection directly on the wall in front of you. To the left is an array of objects placed and lit under plexiglass. The first of these objects is Cohen's own Olivetti Lettera 22 typewriter, acquired by Rakowitz through EBay, and a letter he wrote to Cohen on that very same typewriter in 2015. After spending some time in the room, you quickly realize the letter also forms the narration of the short film projected on the wall.

In the film, Rakowitz recreates "the period during which Cohen travelled to Israel to perform for troops fighting in the Yom Kippur War," using an actor with an uncanny likeness to Cohen.[56] In the letter, Rakowitz presents himself as a "great admirer" of Cohen's work and describes the joy he felt after learning Cohen was to perform in Ramallah.[57] However, his elation shifted into disappointment after discovering Cohen was also scheduled for a performance in Israel, which ultimately led to the cancellation of the Ramallah show by the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel. Rakowitz's conflicting feelings towards Cohen—the experience of cognitive dissonance between feelings of appreciation for Cohen's art and lack of support for some of his beliefs and actions—form the foundation of this work. Cohen fans, experiencing similar feelings, often sort them out by not talking about or ignoring aspects of Cohen's identity that create this dissonance. However, Rakowitz is unable to resolve these feelings and relates the personal reasons as to why.

The title of the installation, *I'm Good at Love, I'm Good at Hate, It's in Between I Freeze,* a line from Cohen's poem "Thousand Kisses Deep," mirrors this experience of cognitive dissonance, the space between love and hate, which Rakowitz attempts to navigate. While he reflects upon the tension between love and hate in connection to Cohen, his main focus is on the

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[55] Zeppetelli and Shiffman, 50.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid., 52.

experience of this tension in relation to Israel. In the letter, he informs Cohen of his project, stating: "[T]his paralysis located in the middle is the moment that captivates me. I feel it too and I think many Jews around the world who are faced with the ethical crisis of what Israel is and what Israel does feel it as well."[58] Rakowitz explains how growing up in suburban New York he saw "no logical reason to not support Zionism" until college when he learned of "the cost of constructing a Jewish homeland."[59] Connecting this to his grandparents, who are of Arab and Jewish decent, and their own dispossession and escape from Baghdad in 1946, he directs attention to the "well-documented programs that sought to de-Arabize Arab Jews upon their arrival in Israel … another act of cultural erasure."[60] In delineating his position, Rakowitz maintains: "The existence of the state of Israel could not be possible without a choreography of historical narratives that does not always intersect with truth. 'A land without a people for a people without a land,' for one. Well, there were people there."[61] Reflecting upon the different perspectives and lived histories from which he and Cohen approach the conflict, Rakowitz's letter appeals to Cohen to listen from a different standpoint.

In the letter, Rakowitz calls upon Cohen to consider his power and influence in making the decision to perform in Israel, at the cost of not being able to perform in Ramallah. He writes:

> Leonard, I believe boycotts are problematic. I think politics can obliterate art, but I also think that art can create facts and bring to light truths that are suppressed. Your words have had great impact around the world, and in particular, in the Arab world and West Asia. Palestinian director Elia Suleiman features your recording of "First We Take Manhattan" during the climax of his lyrical film "Chronicle of a Disappearance." Your prose is quoted by poets and artists from Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon. Two collections of your poems have been translated into Farsi and published in Iran, where Jewish poets are not well represented. Both editions sold out within hours. Art obliterates politics.[62]

Rakowitz's installation is able to be critical without damning Cohen, and it engages the Cohen phenomenon in all its complexity and multiplicity. In this respect, Rakowitz's installation provides a perceptive example of how to hold ambivalence in tension.

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[58] Ibid., 53.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid., 52.

