Man-Sized Inside:
A History of the Construction of Masculinity in
The Tragically Hip's album *Fully Completely*

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ABSTRACT

Although The Tragically Hip's *Fully Completely* is an unorthodox historical text, in-depth exploration of the landmark album prompts us to reconsider the role of musical experience in the production of gender in late twentieth-century Canada. This thesis frames gender as a reiterative performative-discursive production consisting of four interrelated elements: cultural symbol-systems; normative concepts; the politics of social institutions and organizations; and subjective identity. These elements operate symbiotically in a field of multiple, mobile, and routinely unequal relations. In order to further trace the construction of masculinity in Canada during the early 1990s, this thesis outlines the interacting historical contexts The Tragically Hip navigated through while writing, recording, and producing *Fully Completely*. Careful interdisciplinary consideration of the songs "Looking For A Place To Happen" and "Fifty-Mission Cap" provide specific examples of the performative-discursive formation of masculinity in the best-selling recording. This thesis concludes that *Fully Completely* functioned as an important platform for the constitution of gender in Canada. The album deployed and formed multiple comparative and contrasting masculinities as part of the compulsory maintenance of sexual difference as gender. This study of English-Canadian rock music urges scholars to continue exploring the role of musical experience in the production of gender identities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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A road is made by people walking on it; things are so because they are called so.
What makes them so? Making them so makes them so.

- Chuang Tzu, "Discussion on Making All Things Equal"[1]

We tend to think that *what is* is reality and that truth would only be correct knowledge about reality. But what we are proposing here is to turn it around to say that truth is *what is*, and reality as a whole is nothing but appearances. Reality is a kind of appearance that may be a correct appearance or that may be incorrect, may be an illusion.

- David Bohm, *The Limits of Thought*[2]

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What is the connection between Canadian rock music and masculinity? How can the examination of a single popular rock album inform our understanding of gender in Canada during the early 1990s? Some might view rock music as too mundane or trivial a subject for historical study of late twentieth-century Canada. Upon closer inspection, however, the profound influence of rock music and its intricate relation to masculinity is readily apparent.

"Records are both artworks and historical witnesses," former producer Albin Zak rightly figures.[3] The focus of our present inquiry is the role of The Tragically Hip's *Fully Completely* as historical witness. Released in October 1992, the best-selling album is a potent marker of Canadian culture. For Jacques Derrida, there is no singular truth that, "if we read enough, or live life enough, we can finally grasp: everything is undecided and always will be."[4] Similarly, *Fully Completely* has a multiplicity of inconsistent meanings that are repeatedly produced and negotiated within boundaries set by the record and each listener's musical sensibilities. With that

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[1] Chuang Tzu, "Discussion on Making All Things Equal," in *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, ed. Burton Watson, trans. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 40.

[2] J. Krishnamurti and David Bohm, *The Limits of Thought: Discussions* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 6.

[3] Albin J. Zak, *The Poetics of Rock: Cutting Tracks, Making Records* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), 23.

[4] Derrida's quote appears without citation in Peter Watson, *A Terrible Beauty: The People and Ideas that Shaped the Modern Mind* (London: Phoenix Press, 2001), 632.

in mind, careful consideration of the album still allows us to trace the deployment and formation of masculinity in English-Canadian rock music.

Gender is a historical construct shaped by the social and cultural conditions in which it is enacted. Galvanized by the work of Joan Scott and Judith Butler, this thesis treats gender as a reiterative performative-discursive production with intense, far-reaching significance.[5] *Fully Completely* is a part of a complex symbol-system that is influenced by and displays hetero-normative concepts and political ideologies, and through which subjective identity is both portrayed and established. The album demonstrates and forms masculinity as part of the compulsory stable maintenance of sexual difference as gender.[6] *Fully Completely* offers a composite construction of Canadian masculinity. We can see comparative and contrasting masculinities being developed and produced in the songs "Looking For A Place To Happen" and "Fifty-Mission Cap" for example. English-Canadian rock music, as evidenced by *Fully Completely*, operated as an important platform for the articulation and construction of masculinity during the early 1990s.

A detailed examination of *Fully Completely* as a historical text requires more than just 'content analysis' of song lyric. It demands some musicological scrutiny as well.[7] Four monographs have been especially helpful in this regard. First, Allan Moore's groundbreaking *Rock: The Primary Text* focuses on the *sounds* of rock music and impressively establishes a musicology particular to rock. *Running With the Devil* by Robert Walser effectively grounds musicological analysis in culture and history while examining what links American hard rock with power, gender, and madness. Albin Zak's *The Poetics of Rock* offers a detailed account of rock recording artists and their creative process in the studio "to present a picture of a compositional milieu."[8] Lastly, in *This Is Your Brain On Music*, rocker-turned-neuroscientist Daniel Levitin thoroughly outlines the connection between music and the human brain. These

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[5] The term "performative-discursive production" is used liberally in this thesis. The author considers virtually all human endeavour to be performative-discursive. It is through action, of which discourse is a specific modality, that things are made or not made so.

[6] Biological difference between males and females is discursively constituted, negotiated, and explained in terms of masculine or feminine gender designation.

[7] Although lyric are often poetic, they are not poetry. In a given rock song, music and lyric interpenetrate and co-exist to form a whole text. Lyric are open to discursive associations and constructions, but each vocal line is still prepared, explained, and/or placed in a larger context by the other instruments. Musicology is therefore a crucial tool for understanding and deciphering any rock song.

[8] Zak, *The Poetics of Rock*, xii.

pivotal musicological studies deepen our exploration of the relationship between *Fully Completely* and masculinity.

Historical sociology is another field of study relevant to our inquiry and Simon Frith's oeuvre is preeminent. In the pioneering "Rock and Sexuality," he finds that "the most important ideological work done by rock is the construction of sexuality."[9] Frith's numerous articles and monographs deftly examine the historical sociology of rock, paying great attention to the music's form and use, especially in the constitution of gender identities. In *Music In Everyday Life*, Tia DeNora uses interviews and ethnographic studies to empirically develop a sociological theory of music's role in the structuring of everyday experience. Perhaps most significantly, her research soundly relates popular music to the formation of subjectivity.

Several scholars have carried out interesting work on rock music and gender in the United States. Marion Leonard's *Gender in the Music Industry* explores "how gender is 'produced and maintained' by discourses, institutions, groups and individuals operating within the music industry."[10] Employing a wide range of texts and several dozen interviews, Leonard determines how gender is discursively constructed and experienced in the indie-rock genre among American bands with all female members. In *Instruments of Desire,* Steve Waksman analyzes the history of the electric guitar in America and its role in the shaping of musical experience. He expertly surveys the social and technological history of the instrument's rise in connection to gender and race. Another important work is *I'm A Man: Sex, Gods, and Rock 'n' Roll* by Ruth Padel. This engaging monograph examines the relationship between the myths surrounding rock's emergence in America in the 1960s and ancient Greece. Padel's investigation of the history of rock music challenges the notion that rock is essentially masculine and reveals how the gendered discourse enveloping the 'rock star' was first formulated in and given shape by Greek mythology.

As far as can be determined, the relation between Canadian rock music and gender has received virtually no scholarly attention. Be that as it may, vital work by several Canadian intellectuals has informed our present study. Will Straw has been the leading academic on the English-Canadian recording industry and rock culture. His extensive and insightful research outlines the development of the Canadian music industry, and helps us situate The Tragically

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[9] Simon Frith and Angela McRobbie, "Rock and Sexuality," in *On Record*: *Rock*, *Pop*, *and the Written Word*, ed. Simon Frith and Andrew Goodwin (London: Routledge, 1990), 373.

[10] Marion Leonard, *Gender in the Music Industry: Rock, Discourse, and Girl Power* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007), 1.

Hip in historical context. Ryan Edwardson's *Canuck Rock* is a broad history of Canadian popular music that questions whether there is such a thing as 'Canadian' music. This excellent survey provides comprehensive detail of popular music in Canada that is crucial to our inquiry. Another informative monograph is *Have Not Been The Same* by Michael Barclay, Ian Jack, and Jason Schneider. Tracing the progression (and maybe renaissance) of English-Canadian rock music from 1985 to 1995, these rock journalists cover nearly every Canadian band imaginable and interview many of the relevant artists.

Oral history is yet another important facet in our investigation of Canadian rock music and masculinity. The Tragically Hip's recollections of writing, recording, and producing *Fully Completely*, however varied, are invaluable to our endeavour because they provide access to the band's motivations for and experiences of making the album. In addition to several band interviews gleaned from multiple secondary sources, this thesis is bolstered by the author's lengthy conversation with Rob Baker.[11] The lead-guitarist's remembrances have greatly enhanced our analysis with profusive detail from an insider perspective.

Finally, gender theory structures and unifies our entire exploration of Canadian rock music in the early 1990s. For some, masculinity seemed in crisis at the time. A mythopoetic men's movement, spearheaded by Robert Bly and others, was gaining popularity across North America. Tim Edwards investigated this apparent gender crisis that was so prevalent in populist and academic circles from the late 1980s to the mid-2000s. Edwards concludes that Bly's movement was a misguided response to feminism and the crisis of masculinity thesis was "pervasive" yet clearly "unsubstantiated."[12] Despite its spurious grounding, the supposed crisis of masculinity was culturally influential when *Fully Completely* was recorded and disseminated. In terms of gender theory in this thesis, as mentioned before, the post-structuralism of Scott and Butler is paramount. In *Gender and the Politics of History*, Scott outlines four interrelated elements of gender that form the foundation of this essay's understanding of sexual difference. Underlying and activating all four elements in our framework is Butler's concept of gender as performativity, a complex reiterative citational process. In-depth consideration of each interrelated element is integral to grasping how masculinity is articulated and constructed in *Fully Completely*.

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[11] The author visited with the entire band informally for a couple of hours as well.

[12] Tim Edwards, *Cultures of Masculinity* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 24.

According to Scott, "culturally available symbols that evoke multiple (and often contradictory) representations" constitute the first element of gender.[13] In this thesis language and rock music are both treated as complex symbol-systems that have cultural significance and the capacity to excite or objectify a response. The Tragically Hip's *Fully Completely* is a particular incarnation of rock music. Listening to the album is a performative-discursive act that is inextricably tied to the musical sensibilities and linguistic comprehension of the listener. Furthermore, the performative-discursive practices that shape the reception and interpretation of *Fully Completely* are firmly related to power.

Let us determine what power is. Simply put, power is chiefly established within and through the performative-discursive formation of gender. Michel Foucault argues that Western society has traditionally figured that power only acts in terms of negation; is deciphered in relation to the law; constrains through taboo; and is exercised uniformly at all levels. Foucault utterly discards this juridical conception and instead offers a novel vision of power that places "the expanding production of discourses on sex in the field of multiple and mobile power relations."[14] Scott suggests we follow Foucault's lead and define power as a set of "dispersed constellations of unequal relationships" that are "discursively constituted."[15]

Discourse produces, transmits, and reinforces power while simultaneously allowing it to be undermined, exposed, and possibly contravened. Foucault contends that discursive practices are marked by "the delimitation of a field of objects, the definition of a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge, and the framing of norms for the elaboration of concepts and theories."[16] Each discursive practice, including the one employed authoring this thesis, has principles of exclusion and choice. There is a great tendency to attribute these principles to a person who invented them or from whom they originated. To the contrary, Foucault convincingly establishes that these principles "designate a will to knowledge that is anonymous, polymorphous, susceptible to regular transformations, and determined by the play of identifiable dependencies."[17] While it is customary to attribute discursive principles to a choosing subject,

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[13] Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and The Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 43.
[14] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 98.
[15] Scott, *Gender and The Politics of History*, 42.
[16] Michel Foucault, "History of Systems of Thought," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. Donal F. Bouchard, trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 199.
[17] Foucault, "History of Systems of Thought," 200-01.

there is also a strong inclination to personify power. Nevertheless, as Butler rightfully reminds us: "There is no power that acts, but only a reiterated acting that is power in its persistence and instability."[18] This repeated acting is performativity, "a specific modality of power as discourse."[19] Furthermore, this reiterative process is inherently unstable.

It is pertinent to question whether power is only produced discursively. Edwards criticizes performativity theory for tending to "undermine or neglect" the material basis of subjective identity and power.[20] Perhaps it does. But the tangible foundation to which Edwards alludes is contestable terrain. Every corporeal entity has a history. "We may seek to return to matter as prior to discourse to ground our claims about sexual difference," Butler avers, "only to discover that matter is fully sedimented with discourses on sex and sexuality that prefigure and constrain the uses to which that term is put."[21] There is no access to matter except through discourse. The substantiality of power, according to Foucault, is not "given at the outset," it is embodied through a "multiplicity of force relations" which "constitute their own organization."[22] Discourse is a performative activity routinely employed to make sense of our actions. These maneuvers are conditioned by the material context in which they occur, though they have the potential to alter the environment as well.

Culture is the outcome of performance. The idea of music existing apart from the acts of making and receiving it appears untenable.[23] The creation of The Tragically Hip's *Fully Completely* was entirely reliant upon the performances of the sound engineers, record producer, and band members in the studio. In addition, listening to the album, whether by oneself or with others, is also a performative act. Referring to *Fully Completely*, Rob Baker maintains: "I think a lot of these songs have some built in ambiguity. You don't want to fill in all the blanks, that is what the listening is for. The listener completes the picture."[24] In other words, listening is a performative-discursive act. *Fully Completely* is a historical text in which social relationships are

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[18] Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 9.
[19] Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 187.
[20] Edwards, *Cultures of Masculinity*, 103.
[21] Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 29.
[22] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 92-3.
[23] Nicholas Cook, "Music as Performance," in *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction*, ed. Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert, and Richard Middleton (New York: Routledge, 2003), 208.
[24] Rob Baker, interviewed by author, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 3 August 2009.

encoded and in response to which they are performed. Social meaning is enacted through making and receiving rock music.[25]

Rock music is a vital arena for the articulation and construction of gender. We make sense of and give purpose to our physical and emotional gestures through discursive practices. Likewise, the significance of *Fully Completely* is discursively established. The album's meaning is neither objectively inherent nor entirely discretionary. Its importance is derived from our social interaction with the material world.[26] All the same, *Fully Completely* itself establishes boundaries within which the struggle for musical and non-musical meaning can take place. The album is a cultural artifact that reflects and refers to a pre-existing social reality, while at the same time helping to produce or challenge that reality. As part of a complex symbol-system, *Fully Completely* aids and abets the performative-discursive production of gender. This is one reason why rock music constitutes an important site for the exercise of power.

Scott's second interrelated element of gender concerns "normative concepts" that "attempt to limit and contain" the interpretation of the aforementioned cultural symbol-systems.[27] Concepts permit humans to establish coherence where there is none. Each instantiation of masculinity differs slightly from another. Yet the concept of *masculinity* omits difference and arbitrarily unifies the multiplicity of masculinities that are enacted. Similarly, each rock music recording differs from the next, but the concept of *rock music* ostensibly binds them together. Friedrich Nietzsche contends that faith in the verity of concepts allows people to live "with some repose, certainty, and consequence."[28] Be that as it may, he cautions us not to mistake these fictive coherences for actuality. Western discourses on sexuality are laden with normative concepts that underpin hetero-normativity, what Butler calls "the institution of a compulsory and naturalized heterosexuality."[29] These regularizing concepts are infused with ideal notions of gender that are structured dualistically. Rock ideology is replete with normative concepts that colour the music's creation, reception, and interpretation.

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[25] Cook, "Music as Performance," 213.
[26] Robert Walser, *Running With the Devil: Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1993), 32.
[27] Scott, *Gender and The Politics of History*, 43.
[28] Friedrich Nietzsche, "On Truth and Falsity in an Extra-Moral Sense," in *Early Greek Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans. Maxilion Mugge (New York: Russell & Russell, 1964), 184.
[29] Michael Warner coined the term hetero-normativity in 1993. The quote is from Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 22.

Traditionally, Western epistemology has attempted to order the fluid nature of existence into binaries in which one side is privileged over the other. These dualistic notions rely on essentialist assumptions for their construction and maintenance. Butler notes that hetero-normativity "requires and regulates gender as a binary relation in which the masculine term is differentiated from a feminine term, and this differentiation is accomplished through the practices of heterosexual desire."[30] Each duality is therefore consolidated along culturally organized lines of coherence. Other prominent binaries include: male/female; reason/unreason; self/other; mind/body; and culture/nature. The historically and culturally contingent terms of each binary interconnect and interpenetrate.[31] Still, once conceived these terms often operate as reified regulatory fictions that present themselves as natural and in so doing, conceal their culturally-produced character. Consequently, binaries are sites of culturally constructed and contested meanings. As Butler reminds us, whatever falls 'outside' the binary is also produced by it as a set of exclusions presented as being external, although they actually reside within the binary. These exclusions emerge as incoherence, disruption, or even as a dire threat to the binary system.[32]

Masculinity is differentiated from femininity through the idealization, appropriation, and naturalization of certain human traits. Characteristics of the stereotypical modern Western ideal of masculinity include being: self-assured; fearless; daring; able to take control and lead; autonomous and self-sufficient; dependable; a worker; a breadwinner; strong; aggressive; competitive; invulnerable; rational and in control of one's emotions and desires; independent; task oriented; technologically savvy; and above all else successful.[33] Additionally, sexual drive is imagined as heterosexual and masculine, with the phallus being heralded as a symbol of power. Obviously every human can potentially display any or all of these attributes at one time or another. There is nothing intrinsically masculine about any of them, including 'having' a phallus.[34]

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[30] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 22-3.

[31] Alan Petersen, *Unmasking the Masculine: 'Men' and 'Identity' in a Sceptical Age* (London: Sage Publications, 1998), 87.

[32] Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 39.

[33] This list of stereotypical masculine characteristics is garnered from Arthur Brittan, *Masculinity and Power* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 49; John MacInnis, *The End of Masculinity: The Confusion of Sexual Genesis and Sexual Difference in Modern Society* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1998), 14; Victor J. Seidler, "Reason, Desire, and Male Sexuality," in *The Cultural Construction of Sexuality*, ed. Pat Caplan (London: Tavistock Publications, 1987), 97; and Victor J. Seidler, *Rediscovering Masculinity: Reason, Language and Sexuality* (London: Routledge, 1989), 31 and 151.

[34] For a detailed analysis of the transferable nature of the phallus see Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 57-91.

Normative concepts are constantly being reproduced, reinterpreted, and subverted, though they claim to be natural, timeless, and permanent.[35] Gender as performativity best captures the ever-present potential for the undermining of standardizing concepts and recasting of scripts.[36] Butler describes performativity as: "a process of iterability, a regularized and constrained repetition of norms. And this repetition is not performed *by* a subject; this repetition is what enables a subject and constitutes the temporal condition for the subject."[37] Gender designation does not result from a singular performative act, rather it is a "ritualized production" that is repeated under and through restrictions which range from prohibition to death.

Each performative act renders social norms explicit.[38] When norms are thwarted, others may attempt to correct the 'offender' with anything from a slight gesture to outright violence. Gender norms are reiterated in order to stave off what threatens or challenges hetero-normative gender formation. Subsequently, it is essential that normative concepts conceal the conventions of which they are a repetition. Butler finds that "pathologizing practices and normalizing sciences" are created to "produce and consecrate" heterosexual performativity and ensure normative gender designation.[39] Nonetheless, she contends that such constraints compel and control the production of gender without fully determining it in advance.

