in North, ed., *Negotiations for Peace*, p. 39; a discussion by CAPA writer Julie Leonard, "Canadian Links to the Militarization of the Caribbean and Central America," Canada-Caribbean-Central America Policy Alternatives, May 1985, p. 7.

53. See, for example, Latin American Working Group, *Canadian Investment, Trade and Aid in Latin America* (Toronto), vol. 7, no. 1/2 (1981); commentary by Meyer Brownstone, Director, OXFAM-Canada, *Globe and Mail*, 16 June 1986; Latin American Working Group, *Overview of Canadian Aid to Central America*, Toronto, 1986.
54. See Task Force on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility, *Annual Report* 1982-1983 (Toronto); *Toronto Star*, 22 July 1982; and *Financial Post*, 19 March 1983.
55. Interview, Dr. John Foster, Director, Interchurch Committee on Human Rights, Toronto, 5 June 1985.
56. Ottawa's aid to Nicaragua seems congruent with the expressed interests of these groups, although it is not at all clear that Canadian assistance to the Sandinistas is based solely upon the expressed interests of domestic groups. The government, for example, has indicated that assistance to Nicaragua represents an attempt to discourage the Sandinistas from relying increasingly upon the Soviet bloc for economic aid.
57. T. Draimin, "Canadian Foreign Policy in El Salvador," in Liisa North, ed., *Bitter Grounds* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1981), pp. 99-100.
58. Canada, DEA *Bulletin*, "Canada and Central America," 6 December 1985.
59. Leonard, "Canadian Links," p. 9.
60. Regarding the debate concerning Canadian aid to El Salvador, see the exchange between Professor Meyer Brownstone and M.R. Bell of the DEA in *Globe and Mail*, 29 March 1986, 16 June 1986, and 7 July 1986.
61. Letter, Jim Manley, MP, Cowichan, to Hon. Monique Landry, Minister of State for External Relations, 10 September 1986, printed by Canada-Caribbean-Central America Policy Alternatives, November 1986.
62. Maurice Dupras, *The Case for the OAS* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1983), p. 1.
63. See Bob Thomson, "Canadian Aid and Trade Relations with Nicaragua," Canada-Caribbean-Central America Policy Alternatives, 1984, for an in-depth analysis of Canada's trade with Nicaragua.
64. See *NOW*, 7 November 1985; and Bob Thomson, "Canadian Trade Relations with Nicaragua After the US Embargo," Canada-Caribbean-Central America Policy Alternatives, 7 May 1985; Letter, Mario Nunez-Suarez, Special Assistant, DRIE, to author, 24 June 1986.
65. Interview, Pat Doyle, Senior Political Risk Analyst, Export Development Corporation, Ottawa, 30 May 1985; Interview, B. Khan, Manager, Special Services, International Trade and Correspondent Banking, Royal Bank, Toronto Main Branch, 23 May 1985.
66. Interview, Pat Doyle.
67. Interview, Leslie Borbas, Documentalist, Canadian Association for Latin America and the Caribbean, Toronto, 23 May 1985.
68. See, for example, Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, *Competitiveness and Security* (Ottawa, 1985).
69. Interview, Robert Miller, Parliamentary Centre for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Ottawa, 31 May 1985.
70. American military assistance to its client states in Central America increased 20-fold between 1978 and 1985, reaching $1433.7 million in 1985. *Central America Update*, Vol. 7, #5 (March/April 1986), p. 25; and Joshua Cohen and Joel Rogers, *Inequity and Intervention: The Federal Budget and Central America* (Boston: South End Press, 1986), p. 43.
71. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to analyze in depth the balance of power between various forces which shape Canadian policy towards the isthmus, this significant matter is dealt with in detail in Rochlin, "The Political Economy of Canadian Foreign Policy Towards Central America."

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"Dream, Comfort, Memory, Despair": Canadian Popular Musicians and the Dilemma of Nationalism, 1968-1972

ROBERT A. WRIGHT

English-Canadian popular music matured thematically and economically amid the euphoric nationalism of the Centennial era. Ironically, this maturation owed less to the benevolence of the newly-created CRTC and the adulation of the nationalist music press in Canada than it did to the influence of American folk-protest music. Much Canadian pop music in these years appeared stridently anti-American, but, in truth, thoughtful Canadian song-writers like Gordon Lightfoot, Bruce Cockburn, Joni Mitchell, and Neil Young were suspicious of the new Canadian nationalism and profoundly ambivalent about the United States. Revulsion for "official" America and sympathy for American youth combined in the songs of these musicians to produce some of the most poignant pop music of the Sixties generation.

C'est à l'époque du nationalisme euphorisant du Centenaire que la musique populaire anglo-canadienne a pris un essor thématique et économique. Chose ironique, cette maturation résultait moins de la générosité de la C.R.T.C. récemment établie et de l'adulation de la critique musicale nationaliste du Canada que de l'influence de la musique folk contestataire des Etats-Unis. Une grande partie de la musique pop de ces années-là paraissait celle d'un anti-américanisme strident mais, en vérité, certains auteurs de chansons canadiens tels que Gordon Lightfoot, Bruce Cockburn, Joni Mitchell et Neil Young se méfiaient du nouveau nationalisme canadien et se montraient fermement neutralistes envers les Etats-Unis. Un dégoût pour les autorités administratives des Etats-Unis et une solidarité avec la jeunesse américaine se mariaient dans les chansons de ces chanteurs pour engendrer de la musique pop des plus poignantes de la génération des années soixante.

