Barbara Godard vs. The Ethically Incomplete Intellectual

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Over the last several years of Barbara Godard's life, I had a number of conversations with her about our shared perception that there is a growing need in literary studies, and especially Canadian literary studies, to add the critical study of cultural policy to its everyday concerns. It is a great regret of mine that this discussion ended abruptly with her untimely death. We live in an era of closing bookstores; dwindling book sales; growing concentration and centralization in the production, circulation and sales of electronic texts; copyright laws with weak fair-dealing provisions that make it difficult to conduct both scholarly and creative work; and unsympathetic governments eager to replace the subvention of culture with the rhetoric of cultural industry. The need for literary scholars to begin grappling with cultural policy issues is real and pressing.

This essay is an attempt to put Godard's own intertextual critical method, "thinking one literature or text in relation to another," to work in the service of documenting some of the thoughts that I had after our various discussions. As Godard observes in conversation with Smaro Kamboureli in "The Critic, Institutional Culture and Canadian Literature":

> As Gramsci notes, language, – and culture, I would add – cannot be anything but "comparative," always positioned in relation to another temporal moment or geopolitical space and so considered not in terms of identity but of relationality with vectors of power. Thinking one literature or text in relation to another, thinking dialectically or intertextually, has been a key aspect of all my writing and teaching, informing the way I establish course syllabi as well as the topics I write on ... relational thinking for incommensurabilities or convergences was at the heart of my writing practice. (26-27)

What follows is the beginning of a description of the convergences and incommensurabilities between a variety of texts, chiefly Godard's work and the work of Toby Miller, a major contemporary theorist of critical cultural policy studies but not a name that's familiar to many literary scholars. Because many of those concerned with cultural policy insist on the importance of a hybrid approach – artists, journalists and administrators as well as academics can all 'do' critical cultural policy studies after their fashion (and many academics also play these roles) – I've also included a dis-

cussion of a series of policy-focused art pieces by RM Vaughan and his various collaborators. Ideally, this could be the beginning of a collective conversation rather than a premature conclusion. As Godard remarked, Canadian studies never developed a distinct methodology to deal with Canadian matters, and the promise of interdisciplinary practice remains incomplete, so we are left with the inherited model of studying Canada in our separate bunkers, protected by the norms of our own disciplines (50). Perhaps it's time to venture outside and wave our pale arms in the sun.

Policing Canadian Literature

In 1991, I was a student of Barbara Godard's in the English Department at York University, in the seminar that resulted in the publication of the "Canadian? Literary? Theory?" issue of *Open Letter*. Though I always flinch when I revisit the excesses of my prose at the time, the importance of that class, and of Godard's scholarship and advice over the following years, has never diminished for me, in part *because* I flinch when I reread my essay (an earnest but stylistically indulgent piece of postmodern wankery about the poetics of Robert Kroetsch). Godard's pedagogy always involved an active attempt to produce the sorts of scholars that recognized themselves as members of various – and often conflicting – kinds of publics and counter-publics by actually circulating student writing ... what she referred to as a kind of "intellectual craftwork" (50). On one hand, this meant taking her students seriously enough as participants in the discussions and debates of culture to dedicate an entire issue of a major journal to their work, editing, framing and introducing the arguments of each essay. At the same time, within this regulated framework, she created an environment that allowed students to depart from conventional assumptions about what constituted good Canadian literary criticism, and, by extension, what it meant to be proper scholars of Canadian literature. What I have come to realize is that the purpose behind Godard's approach to our *Open Letter* issue was to create the conditions under which it would eventually be possible for us to become the sorts of scholars that would be interested in actively interrogating the protocols that instil categories such as "good Canadian literary criticism" and "proper scholars of Canadian literature" in the first place.