Hetero-normativity is a citational practice in and through which regulatory norms are performed in order to materialize and naturalize heterosexual gender designation. Gender identification is possible only to the extent that social norms support and enable the act of claiming gender.[40] For the performative act to provisionally 'succeed,' the action must echo prior actions and cite a previous set of authoritative practices.[41] Butler determines that the repetition of normative concepts "is at once a reenactment and re-experiencing of a set of meanings already socially established; and it is the mundane and ritualized form of their legitimation."[42] Regularizing concepts take hold only to the extent that they are cited. Their power is acquired through the very citations they compel. These concepts do not have a fixed form prior to being

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[35] Brittan, *Masculinity and Power*, 18.
[36] Petersen, *Unmasking the Masculine*, 128.
[37] Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 95.
[38] Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution," in *The RoutledgeFalmer Reader in Gender and Education*, ed. Madeleine Arnot and Mairtin Mac an Ghaill (New York: Routledge, 2006), 67.
[39] Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 125.
[40] Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 7.
[41] Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution," 61-2.
[42] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 140.

cited, they are produced through the citation. They remain normative as long as they demand citations called masculine or feminine.[43] Citing a normative concept effectively brings into being the authority to which that norm supposedly defers. The prior gendered position is a fabrication constituted in the course of its production. "In this sense, then," Butler concludes, "the instance produces the fiction of the priority of sexed positions."[44]

The normative concepts that underpin hetero-normativity assume that heterosexuality is essentially natural and obfuscate its historical arrangement. "Heterosexuality is an invented tradition," Jonathan Katz finds after investigating the history of the term.[45] Katz explores how the terms heterosexual and homosexual signify historically specific ways of naming, thinking about, and giving value to the social organization of the sexes and their pleasures.[46] After exploring the history of Western medical terminology, he finds the word homosexual was coined in 1868. Heterosexual entered the scientific lexicon by 1901. It is revealing, however, that both terms did not develop their present connotation until around 1925.[47] Katz concludes that some middle-class men invented heterosexuality to publically name, scientifically standardize, and ethically justify their own practice of regulating and differentiating sexual pleasure.[48] He pays specific attention to Sigmund Freud, whose work elevated heterosexuality to a societal norm while relegating homosexuality to the deeply problematic. Of course, as Katz points out, homosexuality is only a 'problem' if one is trying to defend heterosexuality as 'normal' sexuality.[49]

Science has and continues to play a crucial role in the formation and legitimation of normative concepts. Considering the history of science, it seems prudent to adopt Foucault's conception of the sciences as "very specific 'truth games' related to specific techniques that human beings use to understand themselves."[50] The notion that heterosexuality is fated by nature or biology is partly based on the erroneous belief that science is somehow objective or value-free. Biological facts are mediated by social and cultural determinants. And a select few men

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[43] Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 13-14.
[44] Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 108-09.
[45] Jonathan Ned Katz, *The Invention of Heterosexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 182.
[46] Katz, *The Invention of Heterosexuality*, 12.
[47] Katz, *The Invention of Heterosexuality*, 10.
[48] Katz, *The Invention of Heterosexuality*, 50.
[49] Katz, *The Invention of Heterosexuality*, 81.
[50] Michel Foucault, "Technologies of the Self," in *Michel Foucault: Ethics, Subjectivity, and Truth*, ed. Paul Rabinow, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: The New Press, 1994), 224.

have propagated their version(s) of sexuality by way of scientific discourse for centuries. Victor Siedler maintains the Age of Reason tied rationality, science, progress, and masculinity together in order to bolster Western capitalist civilization.[51] As a result, science, the preserve of men, was considered a genuine source of knowledge, whereas feeling and emotion, allegedly women's domain, was profoundly suspect.[52] Arthur Brittan argues that gender inequality was naturalized in the 19th century through biology, economics, and psychology.[53] Finally, Raewyn Connell notes that scientific research in the 20th century was largely guided by socially dominant men and widely employed in the rationalization of a patriarchal gender order.[54]

The entrenching of essentialist normative concepts has an extensive history in Western philosophy that long predates the Scientific Revolution. Genevieve Lloyd thoroughly outlines how the conception of rationality, as *the* criterion for truth and personhood from Plato to Jean-Paul Sartre, has been gendered.[55] Lloyd clearly demonstrates that Western philosophers have consistently designated reason as a masculine property, while its nemesis, unrestrained nature, is delegated feminine. This arrangement, a task primarily undertaken by men, has allowed for the social organization of sexual difference to be based on normative concepts.

Rock music ideology is rife with normative concepts that influence how the music is conceived, introduced, and apprehended. The term rock was coined around 1967 as certain musicians were striving to differentiate their sound from rock 'n' roll and other commercially driven pop music.[56] From the outset rock was ideologically defined as being counter-cultural, authentic, and essentially masculine. Ironically, being against tradition has become the quintessential rock convention.[57] As we shall see in the following chapter, the notion of authenticity that was developed in the early days of rock was largely based on racially charged and gendered notions of American bluesmen. The adoption and deployment of essentialist concepts of gender in rock ideology has enabled some rock music, and musicians, to articulate and enact misogyny.[58] Simon Frith defines this kind of insular music as "cock-rock" and derides

[51] Seidler, *Rediscovering Masculinity*, 14.
[52] Seidler, *Rediscovering Masculinity*, 127.
[53] Brittan, *Masculinity and Power*, 130.
[54] Raewyn Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 6.
[55] Genevieve Lloyd, *The Man of Reason: "Male" and "Female" in Western Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).
[56] Allan Moore, *Rock: The Primary Text* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2001), 1-3.
[57] Ruth Padel, *I'm a Man: Sex, Gods, and Rock 'n' Roll* (London: Faber and Faber, 2000), 273.
[58] The examples are too numerous to count. See Led Zeppelin's "Dazed and Confused" for a start.

its public display for being little more than "a masturbatory celebration of penis power."[59] Whether they are explicit or insidiously implicit, normative representations of masculinity in rock music promulgate gender privilege in society.[60]

Ideological considerations also help shape how the actual sound of rock music is generated and recorded in the studio. Allan Moore determines that rock music is structured by "a multiply-evolving but coherent set of rules and practices."[61] Through routine, rock has acquired flexible conventions as opposed to fixed laws. Rock musicians share technological resources and are influenced by normative procedures which shape the stylistic and commercial guidelines they follow.[62] Despite certain ideological influences, rock music is ultimately driven by creative musical artistry.

Scott identifies the politics of "social institutions and organizations" as the third element of gender.[63] In relation to rock music, the family unit, education facilities, governmental structures, and corporations, especially those that service the leisure industry, are important configurations. Music is a powerful medium of social order and thoroughly political. It unites us in social rituals that address a multitude of emotions, and are performed in a whole range of circumstances. Still, the politics of music is frequently grounded in pleasure.[64] Frith's extensive research on the connection between youth, leisure and the politics of rock establishes that rock music is a leisure commodity whose cultural meaning is derived from both its form and use.[65] Accordingly, the ideological power of rock music results from its popularity or mass dissemination. During the first year of its release, over half a million copies of *Fully Completely* were sold in Canada alone.[66]

What qualifies as music, as opposed to noise, is perpetually being negotiated within a social and political context. This fact leads Jacques Attali to conclude that music "constitutes the

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[59] Simon Frith, *Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure, and the Politics of Rock 'n' Roll* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), 227.
[60] Stan Hawkins, *Settling the Pop Score: Pop Texts and Identity Politics* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), 72.
[61] Moore, *Rock*, 7.
[62] Zak, *The Poetics of Rock*, 189.
[63] Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, 43.
[64] Walser, *Running With the Devil*, 55.
[65] Frith, *Sound Effects*, 261.
[66] Canadian Recording Industry Association, "The Tragically Hip Certifications," *Canadian Recording Industry Association*, www.cria.ca.

audible waveband of the vibrations and signs that make up society."[67] Because music helps people to endure life and be reconciled with the social order, musicians who produce uncomfortable degrees of noise are marginalized while those that do not are championed for cultivating familiarity. Any welcomed code of music "simulates the accepted rules of society" where harmony represents orderliness and dissonance signals chaos.[68]

Musical conventions are constantly evolving and mutating. What some judge a noisy racket, others herald as part of a new mode of music. Late in January 1992, Nirvana's revolutionary recording *Nevermind* dethroned the King of Pop, Michael Jackson, from the #1 spot on the U.S. Billboard album chart. This event announced the mainstream arrival of 'alternative rock' and signaled a major transformation in the musical sensibilities of young North Americans. Amidst this shift, The Tragically Hip released their pivotal and wildly popular album *Fully Completely*. Certain musical practices that were preferred among the young at the time were being discursively distinguished as alternative rock. This categorization rendered recordings like *Fully Completely* amenable to various forms of social, political, and economic control.[69] As the rise of alternative rock exemplifies, rock music can be innovative but once it becomes profitable, it is quickly co-opted by the recording industry. Consequently, more often than not, rock music tends to reflect and advance the capitalist system rather than challenge it.[70]

The commercial production of rock music is fundamentally contradictory. And the making of *Fully Completely* was no exception. As creative musical artists, The Tragically Hip strove to produce a significant work of art. On the other hand, the band was under contract to make several albums for MCA Records, a corporation whose *raison d'etre* was to generate profit. The cost of producing and marketing an album nationally is phenomenal, usually requiring hundreds of thousands of dollars. In order to remain under contract and make a living, The Tragically Hip needed to create music that would beget a noticeably large number of sales while remaining artistically relevant. The record industry tries its best to control the market, but since there is no accounting for musical taste or technological innovation, it is basically uncontrollable.

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[67] Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 4.
[68] Attali, *Noise*, 29.
[69] John Shepherd, "Difference and Power in Music," in *Musicology and Difference*, ed. Ruth Solie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 49.
[70] Frith, *Sound Effects*, 272.

The history of rock music is intricately bound to youth and leisure. Rock 'n' roll attracted scores of young people across postwar North America and beyond with its electrifying sound and sexy beat.[71] As Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno argue, being is apprehended by industrial society in terms of manipulation and administration.[72] With the advent of rock 'n' roll, record companies quickly capitalized on the listening habits and purchasing power of the young. They developed a model for consumption specifically based on the leisure interests and needs of teenagers.[73] In this manner rock music became and remains a major commodity in the leisure industry. Dominick LaCapra maintains that industrial society has recaptured leisure as the time and space for the consumption of culture as merchandise. Leisure is now serviced by "culture industries" that specialize in the satisfaction of leisure time pursuits and requirements.[74] The music these culture industries furnish and retail is shaped by their desire to satisfy the leisure demands of young people.

For decades rock music has routinely been a part of the teenage search for identity. Adolescence is a time of self-discovery that is full of emotion and rebellion. During this stage music is often an important resource for generating a sense of self-identity. Evan Rudd establishes that teenagers regularly use music to bring "their narrative of their identity into alignment with a feeling of what life should be like."[75] When successfully engaged in listening to music the young person feels like they are somebody with a voice of their own. It influences how they view themselves and others. Musical preferences become central to teenage social systems as distinctive markers of both personal and group identity.[76] The importance of rock music as a cultural initiator was not lost on Foucault: "to like rock, to like a certain kind of rock rather than another, is also a way of life, a manner of reacting; it is a whole set of tastes and attitudes."[77]

Lastly, the fourth interrelated element of gender that Scott names is "subjective identity."[78] Subjectivity bears a fundamental relation to experience. "It is not individuals who have

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[71] The term rock 'n' roll was originally a euphemism for sexual congress.

[72] Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, ed. Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 65.

[73] Frith, *Sound Effects*, 201.

[74] Dominick LaCapra, *History and Criticism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), 79.

[75] Evan Rudd, "Music and the Quality of Life," *Nordic Journal of Music Therapy* 6 (1997): 86-97.

[76] Levitin, *This Is Your Brain On Music*, 232.

[77] Michel Foucault and Pierre Boulez, "On Music and its Reception," trans. John Rahn, in *Music, Culture, and Society: A Reader*, ed. Derek B. Scott (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 164.

[78] Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, 44.

experience," Scott proclaims elsewhere, "but subjects who are constituted through experience."[79] The modern Western conception of subjectivity as a trans-historical integrative self is no longer sound. It seems wiser to consider subjective identity as a reiterative performative-discursive production. Music plays an integral role in the formation of subjectivity. Listening to rock music is a performative act through which, as Foucault claimed, "the listener affirms himself."[80]

Teresa de Lauretis convincingly argues that experience "is the process by which, for all social beings, subjectivity is constructed."[81] Subjective identity is regularly and mistakenly comprehended as being metaphysical, rather than arising from specific historical, social, and cultural conditions. The significance of experience is constituted discursively. Scott notes: "Without meaning, there is no experience; without processes of signification, there is no meaning."[82] An indelible circular pattern emerges here. Processes of signification require the movement of thought to operate; and thinking is based on memory traces, which are the residue of experience and whose meaning is in turn dependent upon processes of signification. Scott encourages historians to historicize experience as well as "the identities it produces."[83]

The modern Western notion of subjective identity is founded upon essentialist assumptions that date back at least to the 17th century. Jane Flax contends that belief systems operating in the Age of Enlightenment actively promoted the idea of the self as "a stable, reliable, integrative entity that has access to our inner states and outer reality, at least to a limited (but unknowable) degree."[84] Postmodern critical analysis, in contrast, considers the idea of a fixed identity to be a regulatory fiction that is actually a historical production conditioned by cultural imperatives. The self may be experienced as something profound or fundamental, but this occurrence is merely an effect of the performative-discursive production of subjectivity. Butler asserts that the ascription of an interior psychic space is "a publically regulated and sanctioned form of essence fabrication."[85] Recognizing that subjective identity is fictitious does not necessarily make it any

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[79] Joan Wallach Scott, "The Evidence of Experience," *Critical Inquiry* 17 (1991): 773-97.
[80] Foucault and Boulez, "On Music and its Reception," 164.
[81] Teresa de Lauretis, *Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 159.
[82] Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, 38.
[83] Scott, "The Evidence of Experience," 780.
[84] Jane Flax, *Thinking Fragments: Psychoanalysis, Feminism, and Postmodernism in the Contemporary West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 8.
[85] Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution," 68.

less powerful. Although gender is a construction, it has real implications because gender is commonly portrayed as being authentic and natural.

John MacInnes maintains that existential anxiety is largely responsible for the imagination of sexual difference as gender. The projection of an "authentic nature" as an existential anchor assuages "the psychic terrors of mortality."[86] MacInnes determines that gender has replaced religion in contemporary Western society as a defense against psychic insecurity. One reason for our fascination with sex is that we imagine our sexuality "offers to tell us some elusive truth about our mortality."[87] Because of the complex relationship between essentialist notions of gender and psychic security, the alteration or transgression of gender norms is widely feared.

Existential demands for an essentialized gendered identity are linked to the politics of hetero-normativity. Unveiling the performative-discursive composition of gender brings to light the political machinations behind normative concepts of sexuality. Butler addresses this point marvelously. It is worth quoting her at length:

> acts and gestures, articulated and enacted desires create the illusion of an interior and organizing gender core, an illusion discursively maintained for the purposes of the regulation of sexuality within the obligatory frame of reproductive heterosexuality. If the "cause" of desire, gesture, act can be localized within the "self" of the actor, then the political regulations and disciplinary practices which produce that ostensibly coherent gender are effectively displaced from view. The displacement of a political and discursive origin of gender identity onto a psychological "core" precludes an analysis of the political constitution of the gendered subject and its fabricated notions about the ineffable interiority of its sex or its true identity.[88]

Conversely, Flax contends that people need a psychological "core" to ward off total fragmentation and psychosis.[89] The human psyche apparently requires some basic cohesion to operate healthily. Be that as it may, the cohesiveness of subjective identity is a tenuous production, not a given. It strikes one that consciousness is its content.[90] Since subjectivity is based on memory acquired through experience, it is inherently incomplete and fragmented. There is no limit to memory because it can always be added to through experience. As a consequence, subjective identity is an enterprise that can never be entirely realized.

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[86] MacInnes, *The End of Masculinity*, 31.
[87] MacInnes, *The End of Masculinity*, 36.
[88] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 136.
[89] Flax, *Thinking Fragments*, 218.
[90] The phrase "consciousness is its content" is borrowed from Indian philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895-1986), who used it repeatedly in his talks.

Butler's concept of gender as performativity is useful for distinguishing the emergence and operation of subjectivity. Though gender is established through performance, a subject does not pre-exist the performative acts. "There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender;" according to Butler, "that identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results."[91] The standardized and constrained repetition of normative concepts creates "the illusion of an abiding gendered self."[92] Butler argues that subjective identity neither precedes nor follows gender designation, "but emerges only within and as the matrix of gender relations themselves."[93] Gendering in action provides the conditions for the subject to appear and function – conditions that one may neither totally refuse or obey.

Rock music and subjective identity are intimately linked. Frith finds the most important aspect of popular music to be how it provides "a resource in and through which agency and identity are produced."[94] Elsewhere he claims that music is more relevant to the formation of subjectivity than television, films, or books.[95] Popular music helps structure and form subjective identity along culturally specific lines. For some, rock music is the soundtrack of everyday life, giving direction and meaning to their self-consciousness. Popular music is routinely used to manipulate the mood and organize the emotions of the listener. In this regard, it seems best to consider rock music as a "technology of the self," a term Foucault defines as that:

> which permits individuals to effect by their own means, or with the help of others, a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality."[96]

Understanding rock music this way accounts for how it assists in the creation and organization of emotions, memory, identity, agency, and psychic security.

Tia DeNora effectively explores music's role as "a building material of 'subjectivity.'"[97] After conducting scores of interviews, DeNora determines that music is integral to the arrangement of the listener's social and psychological worlds. Most of the individuals she

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[91] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 25.
[92] Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution," 61.
[93] Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 7.
[94] Simon Frith, "Music and Identity," in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, ed. Simon Hall and Paul du Gay (London: Sage, 1996), 109.
[95] Simon Frith, "Music and Everyday Life," in *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction*, ed. Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert, and Richard Middleton (New York: Routledge, 2003), 100.
[96] Foucault, "Technologies of the Self," 225.
[97] Tia DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 57.

questioned said they utilize music for what they "need."[98] DeNora gathers that, as a resource for identifying how one feels, music participates in the "reflexive constitution" of emotional states.[99] As a device for memory retrieval, music enables the listener to simultaneously remember and build their identity. Musical materials help establish our perception and imagination of non-musical matters. DeNora concludes that at the level of daily life music has the power to influence how we understand our bodies, behaviour, and even our sense of time.

Listening to rock music is undeniably a performative act. And everybody relates to rock differently. Anyone with auditory perception, for instance, will hear the exact same music on *Fully Completely,* though each shall listen to it uniquely. Some may even dance or simulate playing the instruments they hearken. In his study of heavy metal music, Robert Walser stresses that listeners decipher music in "a dialectical environment in which meanings are multiple, fluid, and negotiated."[100] The discursive negotiation of rock music's meaning can range widely. Yet, potential 'readings' are not infinite. Referring to television, John Fiske maintains that a text delimits "the arena of the struggle for meaning by marking the terrain within which its variety of readings can be negotiated."[101] It seems reasonable to accept that rock albums such as *Fully Completely* operate similarly. Music, however, does not simply act upon people. People orientate and interpret songs according to their musical and non-musical sensibilities. DeNora claims that this personal appropriation "is what consolidates and specifies music's force."[102]

Music must first be discerned before any aesthetic value can be attached to it.[103] Whatever appraisal is given depends on how the listener categorizes the sounds they hear and their competence within that genre. Each musical recording is understood in relation to whatever other music the listener has heard previously. The listener distinguishes and assesses each piece they hear by way of association, a process that is constantly evolving and perhaps ineffable.[104] A particular song's meaning is created within the context of the listener's own musical experience.

It can be well argued that music does not exist outside of the human brain. Musical grammar is a culturally specific historical construct that must be learnt. Sensory perception registers sound

[98] DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life*, 50.
[99] DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life*, 57.
[100] Walser, *Running With the Devil*, 21.
[101] John Fiske, "British Cultural Studies and Television," in *Channels of Discourse: Television and Contemporary Criticism*, ed. Robert C. Allen (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 269.
[102] DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life*, 43.
[103] Moore, *Rock*, 17.
[104] Zak, *The Poetics of Rock*, 190.

vibrations that are then interpreted according to the particular referential field of each person. "Music, then," postulates Levitin, "can be thought of as a type of perceptual illusion in which our brain imposes structure and order on a sequence of sounds."[105] It might be wise to view subjective identity in the same light. The "self" could be understood as a kind of perceptual illusion in which structure and order is compelled on a disparate array of thoughts. If this outlook is correct, and there is no division between thinker and thought, then how do we account for agency or will?

Nietzsche states that, "there is no such thing as a will."[106] This assertion might well bewilder those who envisage the will as the originator of their actions and a unified property that they possess. Michel Haar's assessment of Nietzsche competently explains this conceivably perplexing statement. Haar maintains that the will is in fact an "imaginary entity" that is discursively formulated as "a complex and belated sentiment."[107] Moreover, the will is not a singularity attributable to a subject; it is "a plurality of instincts and impulses in constant battle with one another to gain the upper hand."[108] Haar's helpful reading of Nietzsche configures the will as a temporary derivation spawned from the interaction of a multiplicity of drives.