The image of Cohen that Rakowitz creates in this piece is not two-dimensional; he paints a realistic portrait of a man trying to navigate complex issues late in his career and appeals to the sensitivity of this man to reflect upon his past actions and perhaps make different choices in the future. This resonates with the title of the installation (*I'm Good at Love, I'm Good at Hate, It's in Between I Freeze*) and underlines the potentially debilitating space between love and hate. Working productively from within this space, Rakowitz has compassion and empathy for Cohen, in particular "the 11-year-old boy who in 1945 saw footage of the inferno that was the Holocaust,"[63] and understands Cohen's "desire to balance [his] presence in Palestine / Israel" without supporting his position or dissolving into hatred.[64]

The main goal of Rakowitz's piece is to accent the freeze between love and hate and to work through this paralysis in a meaningful and productive way. He writes: "I have never been interested in being perfect, morally or ethically. I am interested in the real, the contradictions and the resultant tensions that are created within the self."[65] He expands on this in the conclusion of his letter:

> I don't know why I am writing to you, then I suppose it is about honor among artists. I see the conflict in you and the conflict in me and think that somehow we can blend and have it both ways. I want you to know that sometimes the good guys lose and that maybe you sang for the enemy. I guess I want you to know that the way you feel feels normal to me, but that this is no excuse.[66]

Near the end of his letter, Rakowitz explains: "I cannot support a Zionist position because of what it forgets."[67] This reminds us how certain discourses have the ability to erase history, that forgetting or choosing to ignore the complicated and devastating aspects of history and individuals creates a singular, smoothed out story, and that engaging in the complicated middle-zone between love and hate, the real, may bring forth a new or different narrative that exists alongside others. Rakowitz continues: "I am therefore asking your permission, Leonard, to remember. To illuminate truth."[68] Freeing himself from such paralysis, Rakowitz sets out to remember.

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[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid., 53.
[65] Ibid., 52.
[66] Ibid., 53.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid.

## 5.4 That Don't Make It Junk

If anyone has insight into the topics that Cohen fans like to avoid, it would be Allan Showalter. Showalter runs the Cohencentric website, which like its precursors HeckOfAGuy.com and DrHGuy.com, is one of the top websites that focus on Cohen.[viii] Cohencentric hosts an array of materials from concert videos to analyses of Cohen's work to breaking news to other miscellaneous information pertaining to Cohen. Before his death, Cohen was also an occasional contributor. After making a string of observations regarding the popularity of particular posts on his website, as well as the unpopularity of others, in April 2018 Showalter published a series of posts titled "That Don't Make It Junk: Things Cohenites Don't Like About Leonard Cohen." In the introduction to the series, he explains: "Three Leonard Cohen topics, all unequivocal facts from Leonard's history, have proved overwhelmingly and uniformly unpopular with and, frequently, antagonistic to readers."[69] These three topics go beyond "the strident comments that 'nobody should cover Leonard's songs' or 'Jazz Police is probably Cohen's worst song,'" and comprise Cohen's brief stint with scientology, his ownership of guns, and his views on war.[70]

While one could just disregard aspects of Cohen's identity that are troublesome and concentrate on the purely favourable features, Rakowitz's installation warns of the dangers of forgetting parts of history. Showalter is resolute about the risks of editing out facets of Cohen's biography that make people uncomfortable, explaining: "While one supposes that a case can be made for simply omitting those portions of Leonard's life that could upset fans, even benign historical revisionism is not without cost. If those who admire artists are interested in understanding their backgrounds, rewriting those histories defeats the intent. Ignoring, let alone attacking biographical data is dangerous."[71] We cannot ignore uncomfortable aspects of Cohen's past; instead, we must bring them to the forefront. By underscoring the things we do not want to talk about when we talk about Leonard Cohen, I hold Cohen's ambivalent construction in tension to see what it reveals.

Like other fan websites, Cohencentric and its earlier iterations identify Cohen's preferred brand names and favourite consumer products, including the model of car he drove, the brand of

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[69] Allan Showalter, "That Don't Make It Junk: Things Cohenites Don't Like About Leonard Cohen," *Cohencentric*, April 27, 2018, https://cohencentric.com/2018/04/27/that-dont-make-it-junk-things-cohenites-dont-like-about-leonard-cohen/

[70] "That Don't Make It Junk: Things Cohenites Don't Like About Leonard Cohen: His Scientology Phase," *Cohencentric*, April 29, 2018, https://cohencentric.com/2018/04/29/that-dont-make-it-junk-things-cohenites-dont-like-about-leonard-cohen-his-scientology-phase/.