The question marks in the title Godard chose for the *Open Letter* issue, "Canadian? Literary? Theory?", are one indicator of that critical stance. At first glance, they signify the crucial importance of close reading – the word-by-word, letter-by-letter, punctuation mark-by-punctuation mark interrogation of the text. But they also gesture toward an equal but opposite imperative – the need to look outside the text at the assemblages of discourse, power, material media forms and systems of circulation that

allow particular statements to come into being at a particular time and place, and imbue them with significance. The NWMP officer on this issue's cover (which, Godard told me with a certain amount of amusement because the choice itself represented a certain kind of policing, was chosen by Frank Davey) is the personificiation of that assemblage, which has the collective name of *cultural policy*.

In their critical studies of cultural policy, Toby Miller and George Yúdice expand on Jacques Donzelot's concept of "policing," which involves "methods for developing the quality of the population and the strength of the nation" (12). The perceived need for policing begins in mid-19th-century Europe, when the industrial division of labour was separating people from their traditions, creating a split between thought and feeling (Miller 72). Reformers decided that the best way to avoid the unrest and class struggle under these conditions was to teach the working class to value the nation. "Policing was conceived as a struggle between reason and unreason for 'the public mind.' The irrational aspects of subjects would be made known to them as a preliminary to their mastery of life and its drives" (Miller and Yúdice 12). These "irrational aspects" are the things which subjects are told they have to correct in themselves in order to become not only better people, but (taking the word "subject" literally, in its political sense) better citizens. The forces that provide instruction about what has to be corrected, and the manner in which to conduct those corrections, are, of course, Althusser's Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs).

As they constitute particular concrete individuals as subjects, ISAs use a range of techniques to instil in them various sorts of "relations of production," which establish imaginary relationships that conveniently mask the contradictions and traumas that arise from the real conditions of existence. Godard's practice, both in the classroom and in essays such as "The Politics of Representation: Some Native Canadian Women Writers," consistently emphasized the role this process plays in the production of Canadian literature. The ISAs that comprise the Canadian literary institution convey the 'know-how' upon particular subjects called 'authors' that allows them to access educational institutions, professional associations, agents, the press and publishers, thus permitting them to maintain or improve their social positions. While this allows authors to master a particular kind of professional practice, it also ensures that the dominant ideology *stays* dominant by continually reproducing successful authors who are literally subject *to* it. Miller and Yúdice concur: "'Good taste' becomes both a sign of and a means towards better citizenship" (15). What is at stake, Godard notes when she asks "What is that 'good' book that merits publication and constructs the author as subject?" (112-13), is what counts as being culturally valuable.

Godard's analysis seizes upon the literary institution for a reason. It is not simply one example among many ISAs that structure the relationship of subjects to the state. There is both "continuity and coincidence between cultural policy and textual analysis" (Miller 95) in terms of how they instil the relations of production in subjects. Miller argues that hermeneutics, a form of textual analysis developed at the same time as industrialization, mirrors the split subject in its division of form from content. The endless process of ferreting out new levels of meaning became a model for the reader's own endless process of self-examination and hopeful, imaginary (and therefore entirely ideological) desire for unification (Miller 72). There were also new pedagogical techniques that buttressed this process of instilling an endless self-analysis in the subject: the contemplative, silent mode of private reading that became possible even in public spaces like coffee-houses because of movable type, cheap newspapers and serial novels; the placing of students under the "aesthetico-ethical supervision" of professors who were, first and foremost, exemplary readers of texts; and, just as the need to create a unified self became inseparable from the project of locating this self in terms of its relationship to one's country, "to know one's local literary history was to affirm one's national identity" (Miller 73). In other words, the proverbial well-rounded liberal education in literature and the humanities, with its emphasis on developing critical thinking skills through the practice of close reading, uses a very specific and far from neutral set of techniques to construct subjects in terms of their relationship to the nation.

Before considering how to resist the reproduction of the dominant mode of culture, which was the goal of much of Godard's work, I'd like to consider the specific tone and flavour of the techniques that are used to instil the relations of production in Canadian authors and academics. Miller calls it *ethical incompleteness*.