For Butler, if there is agency, it resides in the possibilities initiated and limited by hetero-normative gender designation.[109] Even though subjective identity is assembled, this does not mean that it is either completely determined or totally arbitrary. The construction of subjectivity is the very site where terms of agency are articulated and become "culturally intelligible."[110] Butler determines that agency is a reiterative practice not to be conflated with a choosing subject. Likewise, Scott maintains that subjects are constituted discursively and agency is attained through "situations and statuses conferred on them."[111] These conditions enable choices, though they are restricted to a large degree. Finally, rock music can serve a critical role in the establishment of agency. DeNora's in-depth research reveals that music is regularly used in "the moment-to-moment production of agency in real time."[112]

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[105] Levitin, *This Is Your Brain On Music*, 109.
[106] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will To Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale, ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, 1967), 46.
[107] Michel Haar, "Nietzsche and Metaphysical Language," in *The New Nietzsche: Contemporary Styles of Interpretation*, ed. David B. Allison (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1985), 9.
[108] Haar, "Nietzsche and Metaphysical Language," 9.
[109] Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 12.
[110] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 147.
[111] Scott, "The Evidence of Experience," 793.
[112] DeNora, *Music and Everyday Life*, 66.

With our theoretical framework in place, we can better comprehend how masculinity is articulated and constructed in The Tragically Hip's *Fully Completely*. As symbol-systems, language and rock music are both important aspects of the performative-discursive formation of gender. Rock music is often a conduit for the deployment, negotiation, and legitimation of a dualistic, hetero-normative concept of sexual difference. Being intimately tied to youth and leisure, the politics of rock music is frequently rooted in pleasure. And the record industry has developed and adapted accordingly. Since subjectivity is a reiterative performative-discursive production constituted in and through experience, *Fully Completely* is best understood as technology of the "self." Butler convincingly informs us that gendering in action "constitutes the temporal condition for the subject."[113] Rock music functions similarly by providing each listener the opportunity to (re)establish subjective identity and agency.

This thesis is concerned with tracing the deployment and formation of masculinity in English-Canadian rock music, using *Fully Completely* as a case study. Chapter two situates the record in historical context and introduces the interacting circumstances The Tragically Hip inherited and negotiated as they wrote, recorded, and produced the landmark album. After a brief history of rock music, the development of the Canadian music industry is depicted with special emphasis given to Canadian content regulation, MuchMusic, and alternative rock. The supposed crisis of masculinity and nationalist issues are also addressed. Then a succinct biography of The Tragically Hip is followed by a detailed history of recording and producing *Fully Completely*. The chapter concludes with gender analysis of the album cover.

Chapter three examines "Looking For A Place To Happen." The tune re-enacts Jacques Cartier's (in)famous 16th century voyages and the native-newcomer relationship they inaugurated. In the song, The Tragically Hip issues a pointed commentary on the contentious Canadian political situation that was threatening to pull the country apart. The chapter explores how politics and gender are mutually constructive. This thesis finds that The Tragically Hip's critique of traditional native-newcomer politics in Canada shapes, and is shaped by, the forms of masculinity contrasted in "Looking For A Place To Happen." As a result, The Tragically Hip's political stance challenges hegemonic masculinity to a certain extent.

Lastly, chapter four analyzes "Fifty-Mission Cap," a track that recounts the tragic tale of Toronto Maple Leafs defenseman Bill Barilko from the perspective of a young aspiring fighter

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[113] Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 95.

pilot.[114] At a time when physical work seemed underappreciated, The Tragically Hip was honouring and, in turn, validating gritty 'blue-collar' skills. The chapter scrutinizes the role of hockey and war, the two topics that dominate "Fifty-Mission Cap," as pivotal sites for the performative-discursive establishment of hetero-normative gender identities. This thesis argues that The Tragically Hip's reverential handling of rugged masculinity in the song effectively reinforces and reproduces hetero-normative masculinity.

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[114] William 'Bashin' Bill' Barilko won four Stanley Cups with the Leafs in his five-year professional career. In the summer of 1951, Barilko vanished without a trace while on a fishing trip in northern Ontario. His remains were not discovered until 1962.

In order to evaluate a given text, historians routinely employ the critical concept of context. Still, as Dominick LaCapra reminds us, intricate texts such as The Tragically Hip's *Fully Completely* have "a set of interacting contexts whose relation to one another are variable and problematic."[1] Context is multifaceted and multivalent; there is no singular background to behold. Outlining the interacting contexts in which *Fully Completely* was produced and received is significant. Whereas issues of technology, race, and gender shaped the emergence and evolution of rock music, the state of the Canadian music industry, a supposed crisis in masculinity, and nationalist concerns all influenced the recording and dissemination of *Fully Completely*. Providing an overview of the interacting contexts The Tragically Hip navigated through in the early 1990s bolsters our ability to assess the articulation and construction of masculinity in *Fully Completely*.

The harnessing of electricity in the 19th century brought forth sweeping technological innovations that transformed Western culture. In the early 20th century, musical recordings were generally considered inferior to live exhibition. Myriad musicians took umbrage with the use of any recording "trickery" that tampered with the performance.[2] Regardless, the popularity of recordings grew rapidly across North America as the consumption of music spread with radio and became more individualized with the personal record player. For Americans of African decent, recording and radio provided a conduit to a mainstream society dominated by people with European heritage, allowing for the musical exploration of a marginalized group to be widely heard and appreciated. Important electronic advancements continued during the 1930s

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[1] Dominick LaCapra, *Rethinking Intellectual History*: *Texts*, *Context*, *Language* (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1983), 35.

[2] Albin J. Zak, *The Poetics of Rock: Cutting Tracks, Making Records* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), 6.

with the invention of the tape recorder in Germany.[3] The massive expansion of technology, however, was not embraced unanimously.

Scholars from the Frankfurt School took issue with the adverse impact they perceived capitalist industrial society was having on Western art and culture. In a 1935 treatise, Walter Benjamin assails industrial reproduction for withering "the aura of the work of art."[4] He laments how the original use-value of "authentic" art is lost when it is mechanically duplicated.[5] In *The Poetics of Rock*, Albin Zak specifically addresses Benjamin's essay and convincingly argues that the use-value of a rock album remains intact when it is reproduced. Zak, a former record producer, claims the energy of the musicians performing in the studio is conveyed to the recording as an "aura" that gives the track a power of its own.[6]

Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno maintain in their 1944 monograph that, if unabated, the technological rationality of industrial society will "infect" everything with sameness through domination, standardization, and mass production.[7] They claim the fusion of art and entertainment debases culture while intellectualizing amusement. The fact that gratification was being "experienced only in facsimile" through movies or recorded music convinced the pair.[8] In this state of affairs, consumers are mere pawns of "culture industry" advertisers in-sync with the demands of industrial capital.[9] Even though Horkheimer and Adorno severely underestimate the agency and intelligence of the audience, it is undeniable that 20th century capitalism tended to homogenize the cultural products available in the West.

Following the Second World War, youth culture garnered a distinct and important position in North American society for the first time. Economic and technological developments stemming from the war greatly expanded commercial production and consumption across North America. The number of radios and record players in Canadian homes subsequently swelled. At the same time, AM-band radio stations were proliferating and cheap vinyl replaced costly shellac as the key component of records. A whole industry was emerging to service the leisure time needs and

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[3] Steve Waksman, *Instruments of Desire: The Electric Guitar and the Shaping of Musical Experience* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 10.

[4] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schoken, 1969), 223.

[5] Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," 226.

[6] Zak, *The Poetics of Rock*, 19-20.

[7] Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, ed. Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 94-95.

[8] Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 114.

[9] Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 136.

desires of the youth. By the late 1950s, Canadian teenagers were a consumer group spending $100 million dollars a year, responsible for 60% of all music sales in Canada.[10]

The innovation and entrepreneurship of Les Paul personifies the merging of popular music, technology, and commerce in the postwar era.[11] Although an accomplished musician and songwriter, it was Paul's penchant for inventing that proved critical to the development of rock music. The sound of popular music recordings changed profoundly in the 1940s and 1950s when Paul helped create and pioneer the use of over-dubbing, multi-track recording, and the solid-body guitar. Over-dubbing is a process through which a sound is superimposed on a musical performance already recorded. The practice effectively released recording from mirroring live music.[12] Widely adopted in the 1960s as an industry guideline and championed by The Beatles, multi-track recording allows for the separate recording of multiple sound sources. Lastly, Paul created a solid-body guitar, first issued by the Gibson guitar company in 1952, to attain a tonally pure electric guitar sound free of any distortion or feedback. Steve Waksman argues that Paul created a clean sustaining electric guitar tone so that his music would be "generally devoid of obvious ethnic or racial markers" and thus appeal to other middle-class Americans of European decent.[13]

For guitarists with African heritage, the postwar era in Memphis, St. Louis, and Chicago was a time of musical experimentation that welcomed the creative employment of amplification, feedback, distortion, and other electronic effects.[14] Cutting-edge recordings by Muddy Waters, Chuck Berry, and numerous others caused the boundaries between noise and music to be renegotiated. Jacques Attali explains that in order to capitalize on the popular appeal of these new urban sounds, the music industry serviced the leisure demands of young people via "the colonization of black music."[15] This precarious endeavour compelled American society to reconsider and reconfigure relations between its distinctive peoples. Rock 'n' roll was born in

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[10] Ryan Edwardson, *Canuck Rock: A History of Canadian Popular Music* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 27-28. *Canuck Rock* provides a superb detailed account of the rise of popular music in postwar Canada.
[11] Waksman, *Instruments of Desire*, 38.
[12] Zak, *The Poetics of Rock*, 10.
[13] Waksman, *Instruments of Desire*, 38-39.
[14] Waksman, *Instruments of Desire*, 147.
[15] Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 103.

and through this aural, cultural, and social rearrangement in which the concept of race was clearly a vital factor.[16]

Race is a construction issued from the discursive negotiation of biological facts. It is a performance-based cultural production mediated by the social and political imperatives of the historical context(s) in which it is established. The performative-discursive formation and maintenance of race also relies upon normative concepts to reify racial categories and the stereotypical characteristics that animate them. North Americans with European heritage are designated white while those of African decent are labeled black. In the 1950s and well beyond, 'white' musicians adopted and played 'black' music according to their perceptions of what 'black' people represented. Ruth Padel suggests that the imperial European notion of blackness as primitive and closer to nature is partly behind white people's fascination with black music in the 20th century.[17]

New York radio disc jockey Alan Freed is credited with popularizing the term rock 'n' roll in the early 1950s. The novel rhythm and blues music Freed was playing during his broadcasts shocked a large segment of North American society. There was widespread concern the overt sexuality and anti-authoritarian imagery that rock 'n' roll displayed would corrupt the youth. Racial prejudice against Americans with African heritage also influenced the reception of what Billboard listed as 'race records.' Consequently, so-called white performers were able to garner fame and fortune covering the songs and mimicking the styles of 'black' musicians. In 1956, Elvis Presley had four #1 hits and became a household name by acting like, in the words of legendary record producer Sam Phillips, "a white man with the Negro sound and the Negro feel."[18]

At their first American press conference in 1964, The Beatles said the person they wanted to meet most was Muddy Waters. What 'black music' meant to 'white' musicians is key to understanding the emergence of rock music. By 1967 rock was a distinct genre whose origins were traced to the blues, a mixture of European and West African musical codes stemming from the Atlantic slave trade. Rock musicians heralded the bluesman as 'authentic.'[19] In her study of rock history, Padel figures the "black voice empowered rock's feral leap to authenticate white

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[16] For a detailed examination of the emergence of rock 'n' roll see Allan Moore, *Rock: The Primary Text* (Adelshot: Ashgate Publishing, 2001) and Waksman, *Instruments of Desire*.
[17] Ruth Padel, *I'm a Man: Sex, Gods, and Rock 'n' Roll* (London: Faber and Faber, 2000), 141.
[18] Gilbert Rodman, "A Hero to Most?: Elvis, Myth, and the Politics of Race," *Cultural Studies* 8 (1994): 457- 483.
[19] This point is made and developed by Padel, *I'm a Man*, 39, and Moore, *Rock*, 75.

masculinity" because the blues represented "oppressed powerlessness turned into strength through the alchemy of song."[20] The inception and evolution of rock music, though largely about 'white' musicians acting 'black,' does feature artists with African heritage. Jimi Hendrix's trailblazing psychedelic sound and electric guitar virtuosity, for instance, transgressed musical and racial boundaries well beyond his premature death in 1970.

The appropriation of blackness by rock musicians in the 1960s was a gendered enterprise. "Rock music was made by men and is fundamentally about being a man," according to Padel.[21] It aids the idealization, creation, and naturalization of masculinity. Initially rock was ideologically defined as authentic, counter-cultural, and intrinsically masculine. Fueled by their perception of 'black' men as sexually potent, some 'white' rock musicians adopted the image of the virile heterosexual bluesman. Rock history is brimming with penis worship. Bluesmen often equated guitar-playing abilities with heterosexual prowess; musical proficiency signaled they had their *mojo* working.[22] Rock musicians now followed suit, molding the electric guitar into a part of the body in a new openly sexual way.

Rock music is a cultural symbol-system and the electric guitar is the most important aural and visual sign within it. Kevin Dawe argues that ethno-musicological research exhibits how "gender, power, emotion, and feeling are socially and culturally achieved, affected, and built around a musical instrument."[23] The electric guitar embodies the values and aesthetics of Western society. Built to convey meaning, its very structure is saturated with significance. Steve Waksman maintains that the electric guitar is a techno-phallus through which man can be fused with machine. The adaptation of technology as an extension of the body allows musicians to symbolically display their sexuality. Waksman concludes that, as a techno-phallus, the electric guitar frequently affirms a male-dominated hetero-normative sexual order.[24] Judith Butler determines that the phallus is a transferable phantasm only tenuously linked to male morphology.[25] As a result, objects such as the electric guitar can symbolize 'having' a phallus.

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[20] Padel, *I'm a Man*, 198, 205.

[21] Padel, *I'm a Man*, 14.

[22] A *mojo* is a magical charm with the ability to attract women. Padel, *I'm a Man*, 71.

[23] Kevin Dawe, "The Cultural Study of Musical Instruments," in *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction*, ed. Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert, and Richard Middleton (New York: Routledge, 2003), 279.

[24] Waksman, *Instruments of Desire*, 253.

[25] Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 84.

Women guitarists do exist, though they are rare. Even in a woman's hands the electric guitar supposedly remains masculine.[26]

The introduction of rock music coincided with the rise of the civil rights and counter-cultural movements in the United States. In addition to the blues, some of rock's supposed authenticity and rebellious ideology was derived from folk music, especially the work of Bob Dylan. Folk musicians Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger, both champions of the working class, had a long history of being deeply critical of social injustice in America. Their music encouraged artists like Gordon Lightfoot and Bob Dylan to pick up the acoustic guitar. Dylan's 1963 album, *The Freewheeling Bob Dylan,* is a watershed recording that dramatically altered popular songwriting. In 1965 Dylan went electric. This shift dismayed those in the folk community who equated electricity with commercialism and insincerity. Undeterred, Dylan proceeded to chastise The Beatles for writing superficial music, inspiring them to create songs with messages of lasting cultural and political significance. Rock musicians began to differentiate themselves from mere entertainers. Rock music was a form of art.[27]

Meanwhile, at the time of rock music's arrival in the mid 1960s, the Canadian music scene was splintered. Regional conditions prevailed as pan-national radio exposure and the notion of a 'Canadian sound' had yet to develop.[28] Correspondingly, British and American musical influences were paramount. Winnipeg's The Guess Who, like many young Canadian musical groups, initially tried to garner exposure by emulating The Beatles.[29] But after seeing Hendrix play in 1967, the band modified their sound to include aspects of psychedelic-rock. Because the Canadian market was still too small for them to make a living, The Guess Who had to focus on attracting the U.S. audience. Their single "American Woman" reached #1 in both countries in 1970, a first for a Canadian band.[30]

Despite besieging domestic and international quandaries, America's economic and cultural impact on Canada was palpable in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In order to buoy Canadian

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[26] For an excellent analysis of why there are so few women electric guitarists see Mavis Bayton, "Women and the Electric Guitar," in *Sexing the Groove: Popular Music and Gender*, ed. Sheila Whiteley (New York: Routledge, 1997): 37-49. Based on numerous interviews with female musicians, Bayton finds that the lack of women electric guitarists is due to social conditions that help reify the instrument as masculine.

[27] The information on folk music in this paragraph is garnered from Edwardson, *Canuck Rock*, 76-84.

[28] Edwardson, *Canuck Rock*, 9.

[29] Edwardson, *Canuck Rock*, 58.

[30] Edwardson, *Canuck Rock*, 129. It is odd that a song with anti-American sentiment was The Guess Who's breakthrough hit in the United States.

culture and increase opportunity for local recording artists, the Canadian government decided to regulate radio content. Radio stations had been the gatekeepers of popular music in Canada for decades. Since there was little revenue in airing unknown songs, radio programmers systematically deferred playing Canadian artists until they were commercially viable. In April 1968, *RPM*, a trade paper that promoted the Canadian recording industry, revealed that only 0.5% of the nation's radio content was Canadian.[31] That same year, newly elected Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau appointed Pierre Juneau to head the Canadian Radio and Television Commission (CRTC) to help rectify the situation.

In February 1970, the CRTC issued a 30% minimum Canadian content regulation (CanCon) for radio that was based on a four point system. For a song to be considered Canadian, two of the four following criteria had to be met: the music was composed entirely by a Canadian; the artist who principally performed the music is Canadian; the music was recorded in Canada; and/or the lyrics were written exclusively by a Canadian.[32] CanCon's influence was immediate, significant, and pervasive. Ryan Edwardson convincingly establishes that CanCon contributed "to a paradigm shift in which music in Canada would become 'Canadian music.'"[33] After the regulation took effect in January 1971, a national music scene developed as radio play, media coverage, record company promotion, and a touring circuit integrated within Canada.[34] CanCon required radio-stations to play nearly six hours of Canadian music in a given day. The careers of Anne Murray, The Guess Who, The Band, Joni Mitchell, Neil Young, and several others benefitted tremendously, though their hits were over-played at first. Be that as it may, CanCon has vociferous detractors who complain the regulations breed musical mediocrity, most notably Bryan Adams.[35]

As Canadian musicians flourished in the 1970s, the recording industry became increasingly standardized and consolidated. Rock music was now a billion-dollar industry more profitable than either movies or sport.[36] Canadian music industry representatives created the Juno Awards in 1971. The ceremony, an anglicized homage to Pierre Juneau, formally recognizes the musical and technical achievements of Canadian talent each year. In the mean time, U.S. record

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[31] Edwardson, *Canuck Rock*, 142.
[32] Edwardson, *Canuck Rock*, 146.
[33] Edwardson, *Canuck Rock*, 158.
[34] Edwardson, *Canuck Rock*, 213.
[35] At one absurd point, according to CanCon, Bryan Adam's music was not 'Canadian' whereas Aerosmith's was.
[36] Simon Frith, "The Industrialization of Popular Music," in *Popular Music and Communication*, ed. James Lull (New York: Sage Publications, 1987), 67-68.

companies established a branch distribution system in Canada to avoid tariffs. By the mid 1970s, American and European owned labels controlled vast business networks across the country and dominated the Canadian recording industry with plants in Toronto that marketed and sold foreign music to Canadians.[37]

The rock boom ended in the 1980s. With the advent of digital recording and the increasing importance of music videos, the cost of producing and promoting an album skyrocketed. As a result, record labels signed fewer acts and instead relied largely on proven superstars to generate their profits.[38] Canadian musicians still needed to secure a multi-national record deal to make it in the 1980s. More often than not, this meant that bands such as Loverboy, Platinum Blonde, and Glass Tiger, simply replicated musical styles that had already generated sales.[39] In order to support independent recording talent in Canada, several organizations helped form the Fund to Assist Canadian Talent on Record in 1982. The fund has been outstandingly successful and remains a crucial tool for many struggling artists. The introduction of the Compact Disc in 1983 promised consumers better sound quality while offering retailers greater economical efficiency. MuchMusic helped usher in and promote the CD in Canada.