Canadian popular music came of age during Richard Nixon's presidency. Direct government involvement in the so-called cultural industries – a reasoned and consistent effort to protect Canada from absorption into the mass culture of the United States – became the policy of federal governments beginning in the mid-1950s. Slowly that policy and the environment it had fostered yielded internationally recognized theatre, scholarship, television programming, and journalism. Yet as late as 1970 *Rolling Stone* magazine observed that, with respect to popular music, Canada was "notorious for virtual non-support of its own talent."[1] It is today axiomatic that the exodus of Canadian performers to the United States after the Second World War was a great national loss; critics still cite the careers of Guy Lombardo, Percy Faith, the Diamonds, and especially Paul Anka as evidence of Canada's prolonged indifference toward popular music. Only in the late 1960s did it become acceptable, or profitable, for a young Toronto folk singer to write a "Canadian Railroad Trilogy" or for a Winnipeg rock band to make a hit single out of "Running Back to Saskatoon." Canadians recall with great pride how a soft-spoken teacher from Nova Scotia began a career of superstardom with a song written in a Prince Edward Island farmhouse, and how "Four Strong Winds" blew across *their* prairies.[2]

They remember that two of the anthems of the "Sixties generation" in North America – "Woodstock" and "Ohio" – were written by introspective folk singers raised in small Canadian towns.

The aim of this paper is to explore the dynamics of national self-consciousness in English-Canadian popular music during this "golden age," 1968-1972.[3] Of special concern is the tension that grew out of the connection of Canadians to the American musical mainstream on the one hand and the mounting pressure Canadian musicians and songwriters faced from the cultural nationalists of the centennial era on the other. Much of the music written by Canadians in this period seemed to celebrate life in the Dominion and, as is so often the case in periods of intense Canadian nationalism, it criticized the United States. Not far beneath this facile exterior, however, lurked a haunting anxiety about what it meant to be nationalistic. The commercial imperative of the English-language pop music industry was, and remains, a profoundly homogenizing force: even among Canadian musicians who did not relocate to New York or Los Angeles, there was an implicit recognition that success meant cracking the American market.[4] Canadian musicians traveled widely in the United States and recognized that there were a good many Americans unhappy with the social and political *status quo*; they recognized as well that Canada was not without problems of its own. Underscoring this dilemma, above all, was the pervasive influence upon their music of what were quintessentially American musical styles and lyrical themes. The emergence of mature, politically sensitive, and broadly accessible Canadian popular music in this era, it may be argued, had less to do with homage to Canadian geographical and historical landmarks than with the extent to which it had co-opted and preserved an earlier American folk-protest tradition.

* * *

In the mid-1950s, when most learned Canadians believed the only music worthy of study was "high brow," essayist Leslie Bell made the courageous observation that "the endless 'pop' tunes that are born and buried each month play a vital part in Canada's life and, despite their frequent lack of musical worth, offer a valuable index to her habits, customs and ways of thinking." Although less than impressed by the continental phenomenon by then known as the "Hit Parade," mainly because it tended to have an homogenizing effect on youth in all North American urban centres, Bell revered the preservation of rural Canadian folk traditions in which one could find "a truly independent national taste." Don Messer in Prince Edward Island, "singing cowboys" like Wilf Carter and Hank Snow, square dances on the prairies, and the traditionally isolated folk traditions of Quebec and Newfoundland – these were the last bastions of musical distinctiveness in Canada. But even these, Bell despaired, were "losing ground against the onslaught of American radio."[5]

For the most part, of course, "American radio" was also homogenizing

whatever American regional traditions had persisted into the age of the electric guitar. The Jeremiahs of the rock-and-roll age in the United States were themselves busy lashing out against pop music's "lack of musical worth" as well as against Elvis Presley's lasciviousness. Canadian and American suspicions of this new music differed, however, on at least one level. For reflective Canadians there was something additionally troubling about the fact that the sound, the styles, and the records themselves were American. Here was further evidence in this era of continental integration of Canada's incapacity to resist the mass culture of the United States. A recently published survey-history of post-war Canada has made the sardonic but not altogether misguided point that some Canadians breathed a sigh of relief when Paul Anka's "Diana" proved that "they could do it too."[6] In such differing responses the first stirrings of the ambivalence that would later permeate the Canadian popular music industry can be seen; however, as the authors of this volume are quick to add, in Canada "no one cared very much." Voices like Leslie Bell's cried in the wilderness.

The year 1967 was Canada's centennial and, just as Confederation had been consolidated in part out of disgust for the "noisy" republic to the south, Canadians expressed their celebration of this anniversary in terms of the relief they felt at not being part of the United States. Canadians recoiled when ghettos in Newark and Detroit exploded into violence that summer, when the Tet Offensive of February 1968 revealed the futility of the Vietnam War, and when Robert F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. were gunned down the following spring. Lyndon B. Johnson's popularity as president slipped to an all-time low just as, on a wave of jubilant nationalism, Pierre Trudeau was elected Prime Minister – even the youth of America looked to Trudeau's Canada to harbour draft evaders and lead the crusade to liberalize marijuana laws. Journalist Alexander Ross exclaimed that

> Hundreds of young Americans, not all draft-dodgers by any means, are pouring across the border in search of a simpler, cleaner alternative to The American Way. The word is out that a country that can produce a poet as great as Leonard Cohen and a politician as groovy as Pierre Trudeau must know something Americans don't.[7]

That the border was indeed open to what one Canadian writer has called "American refugees from militarism"[8] helped to entrench the notion that Canada was pacifistic. Thoughtful Canadians recognized that, in fact, their government had done nothing to curb Canadian participation in the production of arms destined for South-East Asia and that its selective admission of fleeing Americans mimicked the class inequalities of the draft.[9] Nonetheless, it was not their war. Hawks were few in Canada; in the liberal press, Vietnam served as a useful measure of the distance toward self-serving imperialism the United States had traveled. Outspoken Canadian critics of "American imperialism" openly associated the plight of the Vietnamese with their own struggle against economic and cultural domination by the United States.

"Cultural nationalism" in the late 1960s was the beginning of the end of Canadian indifference toward popular music. Along with the Liberal government's crackdown on foreign ownership in Canada came the imposition by the Canadian Radio-Television Commission of a quota system for radio broadcasting. Commencing in January 1970, the CRTC ruled, 30 percent of the radio programming in Canada must be "Canadian," that is, it must be written, performed, or produced in Canada. This opened the recording industry to Canadian talent as nothing had done previously, and a great scramble to build record companies and to sign artists followed. Many who came to be identified with the nationalism of this era – Bruce Cockburn and Murray McLaughlin, for example – owe the relative ease with which they broke into the industry to this regulation. The Juno Awards, named after CRTC president Pierre Juneau and based upon strict Canadian-content criteria, were also founded in 1970.