[71] Ibid.

typewriter and computer he used, as well as his favourite foods, drinks, cigarettes, and drugs. Showalter notes that these posts have regularly attracted a great deal of interest, "while the posts about smoking, drinking, and drug use routinely triggered a handful of concerned comments."[72] One topic however "generated an overwhelmingly negative response: the Firearms and Leonard Cohen series."[73] Showalter ponders:

> It's interesting to speculate about why the Cohenite response to Leonard's use of guns so dramatically amplified compared, for example, to his use of drugs. It seems likely that the answer has to do, in part, with firearms having been transformed into a political litmus test. I suspect that, as well, Leonard Cohen's comfort with and enjoyment of guns doesn't fit the image admirers have constructed of the Canadian singer-songwriter, creating cognitive dissonance that is resolved by avoiding / denying that trait.[74]

Again, Showalter points to the ability of fans to resolve cognitive dissonance by ignoring aspects of Cohen's identity that are inconsistent with their image of him. This relates to Dyer's reflection that audience members select aspects of the celebrity's identity, "the variations, inflections and contradictions, that work for them."[75] Explaining that his goal is not to support or shame Cohen's interest in guns, Showalter reasserts the danger of historical revisionism. "The goal," he contends, "is simply illuminating an area in Leonard's life that is unknown to many because it is somehow discomforting."[76] In some ways, the most revealing aspect of discovering Cohen's love of guns has nothing to do with Cohen, but with our own desire to hide things about Cohen that make us uncomfortable.

Rakowitz focuses on Cohen's participation in the Yom Kippur War precisely because it makes him feel uncomfortable. By contrast, Showalter realizes that some fans avoid the topic because they "are clearly uncomfortable with Leonard having anything to do with this war, especially because it epitomizes the Israel-Arab conflict."[77] He singles out one quote in particular

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[72] Allan Showalter, "That Don't Make It Junk: Things Cohenites Don't Like About Leonard Cohen: His Guns," *Cohencentric*, May 1, 2018, https://cohencentric.com/2018/05/01/that-dont-make-it-junk-things-cohenites-dont-like-about-leonard-cohen-his-guns/.

[73] "That Don't Make It Junk: His Guns."

[74] Ibid.

[75] Dyer, *Heavenly*, 4.

[76] Showalter, "That Don't Make It Junk: His Guns."

[77] "That Don't Make It Junk: Things Cohenites Don't Like About Leonard Cohen: Leonard Cohen on War," *Cohencentric*, April 29, 2018, https://cohencentric.com/2018/05/05/that-dont-make-it-junk-things-cohenites-dont-like-about-leonard-cohen-leonard-cohen-on-war/.

that caused uproar among fans online. The quote comes from an interview with Robin Pike in 1974, which appeared in *Zig Zag* magazine. In the interview, Cohen proclaims:

> War is wonderful. They'll never stamp it out. It's one of the few times people can act their best. It's so economical in terms of gesture and motion, every single gesture is precise, every effort is at its maximum. Nobody goofs off. Everybody is responsible for his brother. The sense of community and kinship and brotherhood, devotion. There are opportunities to feel things that you simply cannot feel in modern city life. Very impressive.[78]

Showalter observes that "fans appear to feel betrayed when discover[ing] Leonard Cohen quotes that are supportive of the military or war."[79] Although fans may be under the misapprehension that Cohen was anti-war, according to Showalter there is significant evidence to the contrary; "the anti-war Leonard Cohen persona is a misperception."[80]

The reactions to these Cohencentric website posts demonstrate that Cohen fans paint very distinct portraits of Cohen, which reflect their own personal meaning, and when these understandings of Cohen come into conflict with other representations it is very tempting to ignore or refute the evidence. Since the relationship between fan and celebrity is very personal and intimate, and since we can never know the "real" celebrity, picking and choosing certain aspects of the celebrity's persona is a standard fan practice. This does not mean there is no risk involved in narrowing our focus to only specific dimensions of Cohen's identity. By ignoring the things we do not talk about when we talk about Leonard Cohen, we reify his image in a particular fashion, one that smoothens out the edges and fits nicely onto the side of a building in the form of a mural (or two).

By calling attention to my own hesitancy in talking about the contentious aspects of Cohen's identity, in this conclusion, I concentrate on the things we do not talk about when we talk about Cohen, the things dominant discourses neglect. In doing so, I accentuate three examples that hold Cohen's contradictory character in tension. Overall, I situate this discussion of the complicated aspects of Cohen's identity within the contemporary cultural climate that demands accountability for bad behaviour, past and present. Here, I trace a shifting discourse of

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[78] qtd. in Showalter, "That Don't Make It Junk: Things Cohenites Don't Like About Leonard Cohen: Leonard Cohen on War."