MuchMusic, the nation's music station, did more to nurture and develop Canadian popular music and a national star system than anything since CanCon.[40] Launched in 1984, MuchMusic was subject to Canadian content television regulation. Since there were so few Canadian music videos at the time, the station had to air interviews with Canadian artists to satisfy broadcasting requirements. MuchMusic immediately affected the marketing and consumption of popular music in Canada. It was instrumental in the rise of alternative rock music and the burgeoning prosperity of Canadian talent in the early 1990s. Will Straw concludes that: "MuchMusic has contributed to the embedding of music within complex layers of discourse *about* music, surrounding it with performer gossip, concert news and other information. These have played a clear role in the current success of Canadian performers."[41] This discursive negotiation of musical taste altered Canadian musical sensibilities. Straw maintains that this shift spread "a

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[37] Will Straw, "Sound Recording," in *The Cultural Industries in Canada: Problems, Policies, and Prospects*, ed. Michael Dorland (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1996), 102.

[38] Edwardson, *Canuck Rock*, 206.

[39] Geoff Pevere and Greig Dymond, *Mondo Canuck: A Canadian Pop Culture Odyssey* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall, 1996), 171.

[40] Edwardson, *Canuck Rock*, 191.

[41] Straw, "Sound Recording," 109.

relatively connoisseurist approach to music, of which the popularization of alternative rock in the 1990s is a striking example."[42]

The unprecedented condition of the Canadian music industry in the early 1990s enabled The Tragically Hip to generate substantial sales and earn lasting pan-national popularity without cracking the U.S. market, a first in Canadian rock music history.[43] Canada was the sixth largest music market in the world. Although record sales of Canadian artists jumped 63% from 1990 to 1995, they still only represented 13% of all music purchases in Canada.[44] The recording industry consolidated again in the early 1990s. Of the six remaining major labels doing business in Canada – Warner, Sony, MCA, BMG, EMI, and Polygram – none were Canadian owned. In 1994, these six companies accounted for 90% of the music sales in Canada.[45] In a fragmenting music market based on niche tastes, these major labels serviced several wide-ranging small market segments for their profits instead of banking on a blockbuster artist. This business model demanded that retail outlets stock a sizeable and varied inventory. Consequently, scores of small independent local record stores and even larger inter-provincial companies such as A & A and Discos folded while multinational chains like HMV dominated the new superstore era.[46] Mainstream rock music was providing diminishing returns for the labels in the early 1990s, forcing them to search North America for the latest alternative rock sound.

Alternative rock is a contradictory term. It refers broadly to an underground rock scene created mainly by and for college students, primarily middle and working class males of European heritage, as the 1980s began.[47] By the end of the decade, college radio and MuchMusic had linked, bringing alternative rock into the limelight and changing the course of popular music in Canada.[48] Alternative rock - originally ideologically defined anti-commercial, authentic, and independent - became a mainstream genre. Even though it was purportedly anti-commercial, the major labels found retailing alternative rock music quite lucrative. Many

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[42] Straw, "Sound Recording," 109.
[43] Bart Testa and Jim Shedden, "In the Great Midwestern Hardware Store: The Seventies Triumph in English-Canadian Rock Music," in *Slippery Pastimes: Reading the Popular in Canadian Culture*, ed. Joan Nicks and Jeanette Slonioski (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2002), 210.
[44] Straw, "Sound Recording," 95.
[45] Seagram Canada did, however, buy MCA from a Japanese firm in 1995. But they only retained ownership until 1999. Edwardson, *Canuck Rock*, 210-211.
[46] Information on the Canadian music retail market is gleaned from Straw, "Sound Recording," 104-111.
[47] Larry Star and Christopher Waterman, *American Popular Music: The Rock Years* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 292-93.
[48] Greg Potter, *Hand Me Down World: The Canadian Pop-Rock Paradox* (Toronto: Macmillan Canada, 1999), 168.

consumers equated grassroots appeal with authenticity. Record companies appropriately scoured local music scenes to sign alternative bands with rank and file support.[49] The Tragically Hip was one of those distinctive groups.

In addition to the state of the Canadian music industry, the status of gender relations at the time *Fully Completely* was created and released is pertinent. Masculinity was supposedly in crisis during the early 1990s. However, studies by Elisabeth Badinter and Michael Kimmel, which identify earlier periods in modern Western history when masculinity was allegedly in trouble, clearly put this apparent emergency into historical perspective.[50] Still, it can reasonably be argued that masculinity is perpetually in crisis *because* it is a performative-discursive construction that can never be fully or finally realized. Masculinity is an ideal that has to be constantly achieved and reiterated. It must be demonstrated, tested, and proven repeatedly. Hence, the constitution of gender is continuously vulnerable.

Avenues for the enactment of masculinity were narrowing in the early 1990s, spurring talk of an emergency. Those who warned of a crisis of masculinity often assumed essentialist notions of sexual difference.[51] Second wave feminism had challenged these conjectures in the 1960s and, as a result, education and employment opportunities for North American women blossomed. Increased anxiety of being adequately male coincided with this alteration of gender relations and the traditional family structure. The erosion of male power and privilege at work and home contributed to a perceived loss of gender certainty. Feminist criticism compelled some men to defend and legitimate a hetero-normative sexual order. The fact that men still controlled most of the world's wealth, were paid more than women for equal work, and monopolized violence reveals that patriarchy had not collapsed. "What has crumbled, in the industrial countries," according to Raewyn Connell, "is the *legitimacy* of patriarchy."[52]

Some men reacted to feminism by focusing on the 'naturalness' of patriarchal gender identities. The year *Fully Completely* was released witnessed the rise of "Weekend Warriors" who attended "Wild Man retreats" seeking male bonding.[53] These gatherings, which incorporated Aboriginal drumming and chanting rituals, were part of the mythopoetic men's

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[49] Testa and Shedden, "In the Great Midwestern Hardware Store," 209.
[50] See Elisabeth Badinter *XY: On Masculine Identity*, trans. Lydia Davis (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995) and Michael S. Kimmel, "The Contemporary 'Crisis' of Masculinity in Historical Perspective," in *The Making of Masculinities: The New Men's Studies*, ed. H. Brod (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 121-53.
[51] Arthur Brittan, *Masculinity and Power* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 69.
[52] Raewyn Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 226.
[53] Michael S. Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 206.

movement spearheaded by Robert Bly and others. In *Iron John*, a bestseller in America for thirty-five weeks in 1991, Bly claims that men must retreat to recover the "deep masculine" and finally free themselves from Mother's influence.[54] Bly's work, although highly suspect, articulated the dissatisfaction some people had with the feminist critique of society.

Nationalist issues also tempered the production and reception of *Fully Completely*. As the 1990s began, Canadian distress over U.S. cultural influence was at its highest level in forty years.[55] This concern, however brisk, was as old as Confederation. Paul Rutherford identifies three images of Canada that occur time and again in academia: a peaceable dominion less aggressive and more humane than America; a country that conquered, yet remains harmonious with, nature; and a vassal or imaginary nation.[56] Will Straw suggests that Canadians often contend they are "skilled negotiators of cultural resistance" who can take pleasure in American popular culture without being totally complicit with it.[57] Our "talent for subversive mimicry" allows for the production of "idiosyncratic variations of longstanding and successful cultural forms."[58] Canadian artists subsequently distinguish themselves by catering to our underserved tastes. Conversely, Greg Potter describes a Canadian pop-rock paradox; wherein Canadian talent pursuing international fame "gradually and unwittingly" loses their "Canadian identity."[59]

Many consider The Tragically Hip to be quintessentially Canadian. In fact, some critics attributed the band's auspicious rise to their blatant use of national iconography on *Fully Completely*. Gordon Downie claims there was no grand patriotic scheme for the record, he was just writing about what he knew. The Rheostatics, a group the singer really admired at the time, had incorporated Canadian anecdotes on their 1991 album *Melville*. Downie was inspired to follow suit:

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[54] Tim Edwards, *Cultures of Masculinity* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 27-30.
[55] Frank E. Manning, "Reversible Resistance: Canadian Popular Culture and the American Other," in *The Beaver Bites Back?: American Popular Culture in Canada*, ed. David H. Flaherty and Frank E. Manning (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 3.
[56] Paul Rutherford, "Made in America: The Problem of Mass Culture in Canada," in *The Beaver Bites Back?: American Popular Culture in Canada*, ed. David H. Flaherty and Frank E. Manning (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 278.
[57] Will Straw, "Dilemmas of Definition," in *Slippery Pastimes: Reading the Popular in Canadian Culture*, ed. Joan Nicks and Jeannette Sloniowski (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2002), 98.
[58] Straw, "Dilemmas of Definition," 98 and 105.
[59] Potter, *Hand Me Down World*, 3.

> That was really freeing, edifying to be able to do that. It seemed like a whole world was opened up to anybody that wanted to write about such things. It had been a closed wing of the house that you really didn't go to if you were serious about making it.[60]

The Tragically Hip's cynical use of ideologically charged identifiers on *Fully Completely* is readily misunderstood as jingoism. "There are certain Canadian references in the work," guitarist Rob Baker explains, "but I think Gord [Downie] has always thought in much wider, larger terms. In a strange way it is easily misinterpreted. I don't think he considers himself a great patriot."[61] Nonetheless, a third of the songs on *Fully Completely* specifically explore Canadian topics: the writing of Hugh MacLennan; Jacques Cartier's voyages; the eerie tale of hockey player Bill Barilko; and David Milgaard's wrongful imprisonment and ultimate release. These Canadian references influenced the album's popularity to some extent, leading some to associate The Tragically Hip with patriotic fervour. As Douglas Ivison reminds us, the 'Canadianness' English-Canadian rock performers deploy "is not an essential quality but something that is always partial and contested, and always already in transition."[62] *Fully Completely*, while not being motivated by patriotism *per se*, is a compelling example of the performative-discursive construction of nationalism.

The tale of The Tragically Hip begins in the 1960s on Churchill Crescent in Kingston, Ontario. It was there Rob Baker and bassist Gord Sinclair grew up as neighbours. As teenagers they formed a punk band called The Rodents. That was how Gordon Downie, a high school peer, became acquainted with them, discovering they all shared a love of blues-inspired rock. Paul Langlois was pondering a career in journalism before picking up the guitar for good. Although friends with Downie, Langlois would have to wait for the right opportunity to play with him in a band. Baker, Sinclair, and Downie attended Queen's University in 1982. A year thereafter, the three of them formed a band with drummer Johnny Fay, who was still at Kingston Collegiate, and the seasoned saxophonist David Manning. Bluesy covers of rare tunes by The Yardbirds and The Rolling Stones initially constituted the bulk of their repertoire. The fellows selected their monicker from a short film they saw on Saturday Night Live called *Elephant Parts*.[63] In 1985,

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[60] Gordon Downie, interviewed by Jian Ghomeshi, *Q*, C.B.C. podcast, 11 May 2009.

[61] Rob Baker, interviewed by author, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 3 August 2009.

[62] Douglas Ivison, "Canadian Content: Cultural Specificity in English-Canadian Popular Music," in *Canadian Cultures and Globalization*, ed. Joy Cohnstaedt and Yves Frenette (Montreal: Association for Canadian Studies, 1997), 52.

[63] At one point in *Elephant Parts* a character solicits charitable donations for 'the tragically hip.'

The Tragically Hip's membership was finalized when Langlois replaced Manning. "Once we got together," Downie admits, "formal education was the first casualty."[64]

The Tragically Hip proceeded to tour relentlessly and repeatedly deliver sample recordings to music industry professionals. Eventually, Allan Gregg and Jake Gold heard a demo tape, saw the band live, and signed them to a management deal in 1986. Gregg, a pollster for conservative political groups around the world, was deeply connected to the Mulroney government. Speaking for the band, Baker maintains, "None of us were very comfortable with these Tory affiliations."[65] Despite divergent political and musical visions, The Tragically Hip's partnership with Gregg and Gold proved invaluable. Upon seeing the band perform at The Horseshoe Tavern in Toronto, MCA president Bruce Dickinson signed The Tragically Hip to a multi-album deal in 1987.[66]

Prior to signing with MCA, The Tragically Hip had recorded eight road-tested songs on an eponymous Extended Play (EP) album. Their new label promoted the EP throughout 1988. Even though MuchMusic and FM radio-stations were supportive, sales of *The Tragically Hip* were minimal. Nonetheless, their live show continued to draw and impress growing audiences across Canada. The Tragically Hip headed to Memphis to record a full-length studio album in the spring of 1989. "It was our first recording experience in a way, like making a true record," Downie recalls.[67] Producer Don Smith's objective was to transpose the band's enchanting live sound onto tape. *Up to Here* was released that August and within a year, a hundred thousand copies were purchased in Canada.[68] It quickly became a party staple for many young Canadians. Furthermore, The Tragically Hip was recognized as the Most Promising Group of the Year at the Juno Awards in 1990.

For their second album with MCA, *Road Apples*, The Tragically Hip used Smith as producer again. But this time they recorded in New Orleans. During these sessions Downie announced he would no longer sing other people's lyric. The decision handcuffed the rest of the group as

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[64] This quote and the biographical information on The Tragically Hip in this paragraph is gleaned from Michael Barclay, Ian A.D. Jack, and Jason Schneider, *Have Not Been The Same: The Can-Rock Renaissance* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2001), 614-618.

[65] Baker interview.

[66] Edwardson, *Canuck Rock*, 208.

[67] Barclay, Jack, and Schneider, *Have Not Been The Same*, 626.

[68] Canadian Recording Industry Association, "The Tragically Hip Certifications," *Canadian Recording Industry Association*, www.cria.ca.

songwriters to some extent.[69] Baker confesses, "It was a bitter pill to swallow."[70] Nevertheless, he understands the move was integral for Downie to develop as a lyricist and performer. When *Road Apples* was released in February 1991, the band grasped they were entering a new level of popularity. The album sold over three hundred thousand copies in Canada during the following year.[71] Yet, regardless of this invigorating success, The Tragically Hip was still unable to crack the elusive American market.

Circumstances had never been better for The Tragically Hip in Canada. They had steadily built a solid fan base across the nation and were named Entertainer of the Year at the 1991 Juno Awards. Released in October 1992, *Fully Completely* quickly reached #1 on the *RPM* album chart, a first for the band.[72] It remained in the Top 25 for forty-eight weeks, selling half a million copies in Canada by November 1993.[73] At the same time, pressure to capture the prestigious and prosperous American market intensified. No Canadian rock band had ever secured lucrative long-term careers without breaking through there. Both MCA and The Tragically Hip had great expectations for the U.S. release of *Fully Completely* in the spring of 1993. "We were still holding out for the equivalent American success," Sinclair remarks.[74] It never manifested. The label cut promotion of the album after a fortnight. "Two weeks before the record comes out," continues Sinclair, "all the record company is saying is, 'It's gonna be big boys, look out!' Then the week after, no one returns our calls. That's the way it is."[75]

Fully Completely may have failed to attract the American audience, but it cemented The Tragically Hip as Canadian cultural icons. The band's lack of U.S. support, according to some fans, signaled they were truly Canadian. In 1993 The Tragically Hip was declared Entertainer of the Year at the Juno Awards again. On the heels of this success, the band released *Day for Night* in September 1994. The album sold two hundred thousand copies in Canada in just four days,

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[69] Lyric are a potent way of expressing oneself and to have that avenue closed effectively limited the rest of the band members' ability to be creatively expressive. At the same time, one can imagine Downie's reluctance to have others dictate how he expresses himself vocally.

[70] Baker interview.

[71] Canadian Recording Industry Association, "The Tragically Hip Certifications."

[72] Collections Canada, "Records Promotion Music," *Collections Canada*, www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/rpm.

[73] Collections Canada, "Records Promotion Music," and Canadian Recording Industry Association, "The Tragically Hip Certifications."

[74] Barclay, Jack, and Schneider, *Have Not Been The Same*, 635.

[75] Barclay, Jack, and Schneider, *Have Not Been The Same*, 635.

becoming the fastest selling Canadian record in history.[76] The Tragically Hip would now play to sold-out arenas across Canada. Over the next sixteen years, the band made seven more studio albums, toured extensively, and, in 2005, was inducted into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame.

Fully Completely was clearly a pivotal album in several regards. A number of the tracks on the record were written and played before entering the studio while others came to fruition there. Although The Tragically Hip continuously fostered musical ideas, they made specific arrangements to work on material for *Fully Completely*. "I think there were two basic writing sessions," Baker recollects.[77] One was at local record shop owner Jonathan Sugarman's house northwest of Kingston; the other at the Cowboy Junkies' rehearsal space in a Toronto warehouse. These two sessions spawned half the songs on *Fully Completely*.[78] During both gatherings the band would simply form a circle with their gear and suggest musical ideas to each other. It became evident whether or not an idea was working pretty quickly. Baker reveals, "There have been many different [songwriting] processes we've used over the years. But that seems to be a sort of mainstay."[79] The other half-dozen songs on *Fully Completely* were each created separately during various rehearsals throughout 1991-92.

This collective songwriting method, albeit productive, occasionally frustrated Downie. It was relatively easy for the others to join in on a riff but as the vocalist Downie had to search for a snippet of melody while simultaneously trying to find suitably matching lyric. Such improvisation was difficult and unreliable, leading him to be discontented at times. "As a writer," Downie shares, "you're always on the search for something new to say, or at least some new way to shed light on a old word."[80] Downie challenges himself to create meaningful lyric with lasting significance while also being careful not to divulge too much personal information. Writing diaphanously ensures that Downie's privacy remains intact. It also accounts for the role of the listener in deciphering the song. Downie finalized most of the lyric for *Fully Completely* in the studio.

In July 1992, The Tragically Hip travelled to London, England to record at Battery Studios with veteran rock producer Chris Tsangerides. Steady artistic collaboration between the producer

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[76] Testa and Shedden, "In the Great Midwestern Hardware Store," 210, and Martin Melhuish, *Oh What A Feeling: A Vital History of Canadian Music* (Kingston: Quarry Press, 1996), 184.

[77] Baker interview.

[78] Baker recalls that the session in Kingston generated "Eldorado," "We'll Go Too," "The Wherewithal," and "Lionized." The Toronto session birthed "At The Hundredth Meridian" and "Fifty-Mission Cap."

[79] Baker interview.

[80] Kevin Young, "From the Hip," *Maclean's*, 11 December 2000, 48.

and musicians is vital when recording an album. Baker finds collaborating with the same producer on multiple projects troublesome because "little politics and intrigues enter into things."[81] Therefore, it was necessary to replace Don Smith with someone else. Hot off of working with Concrete Blonde, Tsangerides was eager to work with The Tragically Hip. MCA, being responsible for the album's production costs, relished his proven ability to generate an American radio-friendly sound. The band initially perceived Tsangerides as eccentric yet humorous. Nevertheless, they were most impressed with his enthusiasm.

Recording with Tsangerides was a novel experience for The Tragically Hip. "Chris was a real schooled producer," Sinclair remembers. "He had his way of doing things, so there wasn't a lot of ensemble writing and playing on that record. It was by-the-books."[82] Instead of recording the entire band live off the floor as Smith had done, Tsangerides built each and every track instrument by instrument over five weeks. For the first three weeks the band would play but *only* the drums would be recorded. In week four it was solely the bass. Nothing Baker or Langlois performed that entire time made it onto tape. Baker likens it to driving with the parking brake on. All the guitar work was captured in four days during the fifth week. Just the final three days in the studio were dedicated to vocals.[83]

Whereas Downie, unlike Baker, enjoyed recording with Tsangerides without reservation, both band-mates found the nights and weekends outside the studio to be dull and isolating. "We stayed in a really depressing hotel in a nothing area of London," Downie recalls, "then went off every day to another nothing area of London to work."[84] Living in a dingy inn on Edgware Road with no local acquaintances to entertain or guide them, Baker says the band was left to occasionally play soccer in a nearby park, watch coverage of the Barcelona Olympics, have scrabble matches, and drink to excess.[85] In the end, the adversity The Tragically Hip experienced recording in London strengthened the bonds among them.

Mixing the sounds recorded onto tape is the last performative process in the making of an album. According to Zak: "Mixing involves placing the track's elements into an overall arrangement and refining the sounds and dramatic progression of the musical narrative."[86] The

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[81] Baker interview.
[82] Barclay, Jack, and Schneider, *Have Not Been The Same*, 633.
[83] The studio recording timeline is from the Baker interview.
[84] Barclay, Jack, and Schneider, *Have Not Been The Same*, 633.
[85] Baker interview.
[86] Zak, *Poetics of Rock*, 141.