Paradoxically, however, the CRTC ruling was problematic for Canadian performers. Perhaps unexpectedly, it fostered a keen and what would become an enduring awareness in the Canadian pop music industry of the limitations of nationalism. Canadian musicians did not want their success to appear to be due solely to the meddling of the government. Musicians of every stripe attempted to dispell the perception that they had a nationalist axe to grind or, worse, that their work was officially sanctioned. It was widely known, for example, that prior to 1970 Anne Murray had identified very closely with her maritime Canadian roots; as Jon Ruddy of *Maclean's* pointed out, only this could explain why she had "languished" for several years in the chorus of CBC's "Singalong Jubilee."[10] Gene McClellan's "Snowbird" (1970) made her the favoured child of Canadian pop music critics, for unlike Joni Mitchell and Neil Young, they said, she had not forgotten the way back to Canada from the United States. Laudatory articles like John Macfarlane's "What If Anne Murray Were an American?" abounded.[11] Less than two years later, however, when Murray had moved to an exclusive Toronto suburb and had begun to savour enormous success in the American market, she reflected: "I don't like being used by journalists. You know, as some kind of a national symbol. I'm an entertainer. I just want to share some joy with other people. That's all."[12]

Gordon Lightfoot's cool attitude toward Canadian content rules was no secret in the burgeoning Canadian record industry. In 1971, he told Robert Markle:

> Well, the CRTC did absolutely nothing for me, I didn't want it, I didn't need it, absolutely nothing ... and I don't like it. They can ruin you, man. Canadian content is fine if you're not doing well. But I'm in the music business and I have a huge American audience. I'm going to do Carnegie Hall for the second time. I like to record down there, but I like to live up here. I really dig [Canada], but I'm not going to bring out any flags.[13]

Nevertheless, the fact remained that Lightfoot *was* a pioneer in the Canadian popular music industry and a hero to cultural protectionists precisely because

he wrote nationalistically and did not take up residence in the United States. In a calmer moment that same year he admitted: "I guess there was a Canadian flavour, a Canadian feeling to my music. And the 'Canadian Railroad Trilogy' exemplified it."[14]

One of the few Canadian artists to admit openly that he had benefited from the CRTC regulation (and that he had received a Canada Council grant) was Bruce Cockburn. Nonetheless, he felt compelled, like the others, to put as much distance as possible between his music and overt political nationalism. His first album was the inaugural release of Bernie Finkelstein's True North Records, a production company established to promote Canadian talent under the CRTC umbrella. It earned such dubious compliments as Toronto music pundit Peter Goddard's observation that "radio's new appetitie for Canadian music has created for Bruce Cockburn an audience that it took Gordon Lightfoot years to gather."[15] In 1971 Cockburn told journalist Ritchie York:

> I'm a Canadian, true, but in a sense it's more or less by default. Canada is the country I dislike the least at the moment. But I'm not really into nationalism – I prefer to think of myself as being a member of the world.... The Canadian music scene is not yet as rotten as the US scene. But it's showing signs of catching up.[16]

It is apparent in retrospect that Canadian musicians were attempting to distance themselves not only from the protective shield of government regulations but also from the intensely nationalist music media in Canada. Critics like William Westfall of *Canadian Forum* and Jack Batten and John Ruddy, both of *Maclean's*, had been adamant in 1968 and 1969 about the need to check "derivativeness" in Canadian pop music. They argued that everything about Canadian music, from rock festivals to programming at CHUM in Toronto, was a shallow, predictable imitation of American sources.[17] Typical of this hostility was a November 1969 article by Ruddy entitled "How To Become An American Without Really Trying." Its subtitle read, "Your First Move? Get With The 'Canadian' Music Scene: It's as Yankee as Dylan and Drive-ins."

Having lobbied for the introduction of government legislation to protect Canadian music, the critics were at first euphoric about the CRTC decision. They did not fancy themselves "protectionists" but they had come to realize that subtle persuasion and even threats of regulation were having no impact on Canadian broadcasters.[18] The tone of pop music criticism in Canada changed almost instantly. One month after the CRTC ruling went into effect, Courtney Tower produced an article for *Maclean's* entitled "The Heartening Surge of a New Canadian Nationalism," in which she wrote:

> Canadian pop songs, contrary to the notions of most adults, don't deal exclusively with sex, drugs and the hassles of adolescent love. Many recent lyrics are, in the words of Ian Tyson of Ian and Sylvia 'getting into the patriotism bag.' Increasingly, composer-performers such as Tyson, Gordon Lightfoot, Neil Young (of Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young) and Robbie Robertson (of The Band) are producing songs that celebrate a fresh awareness of Canada.[19]

Under this kind of pressure, it is little wonder that by 1970-71 many Canadian musicians felt constrained rather than liberated by such pervasive cultural nationalism.

Whether coincidentally or not, the government had intervened in Canadian music at the moment when Canadian songwriters had begun to respond lyrically to the political crises arising in the United States. No sooner had Pierre Juneau been made the Canadian recording industry's man of the year for 1970 than a song by a Canadian band made *Billboard*'s Number One position for the first time. The song was the Guess Who's "American Woman" which featured the refrain

> American woman, stay away from me
> American woman, let me be
> I don't need your war machines
> I don't need your ghetto scenes.[20]

Life in this instance appeared to copy art.

