

# “CAPITAL INTRACONVERSION” AND CANADIAN LITERARY PRIZE CULTURE



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Frontier College, Canada's longest running adult literacy organization, is a key institution in the nation's development of English-as-a-second-language and citizenship education initiatives. The college was inspired in large part by the educational work that organizations such as the YMCA undertook among immigrants throughout the nineteenth century in Britain, the United States, and Canada. By the turn of the nineteenth century, Alfred Fitzpatrick, a Presbyterian minister influenced by the social gospel movement, Presbyterianism's insistence on literate parishioners, and the eighteenth-century Scottish Enlightenment's privileging of democracy and practicality in education, was determined to bring such efforts out of urban areas and onto the rural frontier, where a significant proportion of Canada's unskilled workers earned their daily bread until well after the turn of the century.<sup>1</sup> Known until 1919 as the Canadian Reading Camp Association, Fitzpatrick's movement inaugurated its work in 1900–1901 with reading rooms in four of the many lumber camps in northwestern Ontario in that period. The association grew quickly; by 1903, there were at least twenty-four reading rooms in shacks, tents, and rail cars across northern Ontario. In the first decades of the twentieth century, Frontier College continued to expand its work westward with the growth of the railroad, mining, and construction industries that relied on itinerant, increasingly non-British, immigrant labour. As the association grew, so its methods altered. The unsupervised reading room gradually ceded place to the librarian-instructor, and, by the end of the association's first decade, to the labourer-teacher—often and then almost exclusively university students who worked on the sleigh haul and steam shovel by day and who conducted classes in English and other basic subjects by night.<sup>2</sup>

Frontier College has long been dependent to some degree on the support of Canada's federal government, and in recent decades, it has also been the object of frequent memorialization by the state. Such memorialization serves the state discourse of multiculturalism well and is crucial to what Eva Mackey identifies as Canada's self-promotion as a tolerant, liberal-pluralistic nation.<sup>3</sup> A commemorative stamp for the hundredth birthday of

Frontier College in 1999, for example, narrates the organization's provision of "education for all" (Figure 1). The media backgrounder for the 2009 unveiling of a Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada plaque at the Frontier College headquarters in Toronto (Canada's most populous city) notes that the organization's early twentieth-century labourer-teachers served an "army of camp labourers—many of whom recent immigrants—[who] worked under unpleasant, dangerous conditions for poor pay."<sup>4</sup> What Parks Canada calls the "official recognition" of the "historic value" of Frontier College embodied in the plaque serves contemporary political ideologies well, offering an alternative collective memory that occludes the racism that guided Canadian immigration policy in the early decades of the twentieth century. The legacy of Frontier College's work among immigrants helps to reorient the remembering of a history of immigration policy that used a head-tax mechanism (1885–1923) and, later, outright exclusion (1923–47), to prevent Chinese immigration, for example. Complementing the state's commemoration of Frontier College is the persistent assumption in the history of Canadian adult education that there is a tradition of "communitarianism" (often contrasted with US-American individualism) that might explain the nation's longstanding devotion to "the imaginative training for citizenship" and, it is implied, its development of a tolerant politics of multiculturalism.<sup>5</sup> This thesis has also been adopted in popular narratives of Frontier College, such as the "Heritage Minute" produced by Historica Canada, a non-profit organization dedicated to increasing awareness of Canadian history and citizenship.

A more recent example of the uses of Frontier College draws on these older narratives but is linked to Canada's most widely recognized literary prize, the Scotiabank Giller Prize for fiction. The Scotiabank Giller "Light Bash," an annual, pan-Canadian fundraising event for Frontier College that has been held in tandem with the now televised Giller award ceremony since 2002, neatly joins the Scotiabank Giller Prize for fiction to the nation's best-known adult literacy organization.

In what follows, I analyze how the "particular symbolic fortunes" of the Scotiabank Giller Prize undergo what James English calls "capital intraconversion"—how they are "culturally 'laundered'" through their association with Frontier College.<sup>6</sup> I use the term Giller "complex" throughout as a means of signaling the set of tangled interests the prize serves, which range beyond the signifiers "Scotiabank" and "Giller." Although the Giller does not bear the obvious colonial genealogy of a more well-known prize like the Man Booker, it, like the Booker, has attempted in recent years to maneuver

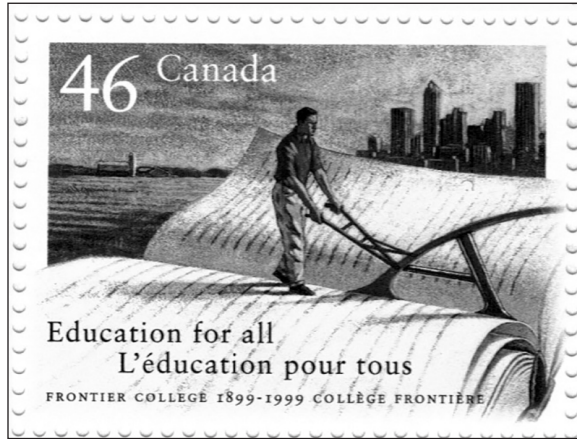


Figure 1.