Tragically Hip, interestingly enough, was not present when Tsangerides did the final mix for *Fully Completely*.[87] The producer assembled the recorded sounds for each song into a panoramic soundstage with a depth and breadth that demands a suspension of aural disbelief.[88] In order to do so, Tsangerides electronically positioned three major components: the timbre of the drums and percussion, bass, guitars, and vocals; the sonic signature of the ambient spaces in which each sound was recorded; and the specific musical performances of the band members, where each take captures the passion of the artist such that their idiosyncratic characteristics become etched in the recording.[89] The mixing stage fits everything together, giving the album its aural texture. Ultimately, Zak finds that records such as *Fully Completely* can only be apprehended via "a direct experience of the sonic canvas."[90]

The final phase of production for *Fully Completely* was the illustration and creation of the cover and inlay. This visual aspect of the record can amend or augment one's experience of the music to some degree. Columbia records designer Alex Steinweiss started developing original artwork for albums in 1939.[91] Rock musicians have traditionally embraced the cover as an extension of their music and image. Charlotte Rivers argues that from a marketing point of view an album cover must be "a creative visual representation of the music inside."[92] Commercial ideology influences and permeates the shape and form of musical recordings. Vinyl albums, cassettes, and CDs have all been standardized for retail transportation, storage, and display purposes. For easier in-store viewing, the artist's name regularly appears in the top third of the cover. After purchasing a CD and successfully prying away the shrink-wrap, one may study the notes, lyric, and artwork to enhance the listening experience. Though open to a variety of possible readings, album covers can become defining cultural objects of their era and a visual archive of music history.[93]

Months prior to recording in London, on a long-postponed honeymoon in Italy, Baker discovered the work of Lieve Prins in a European photo magazine. As art director for the band,

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[87] Barclay, Jack, and Schneider, *Have Not Been The Same*, 633.

[88] Zak, *Poetics of Rock*, 77. It is worth pondering how each song on *Fully Completely* is actually a bunch of separately recorded sonic fragments pieced together to form a whole. Yet, even knowing this, every song appears integrated as it unfurls in real time. This auditory illusion is electronically created in the studio and completed in the act of listening.

[89] Zak, *Poetics of Rock*, 49-51.

[90] Zak, *Poetics of Rock*, 46.

[91] Charlotte Rivers, *CD Art: Innovation in CD Packaging Design* (Mies: RotoVision, 2003), 10.

[92] Rivers, *CD Art*, 14. Much of the information on musical CD covers in this paragraph is garnered from Rivers.

[93] Rivers, *CD Art*, 13.

Baker had been deliberating the design of the *Fully Completely* cover for weeks. He selected Prins to bring to life his vision of Bacchanalian revelry blended with the existential pensiveness of Dutch still life painting. The talented Prins, a Belgian born electrographic artist, had a Canon laser copier delivered to Battery Studios during the fourth week of recording. Over the weekend, she molded a life-size image square by square using photocopies of The Tragically Hip and two young ladies.[94] The band was granted licensing privileges, but Prins retained ownership of the actual artwork. In the late 1990s, The Tragically Hip bought the piece from a gallery in Los Angeles. It now hangs prominently in their studio near Kingston.[95]

Figure 2.1. Cover image for The Tragically Hip, *Fully Completely* (MCA 1992).

Deciphering the *Fully Completely* cover (Figure 2.1) is a discursive negotiation shaped by the individual sensibilities and sensitivities of the beholder. The band's name and album title written across the top focuses the viewer's gaze and limits the projective power of the image.[96] Baker relates the album's multifarious front to the unusual variety of rock music featured within. To him the visually extensive cover matches the musical diversity of *Fully Completely*. "It's got lust, life and death, commerce, creation," Baker says explaining the cover. "It's got a little bit of

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[94] Interestingly, Prins' daughter and a friend were the two nubile female models.
[95] Information on the making of the cover is from the Baker interview.
[96] Roland Barthes, *Image-Music-Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 39.

everything."[97] Just like the record. From another perspective, the cover clearly portrays a hetero-normative male gaze. Laura Mulvey succinctly unravels the sexual objectification of women:

> In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its phantasy on to the female figure which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual aid and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*.[98]

Heterosexual men are able to ostensibly control female sexuality this way. The slightly pornographic tone of the *Fully Completely* cover empowers the male figures as it disenfranchises the women, leaving them without an authentic voice in the sexual exchange. In addition, the cover exemplifies the gendered mind/body binary prevalent in Western culture. Notice that just the heads and hands of the band members are visible while the sexualized female bodies are in full view. This image surreptitiously articulates and reinforces the normative concept that mind is masculine and body is feminine. Finally, it is worth registering the irony of placing a title denoting 'wholeness in its entirety' upon this fragmented electrographic collage. The *Fully Completely* cover consists of thirty segmented photocopied images pasted together. Prins composited the two female figures gracing the cover for maximum sexual effect by mixing and matching their body parts: one supplied the limbs for the two while the other provided both torsos. Whether it was intended or not, the ironic disposition is conspicuous.

Thus ends the development of circumstance. The interacting contexts in which The Tragically Hip's *Fully Completely* was produced and received have been outlined using "remainders of the past."[99] These snippets were assembled to provide an overview of the conditions The Tragically Hip inherited and negotiated in the early 1990s, thereby strengthening our ability to analyze the articulation and construction of masculinity in *Fully Completely*. A child of electrical technology, rock music is a symbol-system primarily made by and for men that was initially infused with racial stereotypes of bluesmen. Canadian popular musicians emulated their British and American counterparts before the concept of a 'Canadian sound' was developed. The Tragically Hip clearly benefited from the state of the Canadian music industry in the early 1990s. The confluence of CanCon, MuchMusic, and alternative rock allowed the Kingston quintet to

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[97] Baker interview.
[98] Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen* 16 (1975): 6-18.
[99] LaCapra, *Rethinking Intellectual History*, 27.

secure lasting pan-national popularity without cracking the American music market. In addition, a perceived crisis of masculinity was taking root in popular culture, adversely influencing gender relations. Canadian resentment of U.S. cultural domination was relatively important too. These nationalist concerns might have primed the Canadian audience to be more receptive of the Canadian references that dot *Fully Completely*. Finally, The Tragically Hip's biography details their recording history and other significant career developments that help situate the landmark album. All these interactive contexts relate to each other in variable and sometimes troublesome ways. Consideration of the *Fully Completely* cover reveals its gendered nature.[100] The institution of the hetero-normative male gaze is telling, especially at the hands of a female artist. Still, it is the music on *Fully Completely* that is the most important aspect of the deployment and production of masculinity in the album. And it is The Tragically Hip's music that is addressed in the following chapters.

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[100] It is interesting that on an album predominantly about masculinity and men, the title is lifted from one of the rare songs on the record where femininity is enacted. In the first verse of "Fully Completely," a woman slams the door on her recently estranged lover (who is also in the position of narrator) and says, "you're gonna miss me. Wait and you'll see." The Tragically Hip, nonetheless, considered many a title for the album before selecting *Fully Completely* for various reasons.

The Tragically Hip created "Looking For A Place To Happen" at a house party in Kingston during the winter of 1991-92. Musical ideas melded and lyric flowed as the tune came together rapidly amid a jam session in the basement. "I think within a couple hours of starting work on it that song was basically done," Rob Baker recollects.[1] As The Tragically Hip was preparing material for *Fully Completely* the confederation of Canada was in contention. The Meech Lake Accord had been defeated in 1990 leaving the constitutional hopes of the Quebecois and Canada's First Nations frustrated. After extensive deliberation during the 'Canada round' of constitutional talks, the nation was set to vote on the Charlottetown Accord on October 26, 1992. Canada's troubled political milieu definitely influenced the creation of "Looking For A Place To Happen." The intense animosity was disconcerting. "It all seemed so stupid and petty to us," Baker says reflecting on the band's reaction to the discord. "I guess we've always had a more inclusive idea of what Canada should be."[2]

"Looking For A Place To Happen" re-enacts Jacques Cartier's (in)famous 16th century voyages and the native-newcomer relationship they inaugurated. Based largely on grade school history, the song revisited the mythology of Canada's 'origin' at the very time when Aboriginal issues were commanding national attention.[3] In the early 1990s, politicians across the country were seriously debating the longstanding political grievances of the Indian, Metis, and Inuit peoples of Canada. "Looking For A Place To Happen" is a pointed commentary on this situation. The first half of the song establishes Cartier's perspective; the second half details an Aboriginal viewpoint. It is telling that Cartier is portrayed disparagingly while on the contrary the unnamed native appears benevolent but jaded. The E-minor scale on which the song is founded further

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[1] A bridge passage was added while recording the song in London, England. Information on the writing of "Looking For A Place To Happen" was provided by Rob Baker, interviewed by author, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 3 August 2009.
[2] Baker interview.
[3] For an excellent summary of these issues see J.R. Miller, *Lethal Legacy: Current Native Controversies in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2004).

elucidates this critical tenor. "For reasons that are largely cultural," former record producer Daniel Levitin explains, "we tend to associate major scales with happy or triumphant emotions, and minor scales with sad or defeated emotions."[4] The song's brooding tone is impactful. "Looking For A Place To Happen" is an angry, cynical take on Canadian history that captures the political angst of the times. As native disputes beset Canada in the early 1990s, The Tragically Hip was lending support to the Aboriginal position.

Even though The Tragically Hip revamps Canadian history in "Looking For A Place To Happen" without explicitly broaching the issue of gender, this does not mean it is absent. Joan Scott outlines "the particular and contextually specific ways in which politics constructs gender and gender constructs politics."[5] Whereas political machinations inspire and maintain the hetero-normative concepts that aim to regulate the performative-discursive production of gender, those very same gendered concepts are utilized to envisage, validate, and censure politics.[6] The contrasting treatment of Cartier and his native counterpart in "Looking For A Place To Happen" is a salient example of this reciprocal relationship. The Tragically Hip's understanding of the political status quo frames, and in turn is molded by, the handling of masculinities in the song. Their critique of traditional newcomer politics in Canada is represented via the unfavourable portrait of Cartier whilst support of native political aspirations is delivered through the complimentary depiction of the Aboriginal character. In effect, the deployment of politics in "Looking For A Place To Happen" questions hegemonic masculinity in Canada.

> I've got a job, I explore. I follow every little whiff.
> And I want my life to smell like this:
> To find a place, an ancient race, the kind you'd like to gamble with.
> Where they'd stamp on burning bags of shit.[7]

Rock songs often project the illusion of the existence of a personal subject whose perspective is made known to the listener.[8] In the first verse of "Looking For A Place To Happen," The

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[4] Daniel J. Levitin, *This Is Your Brain On Music: The Science of a Human Obsession* (New York: Plume, 2007), 38.
[5] Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and The Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 46.
[6] Scott, *Gender and The Politics of History*, 48.
[7] The Tragically Hip, "Looking For A Place To Happen," *Fully Completely* (MCA 1992). On top of the standard rock foundation provided by the rhythm section, the melodic interplay of the lead-guitar and vocal in the first verse occurs in a call and response style borrowed from the blues. Downie's voice is a focal point for listeners. How he sings the lyric is as important as its content. The lyric is open to discursive associations and constructions, but these interpretations are shaped by the tone, intensity, cadence, and central placement of Downie's vocal. Nonetheless, each vocal line is still prepared, explained, and/or placed in a larger context by the other instruments.
[8] Edward T. Cone, *The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 3.

Tragically Hip concoct Jacques Cartier's viewpoint in the early 16th century. Note that Cartier is defined first and foremost by his job. This is hardly surprising since work has traditionally been a vital aspect of masculine identities.[9] Biographical information on the explorer is sparse.[10] Born in 1491 on the island of Saint Malo in Brittany, Cartier grew up in one of the most dynamic harbours in France, known for its cod fishermen, active merchants, and fearsome corsairs. Ramsay Cook suggests that Cartier was "a prosperous French renaissance figure."[11] Despite garnering a modicum of celebrity in France during the time of his voyages, Cartier died in relative anonymity at the advanced age of sixty-six.

Fully Completely was released four days before the quincentennial anniversary of Christopher Columbus reaching the Americas. Columbus had 'discovered' a New World in October 1492 while searching for a western sea route to the Orient. Of course he died swearing otherwise. Columbus remained utterly convinced he had reached the legendary "Indies."[12] It is now understood he first spotted land somewhere in the Bahamas. The actions of Columbus and the Europeans who followed in his wake were being intensely debated as the commemoration approached.[13] Some contended the fateful journey should be celebrated without reservation, chastising the political correctness and historical revisionism of critics. To the contrary, others argued that October 1492 marked the commencement of the decimation, subjugation, and marginalization of the indigenous population.[14] They also stressed that the conquest of the New World precipitated the Atlantic slave trade that devastated countless millions in western Africa. The beneficence of the 'founding' European explorers was being widely questioned in 1992. In "Looking For A Place To Happen," The Tragically Hip is clearly reassessing the historical legacy of "the man who named Canada."[15] Consider how Jacques Cartier is portrayed as

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[9] Victor J. Seidler, *Rediscovering Masculinity: Reason, Language and Sexuality* (New York: Routledge, 1989), 151.

[10] Unless otherwise noted, the biographical information on Cartier in this paragraph is gleaned from Andre Lespagnol, "La Vie Quotidienne a Saint-Malo au Temps des Decouvertes," and Jacques Robert, "L'invention d'un Heros," in *Le Monde de Jacques Cartier*, ed. Claude Paulette and Jean-Jacques Brisebarre (Montreal: Libre-Expression, 1984).

[11] Ramsay Cook, *The Voyages of Jacques Cartier* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), xiii.

[12] Valerie I. J. Flint, *The Imaginative Landscape of Christopher Columbus* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 115.

[13] One need only peruse the news coverage at the time to see this.

[14] Perhaps the most scathing critique of the Columbian Age was provided by Noam Chomsky in *Year 501: The Conquest Continues* (Boston: South End Press, 1993).

[15] The phrase quoted is a part of a chapter title from Ed Butts, *True Canadian Explorers* (Toronto: Prospero Books, 2008), 34.

exploitive, malicious, and vulgar in the first verse. This depiction sharply contrasted previous deferential popular cultural renderings of the Canadian explorer.

Looking for a place to happen.
Making stops along the way.[16]

The chorus can be interpreted in a number of ways. At one level, it professes the motto of an explorer driven by greed and social ambition. Cartier repeatedly crossed the Atlantic while seeking a northern passage to the fabled Orient on behalf of the French Crown. Had he been successful Cartier would have garnered enourmous riches and likely secured the endearment of the French aristocracy. Undaunted by failure, Cartier would make numerous 'stops' throughout the Maritimes as he searched for the elusive passage to the East.

Wayward ho! Away we go. It's a shame to leave this masterpiece.
With it's gallery gods and its garbage-bag trees.
Oh, I'll paint a scene, from memory, so I'd know who murdered me.
It's a vain pursuit, but it helps me to sleep.[17]

"Wayward ho!" is a clever repartee to the nautical destination call of westward ho. This wordplay satirically suggests that Cartier's objective is taking him away from what is right or proper, namely Christian civilization. The art motif of the second verse is particularly apt considering the historical context of France at the time of Cartier's first voyage. King Francis I (1515-1547) was leading France from a medieval society into an early modern one.[18] The French had invaded Italian city-states in 1494 and, in turn, the art and culture of the Renaissance began to flow northwest over the Alps. Francis wanted his court to emulate the best of Italy.

In the second verse of "Looking For A Place To Happen," Cartier is gripped with fear on the verge of departing France in April 1534. As an experienced mariner he was well aware of the "perils and dangers" of traversing the Atlantic.[19] It is likely that Cartier heard that his predecessor, Giovanni Verrazano, was murdered in 1528 and, according to one account, "eaten down to the smallest bone" by cannibals in the Caribbean.[20] Perhaps he tried to allay his fear by

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[16] The Tragically Hip, "Looking For A Place To Happen." In contrast to the verse, all the musical elements are working in unison during the chorus, creating a sense of fluidity and movement.

[17] The Tragically Hip, "Looking For A Place To Happen." Though there are some subtle nuances beyond description, the rhythmic, harmonic, and melodic structure of the second verse is nearly identical to the first. Of course the lyric is entirely different.

[18] Anthony Blunt, *Art and Architecture in France, 1500-1700* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 1.

[19] Cook, *The Voyages of Jacques Cartier*, 36.

[20] King Francis had dispatched Verrazano to find a western sea route to Asia in 1524. The quote is from Lawrence C. Wroth, *The Voyages of Giovanni da Verrazzano, 1524-1528* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), 262.

keeping a journal. The chronicle of Cartier's voyages is the most informative and reliable French account of the St. Lawrence region in the 16th century.[21] It is also invariably Eurocentric and androcentric.

Being strongly associated with the founding of Canada, Cartier may reasonably be viewed as a symbol of contemporary politicians connected to the corridors of power. Men have continually dominated Canadian politics.[22] In the early 1990s, the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing reported that Canada was woefully short of proportional electoral representation among the sexes.[23] Manon Tremblay and Linda Trimble contend that female Canadian politicians invariably face *homo politicus*: wherein "the attributes required to access the spheres of power are more in keeping with the profile of men than women."[24] Accordingly, since an ideal political candidate must appropriately display masculinity, female politicians are actively discouraged from participating. The Canadian electoral system, however, is a performative-discursive production that can be altered. Contextual factors, such as the socio-economic status of women, must also be addressed before gender equality can be achieved in the realm of Canadian politics.

<div align="center">
Looking for a place to happen.
Making stops along the way.
Looking for a place to happen.
Making stops along the way.
(Guitar Solo)[25]
</div>

Rock songs, for a range of purposes, traditionally include at least one guitar solo. "It is all just tension and release," Baker says of his guitar solos. "More often than not it's tension."[26] To create the solo in "Looking For A Place To Happen" Baker took a couple spontaneous cracks at it in the studio, honed in on something appealing, and then laid it down in a single run. In terms of the song's historical narrative, the guitar solo carves a melodic path that embodies Cartier's

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[21] Cook, *The Voyages of Jacques Cartier*, ix.

[22] Though most Canadian women were granted the right to vote during the Great War, it wasn't until 1960 when *every* adult woman in Canada could vote. Yet, between 1987 and 1993 only 13% of Canadian parliamentarians were women. Since then women's representation has reached a plateau just above 20%.

[23] As of 1991, only a quarter of women were represented proportionally. Manon Tremblay and Linda Trimble, "Women and Electoral Politics in Canada: A Survey of the Literature," in *Women and Electoral Politics in Canada*, ed. Manon Tremblay and Linda Trimble (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2003), 1-3.

[24] Tremblay and Trimble, "Women and Electoral Politics in Canada," 11.

[25] The Tragically Hip, "Looking For A Place To Happen." The band is firing on all cylinders in the second and third choruses. At the end of the third chorus, instead of reverting to the opening riff, a novel cascading transition sets up the impending guitar solo.

[26] Baker interview.

first recorded trip across the Atlantic. King Francis had sanctioned Cartier "to discover certain islands and countries where it is said that a great abundance of gold and other precious things is to be found."[27]

> Looking for a place to happen.
> Making stops along the way.[28]

Despite having identical lyric with the chorus, the bridge segment displays a subtle modulation of the harmony and melody that differentiates it. The Tragically Hip is expressing a familiar refrain in a novel fashion, as if Cartier's search has entered unchartered waters. His 'discovery' of the St. Lawrence region marked the commencement of native-newcomer relations in what is now Canada. The bridge in "Looking For A Place To Happen" signals a dramatic alteration in the song's narrative; afterwards the tale is recounted solely from a native perspective.

> Jacques Cartier, right this way.
> I'll put your coat up on the bed.
> Hey man you've got the real bum's eye for clothes.
> And come on in, sit right down.
> No, you're not the first to show.
> We've all been here since, God, who knows?[29]

The Tragically Hip creates the viewpoint of an anonymous Aboriginal person in the third verse, thereby inverting the traditional historical narrative.[30] It is instructive that the native appears welcoming but cognizant of his indigenous status. This characterization is supported by the depiction of First Nations in Cartier's journal. It was July 1534 when Donnacona, a Laurentian Iroquoian leader, spotted Cartier and his crew near what is currently the Gaspe basin. Relations were amicable until the newcomers built and raised a thirty-foot cross with *Vive le roi de France* emblazoned across it, an unmistakable attempt to claim the territory. Donnacona took

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[27] Cook, *The Voyages of Jacques Cartier*, 117.