In the 1950s and even the early 1960s Canadians knew that they had no chance of breaking into the Top 40 in the American-controlled music industry with songs that challenged the *status quo*. Any doubt about the importance of conformity and the necessity of avoiding controversy, especially in the form of criticizing the capitalistic ethos that ruled the pop music business, was erased in 1963 when the American television network ABC blacklisted pioneer folk-singer Pete Seeger from its national music show.[21] "Protest" singers who could fill university coffee houses night after night had trouble getting recording contracts and, in any case, they were simply not welcome on the tightly controlled playlists of AM radio stations. Canadians, like aspiring American and British performers, quickly learned the lesson that kept rock-and-roll free of disruptive folk influences: Top 40 pop stars did not bite the hand that fed them. As critic John Orman suggests, rock-and-roll served to "maintain the *status quo* by diverting people from serious political thought."[22] How, then, did Canadians come to be writing hit songs like "American Woman" less than a decade later?

Even though protest musicians had faced extraordinary pressures from the recording industry, their music was sufficiently powerful and popular to chip away at the hegemony of repetitive, conformist pop music. Led by Pete Seeger and Woody Guthrie, a handful of left-leaning American folk singers persevered courageously through the barren years of McCarthyism and emerged in the late 1950s as heroes to a generation of North American youth that rejected the strait jacket of postwar conformity in all of its manifestations. American music critics agree that the origins of the politically inspired music of the Vietnam generation in the United States lay squarely in the Seeger/Guthrie tradition.[23] Much in the Canadian folk movement of the 1960s can also be traced to this source. Resurgent interest in the protest songs of the 1950s prompted the release of several recordings beginning in 1958 – *Pete Seeger* (1958), *Ballads of Sacco and Vanzetti* (1960), *Dustbound Ballads* (1964)

– to which Canadians had relatively easy access. Asked in 1971 what his formative musical influences had been, Gordon Lightfoot recalled listening to "folk music, things by Pete Seeger and Bob Gibson," after studying music in California in the late 1950s.[24]

Like most of the American folk and pop singers of the 1960s, however, Canadians were heirs to the Guthrie/Seeger tradition through a crucial conduit, Bob Dylan. From an adolescence of Top 40 rock-and-roll, according to Jerome L. Rodnitzky, Dylan "picked up the mantle of Woody Guthrie and carried protest songs to new heights of popularity and power."[25] More than this, adds John Orman, Dylan "liberated the lyrics of rock music."[26] Dylan's influence on American folk, rock, and pop music in the mid-1960s was nothing less than revolutionary, for, in contrast to Seeger's experience, his favoured place in the recording industry gave him access to an enormous audience. In Canada, where there had been no indigenous tradition of politically motivated folk music, his influence was in general terms nothing less than formative. Neil Young recalls trading in his Gretsch guitar for a twelve-string acoustic in the summer of 1965 under the sway of Dylan and others who had turned to folk,[27] and virtually all other Canadian "folkies" spoke of similar experiences. Always eloquent, Bruce Cockburn described his perception of the impact that the American folk tradition had upon Canada:

> When you're young, you tend to act out roles with a passion and our role in Ottawa in the 1960s was to be folkies and to sing mostly the folksongs of other countries. The problem with Canadian songs is that they borrowed so heavily from other traditions; for instance logging songs set to English ballads.
>
> Sure, this happened in the States, too, but they went on to develop the borrowings with the vigour and violence of their experience. They 'exploded' the traditions and we never did. So, if you examine traditional Canadian songs, you won't find anything applicable to today.... [B]ecause social developments in the States always happened a generation before they did in Canada, we soon began borrowing the social commentary and the songs that went with it.[28]

Since the 1960s, scholars and lay critics of popular music have debated the difference between "folk" and "rock" music. This distinction is crucial to understanding the development of Canadian popular music in the centennial era. For Rodnitzky, a Guthrie/Seeger purist, Dylan's significance as a "folk" singer was on the wane by 1963 precisely because he had electrified folk music and forced its accommodation to the commercial standards of AM radio. When folk music became "folk-rock," he argues, "mood replaced message" and eventually the explicit social or political meaning of the folk tradition was lost to a feeling of "general alienation and a hazy, nonconformist aura." The "assimilation" of protest music into rock was all the more "sad" because it had been "gradual and practically unnoticed."[29] Orman is not as pessimistic about the superficiality of rock music in the mid- and late 1960s, seeing in much of the

politically inspired music of performers like the Jefferson Airplane, Jimi Hendrix, and Janis Joplin the social awareness of the earlier folk movement.[30] In any case, both Rodnitzky and Orman would agree with Carl Beltz that, by the "troubled period" of 1969-71, music in America became "disillusioned, directionless [and] plagued by uncertainty about its own identity."[31]

The superficial integration of protest themes in rock music is nowhere clearer than in the Guess Who's "American Woman." Ritchie York may have been correct when he wrote in 1971 that the Guess Who had done more for Canadian music than anything in history.[32] But the truth was, as *Rolling Stone* continually reminded its readers, they had done so at the expense of originality.[33] Burton Cummings, the lead singer and primary songwriter of the Winnipeg band, recognized that there was nothing "intrinsically Canadian" in its music: "We weren't influenced by anything except a rehash of North Dakota AM radio."[34] "American Woman" was not a considered political statement in the Seeger/Dylan folk style; it was conceived spontaneously during a jam session, a product of Cummings's "Bubblegum instinct for the quick, ordinary, foolishly memorable phrase."[35] Any doubt about the superficiality of the song was put to rest in the summer of 1970 when the Guess Who accepted an invitation to play at the White House, agreeing to omit "American Woman" from the performance. Bassist Jim Kale later explained: "We're not American, so we don't get involved in American politics.... We're anti-war, of course, but the Vietnam War isn't Richard Nixon's war. He didn't start it. He simply inherited it."[36] Kale added, "Neil Young told me we shouldn't play [the White House] at all."

Jerome Rodnitzky has dissected the protest music of Woody Guthrie and concluded that he was "essentially a piece of rural Americana reacting to the Depression." The social issues in his music were clear and simple, and the protest it expressed was always explicit. That rurality and directness were the hallmark of this folk music seems indisputable, he argues, since the predominantly urban Sixties generation found it "corny, simplistic and irrelevant."[37] This helps to explain why folk artists like Phil Ochs, who refused to follow Dylan's shift toward amplified, commercial music and "hazy" lyrics, could not maintain popularity through the 1960s. The youth of an increasingly complex and urban United States gravitated toward commercial musical forms because commerciality characterized the world in which they lived.