itself away from contentious associations (the legacies of colonialism in the case of the Booker and the obvious corporatization of culture signified by a major bank's sponsorship in the case of the Giller) and toward relations that strongly suggest the socially valuable work that the reading of fiction performs. Recalling the Scotiabank Giller's "Light Bash," but developed a decade later (in 2012), the Booker Foundation sponsors literacy projects undertaken by the British National Literacy Trust: a "literacy action hub" in Middlesbrough, UK, and a prison library and reading club program (that focuses on novels shortlisted for the Booker) called "Books Unlocked."<sup>7</sup> This purposeful intimacy of literary prizes with the cause of literacy could well be analyzed on a larger scale, but I begin with a Canadian case study here because of the quite unique ways in which literacy in that country continues to be associated with a strong public culture and with the settler state's commitment to an official multiculturalism. Moreover, unlike its British counterpart, Canadian literary prize culture was, until the end of the twentieth century, almost exclusively associated with state sponsorship rather than with private institutions, foundations, or corporations, a fact that has made the rise of corporate sponsorship in Canada's literary prize sector particularly contentious.<sup>8</sup> Adapting Gillian Roberts's contention that "national capital" continues to exert a powerful influence on a literary field seemingly dominated by economic capital, I focus here on the particular ways in which literacy is used to shore up the authority of the Scotiabank Giller Prize.<sup>9</sup>

While the Giller's financial support of Frontier College, an association with a strong legacy of egalitarianism, may seem beyond critique, I pursue two arguments here that reject such a supposition. First, I demonstrate how the Giller's attachment of its brand to Frontier College nurtures its claim to the category of the "multicultural," which bears a particular economic value in Canada's creative economy discourse while continuing to signify as evidence of the liberal-democratic state's commitment to tolerance and cultural diversity. Second, I show how the "Light Bash" positions the Giller complex next to the somewhat ambivalent signifier of literacy. The long-standing association of Frontier College with the postwar language of literacy as a human right functions as a powerful distraction from questions one might well have regarding the freedom of the consumer of "Gillerized" fiction, whose reading might also be theorized as what Nicole Shukin calls "the value-adding labour of attention."<sup>10</sup>

Founded in 1994 by Toronto-based real-estate developer Jack Rabinovitch as a means of honouring his late wife, literary journalist Doris Giller, the award memorializes, through its iconic rose (Giller's favourite flower), a lover of literature who succumbed to cancer. The Giller website describes the couple's lifelong devotion to the literary arts: Giller was a newspaper journalist and, in the 1980s and 90s, a book review editor and columnist for major newspapers in Montreal and Toronto; Rabinovitch earned his B.A. from McGill University in English in the early 1950s.<sup>11</sup> The Giller prize for fiction in English became the Scotiabank Giller prize in 2005 when it attracted the sponsorship support of Scotiabank, one of Canada's largest and oldest banks (the Bank of Nova Scotia was founded in 1832), and also one of its six major financial institutions. Now jointly funded *and* managed by Rabinovitch and Scotiabank, the prize is Canada's most lucrative award for fiction: worth \$140,000 in 2015 (\$100,000 for the winner and \$10,000 for each finalist), it handily exceeds the value of the state-sponsored Governor-General's Award for English fiction by \$115,000.<sup>12</sup> Like other elements of what Beth Driscoll calls the "new literary middlebrow," the Giller manages a simultaneous reverence for "elite culture" and an acknowledgement of the book's status as a commodity. Jack Rabinovitch frequently conjoins the two in his press statements, almost never failing to note that, although he does not wish to "sound crass or commercial," selling Canadian books "is the important thing."<sup>13</sup> The award's earnest cultivation of a high media profile works to realize this goal. Since its inception, the Giller has been a phenomenal media success: it has received enthusiastic support from the *Globe and Mail*, Canada's largest newspaper, and, taking a page from the Booker's

book, its awards ceremony has long been televised. Yet keeping “crass” commercialism out of things has not been easy for the Giller complex. An appeal to elite cultural standards has helped a great deal. As journalist Jeffrey Simpson argued in a 1996 discussion of the then-newly emergent Giller complex, the Giller initially worked hard to differentiate itself from Canada’s much older, state-sponsored Governor General’s Awards, fashioning itself as a prize that stood “for excellence—in writing, judging, and promotion” and that maintained a distance from the state that enabled it to avoid “some of the contortions other prizes go through to ensure every kind of regional, gender, and ethnic balance.”<sup>14</sup> Rather self-consciously, such insistence on the prize’s lack of ideological bias recalls what Graham Huggan identifies as the Swedish Academy’s “much-vaunted impartiality.”<sup>15</sup> However, as Gillian Roberts aptly notes, such claims to Arnoldian disinterestedness are clearly utterly disingenuous disavowals of the complex of influences that shape cultural value and literary taste and are particularly striking in the context of the Giller’s dependence on corporate sponsorship.<sup>16</sup>

The Giller’s difference from the Governor-General’s awards initially offered the newer prize some protective insulation from critique (i.e., whatever it was, it was not that stodgy old politically correct state-sponsored dinosaur). However, the advent of Scotiabank’s sponsorship of the award in 2005 has engendered much critical attention and the debate generated by the Giller has assumed an evermore fractious tenor, making it increasingly necessary for the award to defend its authority to consecrate certain writers and particular texts.<sup>17</sup> Ironically, though there is much that remains of the “new literary middlebrow” in the award, the Giller complex has opted for a defence that attaches it more firmly to the state-sponsored, public culture that it initially seemed to mock. Scotiabank’s sponsorship of the award makes all too visible the growing proximity, since at least the 1970s, of the terms “Canadian culture” and “culture industry” in the nation’s cultural and literary fields, and, more particularly, the enfolding of the “high” arts, such as literature, into the culture industries. The bank’s presence in the Giller complex also reveals a (diversely motivated) discomfort with such proximity, particularly among academic literary critics and writers. While some lament the passing of the strong national public culture and the insulation of “high” art’s autonomy that are associated with the immediate post-war work of the state’s Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences (better known as the Massey Commission) and with the cultural ideologies of the nation’s modernist writers at mid-century, others question the modernist myth of art’s absolute independence from the

market and focus their critique on the erosion under neoliberalism of the various publics that have allowed art some degree of autonomy.<sup>18</sup> Whatever the motivation, it is clear that a deep discomfort with corporate presence in Canada's literary field persists, particularly among academics and writers.