Ethical Incompleteness

What textual analysis and self-improvement have in common as projects is their inexhaustibility. Just as we are taught to constantly refine our readings of texts over a lifetime of study, we are incited to continually contemplate our own unresolvable, evolving ethical dilemmas, and, paradoxically, to try to resolve them via what Miller calls "a series of exercises of the mind" (xiii). These exercises form the connection between government and culture, which downloads the task of managing citizens onto the citizens themselves. Ethical incompleteness, then, is "a determinate indeterminacy" (xii) inscribed in the subject by education and other cultural regimens of governmentality "in the name of loyalty to a more complete entity – the nation". Cultural policy is able to "find, serve and nurture a sense of belonging" in citizens precisely because of this instilled lack (Miller and Yúdice 15).

As with other forms of contemporary power, ethical incompleteness has both a regulatory and a productive aspect. We are all familiar with the stereotypical manifestation of an indifferent government; it is the aspect that Godard describes, which, when presented with the disputations of marginalized groups such as First Nations women, "affirms its authority monologically by refusing to engage in dialogue with these alternate discourses, refuses in fact to acknowledge their existence as contestatory practices and hence to legitimate them as interlocutors" (113). But the regulatory aspect of ethical incompleteness, which could be described as 'paternal,' is a more subtle, and more effective policy instrument than naked oppression. "It is quite wrong to equate cultural policy with 'totality' and describe it as an attempt to 'restrict and stabilize meaning'" writes Miller, because it "depends on the uncertainty that is civility's stock in trade" (223). Ethical incompleteness can be used to control members of a population through instilling a sense of the need to be a better member of a particular ethnicity, age group, gender, faith or class. "Cultural policy finds, serves, and nurtures a sense of belonging, through educational and other cultural regimens that are predicated on an insufficiency of the individual against the benevolent historical background of the sovereign state. These regimens are the means of forming a collective public subjectivity" (Miller and Yúdice 15).

The productive face of ethical incompleteness appears in moments when the marginalized and excluded collectively use its rhetoric of becoming better citizens through access to the cultural machinery as grounds to make claims for access to resources and inclusion. Miller and Yúdice note that this form of ethical incompleteness even has a "postmodern" manifestation, where the ultimate goal of the excluded is to decentre the very national narratives to which they are applying for support (15). One example in the Canadian context is is the Appropriation Arts Coalition <appropriationarts.ca>, a group of over 600 artists, academics, curators and cultural workers who have spent a great deal of time and effort lobbying the government through politely worded open letters and other literate, professionally constructed documents for recognition of the right to infringe the copyrighted status of other cultural objects in the construction of their own works. In his recent work on the applicability of Actor-Network Theory to Cultural Studies, Tony Bennett concurs, observing that various kinds of resistances operate "on the same level and by the same means as the forms of power they counter" (623), meaning that the border between who is inside and who is outside continually shifts. In conversation with Barbara Godard, Smaro Kamboureli observes that "movements that first enter the academic and pedagogical scenes as strategies of resistance, end up becoming institutions in their own right that we often find

ouselves compelled to question, if not radicalize or dismantle altogether" (in Godard 33), citing the institutionalized version of Canadian literature as her example.

While acting with and inside various ISAs is necessary for any marginalized subjects working for change, it is, in and of itself, not sufficient. The reason, writes Miller, is that the citizen is simply too polite, always operating within the borders of what constitutes acceptable behaviour" (223). While the protocols of ethical incompleteness may allow individuals to argue for equal rights as citizens, the imbrication of the notion of citizenship with doctrines of nation and economy places hard limits on what it's possible to accomplish under their sway. Miller argues that in addition to the work that our ethical incompleteness compels us to perform, what is necessary for subjects to actually participate in the definition of public spheres is a specific kind of unruliness that enables the move from citizenship and identity politics to the tactical use of identity (225).

Sports Bra

In 2005, with much fanfare, the City of Toronto Culture Division and the Toronto Arts Council Foundation launched Live with Culture, an ongoing campaign to "draw greater local and international attention to culture in Toronto." Beginning as a key recommendation of the 2003 "Culture Plan for the Creative City" (City of Toronto), and timed to occur simultaneously with the Government of Canada's designation of Toronto as a Cultural Capital for 2005/06, Live With Culture secured funding from all three levels of government (City of Toronto, Live with Culture).