[79] Showalter, "That Don't Make It Junk: Things Cohenites Don't Like About Leonard Cohen: Leonard Cohen on War."

[80] Ibid.

celebrity in Canada. In the 1960s, when Cohen's early celebrity as a literary figure was developing, the discourse of creative genius allowed the writer to become invisible; it acted as an escape clause for bad behaviour. Today, however, there are calls for greater accountability from everybody, celebrities included. While the discourses that circulate Cohen have been largely celebratory, other discourses are beginning to emerge. This is also connected to the emerging discourse of celebrity I identify in Chapter One, discussing Dave Bidini's critical open letter to Joni Mitchell. In light of the current climate, I would argue that these dissenting discourses are more apt to accelerate than to disappear. While fans may pick and choose aspects of Cohen's identity to celebrate, as a scholar I must illuminate the bad with the good and hold the ambivalent constitution of Cohen in tension. In spite of my discomfort, I must not resolve this tension.

**5.5 Travelling Light: Final Thoughts**

In the mid-twentieth century, the Massey Commission played a key role in the development of a discourse of cultural nationalism that branded Canadian culture as distinct from American mass culture. As a result of the commission, the Canadian government strengthened cultural policy and developed the Canada Council for the Arts to support cultural production. In 1958, Cohen was a recipient of a Canada Council Junior Arts Fellowship. With the money awarded, he purchased a plane ticket and flew to London. The day he arrived, he purchased a Burberry raincoat, later "memorialized in his song 'Famous Blue Raincoat.'"[81] In his biography of Cohen, Ira Nadel suggests that the "song has become a signature of sorts, the raincoat embodying Cohen's early image of mystery, travel, and adventure."[82] Cohen wears the coat throughout the 1965 National Film Board documentary, *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen*, as he wanders through the crowds of Montreal. As I wander back through this dissertation—entitled "Our Famous Blue Raincoat"—I ponder the challenges I faced, areas I could develop in the future, and the overall strengths of my research. Just as the history of Leonard Cohen's career over the last sixty years is a reflection of the development of contemporary celebrity culture in Canada, this dissertation on the Cohen phenomenon is a reflection of my intellectual development as a PhD student.

One the biggest challenges I faced in undertaking this project was the sheer volume of materials that compose the Cohen phenomenon. This was compounded when I decided to

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[81] Nadel, 73.
[82] Ibid.

incorporate an analysis of Cohen fandom. I contemplated how I could integrate these two fields of study, especially given the broad and multi-disciplinary nature of fan studies. The conundrum was: how do I develop an account of Cohen fandom within a study of his celebrity given that these two areas (celebrity and fan studies) have developed and remained separate, most likely, because they both require full-length study? To attempt an analysis of Cohen fandom within an analysis of his celebrity may come with charges of not taking Cohen fandom seriously, but the risk felt necessary for a more complete analysis of the Cohen phenomenon, my primary goal.

In some ways, excluding any discussion of Cohen fandom felt like a bigger risk, as Cohen fandom forms a central part of the Cohen phenomenon. Since a full-length study of Cohen fandom is beyond the scope of this dissertation, I identify areas for further research. For example, I conclude Chapter Three by accentuating the work of fandom in the attempt to facilitate and open up the conversation surrounding Cohen fandom and to signal the need for more extensive work.

My exploration of Cohen fandom primarily centres on media representations of Cohen fans, which I discovered perpetuate common stereotypes of fans. I was surprised by the media coverage of Montreal 2000 and its portrayal of Cohen fans, and it impelled me to locate other materials that contained the actual words of fans to redress this imbalance. This led to the decision to include an analysis of fan letters written to Cohen in the late-1960s. I closely examined a sample of twelve fan letters of the thirty contained in the Cohen Papers. At the time, I thought that twelve letters were substantial. This may reveal some of the biases that I continue to carry with me as I move from a literary studies tradition that involves the close reading of a singular literary text to an interdisciplinary approach that examines a wider range and greater volume of materials.