By and large, this characterization of the folk/rock dichotomy has held sway in popular music criticism, though most scholars are less likely than Rodnitzky to see the two camps as wholely separate. Myrna Kostash recently applied the same typology to the Canadian context:

> Folk music, by definition, is rooted in particularity, in locales and events and personalities which are historically specific and are *named,* and the singer-songwriter was valued precisely for the individuality and personality s/he brought to the corpus of the tradition.... But rock music was part of a continental culture produced by and distributed from the commercial and political centres of North America (that is, the United States) which, because of their metropolitan and corporate character, were deemed to be of universal significance and value.[38]

Admittedly very much a product herself of the Sixties generation in Canada, about which she is both critical and reminiscent, Kostash is vigilant in her differentiation of Canadian "folk singers" – Ian and Sylvia, Gordon Lightfoot, Buffy Sainte-Marie, Humphrey and the Dumptrucks – from pop and rock music. The evidence suggests, however, that any hard definition of the distinction between folk and pop music obscures more than it illuminates about Canadian music in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Rurality, directness, and simplicity were, indeed, the cornerstones of Canadian folk music; but these qualities were also evident in much of the pop and rock music written by Canadians who had crossed over from folk in the late 1960s. Even *Rolling Stone* observed in 1968 that a common feature of Canadian rock bands was that they "have their country roots showing."[39] Canadian musicians seem not to have abandoned the folk themes they had co-opted from Woody Guthrie and Bob Dylan, even when Guthrie had become anachronistic and Dylan had strapped on an electric guitar. For musicians like Gordon Lightfoot, Bruce Cockburn, Neil Young, and Joni Mitchell, folk was a medium perfectly suited to express what they, as Canadians, were seeing in the world around them. Bruce Cockburn attempted to articulate this experience in 1972:

> I think a lot of the songs that are being written are distinctively, if not obviously, Canadian. Playing something close to American music but not of it. I think it has something to do with the space that isn't in American music. Buffalo Springfield had it.
>
> Space may be a misleading word because it is so vague in relation to music, but maybe it has to do with Canadians being more involved with the space around them rather than trying to fill it up as Americans do. I mean physical space and how it makes you feel about yourself. Media clutter may follow. All of it a kind of greed. The more Canadians fill up their space the more they will be like Americans. Perhaps because our urban landscapes are not yet deadly, and because they seem accidental to the whole expanse of the land.[40]

Myrna Kostash is suspicious of the "back to the land" movement that characterized the Sixties counterculture, calling it "essentially nostalgic" and even "American."[41] But, in truth, Canadian musicians have betrayed a deeply rooted reverence for rural life and for natural ecology, and very often these values were identified as "Canadian" and juxtaposed with urban America. This attitude was not mere romanticism; it was based on experience. Gordon Lightfoot, for example, was raised in Orillia, Ontario and identified himself throughout the 1960s with rural simplicity in songs like "Early Mornin' Rain" and "Pussywillows, Cat-Tails." In 1968 he wrote a personal musical memoir

describing his increasing alienation as he traveled from Toronto via Albany to New York City. "Cold Hands From New York" documented the myriad social problems of large urban centres in the United States – greed, poverty, fear, street violence; it also featured one of the first references in Canadian music to the Vietnam War:

There were men who lived in style
And others who had died
Where no one knew them
'Cause they couldn't win.[42]

Like many young Canadians, Lightfoot had gone to New York "to find what I'd been missin'" and found it instead "unreal."

Bruce Cockburn's music was rooted in a profound love of wilderness. Though raised in an Ottawa suburb, Cockburn's childhood fondness for his grandfather's farm and his far-reaching tours of rural Canada as a young man solidified his affinity for nature. "I prefer the country to the city," he remarked in 1972, "because I feel better there and I like myself better there."[43] Cockburn abandoned an early career in rock music and some dabbling in jazz for introspective folk music, making a name for himself by performing the soundtrack to the acclaimed Canadian film *Going Down the Road* and by writing songs like "Going to the Country." Like Lightfoot, Cockburn's experiences of urban America had been troubling. During a year at Boston's Berklee School of Music, he claimed to have developed an intense distrust of America and a "sensitivity to the atmospheric tension so that he could tell, even in his sleep, when his bus had crossed the border to the States."[44]

The Canadian musicians who had moved to the United States and "forgotten the way home" expressed similar sentiments. Neil Young was raised in Omemee, a rural village in Ontario, and as a high school student aspired to attend the agricultural college at Guelph and become a farmer.[45] He left Canada to pursue a career in music because he was "fed up with the Canadian scene" in the late 1960s, but by all accounts he was never comfortable with life in America. Young's second solo album, *Everybody Knows this is Nowhere* (1969), was "about the need for and the impossibility of escape from Los Angeles."[46] Escape, for Young, meant Canada. In 1970, at the height of his "rock" success with the supergroup Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, he retreated to Omemee to contemplate his recent divorce. There he wrote one of his most sensitive country-folk songs, "Helpless":

There is a town in North Ontario
There's dream, comfort, memory, despair
And in my mind I still need a place to go
All my changes were there

Blue blue windows behind the stars
Yellow moon on the rise
Big birds flying across the sky
throwing shadows on our eyes.[47]

Though not identified as explicitly with rural life *per se*, Joni Mitchell's concern for environmental issues in songs like "Big Yellow Taxi" (1970) established her reputation as a singer of unusual "innocence."[48] It was rumoured in late 1969 that Mitchell had become sufficiently alienated by the American music industry that she was retiring to her home town, Saskatoon, to paint and write poetry.[49] Earlier that year she described her attitude toward life in the United States: "It's good to be exposed to politics and what's going down here, but it does damage to me. Too much of it can cripple me. And if I really let myself think about it – the violence, the sickness, of it all – I think I'd flip out."[50]

This reverence for "space" and the need to be able to escape from the "crippling" effects of life in violent, urban America did not, however, find expression as simplistic anti-Americanism in the music of these Canadians. For all that they disliked and feared in the United States of the turbulent 1960s, they recognized that there were many Americans who shared their estrangement. They also knew that Canada was no Utopia, that it was naive to look to life in Canada, or to any rural myth, as a panacea for the ills of the United States. These conflicting impulses produced a remarkable ambivalence in the protest music Canadians wrote: they were able to judge life in America from the vantage point of the outsider and the insider simultaneously, blending toughness and sympathy in a way that was unique to the American music scene.