The most prominent visual components of the campaign were "Live with Culture" – a web portal <livewithculture.ca>, and a series of lamppost banners. Though the web portal and many of the campaign's "signature events," including Doors Open Toronto and Nuit Blanche, have met with much acclaim, Live With Culture's advertising campaigns to date have been received much less favourably. In a 2005 column for the *National Post* (and subsequently online at Blogger), critic and artist R.M. Vaughan described the banners like this: "Various disciplines are represented by clichéd props, such as a brush and palette for art, a stack of books for literature, etc., and the activity associated with the prop is performed, or rather assaulted by, a bouncing underwear model dressed in a costume left over from *A Chorus Line*" (Vaughan, "The Big Picture"). It's not the response to this campaign in journalism or the blogosphere that interests, me, though (at least not in isolation). What I think is worth consideration is what happened next, and what I think it implies for of the role of critical cultural policy in Canadian literary and cultural studies.

R.M. Vaughan and Shannon Cochrane's video "Sports Bra," in combination with a series of banners closely parodying the original Live with

Culture campaign designs, and a button produced as an artist's multiple by R.M. Vaughan and Jared Mitchell, were the focus of a 2006 show titled "Live Without Culture" at Paul Petro Multiples. "Sports Bra" was subsequently shown at the 15th Moving Pictures Festival of Dance on Film and Video and at Prefix Gallery; the banners were also shown at MOCCA. Vaughan published a postscript to the entire episode in *The State of the Arts*, the second volume of *uTOpia*, the highly acclaimed series of critical anthologies on Toronto culture from Coach House Books ("Live Without Culture: An Apology," 24-27). The particular success of this body of work as critique of Live with Culture's visual semiotics may have contributed to the swift commissioning of a redesign of the banners by Toronto artist Eric Mathew (Wise), but it's hard to do more than correlate such a shift. However, there was definitely blowback at the level of cultural policy decision-making.

In November 2007, Rita Davies, Executive Director of the Culture Division of the City of Toronto (and the media contact specified on the original Live with Culture press release ["Mayor Miller Announces"]), received a proposal from Martin Huber, UK publisher of *Managing the Arts – Worldwide*, an 80-page quarterly magazine launched in January 2008, suggesting a "24-page Focus on the performing arts in Toronto." The magazine, aimed at policy makers and cultural bureaucrats worldwide, has the stated aim of "giving added visibility to the companies and performers mentioned – by mailing to appropriate people and organisations on mailing lists and through distribution at Trade Shows and Conferences," an ambitious global distribution schedule. The first point on a bulleted list of suggested contents is "Articles looking at policy to and provision for the arts in Toronto and the structures, policies and responsibilities" (Huber). The letter suggests the author(s) of this document should be "local Toronto journalists." Davies forwarded the document to William Huffman, Associate Director and Grants Officer, Visual/Media & Literary Arts for the Toronto Arts Council, who recommended R.M. Vaughan for the job, and was told by the city in no uncertain terms that Vaughan was an unacceptable choice.

I'm bringing all of this up as a preamble to two points. "Live Without Culture" presents the epitome of a process that produces a kind of subject we might call "the ethically incomplete intellectual." Its unavoidable ambivalences and mixed successes point directly to the lived reality of the sorts of struggles that Godard faced as a scholar with a deep commitment to Canadian arts and culture, and to the possibilities for both working within, and occasionally finding some measure of success outside of, the politesse of the citizen's endless dialogue with the state. Though Miller's concept of ethical incompleteness has been an important component of

critical cultural policy studies literature for some years now, discussions of its specific relevance to the people who actually produce critical writing about cultural policy – including academics, artists, public intellectuals, arts administrators, editors and people who are all of these things simultaneously and by turn – are rare. A discussion of "Live Without Culture" is an opportunity to address another gap in the critical cultural policy literature, namely, the importance of micropolitics. Thinking through these two related issues is part of my interest in articulating a critical perspective on the policy issues relevant to Canadian arts and letters.