An alternative methodology I could have applied to study a larger sample of fan texts is a digital humanities distant reading approach. While Franco Moretti coined the term, Johanna Drucker defines distant reading as the processing of content in or information about "a large number of textual items without engaging in the reading of the actual text."[83] Computer analytics have the capacity to incorporate multiple discourses into a singular analysis, allowing researchers to elucidate overlap between the popular, fan, industrial, and scholarly discourses surrounding

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[83] Johanna Drucker, "Distant Reading and Cultural Analytics," Intro to Digital Humanities. Concepts, Methods, and Tutorials for Students and Instructors, UCLA Center for Digital Humanities, 2014, accessed February 5, 2019, http://dh101.humanities.ucla.edu/?page_id=62.

the primary object of analysis. This permits researchers to explore and trace how particular ideas, values, practices, and so forth developed and spread within and between these ancillary discourses, highlighting objects, texts, and images often disregarded in a close reading of an individual text or cultural artifact. For example, in "Becoming Yourself: The Afterlife of Reception" Ed Finn explores the social lives of books and uses both professional and Amazon customer book reviews of David Foster Wallace as his primary datasets, studying and mapping the multiple networks of texts that appear as a way to investigate Wallace's location in the literary marketplace.[84]

Matthew L. Jockers prefers the term macroanalysis to distant reading, comparing it to macroeconomics and its focus on the big picture. Relating this to Pierre Bourdieu and his study of cultural economy, we can reposition distant reading as a technique to analyze the broader field of cultural production in which the cultural artifacts we study are produced, circulated, consumed, and given value. In this respect, it becomes less a matter of distance than focus; that is, it is a methodology which uncovers the broader workings of cultural artifacts often downplayed or completely ignored in a close reading of the text. As Jockers contends, "The most fundamental and important difference in the two approaches is that the macroanalytic approach reveals details about texts that are for all intents and purposes unavailable to close-readers of the texts."[85] This interpretation is similar to the one held by Moretti, who maintains that distance is a "condition of knowledge: it allows you to focus on units that are much smaller or much larger than the text: devices, themes, tropes—or genres and systems. And if, between the very small and the very large, the text itself disappears, well, it is one of those cases when one can justifiably say, Less is more."[86]

For Moretti, the debate over close and distant reading, and the questions it raises—"are they complementary, compatible, opposite, do I really want people to stop reading books, etc."— holds little interest.[87] Jockers points out that his own macroanalytic approach is just one of many methods of gaining and assessing information about a cultural artifact, the results of which are

[84] Ed Finn, "Becoming Yourself: The Afterlife of Reception," in *Literary AB*, ed. Literary Lab at Stanford University (2011).
[85] Matthew L. Jockers, "On Distant Reading and Macroanalysis," *Matthew L. Jockers*, July 1, 2011, http://www.matthewjockers.net/2011/07/01/on-distant-reading-and-macroanalysis/.
[86] Franco Moretti, "Conjectures on World Literature," *New Left Review* 1 (2000).
[87] Franco Moretti, *Distant Reading* (Brooklyn: Verso, 2013), 137.

"not of lesser or greater value to scholars."[88] He argues, "It is the exact interplay between macro and micro scale that promises a new, enhanced, and perhaps even better understanding of the literary record."[89]

Moretti admits that if "we want to understand the system in its entirety, we must accept losing something. We always pay a price for theoretical knowledge."[90] What are the ramifications here? What might be lost in a distant reading approach to Cohen fandom? Considering that my focus on Cohen fandom centres around intimacy and emotional connection—feeling *close* to Cohen and evoking his presence through engagement with the materials that compose the Cohen phenomenon—a distant reading approach is not the right methodological fit for this study. Instead, my utilization of an autoethnographic approach allows me to explore my own embodied, emotional experience of Cohen fandom—what it *feels* like to be a fan. This prompts the question whether distant reading can capture emotions, feelings, and intimacy?

While Cohen's death opened up new possibilities in my research, most significantly the autoethnographic exploration of my embodied, emotional experience of his death, it also led to the exclusion of others. When Cohen died, it became clear that it would be essential to focus on this moment as it was occurring. I was now exploring Cohen's celebrity through a new lens, and there was no longer the space to continue certain parts of my analysis. Just as his death now frames the Cohen phenomenon, Cohen's death now frames my dissertation.