[28] The Tragically Hip, "Looking For A Place To Happen." Overall, the bridge sounds muted and softer than former segments. This sonic shift is largely accomplished when the bridge temporarily leaves the E-minor scale harmony by incorporating a F-major chord to begin the modulation that proceeds to C-major and D-major, and then repeats once.

[29] The Tragically Hip, "Looking For A Place To Happen." The harmony in the third verse is more dynamic than previous ones. Additionally, both the lead-guitar and drums are more active in this verse as we reach the peak of the story arc. The hospitable "coat up on the bed" reference is anachronistic but reminiscent of many a house party (like the one where "Looking For A Place To Happen" was hatched) enjoyed in the northern climes of Canada.

[30] History of these voyages has been almost entirely based on Cartier's Eurocentric chronicle. Whereas the Aboriginal in "Looking for a Place to Happen" thinks Cartier is dressed poorly, in Cartier's journal it is the explorer who takes exception with the attire of the natives. Cartier concluded the Laurentian Iroquois were "the sorriest folk there can be in the world." Cook, *The Voyages of Jacques Cartier*, 24.

umbrage and harangued the European visitors. He conveyed to Cartier that: "all this region belonged to him, and that [they] ought not to have set up this cross without his permission."[31]

The following year Donnacona invited Cartier, then on his second voyage, to winter at Stadacona village (near what is presently Quebec City). Miserable freezing conditions worsened when a scurvy epidemic broke out. Several Iroquoians and almost a quarter of the Europeans perished.[32] If the natives had not shared a natural remedy with the newcomers, all of Cartier's party could have died.[33] Yet, despite their aid, Cartier still distrusted his hosts. Fueled by fear and greed, he plotted and executed the kidnapping of Donnacona and four other native headmen in May 1536. Cartier was back in France with his beleaguered crew and captives by mid-July. None of the Iroquoians aboard ever made it home.

The third verse of "Looking For A Place To Happen" alludes to a cultural divide between native and newcomer.[34] It is hard to imagine two more divergent worldviews than Laurentian Iroquoian and French at the time of contact.[35] Unfortunately, this cultural divide continued to operate in the late 20th century. Aboriginal peoples, with good reason, did not trust Canadian politicians and were highly suspicious of their motives. Conversely, most elected officials in Canada were either unable or unwilling to grasp and reconcile native land claims or demands for self-government. The impact of this chronic disconnect was palpable throughout the constitutional talks of the 1980s and 1990s.

After years of contentious federal-provincial litigation and negotiation, an agreement on a constitutional amending formula and a Charter of Rights and Freedoms was reached in November 1981. The proposed draft, however monumental, was problematic because Aboriginal rights were not enshrined. This oversight was predictable since native leaders were not consulted beforehand. But their intense lobbying subsequently made sure the Constitution Act of 1982 included the article: "The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed."[36] An equally troublesome aspect of the 1981 draft

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[31] Cook, *The Voyages of Jacques Cartier*, 26.

[32] The Iroquoians may have been suffering from European pathogens as well.

[33] J.R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide The Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 31.

[34] The use of the term native-newcomer is somewhat misleading. Neither Aboriginal nor non-Aboriginal peoples are or have been monolithic; regional, cultural, and linguistic variations has created much diversity in both communities.

[35] For a detailed summary of the social and cultural differences between native and newcomer at this time see Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide The Heavens*, 4-21.

[36] Constitution Act, 1982, art. 1, sec. 35.

was the fact that Premier Rene Levesque was noticeably absent when it was authored. French-Canadian nationalists felt excluded and ultimately Quebec rejected the Constitution Act. Even though Canada had finally repatriated its constitution, most Quebecois were dissatisfied and the rights of native people had only been imprecisely defined.

The purposely-vague language outlining Aboriginal rights in the Constitution Act meant that legal rulings and governmental negotiation would have to finalize its practical meaning. Canada's judiciary, as evidenced by the 1985 *Guerin* decision, seemed committed to native rights. A First Minister's Conference on Aboriginal rights was held four times between 1983-87, but the wishes of Canada's First Nations remained frustrated as provincial leaders balked at the concept of native self-government.[37] This inability to outline Aboriginal rights reflected, in part, a neo-conservative shift in the political climate of the mid-1980s.

Brian Mulroney led the Progressive Conservative party to a landslide election victory in September 1984. Atop the priority list for Prime Minister Mulroney was the dramatic reduction of federal spending. The subsequent review of government programs, known as the Nielsen report, recommended virtually ending federal support of Canada's First Nations. The reaction of Aboriginal groups was swift and damning. Mulroney quickly retracted the report but native relations were gravely soured.[38] Yet, as matters deteriorated with Canada's First Nations, Mulroney pressed ahead with constitutional reform that would satisfy Quebec. To the delight of Premier Robert Bourassa, Canada's First Ministers finally reached an agreement in 1987. The Meech Lake Accord granted Quebec special status in Canada's constitution as a 'distinct society.' Only months earlier the same eleven men had failed to treat Aboriginal peoples similarly. This slight would not be forgotten.

By 1990, every province save Manitoba and New Brunswick had ratified the Meech Lake Accord (MLA). Native leaders were, nevertheless, committed to its defeat. Manitoban Cree legislator Elijah Harper, with the support of the province's Aboriginal leadership, resolutely withheld his consent and in late June the MLA expired. "We blocked the accord because it posed a threat to aboriginal people," Harper said accounting for his recalcitrance. "Aboriginal people have no quarrel with Quebec. But we're a distinct society too, and we've fought for many years

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[37] Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide The Heavens*, 350-52.
[38] For many in the native community, the Nielson report was reminiscent of the notorious 1969 White Paper. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide The Heavens*, 360-61.

for the basic rights that Quebec takes for granted, such as participating in constitutional talks."[39] Many French-Canadian nationalists were apoplectic with anger. Still, native leaders were not the only citizens opposed to the MLA.

Several women's groups took issue with 'eleven men in suits' deliberating constitutional matters that deeply affected *all* Canadians. They demanded the high politics of constitutional reform be more gender inclusive. "High politics itself is a gendered concept," Scott explains, "for it establishes its crucial importance and public power, the reasons for and the fact of its highest authority, precisely in its exclusion of women from its work."[40] The reality that Canadian women's constitutional concerns have been largely articulated by non-governmental organizations supports Scott's conclusion. It was the lobbying efforts of women's groups that ensured the Constitution Act included a gender equality provision. The original draft, conceived by 'ten men in suits,' had failed to mention it.

> Looking for a place to happen.
> Making stops along the way.
> Looking for a place to happen.
> Making stops along the way.[41]

Considered from an Aboriginal perspective, the chorus takes on a whole new meaning. It suggests Canada's First Nations are searching for the resolution of their longstanding grievances; pressing issues that had only been addressed in a piecemeal fashion by the federal government, if at all. The last choruses in "Looking For A Place To Happen" speak to the ardent dissatisfaction with newcomer politics that Aboriginal people were displaying in the early 1990s. They aptly capture the disappointment of political aims being thwarted and the frustration of native-newcomer history being misunderstood or ignored.

> Jacques Cartier, right this way.
> Put your coat up on the bed.
> You got the real bum's eye for clothes.
> Come on in, sit right down.
> We've all been here since, God, who knows?[42]

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[39] The Elijah Harper quote is from Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide The Heavens*, 377.
[40] Scott, *Gender and The Politics of History*, 48.
[41] The Tragically Hip, "Looking For A Place To Happen." The last two choruses are more intense and louder than previous ones, marking the song's crescendo.
[42] The Tragically Hip, "Looking For A Place To Happen." The coda alters the harmonic progression as the rhythm section continues the groove from the last chorus. Meanwhile, the vocal and lead-guitar return to a call and response style. Background vocals echo and resonate as Downie rephrases lines from the third verse that restate the Aboriginal viewpoint. The fade out ending suggests the inter-cultural affiliation continues *ad infinitum*.

Mirroring the historical record, the jaded native person advocates his First Nation status to the very end of "Looking For A Place To Happen." Throughout Canadian history native peoples have steadfastly proclaimed their Aboriginal rights and sovereignty, even as allies and treaty partners. The native-newcomer confrontation at Oka, Quebec during the summer of 1990 was another striking example of this political determination. While straining community relations deeply, the crisis also contributed to the inclusion of native demands for self-government in the Charlottetown Accord.

The Oka conflict erupted nineteen days after the Meech Lake Accord was defeated. Rooted in an unresolved land claim dating back to the 1700s, the dispute pitched the Kanesatake Mohawk against municipal, provincial, and federal authorities. The armed standoff featured several intense and ugly confrontations between Mohawk protestors and resentful Quebecois that severely tarnished native-newcomer relations.[43] Although the Oka conflict ended in late September without any land claim resolution, it did spawn the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples that operated from 1991-96.[44] Many Canadians, seemingly unaware of the historical record, remained unsympathetic to the plight of the Aboriginal community and their political demands. "Looking For A Place To Happen" broaches the roots of this pervasive cultural disconnect from a relatively progressive point of view.

As Oka captivated the nation's attention the next phase of constitutional talks began. During the 'Canada round,' as Mulroney declared it, the charter concerns of all citizens would be addressed. But Canada was in dire financial straights. An economic recession emerged in 1990, in part due to the 1988 Free Trade deal with the United States, and continued unabated to the end of 1992. Overfishing in the Maritimes and below-cost wheat prices on the prairies caused Canada's resource-based economy to falter. Consumer spending and property values plummeted as "downsizing" entered the parlance of the unemployed.[45] The recession seemed to dampen the country's appetite for negotiating constitutional revisions. Likewise, Meech Lake deliberations had turned into a lightening rod for Canadian regional political discontent. Some Canadians were fed up with the process and simply tuned out.

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[43] Amazingly, only one person was killed during the Oka crisis, Quebec police corporal Marcel Lemay.
[44] Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide The Heavens*, 380-84.
[45] Morton, *A Short History of Canada*, 347-53.

Quebec's Belanger-Campeau commission set October 26, 1992 as the deadline for constitutional reform. That August 28th the Charlottetown Accord was completed. It proposed to enshrine Aboriginal self-government, albeit limited within Canada, and Quebec's distinctiveness. Canada's First Nations, though promised much, were divided over whether to support the Accord. The Native Women's Association of Canada vehemently rejected the provision of self-government unless gender equality was guaranteed.[46] Lucien Bouchard and the Bloc Quebecois claimed the Accord did too little for Quebec. On the other hand, Preston Manning, leader of the Reform Party of Canada and riding a resurgence of western alienation, complained it unfairly granted Quebec too much.[47] Hundreds of thousands of Canadians listened to "Looking For A Place To Happen" as they pondered the merits of the Charlottetown Accord. Its narrow defeat inflamed the Quebec separatist movement and frustrated Aboriginal leaders. A year later Liberal leader Jean Chretien was elected Prime Minister, the sovereignty seeking Bloc Quebecois formed the Official Opposition, and the Progressive Conservative party had thoroughly collapsed.

Political tensions were threatening to pull Canada apart in the early 1990s. Many Quebecois were prepared to opt out of confederation unless constitutional reform ably recognized their 'distinct society' and its commensurate needs. English-Canadian opinion of Quebec's demands was split variously. Meanwhile, Canada's First Nations were deeply frustrated, as evidenced by the defeat of the Meech Lake Accord and the Oka crisis. Native leaders were not anti-Quebecois; they just wanted to be treated equally. Phil Fontaine, head of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs in 1990, said his particular concern with the Meech Lake Accord "was the further imposition of the Big Lie that Canada was made up of two founding peoples, two official languages."[48] Native anger over unresolved land claims erupted at Oka for all Canadians to see. The nation's contentious political milieu definitely shaped the creation of "Looking For A Place To Happen." The Tragically Hip was purposely addressing contemporary politics. "Looking For A Place To Happen" revisits the story of Canada's 'origin' as a way of supporting Aboriginal rights.

The Tragically Hip's critical portrayal of Jacques Cartier is obviously political. In sharp contrast to the traditional reverential depiction of European explorers, Cartier appears exploitive,

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[46] Miller, *Skyscraper Hide The Heavens*, 378.

[47] Morton, *A Short History of Canada*, 344.

[48] Fontaine's statement appears in John Geddes, "A Life of Its Own," *Maclean's*, June 19, 2000, 16-21. The article examines the impact of the Meech Lake Accord's defeat ten years on.

malicious, vulgar, and fearful. An E-minor scale harmony couches this anti-heroic image and effectively strengthens it. "Looking For A Place To Happen" operates as a reminder that Cartier mistreated his native hosts. The chronicle of his voyages, upon which a part of Canadian history is based, details Cartier's predatory trading practices and aggravated kidnapping. The Tragically Hip inverted Cartier's condescending assumption that Aboriginal people were 'savage' and gullible. The native person in "Looking For A Place To Happen" seems hospitable yet wary, friendly but sovereign. Aided by an E-minor harmonic foundation, the song embodies the morose state of native politics in the early 1990s. Still, by granting a marginalized people a voice, The Tragically Hip bolstered the Aboriginal position in the disputes of the day.

It is hard to determine the extent to which politics influenced the interpretation and reception of "Looking For A Place To Happen" in Canada. In the midst of intense native-newcomer controversy, The Tragically Hip was challenging Canadians to reconsider their country's mythology and, by implication, Aboriginal policy. Canadians had recently shown an appetite for similarly politically charged rock songs. In 1988, Australia's Midnight Oil had a huge #1 hit in Canada with "Beds Are Burning," a plea for Aborigene rights down under.[49] Fans of The Tragically Hip understood and used "Looking For A Place To Happen" as a technology of the "self" in myriad ways. Some listeners might have been oblivious to the political message and simply enjoyed the song's musical qualities; others might have embraced or rejected it to some degree. Whatever the case may be the politics in "Looking For A Place To Happen" is inseparable from the depiction of masculinity.

Politics and gender are mutually constructive. The former influences the performative-discursive production of gender while the latter helps envisage, validate, and censure politics. Subsequently, The Tragically Hip's critique of traditional native-newcomer politics in Canada shapes, and in turn is shaped by, the contrasting of masculinities in "Looking For A Place To Happen." Whereas the political message is established upon the inversion of stereotypical masculine properties traditionally associated with European explorers and the native people who encountered them, the portrait of gender is developed by the transposition of political power. Cartier is not the model heroic, valiant, and brave explorer of yore. The Aboriginal person is not

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[49] Incidentally, Midnight Oil co-headlined The Tragically Hip's Another Roadside Attraction Tour, a version of the Lollapalooza model, which crossed Canada in the summer of 1993. The massively successful tour was a novel and, at times, formidable experience for The Tragically Hip. "We got a sense of what the power of music is all about, especially from the Oils," Gord Sinclair remembers. Michael Barclay, Ian A.D. Jack, and Jason Schneider, *Have Not Been The Same: The Can-Rock Renaissance* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2001), 636.

the conventional uncivilized, naive, and submissive native of times past. Contravening these standard tropes, however spurious they may have been, was politically significant. Furthermore, the political power attributed to each character helps determine the importance and validity of their respective masculinities. Since Cartier holds little political sway in the song, the hegemonic masculinity he represents is being discredited. The Aboriginal person, on the other hand, is a political force to be reckoned with; therefore the marginalized masculinity he exemplifies is being legitimized.

   The Tragically Hip's political stance in "Looking For A Place To Happen" challenges hegemonic masculinity to a certain extent. In order to address the historical-political context of Canada's First Nations in the early 1990s, the band articulated and produced contrasting native and newcomer masculinities. The mutually constructive nature of gender and politics could not be more evident. The Tragically Hip's "Looking For A Place To Happen" revisited the tale of Canada's 'origin' to lend support to Aboriginal rights at a time when they were receiving widespread attention. It functioned as a national historical introspective. "I would want no part in propagating or galvanizing or burnishing some of the stupid mythology in this country," Downie says referring to his motivation as a lyricist. "Honestly. You know, that we're this clean, pristine place."[50] The Aboriginal controversies of the early 1990s lead some newcomers to sardonically ask whether Canada was their home or native land.[51] This is a false choice based on egregious reasoning. Native and newcomer are cohabitants who must forge a democratic society together. Contemplating the history of native-newcomer relations in Canada is the first crucial step in this process. Canadian politics, especially at the highest levels, has been a male preserve. Although "Looking For A Place To Happen" continues this tradition, it does support another marginalized group in the Canadian polity.

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[50] Gordon Downie, interviewed by Jian Ghomeshi, *Q*, C.B.C. podcast, 11 May 2009.
[51] In 1995, Melvin H. Smith released the cantankerous bestseller *Our Home or Native Land: What Governments' Aboriginal Policy is Doing to Canada* (Victoria: Crown Western, 1995).

CHAPTER FOUR: "SEND ME SOME DAISIES"

The early 1990s witnessed a tremendous boom in hockey card sales. In order to capitalize on this development, Pro-Set issued a series featuring some of the most famous goals in National Hockey League (NHL) history. Serendipitously, #340 of this series made its way into Gordon Downie's possession. The card shows Bill Barilko suspended in mid-air, scoring the goal that won the 1951 Stanley Cup. On the opposite side a short blurb titled "The End of the Innocence" outlines the extraordinary tale of the Toronto Maple Leafs defenseman. Downie carried the intriguing card in his pocket for a while. During a songwriting session in early 1992, as the other fellows were jamming on a new heavy guitar riff that Gord Sinclair had created, Downie started to improvisationally sing parts of the text from the card over top of the music. It fit easily and the song "Fifty-Mission Cap" was hatched.[1]

The Tragically Hip continued to develop the tune over the next couple months, adding a chorus and a smooth harmonic transition to it from the verse. "Fifty-Mission Cap" is based on an E-major scale and, according to Daniel Levitin, is therefore largely associated "with happy or triumphant emotions."[2] Whereas the verses indicate a staid celebration of Barilko's brief but highly accomplished NHL career, the chorus sections strongly signal the positive value attributed to a fifty-mission cap and the tremendous military proficiency it denotes.[3] Be that as it may, "Fifty-Mission Cap" revolves around the lumbering guitar riff that opens the track; a riff whose hardness and elongated gait is fittingly reminiscent of Barilko's gritty style of play.

None of the band members were familiar with Barilko's story before writing "Fifty-Mission Cap," yet they were all instantly captivated by it. As they developed the song, The Tragically

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[1] Information on the writing of "Fifty-Mission Cap" was provided by Rob Baker, interviewed by author, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 3 August 2009.

[2] Daniel J. Levitin, *This Is Your Brain On Music: The Science of a Human Obsession* (New York: Plume, 2007), 38.

[3] During the Second World War, fighter pilots in the U.S. Eighth Air Force removed the stiffening ring from their service dress caps so their headphones would fit comfortably. At one point, they had to fly fifty missions to fulfill their combat duty. Subsequently, a seasoned veteran's cap would look crushed and battered. Roger Miller claims the 'fifty-mission cap' "separated the fledgling from the battle-hardened survivor who had earned the right to wear it." Kevin Shea, *Barilko: Without a Trace* (Bolton: Fenn Publishing, 2004), 239.

Hip pondered why such an amazing tale was virtually unknown in Canada. "I think we all had a very keen sense that Canadian stories get very short shrift," Rob Baker says of the band's deliberations at the time.[4] In his eyes, the longstanding heavy influence of American popular culture on Canadian society was largely responsible for this national under-appreciation. Downie was inspired to research Barilko's tragic end. "It was like going into a bygone era of hockey," he notes. "It's a trip that most people don't really make."[5] "Fifty-Mission Cap" is yet another illustration of the band attempting to shed new light on an old Canadian story and contribute to the country's mythology.

At the same time, The Tragically Hip is, perhaps unwittingly, exploring the construction of masculinity in Canada during the early 1990s. Hockey and war, the two topics that dominate "Fifty-Mission Cap," are both pivotal sites for the performative-discursive establishment of hetero-normative gender identities. Canadian sporting and military practices are historical products that are socially assembled and culturally defined in accordance to the transitory desires of powerful men.[6] Gender is a central mechanism through which hockey and the military are stratified to privilege certain types of masculinity. However unintentional it may be, The Tragically Hip's treatment of Barilko and the young aspiring combat pilot in "Fifty-Mission Cap" reinforces and reproduces hetero-normative masculinity.