In Canada as elsewhere, a consistent decline in public investment in culture since the early 1980s has opened space for corporations who are now encouraged to view the arts as good business.<sup>19</sup> Private industry has good reason to do so: according to the Conference Board of Canada, Canada's culture sector accounted in 2007 for 7.4 percent of its real GDP.<sup>20</sup> According to the website of the Giller's primary sponsor, Scotiabank, the arts "inspire all Canadians to pursue their passions" and thus constitute one of the four pillars of the bank's sponsorship portfolio (alongside "hockey," "marathons," and "community").<sup>21</sup> Corporate statements also frequently refer to philanthropy and "giving back" but they occasionally move past such clichés to acknowledge the economic or symbolic value of sponsorship for the sponsor.<sup>22</sup> Referring to the value of an "association with a strong cultural institution in our own country [in this case, the Giller Prize]" Frank Switzer, spokesperson for Scotiabank, nods to what Cheri Hanson calls the benefit of bathing "in the attributes of the receiving brand."<sup>23</sup> Title sponsorships are about more than tax breaks and civic duty. Corporations such as Scotiabank undertake considerable market research in order to select the sponsorship opportunities that serve as highly visible forms of marketing. Moreover, as Beth Driscoll observes, sponsorship of the arts generates both "goodwill" with the public and a particular "prestige" that attends association with "elite cultural producers."<sup>24</sup>

Rather ironically, this growing corporate patronage of the arts that has followed from the shifting state definition of culture is often fueled by a variety of what Gillian Roberts calls "national capital," or the value of "nationality" as a kind of "currency" in the literary field. For example, one finds appeals to the liberal-humanist nationalism of the postwar Massey commissioners: in the year that Scotiabank announced its sponsorship of the Giller, bank CEO Rick Waugh claimed that "culture, and in particular Canadian culture, is very important to me."<sup>25</sup> Moreover, if, as Jeffrey Simpson and Gillian Roberts assert, the Giller complex initially relied on its distance from the state, this distance has been deliberately minimized in the wake of Scotiabank's visible corporatization of the award. Since 2005, the Giller has sought to recuperate its authority not simply by appealing to "national capital," but also by associating itself with the state, and, more specifically, with elements of state-supported culture: for example, since 2011,

the awards ceremony has been televised by the nation's public broadcaster, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). The example that concerns me here is the "Light Bash" fundraiser; established in 2002, it promotes the Giller's attachment to multiculturalism and literacy, both of which have strong associations with public culture in Canada. This is an additional form of national capital that depends less on the cultural nationalism that Roberts names and more on a kind of nostalgia for the state's ability to conjure national cultural forms.

This rebranding has been necessary in the wake of Scotiabank's sponsorship announcement, which prompted a flurry of academic and, to some extent popular, critique. In one of the most frequently discussed critiques of the corporate sponsorship of the Giller, author and critic Stephen Henighan took to the pages of the arts and culture magazine *Geist* to lambaste the award as "the most conspicuous example of corporate suffocation of the public institutions that built our literary culture."<sup>26</sup> Henighan's essay charges the corporatized Giller complex with nurturing an image that Barbara Godard associates with the neoliberalization of public culture—"the artist as an isolated genius, a heroic individual rather than an integral part of the body politic with claims on its resources."<sup>27</sup> Perhaps not coincidentally, two recent Giller prizewinners, Esi Edugyan's *Half-Blood Blues* (2011) and Sean Michaels's *US Conductors* (2014), promote this very vision of the artist figure. Critiques of the Scotiabank-Giller partnership have also focused on how corporate sponsorship seems linked to the Giller's role as a guarantor of profits for the transnational publishing companies that now dominate the national literary field. Alex Good points to the insularity of the Giller "world," whose jurors and nominated authors tend to come from "the same handful of publishers, often work with the same editors, and are represented by the same agents."<sup>28</sup> More to the point, a Giller win leads to phenomenally increased book sales, but the playing field that produces the winner is far from level. For example, the award privileges large commercial publishing houses through the considerable marketing requirements it obliges publishers of short-listed and winning titles to assume.<sup>29</sup> This obligation helps to explain a fact that is often implied but rarely quantified or analyzed in critiques of the Giller: 45 percent of Giller winners and 47 percent of the titles in the finalist category between 1994 and 2015 are products of the big two transnational publishing companies, Penguin Random House and Harper Collins. These figures are particularly striking if one considers the fact that in 2004, all of the foreign-owned publishers in Canada produced only 23 percent of Canadian-authored titles.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to observing its proximity to corporate interests, recent critiques of the Giller point to the convergence in Canada of an erosion of public cultural institutions and transnational publishing corporations' "increasing commodification of 'ethnic' or 'cosmopolitan' art and literature." Central to Jennifer Scott and Myka Tucker-Abramson's analysis, for instance, is their identification of the paradoxical meeting of a fully intact and insular "national" culture and its value to transnational corporations that operate in the country—what they call the "dangerous turn" via which "transnational capitalism is able to hide inside, and position itself as part of, the national imaginary," using the "rhetoric of a 'united' and 'multicultural' Canada, but only insofar as such rhetoric can be easily commodified."<sup>31</sup> The Giller complex is a striking example of just this kind of occlusion: wearing national dress, the Giller complex cloaks its more complicated identity.