If I were to build upon this work in the future, I would like to develop an analysis of the discourses that envelope Cohen's career change from poet and novelist to musician in the mid-to-late 1960s and early 1970s. Here, the goal is not to offer a definitive answer as to where, when, and for what reasons Cohen became a musician, but to examine the accounts that other people have given in pondering these questions. In doing so, I would explore the value judgments and various forms of capital involved and interrogate what they might reveal about the ways in which we talk about fame and celebrity in Canada. The materials I examine would include those that document, discuss, analyze, and critique Cohen's new identity and role as a musician and would not be limited to materials circulated at the time, but also retrospective accounts. Additionally, I would work to situate these discourses within the context of technological innovations in the

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[88] Jockers.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Moretti, "Conjectures on World Literature."

recording industry, cultural policy and implementation of Canadian content regulations, and in relation to the dominant discourses of celebrity discussed in Chapter One.

Another area I would expand is the section on the things we do not talk about when we talk about Leonard Cohen. While the things I discuss in this section—Cohen's ladies' man persona, views on war, and his love of firearms—are more specifically the things we currently avoid in discussions of Cohen today, I would like to explore in more depth the discourse around Cohen's ladies' man persona in the 1970s-1980s.

Reflecting on my autoethnography now I discover another way it functions, one I did not consider in the writing process. In some ways it performs a similar discursive move to the one Cohen makes at the end of *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen* when he breaks the fourth wall; as we watch him watch himself, he reflects on the construction of the film and the film's construction of his persona, and acts as a double agent to tell the audience that this film is not totally devoid of the con. In a comparable fashion, my autoethnography breaks the fourth wall of my dissertation in a way that is revealing and self-reflexive. In this respect, the structure of my dissertation integrates and replicates aspects of the Cohen phenomenon. From the outset, I articulate that this dissertation actively participates in discourses of celebrity and the Cohen phenomenon; it is impossible for it to exist outside discourse. It talks about discourse, it is discourse, and it contributes to this discourse.

On the same day that Cohen arrived in London and acquired his now-famous blue raincoat, he also purchased a green Olivetti 22 typewriter, which he used to write his novels and some of his most famous songs.[91] This is the very same typewriter Rakowitz acquired through EBay in 2015, which he used to write Cohen the letter that became the basis for his multimedia installation for the exhibition *Leonard Cohen: A Crack in Everything*. Here we see an incisive illustration of the circulation of the Cohen phenomenon. Due to funds he received from the Canadian government in the late 1950s, Cohen was able to travel to London where he acquired two of his most iconic possessions on the day of his arrival. While the whereabouts of the coat is unknown, as Nadel notes, today it has become a symbol, even a metonym for Cohen. As for the typewriter, it is currently travelling the world as part of the Leonard Cohen exhibition.

In my autoethnography, I reveal the personal significance of Cohen to my life and how I have used Cohen as a sign of security that indicates that I am on the right path. In this context, it

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[91] Nadel, 73.

seems very fitting that immediately after I submitted a copy of my dissertation for my December defence and was walking down the stairs from the library, I suddenly heard a familiar voice emanating through the stairwell speakers. It was Cohen singing "There's nothing left to do…" from his song "Waiting for the Miracle."[92]

In this dissertation, I have presented my analysis of the discursive constitution of the celebrity phenomenon of Leonard Cohen in Canadian culture across several decades. For me, the importance of this study lies in its attempt to advance a more complex approach to celebrity. Biographical approaches centre on the tension created by discourses of celebrity, the aim being to resolve the celebrity paradox to expose the real person behind the celebrity image. The appeal of celebrity discourse generally resides in its resolution of ambivalence; it suggests an answer, a solution. To resist this temptation is difficult; to fall under the charisma of celebrity discourse is easy. By contrast, the approach to celebrity I develop here refuses to resolve the celebrity paradox and instead interrogates its discursive construction. In this respect, my hope is that for scholars studying celebrity my analysis offers a more contemporary approach to ambivalence and a more rigorous methodology for examining celebrity discourse.