Too Many Jobs

It would require concerted effort for a working intellectual and/or artist in this country to avoid also being an editor, board member, jury member, commentator and/or consultant for arts bureaucracies at the municipal, provincial and/or federal levels at some point (and more often, at many points) in their career. Like many Canadian intellectuals, Godard received the Althusserian phonecall early, and, as she details in "The Critic, Institutional Culture, and Canadian Literature" (40-42), was swiftly interpellated into the world of Canadian cultural policy as an editor, translator, and member of countless boards and juries.

Moreover, being an academic as well as an artist adds another set of dense and bushy connections to this network. I'm thinking here of the often-disparaged set of practices we refer to as 'service' at tenure and promotion time: departmental and university committee work; peer review and departmental reviews; board memberships; membership in professional organizations, external consultancies and so on. Because so many of us are simultaneously connected to a variety of specific artistic, bureaucratic, professional and academic networks (or, to use grant-writing buzzword of the moment, 'multi-sectoral'), specialization is less and less of an option. Miller & Yúdice note that "artists are channeled like service providers to manage the social" (20-21), which is a fine observation, but it's worth pointing out that intellectuals are connected to the same router, and that the managerial flow traverses all nodes in the network. This situation isn't just unique to Godard, or to R.M. Vaughan, for that matter, who is — *aside* from being a journalist, arts critic, blogger, visual artist and performance artist – also an actor, director, restaurant critic, novelist, poet, playwright, writer in residence, jurist, curator, etc. ... the list is never comprehensive because there is always more unpaid work to do. Along with all this comes the constant anxiety produced by that omnipresent technology of ethical incompleteness, the grant application form.

And yet, all of the critical cultural policy writing I've ever seen presupposes a neatly divided world, where artists, academics, bureaucrats, consultants and audience members (along with their various problems and op-

portunities) all stay in their respective cubicles. In order to adequately address the sort of hybrid, multitasking subjectivity I'm describing, Canadian literary studies needs to retrofit its tools with the addition of a strong emphasis on critical cultural policy theory.

Beyond Necessary Evils

The models for thinking about how to do intellectual work in literary and cultural studies that takes policy into account have a number of features in common, including the goal of moving away from the model of the sovereign intellectual who can invariably unmask or debunk false consciousness and demonstrate the One Best Way of proceeding. Many of these models have their relative beginnings in Michel Foucault's formulation of "the specific intellectual" in the 1976 interview "Truth and Power."

It is important to note that in Foucault's thought, the specific intellectual is *not* an unproblematic figure, as he indicates by positioning its origins as a discursive position "in a word, or, rather, a name: Oppenheimer" (127). Rather than the universal intellectual's "exemplary" (126) facility with writing (127), the specific intellectual, whom Foucault also refers to as "the savant or expert" (128) is in possession of a "direct and localized relation to scientific knowledge" (128) and, as a result, "powers that can either benefit or irrevocably destroy life" (129). Foucault calls for a reconsideration of the function of the specific intellectual as a person occupying a specific position linked "to the general functioning of an apparatus of truth" (131) in the interest of arguing that "local specific struggles can have effects and implications that are not simply professional and sectoral" (132). However, this is a long way from claiming that all ambivalence around the position of the specific intellectual has disappeared, even if the power over technologies of life and death is now something that most people who would self-identify as specific intellectuals only fantasize about while playing World of Warcraft.