How exactly does the Giller complex deploy this rhetoric "of a 'united' and 'multicultural' Canada"? In what sense might such rhetoric be linked to what Smaro Kamboureli calls the "sedative politics" of multicultural discourse—"a politics that attempts to recognize ethnic differences, but only in a contained fashion, in order to manage them"?<sup>32</sup> Key here is the verb "manage" and the power imbalance that it is meant to name: as many critics have asserted, Canada's policy of multiculturalism has not only neither ameliorated the longstanding wage gap between visible minorities and white Canadians nor improved the representation of visible minorities in government, it has also failed to protect permanent forms of immigration for settlement from increasingly attractive temporary labour migration arrangements.<sup>33</sup> Kit Dobson argues that a "cynical deployment of multiculturalism" is apparent in the Giller's privileging of fiction that seems to "demonstrate the already inclusive nature of the Canadian nation." Dobson lists Vincent Lam's 2006 short-story collection *Bloodletting & Miraculous Cures*, but one might also include work by authors such Michael Ondaatje and Joseph Boyden, whose *oeuvres* have similarly been associated with this narrative of multiculturalism.<sup>34</sup> The 2006 televised Giller gala offers a wonderful example of how the Giller complex manages the cultural diversity of Canadian fiction in ways that are palatable to its specific audience—in the case of the 2006 gala, a largely white, Toronto-based audience of media personalities and executives. In particular, the highly symbolic choice of Justin Trudeau, currently the Prime Minister of Canada but known in 2006 mostly as the son of Pierre Trudeau, former Liberal Prime Minister and author of Canadian multiculturalism, as host of the 2006 televised awards' ceremony offers rich evidence of the ways that the Giller complex nurtures its proximity to



a self-congratulatory discourse of multiculturalism. Trudeau did not disappoint: he noted that the evening's shortlisted novels were evidence of the nation's diversity, complimented Canadians for embracing such "wonderful differences," and identified the Giller as a "tribute to what it truly means to be Canadian."<sup>35</sup> Perhaps responding to Trudeau's rhetoric, winner Vincent Lam received his award with a humble expression of his indebtedness to a nation that welcomes difference. Significantly, his words were quoted in every press release that was issued in the wake of the event: "My parents came to this country [from Vietnam] when multiculturalism was just beginning to be acknowledged. As their son and as the second generation, I am proud to be here."<sup>36</sup> While Lam's words are certainly ingenuous, the avid media response to his speech and to the evening's self-conscious appeal to a harmoniously multicultural Canada demonstrates the popular, almost commonsense status of this ideal of Canada.

Of course, the value generated by the convergence of the Giller complex and multiculturalism, like the value of literary prizes more generally, exceeds economic value. The apparently progressive politics of diversity and inclusion possesses significant symbolic and national capital in Canada's political and literary fields (to name just two); these forms of capital interact in complex ways with, but cannot be reduced to, the money economy.<sup>37</sup> One finds a good example of this interaction in creative economy discourse, which draws deeply on values from the literary and cultural fields (just as prize culture itself draws deeply on both the money economy and that "other economics" that James English calls the "economics of cultural prestige"). For example, influential creative-economy pundits, such as Richard Florida, have touted the economic benefits of cultural diversity in cities and in the creative industries, where diverse workers will, so the theory goes, create products that appeal to diverse consumers.<sup>38</sup>

As I have already indicated, Canada developed a cultural-industries strategy well before the advent of Florida, in the late 1970s, and it has informed arts policy at every level of government ever since.<sup>39</sup> If it is telling that this cultural-industries strategy more or less coincided with the advent of a policy (1971) of multiculturalism in Canada (which became an official act in 1988), the link between the creative economy and multiculturalism is now explicit in government discourse. This fact has not been adequately recognized in arguments that seek to understand the way that transnational corporations trade in the diversity conjured by state discourses of multiculturalism. A collaborative report produced by the Department of Heritage and the Conference Board of Canada in 2008 notes in its opening pages that

“cultural diversity is an important driver for the creative economy.” This concept of cultural diversity as an economic “driver” is quoted directly from the work of Richard Florida, and in the context of this report, it is adapted to modify the apparent value of multiculturalism to the Canadian nation. Not simply a mark of “our hospitality,” “respecting cultural diversity and welcoming people from diverse backgrounds” is now cast as a measure of “how competitive we will be in marketing our creativity and innovation to the world.”<sup>40</sup> Crucially, the deployment of diversity within multicultural and creative economy discourses is essentially the same, hence the ease with which the latter’s notion of diversity is taken up within Canada: both recognize ethnic differences in a contained fashion, subordinating them to structures of political and economic power that are not required to change.