> Bill Barilko disappeared that summer. He was on a fishing trip.
> The last goal he ever scored won the Leafs the Cup.
> They didn't win another until 1962, the year he was discovered.
> I stole this from a hockey card, I keep tucked up under…[7]

The shocking headline, "Barilko Vanishes in North," greeted readers of the *Toronto Daily Star* on Tuesday August 28, 1951.[8] His disappearance stunned the NHL community and devastated those who loved the Maple Leafs star. Born in March 1927 to Polish immigrants, William 'Bashin' Bill' Barilko was raised in Timmins, Ontario, where his father laboured as a miner. Growing up Barilko imagined he would likely work in the mines as well but eventually

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[4] Baker interview.

[5] Shea, *Barilko*, 237.

[6] Kevin Young and Philip White, "Preface," in *Sport and Gender in Canada*, ed. Kevin Young and Philip White (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2007), xviii.

[7] The Tragically Hip, "Fifty-Mission Cap," *Fully Completely* (MCA 1992). Upon listening to the first verse, one may note that Downie's smooth melodic vocal lines are delivered in a hushed tone that sharply contrasts the gritty, lumbering groove of the guitars and drums. The dynamic tension and release of the harmony couches this solemn homage to Barilko. Interestingly, there is no attempt to rhyme the lyric.

[8] Shea, *Barilko*, 178. All of Barilko's biographical information in this paragraph is gleaned from Shea.

his dream of an NHL career materialized. An avid angler, he took every possible opportunity between hockey seasons to fish the many lakes that dotted the Timmins region. As the summer of 1951 waned, Barilko went fishing once more before returning to Toronto for training camp. "If I don't come back," Barilko told his close friend Bill Curik, "be sure to send me some daisies."[9] Those haunting words were the last the two men shared.

Hockey permeates Canadian culture and shapes countless lives.[10] Downie says that as a child, "everything was hockey and hockey was everywhere."[11] The singer pursued the game seriously until he was sixteen when the draw of music took over. Sinclair also enjoyed hockey as a youngster. "I was never all that good at it," the bass player admits, "but I certainly played all the time."[12] Sinclair continues to take pleasure in the sport with family, friends, and band-mates. Hockey is certainly a source of pride for The Tragically Hip's hometown. In addition to cultivating a number of great players, some contend that Kingston is the rightful birthplace of hockey itself, though others vehemently dispute this assertion.[13]

The first organized indoor hockey game took place in Montreal on March 3, 1875. Forty spectators watched as players with no padding and skates tied to their boots, following certain rugby rules, battled each other to control a wooden puck with their sticks.[14] The game of hockey was standardized and institutionalized in the following decades. In 1892, the Dominion Challenge Trophy, currently known as the Stanley Cup, was created to recognize hockey superiority.[15] The advent of mass media in the early 20th century helped catapult the sport's popularity. Hockey teams were now tied to communal identity and, as a result, matches became invested with tremendous significance as ordinary men were transformed into 'heroes' on ice.[16] Leagues were established across North America to capitalize on the demand for the rugged game.

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[9] Shea, *Barilko*, 171.
[10] This point is developed at length in Ken Dryden and Roy MacGregor, *Home Game: Hockey and Life in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1990); Roy MacGregor, *Home Team: Fathers, Sons, and Hockey* (Toronto: Viking, 1995); and Ken Dryden, *The Game: A Thoughtful and Provocative Look at Life in Hockey* (Toronto: MacMillan, 1983).
[11] Shea, *Barilko*, 236.
[12] Shea, *Barilko*, 237.
[13] Richard Gruneau and David Whitson, *Hockey Night in Canada: Sport, Identities, and Cultural Politics* (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1993), 31.
[14] Michael McKinley, *Ice Time: The Story of Hockey* (Toronto: Tundra Books, 2006), 7-8.
[15] McKinley, *Ice Time*, 9.
[16] Gruneau and Whitson, *Hockey Night in Canada*, 85.

The NHL was formed in 1917 and quickly developed roots in English and French speaking communities across Canada, often bringing the 'two solitudes' together, albeit as rivals.[17] NHL games were broadcast nationally on C.B.C. radio starting in 1933. The Barilko family, like many others, gathered every Saturday during the season to listen to *Hockey Night in Canada*. From 1942 to 1967 'the original six' were the only NHL teams: the Chicago Blackhawks, Detroit Red Wings, Toronto Maple Leafs, Montreal Canadiens, Boston Bruins, and New York Rangers. NHL games were first televised in Canada in October 1952; fourteen months after Barilko had vanished without a trace.

After excelling in an Ontario junior hockey league, Barilko's physical style of play caught the eye of Leafs scouts in 1945. "It was fun bouncing guys around and being bounced," Barilko recalled later.[18] The tough young defenseman was sent to hone his skills in the Pacific Coast Hockey League playing for the Hollywood Wolves of California. There 'Bashin' Bill' became renowned for his bone-crushing (sometimes literally) hits and intimidating presence. Barilko was called up to the Leafs with eighteen games remaining in the 1946-47 season. He was nineteen years old and living a dream. In the NHL Barilko continued to punish opponents with damaging effect, establishing himself as a legitimate player. "He was fearless on the ice, unafraid of anyone or anything," according to Barilko biographer Kevin Shea.[19] Toronto won the Stanley Cup that season. *The Maple Leaf Sports Magazine and Official Programme* claimed Barilko had "bodychecked his way to prominence overnight."[20] The Leafs won the Cup the following two seasons as well, setting an NHL record with three consecutive championships. Toronto returned to the finals in 1951 and, thanks to Barilko's famous goal, captured the Cup for the fourth time in five years.

Hockey provides an important site for the performative-discursive construction of masculinity. Alison Pryer maintains that the game is "ritualized gender performance, a celebratory, communal expression of heterosexual, heteronormative culture."[21] As such, hockey constitutes a ground for advancing and maintaining a traditional ideal of masculinity that praises strength and toughness. Richard Gruneau and David Whitson argue that hockey was organized and developed exclusively by men pursuant to "a very specific model of aggressive

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[17] Gruneau and Whitson, *Hockey Night in Canada*, 101.
[18] Shea, *Barilko*, 28.
[19] Shea, *Barilko*, 57. The account of Barilko's playing career in this paragraph is garnered from Shea.
[20] As quoted in Shea, *Barilko*, 65.
[21] Alison Pryer, "The Aesthetics and Erotics of Hockey," *Canadian Woman Studies* 21, no. 3 (2002): 73-76.

masculinity."[22] Passivity is shunned while domination is rewarded. By valourizing certain traits and associating them with a type of masculinity, hockey tends to denigrate femininity as it simultaneously 'naturalizes' gender designation. In the early 1990s, hockey remained one of the few areas in Canadian society where men could use intimidation and violence legitimately.

Hockey intertwines masculinity with sheer physicality and violence. To garner respect on the ice a player must repeatedly demonstrate his toughness. Robert Faulkner's research reveals that few professional players actually enjoy the use of violence. Instead, most view it as an integral part of the job that follows an informal code of honour.[23] Star players, such as Barilko, are routinely considered hero-warriors deserving of idolization. The ideal NHL player must possess physical and mental stamina, display a fearless ability to inflict pain and endure injury, and harbour a desire to win above all else.[24] Consequently, size, strength, and perseverance are tremendously important to an NHL player. Bodily harm is an occupational hazard. Gruneau and Whitson contend the institutionalization of violence has installed a paternalistic conservatism in hockey where deference to authority and adherence to tradition are prized.[25] Of course violence also fills the arena seats.

Hockey, especially at the NHL level, is a platform wherein players perform and negotiate masculinity publically. In order to have status, NHL players must conform to an ideal notion of masculinity that relishes physical prowess. A crowd of several thousand comments on the spectacle before them with favourable cheers or castigating boos. Most NHL spectators savour the physicality of the game; big hits and fisticuffs always electrify the crowd. Since the team's fate shapes communal identity, masculinity is closely linked to winning and bodily domination. The debate over hockey violence is as old as the game itself. [26] Some contend it glorifies brute strength and condones aggression. Others, such as Kingston native Don Cherry, a former NHL player and coach, maintain that a certain level of violence is essential to the character of the game.[27] In 1989, Cherry started producing *Rock'em Sock'em Hockey*, a video series that

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[22] Gruneau and Whitson, *Hockey Night in Canada*, 191.
[23] Robert Faulkner, "Violence, Camaraderie and Occupational Character in Hockey," in *Social Problems in Athletics*, ed. Daniel Landers (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976), 73-97.
[24] Pryer, "The Aesthetics and Erotics of Hockey," 74.
[25] Gruneau and Whitson, *Hockey Night in Canada*, 194.
[26] For a more detailed look at hockey violence, please see: Marc D. Weinstein, Michael D. Smith and David L. Wiesenthal, "Masculinity and Hockey Violence," *Sex Roles* 33, no. 11/12 (1995): 831-47; Gruneau and Whitson, *Hockey Night in Canada*; Kenneth Colburn, "Honour, Ritual, and Violence in Ice Hockey," *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 10 (1985): 153-70; and M.D. Smith, *Violence and Sport* (Toronto: Butterworths, 1983).
[27] Gruneau and Whitson, *Hockey Night in Canada*, 175-76.

emphasized big hits and epic fights from the NHL. It was an instant bestseller in Canada. Whether it is suitable or not, violence is a central component of the public consumption of hockey.

The first verse of "Fifty-Mission Cap" concludes with the revelation that Barilko's tale has been pilfered from a hockey card. In addition to citing his source, Downie is binding the verse to the impending chorus lyrically. Hockey cards premiered in 1910 and, for a while, were issued in cigarette packs.[28] They rapidly became part of hockey culture as fans enjoyed learning about star players and the history of the game. Cards also became collector's items. As kids, Sinclair and Baker gathered hockey cards and traded them with each other. By the early 1990s, however, playing cards were so lucrative they catalyzed the first strike in NHL history. Debate over the allocation of card royalties, worth tens of millions of dollars a season, brought strained relations between NHL owners and the players' association to the breaking point.[29] The strike lasted for ten days in April 1992 without either side conceding much.

> My fifty-mission cap.
> I worked it in. I worked it in to look like that.
> It's my fifty-mission cap. It's his fifty-mission cap.
> And I worked it in, *worked it in*. I worked it in.
> And I worked it in, *worked it in*, to look like that.
> And I worked it in to look like that.[30]

At first glance the verse and chorus seem to be entirely unrelated. How does Barilko's tragic tale connect with a fifty-mission cap? "They were two disparate parts that were soldered together," Downie explains. "Two disparate parts that, to me, connect."[31] Whereas a hockey card inspired the verse lyric, a visit to the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C. spawned the idea for the chorus. Downie found the wartime artifacts section there particularly memorable, especially the fifty-mission cap display.[32] For Downie the cap denoted accomplishment, experience, and success – "all things a hockey player would aspire

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[28] McKinley, *Ice Time*, 19.

[29] Eric Duhatschek, "Hockey Walkout: It's All in the Cards," *Calgary Herald*, March 31, 1992, sec. A1.

[30] The Tragically Hip, "Fifty-Mission Cap." In a word, the chorus sounds jubilant. This exultation results from a number of factors including but not limited to: the harmony lifting an octave above the home tone of E-major; the melodic interplay of the lead-guitar and vocals; and the steady bright cowbell strikes (yes, more cowbell!). The historical significance of a fifty-mission cap is being invoked here. Rhythmic and harmonic punctuations help signal the 'working in' of the dress cap while also suspending the steady movement of the chorus. This part of the song emphasizes physical work, the kind of rugged labour that model soldiers and hockey players routinely perform.

[31] Shea, *Barilko*, 239.

[32] Baker interview. The concept of a 'pigeon camera' also came from this particular visit to the museum.

to."[33] Furthermore, he suggests it is the stitching of these two disparate images that invests the song with meaning. Barilko's harrowing story, according to Downie:

> is almost the greatest example of being struck down in your prime after you do something great and unique. Then you have the idea of this kid having a fifty-mission cap, and wanting to get to fifty missions faster than it actually takes, but working it in to look like it is; to look like you've had that experience and appear to be beyond your years.[34]

The ironic juxtaposition is telling. Nonetheless, upon closer inspection, the relation between these two lyrical strands is much deeper than Downie proposes.

As part of the British Commonwealth Training Plan, over a quarter of a million Canadians joined the air force during the Second World War, but only a handful were fighter pilots.[35] "We didn't fly missions," one Canadian veteran admonished his interviewer, "we were on a 'do' or we flew an 'op.' Perhaps on a 'trip,' but never on a mission! The Americans used that word, but we didn't."[36] The Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) flew 68,896 sorties during the war, mostly in northwestern Europe, suffering 14,541 deaths, including 317 pilots.[37] Canadian pilots, many still in their teens, had to deal with the intense physical and mental demands of war, and each one handled it uniquely. The legacy of Canada's involvement in the air war was being hotly debated in 1992 thanks to the documentary miniseries *The Valour and the Horror*. Several RCAF veterans complained that the series unfairly disparaged them by suggesting that some Canadian wartime actions were morally dubious. Contrarily, many top military historians vouched for the accuracy of the documentaries.

Man-as-warrior has historically been the ideal expression of masculinity. Paul Edwards asserts there is "a massive institutional and popular commitment to thinking of war as an essential test of manhood and a quintessential masculine activity."[38] Military campaigns provide the opportunity for masculinity to be demonstrated and negotiated, challenged and proven. The model soldier must display risk-taking, aggression, rationality, and heterosexuality. He must also steadfastly endure pain, mutilation, and the imminent possibility of death. A hegemonic

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[33] Shea, *Barilko*, 239. Considering how the band lamented the smothering influence of U.S. popular culture on Canada, it is ironic that The Tragically Hip would employ this American symbol.

[34] Michael Barclay, Ian A.D. Jack and Jason Schneider, *Have Not Been The Same: The CanRock Renaissance* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2001), 632-33.

[35] David L. Bashow, *All The Fine Young Eagles: In the Cockpit with Canada's Second World War Fighter Pilots* (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing, 1996), ix.

[36] Wayne Ralph, *Aces, Warriors & Wingmen* (Mississauga: John Wiley & Sons, 2005), xiii.

[37] Bashow, *All The Fine Young Eagles*, 362-63.

[38] Paul Edwards, "The Army and the Micro World: Computers and the Politics of Gender Identity," *Signs* 16 (1990): 102-27.

understanding of masculinity is thus determined and reified in contrast with other masculinities and in contradiction to femininity.[39] Defense of the nation is coded masculine and heterosexual. It seems that the young pilot in "Fifty-Mission Cap" is struggling to appear experienced and successful in order to adhere to an ideal form of masculinity. In doing so, he is an able foil to Barilko.

Just as war provides a context for the construction of masculinity, hetero-normative gender formation allows war to be identified, comprehended, and appraised. Kimberley Hutchings persuasively argues that the concept of masculinity establishes "a framework through which war can be rendered both intelligible and acceptable as a social practice and institution."[40] In other words, masculinity anchors war. It is the performative-discursive production of masculine properties, rather than the "continuity of substantial meaning," that makes war palatable.[41] Hutchings concludes that military conflict is a historical construct whose practice and outcome is authorized and distinguished by normative concepts of gender.

> Bill Barilko disappeared that summer, *in 1951*. He was on a fishing trip, *in a plane*.
> The last goal he ever scored, *in overtime*, won the Leafs the Cup.
> They didn't win another until 1962, the year he was discovered.[42]

Life was good for Barilko in the summer of 1951. He was an accomplished NHL player with loving family and friends, and a girlfriend he intended to marry.[43] Aside from providing sustenance and leisure, fishing was often an important recreational site for the construction of masculinity in the postwar period. Apparently spending time outdoors helped counteract the 'feminizing' influence of suburbia.[44] Fishing was tremendously popular in the early 1990s. According to a federal survey, one in five Canadians fished recreationally and the vast majority of anglers were men.[45] Barilko convinced Dr. Henry Hudson to take him fishing on Friday August 24, 1951. The pair headed to Seal River near Rupert's Bay in Hudson's bright yellow

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[39] Kimberly Hutchings, "Making Sense of Masculinity and War," *Men and Masculinities* 10, no.4 (2008): 389-404.

[40] Hutchings, "Making Sense of Masculinity and War," 389.

[41] Hutchings, "Making Sense of Masculinity and War," 399.

[42] The Tragically Hip, "Fifty-Mission Cap." Downie raises the intensity and volume of his vocal lines in the second verse. Although shorter in duration than the first one, the second verse features new lyric (in italics) sung by Paul Langlois that adds another melodic level and helps round out Barilko's extraordinary tale.

[43] Barilko had bought a ring for Louise Hastings of Toronto. Sadly, he vanished ten days before he was going to give it to Hastings on her birthday. Shea, *Barilko*, 198.

[44] Chris Dummitt, *The Manly Modern: Masculinity in Postwar Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007), 82. In postwar Canada fishing was constructed as either an all male-activity at fly-in camps or a family one while camping or at the cottage.

[45] Department of Fisheries and Oceans, *1990 Survey of Recreational Fishing in Canada* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 1994), 2-3.

Fairchild 24, a small plane popular with wealthy sportsmen.[46] They were last seen that Sunday taking off uneasily from Moosonee.

The most enduring image of Barilko is of his famous winning goal. Toronto faced their archrival Montreal in the 1951 Stanley Cup final. Amazingly, all five games in the series went to overtime, an NHL record to this day. Nearly three million Canadians were listening to the play-by-play on the radio as Barilko, known more for his body-checks than scoring ability, secured the Cup by rushing in from the blue line and firing the loose puck into Montreal's net.[47] Maple Leafs fans were delirious with joy. Barilko's disappearance, however, marked the rapid decline of the Toronto franchise. After a decade of mediocrity, they finally won the Cup again in 1962. Weeks later the remains of Barilko and Hudson were discovered about one hundred kilometers north of Cochrane.

Helicopter pilot Gary Fields spotted the yellow-flaked wreckage on May 31st, but did not actually reach the crash site until June 6th. There he found the moss-covered, weathered skeletons of both men still strapped in their seats. A subsequent forensic investigation determined that death was likely instantaneous. Fields' discovery ended the most extensive and expensive search in Canadian history.[48] It also quashed rumours that attributed the mysterious disappearance to Hudson high-grading gold or Barilko teaching the U.S.S.R. Canada's hard-hitting hockey style. Finally, the morbid discovery confirmed the worst for loved ones. Referring to "Fifty-Mission Cap," Downie says, "It's as much a story of unfulfilled potential as it is hockey."[49]

Hockey is largely seen as androcentric. Ann Hall maintains that many Canadians view sport as "a cultural practice in which boys learn to be men and male solidarity is forged."[50] Boys are encouraged to play or watch hockey from an early age. With few exceptions, it is primarily males who participate in hockey as players or spectators. Still, this exclusivity was starting to wane in the early 1990s.[51] The game acts as a forum for the establishment of an inter-male

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[46] Shea, *Barilko*, 168-69.

[47] Shea, *Barilko*, 131-32.

[48] The details of the search for and ultimate discovery of Barilko are from Shea, *Barilko*, 209-19.

[49] Shea, *Barilko*, 244.

[50] Ann Hall, "Cultural Struggle and Resistance: Gender, History, and Canadian Sport," in *Sport and Gender in Canada*, ed. Kevin Young and Philip White (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2007), 56.

[51] Perhaps due in part to the trailblazing efforts of Manon Rheaume and Hayley Wickenheiser, not to mention the success of the Canadian Women's Olympic hockey team, the number of females playing organized hockey has increased four hundred per cent since the early 1990s. In 2003, over 55,000 women and girls were playing organized hockey in Canada. Melissa Parker and Philip White, "S/He Plays Sport," in *Sport and Gender in Canada*, ed. Kevin Young and Philip White (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2007), 10.

hierarchy in which non-aggressive masculinities are belittled. As such, hockey allows for the disciplining and cultivation of male bodies, and the building of 'manly' characteristics. Even though women have played the game since the 1880s, they have been systematically excluded from hockey's institutional structures.[52]

The sport has developed into a male preserve that prohibits women, who are generally considered weaker and less capable, from joining men. In 1955, eight-year-old Abigail Hoffman, despite excelling on the ice, was booted from a Toronto hockey league simply for being female. Although her expulsion led to the creation of girls' hockey leagues across Canada, it also reinforced the social organization of sexual segregation.[53] Manon Rheaume, being the first (and only) woman to play for an NHL team, experienced firsthand the rigid gender division in the game. "I am only too aware of the uproar my presence in the macho world of hockey has caused," she notes in her co-written 1993 autobiography.[54] After Rheaume's brief appearance in a Quebec Major Junior League game in November 1991 caused a media frenzy, the goaltender was invited to the Tampa Bay Lightning training camp and played in an NHL exhibition match in September 1992. Many discounted Rheaume's athletic abilities and chose to focus instead on her sexual attractiveness. *Playboy* offered her $40,000 to pose naked, but she "simply was not interested."[55] Rheaume wanted her hockey skills to be judged, not her looks. It is noteworthy that almost no one expected popular male NHL players to model for *Playgirl*. Rheaume's journey offers insight into how gender boundaries were policed in Canada via hockey.