In 1968, the same year that he wrote "Cold Hands From New York," Gordon Lightfoot produced what was, in retrospect, the best song about the Detroit race riots of 1967. "Black Day in July" was a song of explicit social criticism in the tradition of Pete Seeger, expressing Lightfoot's sympathy for American Blacks driven out of desperation to violence. With his usual flair for history, he recognized that the origins of the trouble lay in the distant past:

Black day in July: and the soul of Motor City is bared across the land
And the book of law and order is taken in the hands
Of the sons of the fathers who were carried to this land.

Though explicit lyrically, this song betrays none of the self-righteousness of "American Woman." Lightfoot indicted those who believed they could remain aloof to the crisis, adding the verse:

Black day in July: The printing press is turning and the news is quickly flashed
And you read your morning paper and you sip your cup of tea
And you wonder just in passing, is it him or is it me?[51]

"Black Day in July" was, predictably, ignored by AM radio in the United States but "underground" FM stations gave it wide coverage and American music critics cited it as an important contribution to the American protest tradition.[52]

The best known protest song of Bruce Cockburn's early career was, ironically enough, produced in a pop, rather than folk, style. "It's Going Down Slow" (1971) opened with a graphically anti-Vietnam verse set to a bouncy piano rhythm:

Go tell the Sergeant Major to get that thing repaired
Their losing their pawns in Asia
There's slaughter in every square
Oh, it's going down slow.

Cockburn slowed the song down to an almost hymnal pace for the closing refrain, a powerful expression of his conviction that corruption and warfare were not unique to the United States but common to humanity:

God damn the hands of glory
That hold the bloody firebrand high
Close the book and end the story
Of how so many men have died.

Let the world retain in memory
That mighty tongues tell mighty lies
And if mankind must have an enemy
Let it be his warlike pride.[53]

The most poignant example of a Canadian's capacity to write with ambivalence about American society in the Vietnam era is to be found in Joni Mitchell's "The Fiddle and the Drum" (1969). Though not a "hit" by any means, this song expressed the pathos and the confusion felt by those who believed they were seeing the "good" in the United States turn inexplicably to aggression. Typically, Mitchell's poetic lyrics spoke volumes:

And so once again, my dear Johnny, my dear friend
And so, once again, you are fighting us all.
And when I ask you why, you raise your sticks and cry
And I fall.
Oh, my friend, how did you come to trade the fiddle for the drum?

You say we have turned, like the enemies you've earned
But, we can remember all the good things you are
And so we ask you, please,
Can we help you find the peace and the star?
Oh, my friend, we have all come to fear the beating of your drum.[54]

Of all the protest songs of the Vietnam era, no doubt Neil Young's "Ohio" was, and remains, the best known. On 4 May 1970, Ohio National Guardsmen killed four students at Kent State University during a rally to protest Nixon's decision to invade Cambodia. Though remarkably passive in interviews, Young must have been enraged. Although he had no history of writing protest music, by 21 May Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young were in the studio recording "Ohio":

Tin soldiers and Nixon's coming
We're finally on our own
This summer I hear the drumming
Four dead in Ohio.

Gotta get down to it, soldiers are cutting us down
Should have been done long ago
What if you knew her and found her dead on the ground?
How can you run when you know?[55]

Although it was banned on many radio stations, "Ohio" had instant appeal among American youth and stirred Vice President Spiro Agnew to a speech denouncing rock music.[56] Asked about the genesis of the song a month after its release, David Crosby chided, "Neil surprised everybody. It wasn't like he set out to write a protest song. It's just what came out of having Huntley-Brinkley for breakfast."[57] Young himself was just as vague: "I don't know; I never wrote anything like this before ... but there it is...."[58]

In the end, it was the natural affinity of Canadians for the American folk tradition and their uniquely ambivalent perception of American society, not anti-Americanism, that accounted for their remarkable ascendance as heroes of the Sixties generation. Canadians did not simply offer a foreigner's critique of American society – this kind of parochialism would only have alienated them from their American audience. Rather, they had preserved in their music the explicitness, sensitivity, and vitality of a protest tradition that was, in its essence, American.

* * *

In the half-decade after Canada's centennial year, Canadian popular musicians were at odds with the concept of "cultural nationalism." Some left the country – "fled" was the term most often used in the Canadian music press – and were, therefore, spared much of the sentimental praise that accrued to those who stayed. For the likes of Anne Murray, Gordon Lightfoot, and Bruce Cockburn, the pressure to be "Canadian" was unceasing and often stultifying. More than most Canadians listening to their music perhaps, these artists had become, by virtue of the music business itself, "members of the world." However grateful they may have been for protective legislation that allowed them a greater opportunity of success in the music business, they were frustrated by the tensions inherent in being national symbols as well as artists; and however proud they may have been to be Canadian, intimate contact with the United States and the world at large had sharpened their awareness of the limitations of nationalism.