While reconsidering the ambivalent function of the specific intellectual in terms of its suitability as a descriptor for those of us engaged in critical cultural policy studies (whatever our field), we can make things a little more interesting by considering the position Alan Liu refers to as "the guru" (18). The guru is the specific intellectual of business literature, consultancy and punditry and increasingly, Liu argues, of the academy as well: "the academy can no longer claim supreme jurisdiction over knowledge ... Scholars are themselves knowledge workers in a complete sense: they are intellectuals, but they are also middle managers" (21). The object of knowledge work is a constantly shifting field "that has to be re-earned with every new technological change, business cycle, or downsizing in one's life" (Liu 19). As Liu indicates, the hallmark of living and working under these conditions is "perpetual anxiety" (19) – yet another synonym for ethical

incompleteness.

I'm not suggesting that hanging out a shingle as a specific intellectual is a satisfactory way to theorize one's own practice: for Foucault, "it's not a matter of a battle 'on behalf' of truth but of a battle about the status of truth and the economic and political role it plays" (132). Assuming the mantle of the specific intellectual, in other words, is not so much about the little guy speaking truth to power; it's about examining the articulations of truths (including your own) to various economic and political assemblages. In his recent manifesto for the practice of "culture studies," Tony Bennett argues that we should think of intellectuals not as savants, gurus or seers, "but as mobilisers and transformers, movers of things and people" (614). What Bennett is arguing is entirely necessary, but not sufficient.

This is because of certain institutionalized blindnesses in conventional critical approaches to cultural policy – blindnesses that have been well documented in recent years but are only beginning to affect practice. In "Cultural Studies from the Viewpoint of Cultural Policy," Stuart Cunningham identifies one form:

> Our command metaphors of resistance, refusal and oppositionalism predispose us to view the policy making process as inevitably compromised, ad hoc, and always incomplete and inadequate, peopled with those inexpert and ungrounded in theory and history or those wielding gross forms of political power for short term ends. These people and processes are then called to the bar of an abstrusely formulated cultural idealism. (18)

The risk that Cunningham is underlining is of critique without understanding. As remedy, he suggests replacing revolutionary rhetoric with a reformist vocation rooted in pragmatic policy work (Cunningham 21) — but as I've already argued, that replaces one form of ethical incompleteness with another. Conversely, Miller argues that the resort to the rhetorics of everyday life and the singular experience of the perceiving subject – "continue[s] to work with an insistent dynamic of always-coming-never-arrived subjectivity within the audience". The result is an entirely self-contained system that dispenses humanizing strategies of interpretation (always leaving room for the idiosyncrasies of individual interpretation) in order to fulfil the policy goals of the nation (Miller 79).

It's worth observing at this juncture (i.e. while painted into the proverbial corner) that every new change in theoretical fashion risks reifying ethical incompleteness in its own operations by the gesture of attempting to indicate what's lacking not only in the work of bureaucrats and citizens, but also in the work of other scholars. Among other things, a theory is always an attempt to present a corrective: you too can be a better critic, if only you heed this call. Further, the professionalization of the academy into a branch of knowledge work, a growing concern of Godard's over the

last decade of her life (Godard 49), makes resorting to the rhetoric of ethical incompleteness almost inevitable at certain moments in anyone's academic career. I suspect it's inseparable from the process of giving a job talk, for example, because the novel is always the marketable. Both Derrida and Latour have, in their respective manners, suggested that this sort of foundational aporia is inevitable, and that the best that one can hope for is to mark that gap and return to reassess it later.

Action Items

One thing that we *can* do is to place our emphasis on a strategic approach to a specific, finite goal, as this brief exhortation from Slavoj Žižek suggests:

> [T]he truly subversive thing is not to insist on 'infinite' demands we know those in power cannot fulfill. Since they know that we know it, such an 'infinitely demanding' attitude poses no problem for those in power: So wonderful that, with your critical demands, you remind us what kind of world we all would like to live in. Unfortunately, we live in the real world, where we have to make do with what is possible. The thing to do is, on the contrary, bombard those in power with strategically well-selected, precise, finite demands, which can't be met with the same excuse. (22)