Through this project, I have set out to contribute to the expansion of celebrity studies in a number of important respects. First, through building on the scholarship of Lorraine York and others, I address the lack of research on Canadian celebrity by using Cohen as an entry point to investigate the constitution of celebrity in Canada. This will interest scholars studying Canadian celebrity, as it provides an overview of the shifting and emerging discourses of celebrity from the mid-twentieth century to the present day through a full-length study of Canadian celebrity. My attention to the interconnections between Canadian and literary celebrity, in particular, provides important insights into the prominence of Canadian literary celebrity shortly after the Massey Commission and highlights the influence of the discourse of cultural nationalism.

Second, my study of literary celebrity in Canada brings into focus the role of cultural policy in the discursive construction of celebrity. By studying the role of cultural policy, the close ties between our cultural industries, celebrity, and cultural policy discourse in Canada become evident. In addition to cultural policy, the study of literary celebrity in Canada calls attention to the invisible forms of labour involved in pursuing a cultural career in Canada (e.g. the role of paperwork, grant applications, and other forms of administrative work). Although this

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[92] Leonard Cohen, "Waiting for the Miracle " *The Future* (Columbia Records, 1992).

study has a Canadian context, it offers a comparative framework for scholars studying literary celebrity in other national and global contexts.

Third, to advance a more nuanced understanding of the constitution of celebrity as complex, fluid, and dynamic, this study introduces theories of circulation to the study of celebrity. Doing so accentuates circulation as a constitutive act of celebrity and draws our attention to the discursive links between celebrity and a variety of other discourses as well as other cultural forms, emotions, and values. Exploring the circulation of celebrity also helps to trace the interconnections between celebrity and fandom. I have argued that celebrity discourse constitutes fandom as a public through its intimate address and in turn fandom engages with and circulates celebrity discourse. This perspective of circulation should attract scholars of celebrity and fandom alike as well as researchers interested in the concepts of circulation and publics.

In particular, I developed this perspective of circulation to bridge the gap between fandom and celebrity scholarship. In "*Soap Fans*, Revisited," Lee Harrington and Denise Bielby explain how their approach in *Soap Fans* "was an atypical strategy in 1990s-era fan studies that remains atypical today, given the general lack of dialogue between fan studies and celebrity studies."[93] They observe how the study of fandom and celebrity advanced separately and continue to lack dialogue today. In this respect, my focus on both discourses of celebrity and fandom, as well as their interconnections, works to reunite these two areas of study.

As part of my research, I have attempted to broaden the scope of fandom research, which will be of special interest to fandom scholars. First, my participation in the debate concerning the continuing relevance of the acafan concept will reinvigorate this discussion among fandom scholars. I engage in this debate by both troubling the concept—questioning how it might function as a method of distinguishing oneself from "normal fans"—and considering its value in its approach to ambivalence. Second, my study of Cohen fans provides a corrective to the lack of current scholarship on representations of fans, as noted in the introduction to *Seeing Fans*.

Studying representations of fans after the death of a celebrity is another way of combining the study of fandom and celebrity. While many studies of fan representations in the wake of celebrity deaths focus on the prominent, yet now-outdated, example of the death of Princess Diana, my examination of the media representation of the reaction to Cohen's death identifies a shift away from pathological images of fan mourning to representations that embody

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[93] Harrington and Bielby, "Soap Fans, Revisited," 78.

agency as a way of dealing with the death of a beloved celebrity. Third, my combination of fan autoethnography with embodied in/capacity theory provides a distinctive example of how to engage with one's emotions as both a fan and a scholar, and importantly brings to the forefront the emotional experience of scholarly research, an experience not typically accounted for in fan research. Finally, my emotional discourse analysis introduces an innovative conceptual framework to study both fandom and celebrity discourse, again bringing together these two interconnected phenomena.

My focus on affect and my use of emotional discourse analysis draws on the sociology of emotions and contributes to the affective turn in cultural analysis. My aim to take my emotions as a scholar and a fan into account—to take them seriously and depathologize them—is a meaningful contribution to this area. By bringing the concept of ethical incompleteness into a study of affect, especially the study of academic affect, this research project will pique the interest of other scholars attentive to the role of emotions in connection to not only academic work, but various other forms of labour.