With the notable exception of Bruce Cockburn, Canadian musicians by 1972 had followed the American lead and abandoned political and social themes altogether. Joni Mitchell, Gordon Lightfoot, and Anne Murray integrated thoroughly into mainstream American pop, producing no fewer than ten hits each in the following decade-and-a-half, no mean feat in an industry renowned for producing "one hit wonders."[59] Neil Young's career eclipsed after his resounding success as a solo artist in the early 1970s, but after some dabbling in electronic and even rock-a-billy styles, he has returned in the mid-1980s

to his country roots. As the CRTC and others had hoped, Canadian content rules opened the doors of the music industry to many Canadians in the 1970s and 1980s. From Bachman-Turner Overdrive to Bryan Adams, however, this legacy has been largely one of conformity to American pop standards.[60]

In light of the homogenizing power of the North American popular music business, Bruce Cockburn's ceaseless dedication to social action in the years since "It's Going Down Slow" is truly remarkable. His inimitable acoustic sound has been broadened to include searing electric guitars and tough percussive rhythms, and Cockburn himself has made the transition from the country to the "inner city front." Yet, if anything, his life and his music have become not less but more political. His travels in the 1980s have included a lengthy stay at a refugee camp on the Honduran border of Nicaragua, on which he based much of his *Stealing Fire* album, and concerts in British Columbia in aid of Haida land claims in the Queen Charlotte Islands. Although he still lives in Canada and frequently lashes out at what he perceives as inhumane American policies, his accusation that Canada under the Mulroney government is "open for business like a cheap bordello" suggests that he is no more likely than in 1970 to embrace narrow political nationalism.[61]

Following the lead of the British pop music industry and the inspiration of Bob Geldof in particular, Canadian musicians assembled in Toronto in February 1986 to perform "Tears Are Not Enough" in aid of African famine relief. With uncharacteristic sentimentality and patriotism, Canadians beamed when their old favourites, led by Gordon Lightfoot, collaborated on the opening verse. This was more than a charitable gathering; it was, as the CBC's commercially released film production of the session evinced, a celebration of the Canadian pop music tradition, a triumph of nationalism. Canadians may have known that several of the "Northern Lights" were American citizens and that David Foster had, in fact, written the tune for "Tears Are Not Enough" originally to be used as a love theme in an American movie; but no one let on. Like the music media that had alienated the Canadian performers who left the country in the late 1960s and deified those who remained, Canadians rallied around a mythic nationalism, a sentiment of such power that it could, even in the 1980s, suspend reason. The significance of the closing sequence in the CBC film was not that beleaguered Ethiopia was receiving lifesaving wheat but that the wheat was Canadian. Perhaps this is why Bruce Cockburn, still as sensitive to shifting political fads in Canada as he was during the "golden age" of Canadian pop music, chose to stay in Europe over the winter of 1986.

NOTES

* An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 1987 Popular Culture Association conference (Vietnam Area) in Montreal. The excerpt in the title is from Neil Young, "Helpless" (Broken Arrow-Cotillion Publishing, 1970). The writer would like to acknowledge his debt to Craig Walker and Dan Wright in the preparation of this paper.

1. Juan Rodriguez, "Jesse Winchester's Trip to Canada," *Rolling Stone*, March 19, 1970.
2. Myrna Kostash reminisces about Ian Tyson's "Four Strong Winds" in *Long Way From Home: The Story of the Sixties Generation in Canada* (Toronto: James Lorimer, 1980), p. 138.
3. Given the economic importance of the pop music industry in the English-speaking world and the central place of rock-and-roll in youth culture, pop music as a field of study is in a surprisingly rudimentary state. Widespread interest in the sociology of popular music in the United States was generated in the early 1970s and has blossomed in the 1980s with the advent of punk rock, music videos and recordings for charity. That the 1987 Popular Culture Association conference featured no fewer than forty papers on pop music and provided a truly exciting forum for the discussion of methodologies as well as issues bodes well for the future of the field.

   The study of popular music in Canada lags well behind that of the United States. In some ways this is puzzling, especially given Canada's rich regional and ethnic folk heritage. Most of what little secondary literature exists on pop music tends toward the celebratory rather than the analytical. See, for example, Ritchie York, *Axes, Chops and Hot Licks* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1971); and Martin Melhuish, *Heart of Gold: 30 Years of Canadian Pop Music* (Toronto: CBC Enterprises, 1983). A noteworthy exception is to be found in Barry K. Grant, "'Across the Great Divide': Imitation and Inflection in Canadian Rock Music," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 21 (Spring 1986), though his endorsement of anti-Americanism as a "progressive step forward toward defining our own popular music" (p. 126) evinces a similar bias. Problematic for the student of Canadian popular music are a serious deficiency in the accessibility and quality of music resource libraries in this country, though this situation is improving, and the marked reluctance of the commercial radio industry to cooperate with research in the field.
4. Bruce Cockburn's utter refusal to accommodate his music to the commercial standards of the United States-dominated recording industry was exceptional.
5. Leslie Bell, "Popular Music," in Ernest MacMillan, ed., *Music in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1955).
6. Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond and John English, *Canada Since 1945: Power, Politics and Provincialism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), p. 174.
7. Alexander Ross, "Colour Them Big Pink," *Maclean's*, February 1969, p. 57. See also Ritchie York, "I'd Rather be Burned in Canada," *Rolling Stone*, December 13, 1969.
8. Renee G. Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism: Draft-Age Americans in Canada* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1976).
9. See, for example, "What American Involvement in Vietnam is Doing to Canadian Business," *Financial Post*, October 14, 1967; Ian Adams, Lamar Carson and Goffredo Parise, "Our War," *Maclean's*, February 1968; and Walter Stewart, "Proudly We Stand the 'Butcher's Helper' in Southeast Asia," *Maclean's*, May 1970.
10. Jon Ruddy, "The Pit and the Star," *Maclean's*, November 1970, p. 43.
11. John Macfarlane, "What If Anne Murray Were an American?," *Maclean's*, May 1971.
12. Anne Murray, quoted in Bill Howell, "Upper Canada Romantic," *Maclean's*, May 1972. "Snowbird" reached the Number Eight position on the *Billboard* chart in 1970.
13. Gordon Lightfoot, quoted in Robert Markle, "Early Morning Afterthoughts," *Maclean's*, December 1971.
14. Gordon Lightfoot, quoted in York, *Axes, Chops and Hot Licks*, p. 81.
15. Peter Goddard, "A Maple Leaf on Every Turntable Means Made-In-Canada Pop Stars," *Maclean's*, November 1970.
16. Bruce Cockburn, quoted in York, *Axes, Chops and Hot Licks*, p. 56.
17. See, for example, Jack Batten, "Canada's Rock Scene: Going, Going...," *Maclean's*, February 1968; William Westfall, "Pop Counter-revolution?," *Canadian Forum*, August 1969; and Jon Ruddy, "How to Become a Rock Star Without Really Trying," *Maclean's*, November 1969.
18. Ritchie York was especially critical of Canadian broadcasters. See *Axes, Chops and Hot Licks*, p. 11. Ironically, in the foreword to this book Pierre Juneau included broadcasters among those who had helped the Canadian music industry.
19. Courtney Tower, "The Heartening Surge of a New Canadian Nationalism," *Maclean's*, February 1970.
20. The Guess Who, "American Woman" (Cirrus Music, 1970).