Hockey tends to support male dominance in Canadian society. Lois Bryson determines that sport fosters patriarchy in two important ways: by connecting masculinity to cherished and detectable skills, and by blending masculinity with authorized aggression and violence.[56] Gruneau and Whitson echo this argument in *Hockey Night in Canada*. Moreover, they suggest that the defense of hockey as a 'man's game' is tied to "the contemporary erosion of traditional male privileges."[57] With fewer male bastions left intact in the early 1990s, hockey allowed some men to stave off the alleged crisis of masculinity. It provided the opportunity for male bonding during leisure time. Disaffected men thus vigorously defended 'their game' from the perceived

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[52] Gruneau and Whitson, *Hockey Night in Canada*, 191.

[53] McKinley, *Ice Time*, 37.

[54] Manon Rheaume with Chantal Gilbert, *Manon: Alone in Front of the Net* (Toronto: Harper Collins, 1993), vii.

[55] Rheaume, *Manon*, 153.

[56] Lois Bryson, "Challenges to Male Hegemony in Sport," in *Sport, Men, and the Gender Order: Critical Feminist Perspectives*, ed. M.A. Messner and Don Sabo (Champaign: Human Kinetics, 1990), 173-84.

[57] Gruneau and Whitson, *Hockey Night in Canada*, 180.

encroachment of feminism, as evidenced by Rheaume's reception in the "macho world" of hockey.

> My fifty-mission cap.
> I worked it in. I worked it in to look like that.
> It's my fifty-mission cap. It's his fifty-mission cap.
> And I worked it in, *worked it in*. I worked it in, *worked it in*.
> And I worked it in, *worked it in*, to look like that. *Worked it in*.
> And I worked it in to look like that.[58]

The return of the chorus revives the connection between hockey and war. It is evident that both activities provide crucial platforms for the construction and maintenance of an ideal normative masculinity. The two endeavours are also linked to each other through the sport/war metaphor: wherein hockey matches are described using war terminology and military conflict is depicted with sporting jargon. Notice that every NHL playing surface is officially divided into defensive, neutral, and attacking zones. Players in distinctive uniform 'fire shots' and games that go to overtime end in 'sudden death.' Journalists and sportscasters help proliferate this martial trope, often using war-speak to relay hockey news. For example, the *Toronto Star* heralded the Leafs' 1951 Stanley Cup victory with the headline "Bashin' Bill Barilko's Blow Kills Canadiens."[59] Therefore, to a certain extent, hockey discourse reifies conflict itself.

Conversely, Western governments and media industries routinely employ sporting vernacular to decipher and validate military conflict. Sue Jansen and Don Sabo maintain the longstanding relationship between sport and war provides these powerful organizations "with an easily mobilized and highly articulated semiotic system and set of cultural values to advance and justify their respective plans, actions, and interests."[60] Jansen and Sabo's study of media coverage during the 1990-91 Persian Gulf War reveals that American politicians and military personnel frequently utilized football nomenclature to package the war as a "spectator sport" for "domestic consumption."[61]

The war to liberate Kuwait marked the first time Canadian and American female enlisted soldiers took part in combat operations. Yet, the media coverage constantly linked masculinity with technical expertise, aggression, and violence. Even though women fought and died in the

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[58] The Tragically Hip, "Fifty-Mission Cap." Aside from some additional background vocals and other subtle nuances, the second chorus is very much like the first one. It too sounds celebratory and emphasizes manual labour.
[59] Shea, *Barilko*, 140.
[60] Sue Jansen and Don Sabo, "The Sport/War Metaphor," *Sociology of Sport Journal* 11 (1994): 1-17.
[61] Jansen and Sabo, "The Sport/War Metaphor," 11 and 4.

war, the discourse surrounding the conflict minimized their efforts.[62] Jansen and Sabo conclude that sport/war tropes serve to trivialize femininity as they "lionize and make heroes of strong and aggressive men, and marginalize and emasculate men who appear weak, passive, or pacifist."[63] In effect, the performative-discursive deployment of the sport/war metaphor bolsters patriarchy and hetero-normative gender formation.

> It's my fifty-mission cap.
> It's my fifty-mission cap.
> It's my fifty-mission cap.
> It's my fifty-mission cap.
> (Guitar Solo)[64]

"Fifty-Mission Cap" closes with a lengthy piercing guitar solo. Baker's steely tone and melodic groove is reminiscent of a plane soaring. Eventually the solo 'lands safely' on the home tone, thereby completing The Tragically Hip's sonic exploration of a bygone era of hockey and a distant war. The ironic juxtaposition of these two disparate images is significant in a number of ways. The verses of "Fifty-Mission Cap" pay homage to Barilko, a consummate star cut down in his prime. Eerily, the defenseman's sudden disappearance and eventual discovery coincided with the Leafs' fluctuating fortunes. Meanwhile the chorus sections feature a guileful young combat pilot eagerly trying to appear successful and experienced. This implies that masculinity is not something given but is rather earned and renewed, calling attention to its inherent instability. It highlights the need to reiteratively perform gender norms in order to maintain sexual difference as gender. The pilot's demeanor makes him an able foil to Barilko. Since the song is structured on an E-major scale, the lyric of "Fifty-Mission Cap" is related to cheerful or victorious emotions. Hence, the music staidly celebrates Barilko's short but auspicious NHL career and clearly signals the tremendous worth of a fifty-mission cap.

The Tragically Hip's lyrical and musical depiction of Barilko and the fledgling combat pilot in "Fifty-Mission Cap" celebrates and effectively perpetuates hetero-normative masculinity. As an accomplished, experienced, and successful hockey player, Barilko is worthy of idolization partly because he has proven to be acceptably masculine. Conversely, the young pilot 'working in' his dress cap is still laudably trying to emulate an ideal form of masculinity. Hockey and war

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[62] Jansen and Sabo, "The Sport/War Metaphor," 11.
[63] Jansen and Sabo, "The Sport/War Metaphor," 9.
[64] The Tragically Hip, "Fifty-Mission Cap." The harmony of the coda differs from the chorus, yet the rhythm stays rather similar.

are important sites for the performative-discursive establishment of hetero-normative gender identities. Both practices are historical products that constitute an inter-male hierarchy in which strong aggressive heterosexual men are revered and 'feminine qualities' are disregarded. Because only certain masculine traits are considered superior, the social assemblage and cultural definition of hockey and war reinforce patriarchy in Canada.

One may only speculate to what extent The Tragically Hip's, perhaps unwitting, celebration of masculinity contributed to the popularity of the song. Despite being undeniably sorrowful, Barilko's premature demise immortalized the Leafs defenseman. He has subsequently become symbolic of youth, power, success, and unquestionable masculinity. For the young fighter pilot in "Fifty-Mission Cap," Barilko is an icon worthy of emulation. Perhaps some listeners felt similarly. The fledgling airman is citing Barilko's masculinity, as does the song. In addition, the tune – via the figure of the pilot – calls our attention to the relationship between masculinity and repetition even as it itself engages in a kind of complex repetition of gender norms. Class-based notions of men's work may have influenced the interpretation and reception of "Fifty-Mission Cap" as well. Having a vocation has traditionally been a vital aspect of masculine identity.[65] Barilko and the young fighter pilot represent gritty 'blue-collar' skills that depend on physicality as opposed to 'white-collar' ones that are more cerebral. In the early 1990s, a deep economic recession had eliminated nearly one million factory jobs in Canada.[66] At the same time, elite corporate barons were making fortunes simply by merging and dismantling businesses. "Fifty-Mission Cap" honoured and in turn validated rugged physical work at a time when it seemed underappreciated. For that reason, the song partly operates as nostalgia for a lost era when 'blue-collar' men like Barilko and the fighter pilot could be proud of their skills. Amidst a supposed crisis in masculinity, The Tragically Hip's uncomplicated hymn to 'manly' men may have comforted some listeners. Nevertheless, for whatever reason, hundreds of thousands of Canadians enjoyed "Fifty-Mission Cap," especially Maple Leafs fans.

"Fifty-Mission Cap" appealed to many Leafs supporters, perhaps in part because the song journeyed to a golden age of the franchise's history. Joey Scoleri, a rock radio personality in Toronto during the early 1990s, recounts the song's reception among fellow Leaf fans:

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[65] Victor J. Seidler, *Rediscovering Masculinity: Reason, Language and Sexuality* (New York: Routledge, 1989), 151.
[66] Desmond Morton, *A Short History of Canada* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2001), 347.

That was the whole Dougie Gilmour era in Toronto, too. The band's from Kingston, Gilmour's from Kingston, I mean, it all came together so unwittingly and for a few years, 'Fifty Mission Cap' became the unofficial theme song of the Toronto Maple Leafs.[67]

Many fans had heard of Barilko but few were familiar with his extraordinary biography. By happenstance, the Leafs retired Barilko's #5 jersey in October 1992, eleven days after *Fully Completely* was released. "Fifty-Mission Cap" continues to resonate with hockey fans. To this day, it can still be heard in arenas across Canada during stoppages in play.[68]

While detailing Barilko's remarkable tale from the perspective of a young aspiring fighter pilot, "Fifty-Mission Cap" effectively serves as a simple tribute to masculinity at a time when it was allegedly in crisis. It appears The Tragically Hip is articulating and constructing a 'blue-collar' masculinity to attenuate or counter the perceived erosion of male power and prestige. In order to bolster their gender identities in an uncertain world, listeners could have utilized "Fifty-Mission Cap" as a technology of the "self." Masculinity helps anchor both hockey and war. Players and soldiers alike are defined by their ability to emulate hetero-normative concepts of masculinity that stress physicality. Conversely, hockey matches and military conflict provide significant platforms for the production of masculinity in Canada. Nevertheless, hockey and war, as well as masculinity itself, are historical constructs 'always already' in transition. They are pliable and malleable socio-cultural practices, not fixed entities. "Fifty-Mission Cap" blossomed from an impromptu jam into a Canadian rock and sports classic. This exemplary status is at least partly due to its reverential handling of rugged masculinity, not to mention its attractive musical qualities.

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[67] Shea, *Barilko*, 241.
[68] Shea, *Barilko*, 243.

The Tragically Hip's *Fully Completely* clearly functioned as an important site for the articulation and construction of masculinity in Canada during the early 1990s. Even though there are many kinds of masculinity being deployed and formed on the album in a composite fashion, they all contribute to the compulsory stable maintenance of sexual difference as gender. The theoretical foundation in which our entire exploration is couched is key to comprehending the relationship between Canadian rock music and masculinity. Outlining the interacting circumstances The Tragically Hip was negotiating further advances our ability to analyze *Fully Completely* as a historical text. Detailed interdisciplinary consideration of the songs "Looking For A Place To Happen" and "Fifty-Mission Cap" provides our inquiry with specific examples of how masculinity is articulated and constructed in the recording. In the end, the significance of *Fully Completely* is performatively-discursively produced. The history of the benchmark album presented in this thesis furthers that discourse.

Our first task was to establish a sufficiently useful theoretical framework that could analyze the expression and production of masculinity in *Fully Completely*. Despite having biological constitutive constraints, gender is a historical construct shaped by the social and cultural conditions in which it is enacted. Framing gender as a reiterative performative-discursive production consisting of four interrelated elements allows for its profound, widespread importance to be readily understood. Language and rock music are complex cultural symbol-systems that aid and abet the performative-discursive formation of gender identities. *Fully Completely* is a specific incarnation of rock music, a cultural artifact whose reception and interpretation is dependent upon the linguistic comprehension and musical experience of the listener. Secondly, there are normative concepts that attempt to limit the use and apprehension of language and rock music. These standardizing concepts underpin hetero-normativity and shape the creation, reception, and understanding of rock music. In terms of politics, social institutions and organizations are key configurations related to gender designation and rock music. Pleasure

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often grounds the politics of rock and, accordingly, the music industry has developed a model of consumption that services the leisure interests and needs of young people. Lastly, subjective identity and rock music are intimately linked. Subjectivity is constituted in and through experience. And musical experience often structures and supports our everyday existence. *Fully Completely* is therefore best conceived as a technology of the "self." These four elements of gender are interrelated, and activated performatively. We may distinguish each of them for analysis but they operate, in and through performative-discursive practices, as an indivisible symbiotic whole in a field of multiple, mobile, and routinely unequal relations.

The next phase of our investigation involved the arrangement of historical context. Delineating the interacting circumstances The Tragically Hip inherited and navigated through while writing, recording, and producing *Fully Completely* strengthened our capacity to trace the articulation and construction of masculinity in Canada at the time. Nevertheless, as David Lowenthal ably points out, what a historian calls 'the past' is not what anyone ever experienced as 'the present.'[1] With the benefit of hindsight, historians (re)construct 'the past' to address and inform our contemporary understanding of current or past events. Our ability to read 'the past,' however, is deficient in many ways.[2] Regardless, learning about gender constitution in Canada during the early 1990s via *Fully Completely* enhances our comprehension of the present we are experiencing.

Several interacting contexts were depicted in Chapter Two. The emergence and evolution of rock music, a process infused with racialized and gendered notions of American bluesmen, was largely about being rebellious, authentic, and masculine. The powerful convergence of CanCon, MuchMusic, and alternative rock in the early 1990s fostered a novel state for the Canadian music industry; one that allowed The Tragically Hip to garner lasting pan-national success without securing the American market, a first in Canadian rock music history. An alleged crisis of masculinity that was riling gender relations coloured the deployment and reception of masculinity in the album. Nationalist concerns were also significant. At a time when resentment of American cultural influence was at a postwar high, The Tragically Hip punctuated *Fully Completely* with Canadian references. The band wanted to give Canadian stories their due as

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[1] David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 191.
[2] For an insightful critical analysis of current historiography see Allan Megill, *Historical Knowledge, Historical Error: A Contemporary Guide To Practice* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007). Megill expertly outlines the benefits and drawbacks of postmodern historiography.

they attended and contributed to the country's mythology. Still, this decision led some to associate The Tragically Hip with patriotic fervour. Nonetheless, the record effectively delivers Canadian history to the masses, albeit through the lens of five men from Kingston. Finally, after a brief band biography, we examined the *Fully Completely* cover and discovered that normative concepts were at play. The illustration of a hetero-normative male gaze may have influenced who purchased the album and their interpretation of the music to some degree. With a theoretical position in place and a multifarious historical context developed, we then carefully considered a couple of key songs to provide specific examples of the performative-discursive articulation and construction of masculinity in The Tragically Hip's *Fully Completely*.

"Looking For A Place To Happen" was a pointed commentary on the Aboriginal issues that were dominating the Canadian political sphere in the early 1990s. The provocative four-minute song re-enacts Jacques Cartier's voyages to 'Canada' and the native-newcomer relationship they initiated. While the French explorer appears exploitive, malicious, and vulgar, the anonymous Aboriginal person that greets him exudes a jaded benevolence. The E-minor scale harmony further elucidates this critical tenor. Politics and gender are mutually constructive. The Tragically Hip's understanding of the Canadian political status quo molds, and in turn is shaped by, the handling of masculinities in the tune. As a representative of hegemonic masculinity, Cartier is politically discredited. Conversely, the viewpoint of the Aboriginal character, a symbol of marginal masculinity, is being validated. In this regard, "Looking For A Place To Happen" challenges hegemonic masculinity while deploying the band's politics.

Next, we found that "Fifty-Mission Cap" recounts the extraordinary tale of Maple Leafs defenseman Bill Barilko from the perspective of a young aspiring fighter pilot. Based on E-major scale, the song effectively celebrates the kind of rugged heterosexual masculinity that anchors both hockey and war. Whereas the verses deliver a solemn homage to Barilko, the chorus sections portray the positive value attributed to a fifty-mission cap. Once again, there are two male characters being contrasted. As an experienced and tremendously successful hockey player, Barilko is worthy of idolization and citation because his masculinity has been proven and immortalized. In stark contrast, the fledgling pilot 'working in' his dress cap is still laudably trying to emulate an ideal form of masculinity. At a time when it seemed underappreciated, "Fifty-Mission Cap" honours and validates the kind of strenuous physical labour that model hockey players and military personnel customarily perform. The Tragically Hip's reverential

treatment of Barilko and the aspiring fighter pilot clearly celebrates and replicates hetero-normative masculinity.

Multiple masculinities are articulated and constructed in *Fully Completely*. Even though space constraints limited our current investigation to a couple of tracks, the two songs we did analyze exhibited four differing shades of masculinity. In "Looking For A Place To Happen," we traced how, for political effect, the hegemonic masculinity of 'Jacques Cartier' was disparagingly established in contrast to the wearied yet benevolent marginal masculinity of an unnamed native person. "Fifty-Mission Cap" also juxtaposed two distinctive enactments of masculinity. As a star hockey player tragically cut down in his prime, Barilko represented a model form of hetero-normative masculinity worth emulating. The young aspiring fighter pilot, on the other hand, fell short of the masculine ideal. Nevertheless, he still reinforces it by striving and working to appear suitably masculine. These few specific examples of masculinity being deployed and produced in *Fully Completely*, however informative, only constitute a small sample. There are ten other songs on the album yet to be examined. Each tune enacts at least one form of masculinity, and two tracks even command rare instantiations of femininity.[3] As a consequence, it is fair to say that our inquiry into the connection between English-Canadian rock music and masculinity has only just begun.

On the *Fully Completely* inlay, aside from scattered song lyric, unusual photocopied images of the Kingston quintet, and production credits, there is a 'letter' dated October 1992 addressed to "Dear You."[4] Despite resembling a personal correspondence, the content of this communication is actually the lyric from The Tragically Hip's unrecorded song "That's Me In The Everglades."[5] Pondering the meaning of the lyric, Rob Baker is reminded of postcards and how they usually act as a resonant signpost on a long journey. He thinks *Fully Completely* is also a snippet from the past held in suspended animation. "An album is a snapshot of all of us collectively in time," Baker says referring to the band. "It is like a frozen moment."[6] Just like a

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[3] The slow-paced "Pigeon Camera" features a sister figure whom "we could no longer contain" and the title track, "Fully Completely," has a woman character chastising her ex-lover for breaking things off.

[4] On the reverse side of the inlay there is a fold out poster of the album cover image.

[5] "That's Me In The Everglades" was created while jamming at Sugarman's house outside Kingston. Yet, somehow it never made it to Battery Studios. For various reasons, there are several songs The Tragically Hip have written but not recorded. "Charlie Sheen Quit Smoking" is another example of a solid tune, this time a product of the Toronto songwriting sessions, which never made it on to tape in London or after. This information was provided by Rob Baker, interviewed by author, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 3 August 2009.

[6] Baker interview.

postcard. While the fellows hoped the record was a great definitive artistic statement, The Tragically Hip always perceived these songs to be living, mutating entities. Still, most people associate "Looking For A Place To Happen" or "Fifty-Mission Cap" exclusively with the *Fully Completely* version.[7] This thesis functions like a postcard as well. It too is a snapshot, an unorthodox yet revealing marker of the continual examination of the relationship between English-Canadian rock music and masculinity. Scholars need to persistently explore rock music as a significant platform for gender construction in Canada.[8]

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[7] The popularity of *Fully Completely* has endured. In January 2007, it became one of the few Canadian albums to reach Diamond status in Canada by selling a million copies. Canadian Recording Industry Association, "The Tragically Hip Certifications," *Canadian Recording Industry Association*, www.cria.ca.

[8] There are other pertinent aspects to the performative-discursive deployment and production of masculinity in *Fully Completely* that were beyond the scope of our present inquiry. For instance, scholars might also address the role of the music videos that accompanied three out of the seven singles that were released; promotional pictures of the band members; rock press coverage and reviews of the album; plus live concert performance and the incumbent audience reaction while touring in support of the record.

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