One aim of this project is to open up new avenues of inquiry for literary studies by exploring a range of extra-textual materials often disregarded in traditional approaches to literature. While these materials may be similar to those used in a biographical or journalistic study, my approach differs vastly. In examining the celebrity phenomenon of Cohen, my goal is to illuminate how shifting focus from the content and meaning of a literary text to modes of production, circulation, and consumption unearths new areas of research and methodological possibilities. In turn, this study contributes to a growing area of research that is critical of the exclusive use of close reading and advocates for contextual analyses of the material, industrial, and economic aspects of literary production. This scholarship not only addresses the vital role of industrial and economic factors in the field of literary production, but also uncovers and recovers a wide range of practices, processes, and materials. Part of a larger "reorientation of cultural study toward what has too often been set aside as the mere machinery of cultural production,"[94] this dissertation works to reveal how the study of literary celebrity and its related objects— literary awards, popular discourse, cultural policy—offers a wide range of materials of analysis and sites of inquiry that fall outside the traditional boundaries of literary studies.

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[94] English, 13.

Finally, this study will interest fans and admirers of Cohen and his work. Unlike celebrity discourse, I do not attempt to reveal the real Leonard Cohen, but provide a new and unique perspective on the discursive construction of the Cohen phenomenon. In this respect, we can see how we all participate in Cohen's construction; we validate, construct, justify, and perpetuate his mythology through the ways in which we talk and do not talk about Cohen. In other words, if Cohen is the word made flesh, then we are the word. We all are the authors of the mythology of Leonard Cohen. Now, let us compare mythologies.

## Notes

[i] Cohen now watches over the bar from across the street in the form of a large mural, painted in June 2017, on the side of his favourite restaurant, Moishes.

[ii] For example, Cohen's debut album, *Songs of Leonard Cohen*, topped the charts at eighty-three in the United States and thirteen in the United Kingdom, but did not chart in Canada (see Mount, 185). According to Music Canada, whose Gold Platinum Awards Program started in 1975, *I'm Your Man* was the first Cohen album to be certified Gold status (50,000) in May 1989, and *The Future* reached Platinum status (100,000) in January 1993 and Double Platinum (200,000) in September 1993 (see "Gold / Platinum," Music Canada, 2018).

[iii] In 2018, the CBC Digital Archives changed its name to CBC Archives and appears to have dropped its pedagogical objective.

[iv] Although this article has become lost in the ether of the internet, the notions it contains continue to circulate through other material. Cohen's connection to Montreal, for instance, was greatly emphasized after his death, as Montreal became a city in mourning. The front door of his Montreal house became an altar and talks of official monuments began circulating. During the city's annual Mural Festival, Kevin Ledo painted a mural of Cohen on Saint Laurent Boulevard, the festival's largest to date. Shortly after, a second mural, this one officially commissioned by the city of Montreal, was painted downtown on Crescent Street.

[v] Marshall identifies this as a shift from a logic of representation to a logic of presentation in the structures of online self-production in his article "The Promotion and Presentation of the Self."

[vi] However, Cohen is not the only musician to achieve success and experience a career revival late in life. Another notable example is Johnny Cash's resurgence, from the mid-1990s until his death in 2003, when he began working with music producer Rick Rubin and expanding his audience among younger listeners. (Interestingly, Cash's first album with Rubin includes a cover

of Cohen's *Bird on a Wire*.) Andy Bennett notes how among the musicians who enjoy critical acclaim today "are a number whose careers date back to the late 1960s and early 1970s" (see "'Things They Do Look Awful Cool': Ageing Rock Icons and Contemporary Youth Audiences," 260). Suggesting that the majority of audience members for these ageing musicians are "original fans," he also identifies how "new, younger fans are also attracted to such artists and their music." Bennett observes an overall shift in the "cultural terrain of rock and pop," where it is no longer "the exclusive property of youth" and "successive generations now claim cultural ownership of particular popular music genres" and musicians (see ibid., 261). In this respect, not only did Cohen's music still feel culturally pertinent, but his audience now contained a multigenerational membership.

[vii] Nick Mount's book *Arrival* however has received backlash, in particular, for its claim that it is a complete history of writing in Canada and its focus on predominately white, male authors (see Julie Rak, "Guest Post Another Dumpster Fire: An Opinionated Review of *Arrival: The Story of CanLit* by Nick Mount").

[viii] As I write this, Showalter is performing a "Farewell Tour" of his website, which will be shutting down after ten years.

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