As the above examples demonstrate, the Canadian state plays an active role in the forging of links between the economic value of the cultural sector and the nation’s “immense diversity.” The Giller complex benefits greatly from a state-promoted discourse that equates cultural diversity, creativity, and economic productivity but that nonetheless continues to bear the older traces of multiculturalism as a project of social equality. The Giller has been associated with, and cultivates, *both* discourses of cultural diversity. For example, the Giller complex has been fashioned in the media as the private alternative to state-sponsored culture, a driver of diversity- and creativity-fuelled economic growth that is not beholden to artificial state stimulation. Consider, for instance, journalist Richard Gwyn’s triumphalist 1994 announcement of the Giller’s arrival on Canada’s literary scene as the inauguration of a “a post-multiculturalism future”—a “uniquely creative” society in which diverse writers can make “it to the top without the benefit of any literary equivalent of employment equity, let alone without any multiculturalism grants.” Gwyn concludes the article by emphasizing the apparently natural convergence of “excellent writers” with economic success:

Relevant also is the contrast between the success of Selvadurai and Vassanji and last summer’s Writing Thru Race conference from which whites were excluded to allow the writers of color attending to talk uninhibitedly—supposedly—about their failures to get published because of “systemic racism.” If writers who happen to be colored or to be women or to be gay can now make it to the top in Canada by talent alone, why can’t the same thing happen in business, finance, the law, universities, politics, and in all the other arts?<sup>41</sup>

Journalists, Giller jurors, and Giller press releases frequently conflate the award's self-professed commitment to literary excellence with cultural diversity and, as in the press release for the 2015 short list, the "eclectic and vibrant" quality of the writers who are shortlisted.<sup>42</sup> Yet such language always possesses a doubled context: does the naturalized value of diversity emerge from a state-engendered official multiculturalism, or from a state-promoted view of the economic value of cultural diversity that aims to serve corporate interest over social policy?

Given this doubled and therefore ambiguous context, the Giller complex, always fending off critiques of its corporatization of culture, has much to gain from an older discourse of multiculturalism that is linked to the legacy of the liberal welfare state. Consequently, it is perhaps unsurprising to contemplate the 2002 emergence of the "Light Bash" as an element of the Giller celebrations. The development of the "Light Bash" fundraiser enables the Giller to link itself to Frontier College, an institution that is strongly identified with a narrative of Canada's multicultural legacy, as my opening examples demonstrate. The "Light Bash" website makes no explicit mention of the fact that Frontier College signifies in this way, preferring instead to note that the event brings people together to "celebrate Canadian literature" and "raise money for Frontier College, Canada's original literacy organization." Nation is the privileged category here, but one need not follow the links on the "Light Bash" website very far in order to find the Frontier College website, where the organization's history of providing literacy instruction to immigrant workers in frontier labour camps is prominently cast as "nation building."<sup>43</sup> Via the "Light Bash," the multicultural nation and its strong liberal-democratic state becomes ever more central to the signification of the Giller complex.

If the "Light Bash" serves to cement the connection between the Giller and a palatable politics of diversity, it serves other functions, as well. Like other recent additions to the Giller complex, such as the birth in 2011 of a (short-lived) "Readers' Choice" award, the "Light Bash" also seems calculated to emphasize the Giller's authenticity and sincerity (the "Light Bash" website informs us that Giller founder Jack Rabinovitch was once a labourer-teacher for Frontier College) and thus to downplay its role in the peddling of books published by transnational media corporations; to embellish the award's connection to the nation's readers, young, hip, and mostly cosmopolitan types who bear great resemblance to Richard Florida's "creative class"; and to accentuate the relationship between English-language fiction and literacy as a human right.

Initially a “house party,” the “Light Bash” has “grown into a full-scale event” in seven cities that brings together, according to its website, “over 1,200 people celebrating Canadian literature and supporting literacy.”<sup>44</sup> According to a 2012 press release, these guests “watch the broadcast of the Giller gala on a big screen, mix with fellow partiers, vote on the book they think will take home the coveted Scotiabank Giller Prize and enjoy music, appetizers, and cocktails.”<sup>45</sup> Like the Giller long list, which was inaugurated in 2006 and which ostensibly allows the jury to acknowledge the diversity of Canadian fiction and its publishers, the “Light Bash” is an event that takes the Giller beyond Toronto to six cities (listed in order of population size): Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Halifax, Regina, and Thunder Bay (the smallest of the lot, with just over 100,000 people). Unlike the televised awards reception, the “Light Bash” is not an exclusive event; but it is marketed as youthful, hip, and diverse—“an exciting party environment” at locations with decidedly independent and artistic atmospheres, such as Wurst, a Calgary restaurant and craft-brew pub. According to Scotiabank Vice President of Sponsorship and Partnership Programs, Jacquie Ryan, the “Light Bash” is meant to make the prize “more accessible to book lovers from coast to coast.”<sup>46</sup> Yet the event’s marketing clearly indicates a certain exclusivity: only young creatives need attend. The reduced (eight dollar) price for students at some of the events, in particular, demonstrates a key ingredient in the “Light Bash” recipe: the “young, hip” readers who, according to a 2008 press release, appreciate the event’s “hip-urban twist.”<sup>47</sup> The event’s Twitter account (@GillerLight) is curated to emphasize how the evening brings together publishing and other creative-industry types with these “hip” readers. Indeed, the divisions among these categories are nebulous: many of the “retweets” on @GillerLight come from self-professed “bibliophiles” who hold multiple “creative” jobs as bloggers, writers, and freelance editors.

Although corporations have a strong visual presence in “Light Bash” marketing—from a sponsorship page with logos on the website to the loot bags distributed at the event by Penguin and promptly displayed on Twitter—the main description of the event on its website emphasizes not commerce but rather the relationship between the “Canadian literature” the event celebrates and the cause of literacy, which serves “disadvantaged children, youth and adults in locations such as aboriginal communities, women’s shelters, inner-city schools, farms and community housing.”<sup>48</sup> “Light Bash” promoters emphasize the regional diversity of the event, its accessibility / exclusivity, its urban cosmopolitanism, and its youthful hipness;

moreover, the event's promotional material implies that Giller books are generative of the individual and national development that literacy is axiomatically assumed to enable.