Enjoy your symptom, in other words, but enjoy it as the first action item on your to-do list. "Live Without Culture" presents just such a precise, finite demand, that moreover takes place on the same plane, using the same materials, methods, and even some of the same channels (plus a few others) as the policy that it critiques. "Sports Bra" is not art *about* cultural policy; it *is* critical cultural policy in action at the micropolitical level. Part of its project was staged within the polite channels of the Toronto arts and letters bureaucracy – the space of ethical incompleteness – but part of it is rebarbative enough that it cannot quite be accommodated within such a space. When I think of Jim McGuigan's call for work that aims to "address the social agents who are actually in a position to do something about [cultural] policies" (31), what I envision involves something a lot like the network I've just traced around "Live Without Culture": emails, newspaper columns, phonecalls, blog posts, conversations in cafes, gallery shows, posters, buttons, snapshots, videos, performances, festivals, fundraisers, anthologized essays and, yes, position papers and presentations. Paying close attention to the sites where culture is produced in order to understand the effects they have on policy provides access to one of the most compelling tools in the arsenal of anyone attempting to be persuasive: narrative.

Moreover, "Live Without Culture" presents a model for a form of critical cultural policy work that avoids the impasse of ethical incompleteness by holding a funhouse mirror up to it. The slightly abject, slightly hopeful minimalist drag of "Sports Bra" presents a subject that Miller describes in

The Well-Tempered Self as "*différends de soi*" (176). Citing Marx and George Herbert Mead, Miller describes this process as the subject fashioning its own life into a hybrid subject-object for themselves, one that is defined in such a way that it "correctly identifies the communities to which it belongs via a process of matching ideal types from the social with its own self-view"; the goal is to develop "a fully achieved capacity for intersubjective recognition and conduct," perhaps even in a manner that places it beyond the alienation instilled by the categories of existence specific to the current mode of governance (207-08). "Sports Bra" insists, repeatedly (especially as it plays in an endless loop during an installation), that living with culture wasn't, and isn't, exactly as illustrated.

For Alan Liu, like Žižek and Miller, political pragmatism sets the intellectual agenda of the moment. "Only if scholars now think about business as usual as an intellectual *and* practical partner in knowledge work, therefore, can the critical issues in the relation of the academy to business [or government, I would add] be joined" (Liu 21). Liu's specific contributions, by way of action items, are, like Miller's, an attempt to address the attention deficit of knowledge work by reasserting the importance of a broader cultural and historical context for what artists, intellectuals, and artist-intellectuals can be. This project of reconnection is necessary to create a persuasive rhetoric explaining the cultural value of art that has no obvious, immediate use-value to the state: "while viral aesthetics and other new aesthetics may be contenders for a governing aesthetic ideology in the age of knowledge work, their ability actually to provide capable governance – that is, to imagine a civil compact not just of the art scene but of its relation to the larger social scene – is blocked by the inability to legitimate the new art" (Liu 374). What if administrative discourse was actually capable of recognizing something like "Sports Bra" as valid critique, without the need for reprisal?.

The approach I'm advocating, an approach very much in the spirit of the life and work of Barbara Godard, stands as a supplement to traditional literary studies in Canada. Insisting on the importance of the particular instruments of cultural policy that produce writers, scholars, artists, arts organizations, and national literatures, especially at this particular time and this particular place, is vital. The Canadian government's various arts policy organs – the Canada Council, Heritage Canada, the Book Publishing Industry Development program, and so on – remain committed to models of subvention based on a shell game that, whenever possible, substitutes the neoliberal fiction of funding cultural industry for the funding of culture. For example, sales of poetry books were down 5 percent in 2010 from the previous year, leaving them at 0.12 percent of the total mass market sales of books (CBC). Pretending that literary publishing could be a profitable

business without the subvention of block grants from the various provincial arts councisl and the Canada Council for the Arts, then, is both dangerous and risible. Miller and Yúdice assert that one way out of the double bind of having to conceive of progressive cultural policy in terms of either a trusteeship model or individual emotional response is to reconceive of arts as a public good (16). We can take a step in that direction by treating art not as a conduit, but as a kind of critique at the limits of what cultural policy (critical and uncritical alike) will currently allow itself to think.

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