21. Jerome L. Rodnitzky, *Minstrels of the Dawn: The Folk-Protest Singer as a Cultural Hero* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1976), p. 14; see also Tony Palmer, *All You Need is Love: The Story of Popular Music* (New York, London: Penguin, 1977), pp. 206-7.
22. John Orman, *The Politics of Rock Music* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1984), p. xi.
23. Rodnitzky, Orman, Palmer subscribe to this view, as does Carl Belz, *The Story of Rock* (New York: Oxford, 1972).
24. Gordon Lightfoot, quoted in York, *Axes, Chops and Hot Licks*, p. 80.
25. Rodnitzky, p. 20; see also Palmer, p. 208.
26. Orman, p. 51.
27. Scott Young, *Neil and Me* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1984), p. 59.
28. Bruce Cockburn, quoted in Myrna Kostash, "The Pure, Uncluttered Spaces of Bruce Cockburn," *Saturday Night*, June 1972, p. 22.
29. Rodnitzky, pp. 20-21, 137.
30. Orman, ch. 1.
31. Belz, ch. 5.
32. York, *Axes, Chops and Hot Licks*, p. 13.
33. See, for example, Nancy Edmunds's review of *Wheatfield Soul, Rolling Stone*, June 14, 1969; Lester Bangs's review of *Canned Heat, Rolling Stone*, February 7, 1970; and Craig Modderno, "Guess Who: Good Business Partners," *Rolling Stone*, January 7, 1971.
34. Burton Cummings, quoted in York, *Axes, Chops and Hot Licks*, p. 24. "Signs," by Canada's Five Man Electrical Band, was another pop song to appeal to protest lyrics in vogue at this time. It reached Number Three on the *Billboard* chart in 1970.
35. Jack Batten, "The Guess Who," *Maclean's*, June 1971. Batten was critical of musicians who casually politicized their lyrics after seeing an arena full of Guess Who fans shaking their fists during "American Woman."
36. Jim Kale, quoted in Modderno.
37. Rodnitzky, ch. 8.
38. Kostash, *Long Way From Home*, pp. 137-38.
39. n.a., Review of Buffalo Springfield, *Last Time Around, Rolling Stone*, August 24, 1968.
40. Bruce Cockburn, quoted in Kostash, "Pure, Uncluttered Spaces," p. 21.
41. Kostash, *Long Way From Home*, p. 140.
42. Gordon Lightfoot, "Cold Hands From New York" (Warner Brothers, 1968).
43. Bruce Cockburn, quoted in Kostash, "Pure, Uncluttered Spaces," p. 21.
44. Bruce Cockburn, quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 22.
45. Young, *Neil and Me*, p. 42.
46. n.a., *Rolling Stone*, August 9, 1969.
47. Neil Young, "Helpless" (Broken Arrow-Cotillion Publishing, 1970).
48. n.a., "Joni Mitchell," *Rolling Stone*, May 17, 1969. "Big Yellow Taxi" made *Billboard*'s chart twice: in 1970 the studio version reached Number 67, and in 1974 the live performance climbed to Number 24.
49. n.a., "Joni Mitchell Hangs It Up," *Rolling Stone*, December 13, 1969.
50. n.a., "Joni Mitchell."
51. Gordon Lightfoot, "Black Day in July" (Warner Brothers, 1968).
52. Lightfoot did not get his first "pop" hit – "If You Could Read My Mind" – until 1970, and of the 14 AM hits he subsequently wrote, none had a political theme.
53. Bruce Cockburn, "It's Going Down Slow" (Golden Mountain Music Corporation, 1970).
54. Joni Mitchell, "The Fiddle and the Drum" (Siquomb Publishing Corporation, 1969).
55. Neil Young, "Ohio" (Broken Arrow-Cotillion Publishing, 1970).
56. Young, *Neil and Me*, p. 110.
57. David Crosby, quoted in n.a., "Tin Soldiers and Nixon's Coming," *Rolling Stone*, June 25, 1970.
58. Neil Young, quoted in *ibid.*
59. See Joel Whitburn, ed., *Top Pop, 1955-1982* (Wisconsin: Record Research, 1983).

60. Barry K. Grant, "Across the Great Divide," has argued that "generic subversion" has been a persistent strain in Canadian rock music from the 1950s to the present. He cites the music of The Band in the mid-1970s and of Rough Trade in the 1980s as evidence of a continuing tradition of Canadian self-consciousness in which American music styles and popular icons are frequently parodied. Grant also points, appropriately, to the important role CFNY-FM of Toronto has played in the promotion of new Canadian talent. Unfortunately CFNY's Casby awards, conceived originally as a much-needed alternative to the Junos, have evolved into a forum for the kind of smug nationalism that characterized the Centennial era. Carol Pope set Canadian music back fifteen years when she introduced the 1985 Casby award show with the quip that Anne Murray should "wake up and smell the coffee."
61. Bruce Cockburn, "Call It Democracy" (Golden Mountain Music Corporation, 1985).

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