If the "Light Bash" concept serves the Giller complex in important ways, press releases suggest that the relationship between the prize and Frontier College is a one-way street, beneficial only to latter. Frontier College is figured as, and is called to represent itself as, a very grateful recipient of the attention it is receiving from the Giller complex. Since its inception in 2002, the "Light Bash" has raised over \$500,000 for the literacy organization.<sup>49</sup> Frontier College president Sherry Campbell is frequently quoted in "Light Bash" press releases, noting in 2012, for example, that "Light Bash" funds are not tagged to specific programs, meaning that the event enables the organization to "provide programming that might be harder to find, like our Domestic Workers Program in Vancouver, or our Beat the Street program in Toronto."<sup>50</sup> Although still a recipient of considerable state funding, Frontier College is surely aware of the precarious status of these bonds, given that state funding for adult literacy programs has been drastically reduced in recent years: in 2006, Canada's federal government shut down the National Literacy Secretariat (NLS), and, since that time, the elimination of federal core funding for adult literacy programs has resulted in the closure of countless programs across the country.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, influenced by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) International literacy surveys, which tend to reduce literacy to economic productivity, state conceptions of literacy have shifted significantly in the past two decades. For example, the dismantling of the NLS led to the creation of the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills within Employment and Social Development Canada, a reorganization that clearly indicates the new functionality that characterizes the state definition of literacy.<sup>52</sup> In such a political climate, it should surprise us neither that organizations like Frontier College increasingly form funding relationships with private banks and other corporations nor that such private interests, like governments before them, seek to benefit from the meanings attached to Frontier College.

The leveraging by the Giller "Light Bash" of a conception of literacy associated with postwar humanism is worth examining, but to do this it helps to think first about another reader called forth by the Giller complex, who is first and foremost a consumer. Clearly, literary prize culture plays a key role in the distribution, or sale, of books. Yet as recent applications of theories of immaterial labour to the reader indicate, we cannot simply think of readers as the radically disruptive potential that comes in the wake of

production and distribution.<sup>53</sup> Readers have a crucial function not just in the consumption of prizewinning and nominated titles but also as labourers in what Maurizio Lazzarato calls the “actual productive cycle” of the new immaterial labour. The moment of consumption, far from signaling the end of the commodity, now “enlarges and creates the ‘ideological’ and cultural environment of the consumer” and gives the product a “place in life (in other words, integrates it into social communication) and allows it to live and evolve.”<sup>54</sup> Highly staged consumption, curated as lifestyle, identity, and personality, is now key to the productive process because it creates what Eugenia Siapera calls “a specific cultural hierarchy.”<sup>55</sup> Although marketing practices have long exploited the ways in which commodities, including books, might shape lifestyles, theorists of immaterial labour point to the radical destabilization of “production” in the context of, for example, new media environments, where the potential for consumers to participate in the productive cycle is significantly expanded. As Lazzarato points out, the unpaid labour of such consumers thus becomes an increasingly central component of the market economy. The Giller complex needs readers, not simply because readers buy books, but also because readers who fashion their ongoing consumption of books as lifestyle, identity, and personality—often via social media and often as “ordinary” participants in highly publicized media events such as the Scotiabank Giller Prize—produce new kinds of consumer demand and interest, and they do this without being paid. This capital-producing reader is obviously not the reader we encounter in the media forms that promote the Giller: namely, the Scotiabank Giller website, the “Light Bash” website, @GillerLight, and press releases.

Instead, we meet the “Light Bash” reader. Young, hip, urban, and creative, this reader is held up as the literate subject par excellence. Yet, in a distinct departure from neoliberal conceptions of the literate individual, it is not this reader’s ability to employ her literacy as a workplace skill that is celebrated. Rather, through the event’s evocation of Frontier College and its literacy work, the literacy of the “Light Bash” attendee is granted a very particular poignancy: it is yoked to an older internationalism and its language of literacy as a human right. Just as the Canadian state’s commemoration of Frontier College forges a strong connection between the state’s historical and present capacity to incorporate immigrants in a fair and egalitarian manner, so a more internationally oriented discourse of literacy dominant in the postwar West has given weight to the meanings that Frontier College bears both in Canada and beyond. These meanings are crucial to the Giller complex’s use of Frontier College. Since at least the end of the Second World

War, literacy has been axiomatically linked to the rationality and freedom, as well as the rights, upon which modern liberal citizenship is thought to depend. The most vigorous international promoter of this axiom has been the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Established in 1946, UNESCO has used policy, research, program design and delivery (particularly in the global south), advocacy, monitoring and evaluation, and prizes to promote literacy as a “fundamental human right and the foundation for lifelong learning.”<sup>56</sup> Canada is widely recognized in the international community for its key contributions to this work: Canadian scholar James Robbins Kidd was the chair of UNESCO’s Experimental World Literacy Program (1967–73), and Frontier College was granted UNESCO’s literacy prize in 1977. This latter fact is repeatedly emphasized in the Canadian state’s contemporary memorialization of Frontier College—in its 2009 announcement of the placement of a Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada plaque at the organization’s Toronto headquarters, for example.<sup>57</sup>

Despite the axiomatic equation of UNESCO with literacy as a human right, the *meanings* of literacy have long been debated within this organization, a fact that might be attributed to what Richard Hoggart characterizes as the power struggles that played out within UNESCO in the decades following the Second World War. For example, during the 1960s, when UNESCO adopted its Declaration on the Eradication of Illiteracy (1964) and launched its Experimental World Literacy Programme, there was conflict between proponents of “development-linked functionality” and critics of this conception of literacy, who were largely based in the global south and influenced by the work of Paulo Friere.<sup>58</sup> Nevertheless, from the post-war period until the end of the twentieth century, UNESCO’s literacy work was identified with a Western humanist view of education, one that accords a strong role to national states (conceived in terms of modernist state formation), and that values rationality, autonomy, and individual rights as guarantors of collective well-being.<sup>59</sup> It is this liberal-humanist view of literacy work that has been strongly associated with Frontier College, and it is one that conveniently serves the state’s narration of the building of the nation, as well. Yet, at the UNESCO level, liberal humanism was forced to accommodate the “development-linked functionality” promoted, most notably, by the United States.<sup>60</sup> As recent scholarship has demonstrated, the definition of education as a “tradable service” in the context of the World Trade Organization’s 1995 General Agreement on Trade in Services, as well as the neoliberal turn after 1997 of the United Nations—and of the organizations

that fall under its umbrella, such as UNESCO—has had remarkable consequences for education.<sup>61</sup> UNESCO is now an avid participant in the “multi-stakeholder partnerships” that are privatizing and commodifying education worldwide, all the while retaining much of the liberal-humanist discourse of an earlier era in order to describe its priorities and programs.<sup>62</sup> Exploring the constitutive history of literacy—its highly contested signification under postwar internationalism and contemporary neoliberal globalization and its constant deployment across both periods in the service of “development” and “functionality”—is key to understanding how its contemporary appropriation in the context of literary prize culture not only occludes the radical moments in its history, but, more to my particular point, exploits its symbolic flexibility.

In conclusion, I would like to recall that adult education and literacy initiatives in Canada are particularly exposed to pedagogical and ideological priorities that may not be their own. In large part, this is due to what Tannis Atkinson calls the nation’s “long tradition of devaluing education for working people.”<sup>63</sup> In order to secure funding, Frontier College is obliged to narrate its legacy—or to offer up its signifying power—in terms that are palatable to its donors, whether these are government agencies or private corporations. As the Scotiabank Giller Prize finds itself the object of critique that hones in on its corporate sponsorship and as the award’s claim to apprehend cultural excellence fails to stem that critique, it has all the more reason to associate itself with Frontier College, an organization that signifies strongly in the direction of public culture. Associated as the discourse of multiculturalism and the figure of the literate citizen are with persistent conceptions of the western, liberal-democratic nation-state as a producer of strong public culture, they offer a powerful distraction from the actual diminishment of such publics that the Giller signifies and thus possess a remarkable ability to accentuate the symbolic capital of Canada’s most widely recognized literary prize.

## Notes

1. For further information about the relation of the Canadian YMCA movement to its British and US-American counterparts, see Murray G. Ross, *The YMCA in Canada: The Chronicle of a Century* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1951). Unlike both Britain and the United States, Canada retained the majority of its population in rural areas until 1921, and industrial development did not significantly alter the nation’s economy and labour force until the beginning of the twentieth century.

2. Alfred Fitzpatrick, *Library Extension in Ontario* (n.p.: privately printed, 1901), 3–4; Eric Robinson, “The History of Frontier College” (Master’s thesis, McGill University,



1960), 18, 38; and James Morrison, "Black Flies, Hard Work, Low Pay: A Century of Frontier College," *The Beaver* 79, no. 5 (1999): 35. As a result of policies aimed at settling the West and as a consequence of the nation's enormous need for labour, more than three million people, mostly from eastern and southern Europe, entered Canada between 1896 and 1914. About 30 percent of these immigrants worked homesteads, and another 20 percent worked seasonal jobs in agriculture, mining, lumbering, and railway construction. Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 113–14.

3. *The House of Difference. Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 3. Although Frontier College principals continually requested federal funding for its work with adults, it was not until after the Second World War that the intervention of Canada's federal and provincial governments in the field of adult education expanded considerably. Gordon Selman et al., *The Foundations of Adult Education in Canada*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Thompson Educational, 1998), 65–67.

4. "Frontier College," Parks Canada, last modified May 1, 2015, accessed April 6, 2016, [http://www.pc.gc.ca/APPS/CP-NR/release\\_e.asp?id=1333&andor1=nr](http://www.pc.gc.ca/APPS/CP-NR/release_e.asp?id=1333&andor1=nr).

5. Gordon Selman, *Citizenship and the Adult Education Movement in Canada* (Vancouver: Centre for Continuing Education, University of British Columbia, 1991), 3–5. For an analysis of the racist ideologies and exclusionary measures embedded in the 1906 and 1910 Immigration Acts, including the particular targeting of Chinese and other Asian immigrants, see Kelley and Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic*, 135–63.

6. *Economy of Prestige: Prizes, Awards, and the Circulation of Cultural Value* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2005), 10–11.

7. "The Foundation," The Man Booker Prizes, last modified 2016, accessed 3 March 2016. <http://themanbookerprize.com/foundation>. On the relation of the Booker Prize to the history of British colonialism, see chap. 4 of Graham Huggan, *The Postcolonial Exotic: Marketing the Margins* (London: Routledge, 2001). Beth Driscoll discusses how literary sponsorship helped the Booker McConnell company, which made its fortunes in nineteenth-century Caribbean sugar plantations, refashion its reputation through "an injection of symbolic capital." *The New Literary Middlebrow: Tastemakers and Reading in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 131–32.

8. Driscoll makes the point that, unlike in Canada, the United States, and Australia, in Britain most major literary prizes have corporate sponsorship. *The New Literary Middlebrow*, 130. Canada's other major literary awards, the Governor General's Awards for literature, were established in 1936 by a group of writers, the Canadian Authors' Association, but were taken over by the state-run Canada Council for the Arts in 1959. In that same year, French-language prizes were added. There are currently seven major award categories. Further information about the history of literary prizes in both English and French Canada can be found in Marie-Pier Luneau and Ruth Panofsky, "Celebrating Authorship: Prizes and Distinctions," in *The History of the Book in Canada*, volume 3, 1918–1980 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 116–21. Luneau and Panofsky note that the Governor General's Awards only became available to French-language writers after 1959; Quebecois cultural nationalism guarantees that these federally sponsored prizes do not have the same cachet in Quebec as they do in English Canada. As a result, there are more privately sponsored prizes for French-language than English-language writers in Canada.

9. *Prizing Literature. The Celebration and Circulation of National Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 21. Roberts's expansion of Bourdieu's terminology is meant to name the particular value of "nationality" as a kind of "currency" in Canada's "cultural marketplace."

10. "The Hidden Labour of Reading Pleasure," *English Studies in Canada* 33, no. 1–2 (2007): 23.

11. "Biographies," Scotiabank Giller Prize, last modified 2016, accessed July 13, 2016, <http://www.scotiabankgillerprize.ca/about/biographies>.

12. "Who We Are," Scotiabank Giller Prize, last modified 2016, accessed Feb. 4, 2016, <http://www.scotiabankgillerprize.ca/about/prize-history>; Deborah Dundas, "Giller Prize Now Among the Richest," *Toronto Star*, Sept. 17, 2014, E1; "Read Great Books: About the Awards," Canada Council for the Arts, accessed Feb. 5, 2016, <http://ggbooks.ca/en>.

13. Driscoll, *The New Literary Middlebrow*, 119–20. See also chap. 1 of this title. Rabinovitch was quoted in Adam McDowell, "Giller Prize Lessons: What the Literary Award Gets Right," *CanWest News*, Nov. 10, 2008, ProQuest: CBCA Complete (460073010).

14. "The Giller Prize Has Come of Age for Canadian Writers," *The Globe and Mail*, Nov. 12, 1996: A18. Writer Mordecai Richler, a close friend of Jack Rabinovitch and, along with Alice Munro and literature professor David Staines, one of the judges of the first Giller competition, infamously proclaimed at the prize's inaugural (1994) press conference that "all three of us are politically incorrect. Looking for the first winner, we will not favour young writers over old writers, or vice versa. We won't favour a book written by a woman over a man, or a black, gay, or native writer any more than somebody whose family has been here for 200 years." Philip Marchand, "Giller Prize Jury Goes Small," *Toronto Star*, Oct. 7, 2006: H9.

15. Huggan, *The Postcolonial Exotic*, 118.

16. *Prizing Literature*, 29.

17. On the relation between institutions, such as the literary award, and "consecration," see "The Market of Symbolic Goods" in Pierre Bourdieu's *The Field of Cultural Production* (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 1993), 120–25.

18. For an example of the first position I identify here, see Steven Henighan, "Kingmakers," *Geist* 63 (Winter 2006): 61–62, and for the second, see Jennifer Scott and Myka Tucker-Abramson, "Banking on a Prize: Multicultural Capitalism and the Canadian Literary Prize Industry," *Studies in Canadian Literature* 32, no. 1 (2007): 5–20, and chap. 10 of Kit Dobson, *Transnational Canadas: Anglo-Canadian Literature and Globalization* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2009). For a fuller discussion of the work of the Massey Commission (1949–1951), and its role in the rise of state-sponsored culture in Canada, see Paul Litt, *The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992). Jody Berland contends that Canada's modernists were largely responsible for the longstanding distinction in government cultural policy between high, "autonomous" art, such as literature, and more popular cultural forms, which were less deserving of state funding. She claims that this distinction held fast until the 1980s. "Nationalism and the Modernist Legacy: Dialogues with Innis," in *Capital Culture: A Reader on Modernist Legacies, State Institutions, and the Value(s) of Art*, ed. Shelley Hornstein and Jody Berland (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), 22.

19. If federal spending on the arts nearly doubled between 1972 and 1983, the arts fared poorly under Conservative and Liberal governments alike between 1984 and 2015. While the Conservative government of Brian Mulroney introduced NAFTA (which limits the state's ability to protect and regulate its domestic arts and culture industry), the Liberal government of Jean Chrétien cut funding to heritage and cultural programs by more than 23 percent between 1993 and 1998, and the Conservative government of Stephen Harper eliminated more than 191 million from arts funding in its 2012 budget. Michael Dewing, *Background Paper: Federal Government Policy on Arts and Culture* (Ottawa: Library of Parliament, 2013), 3–4; Government of Canada, *Jobs, Growth and Long-Term Prosperity: Economic Action Plan 2012* (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2012), 269. During the 1990s, provincial and territorial support for arts and culture funding also declined. In 2002–03, the federal government's contribution to cultural spending represented 45 percent of total spending (allocated mostly to broadcasting, publishing, film / sound recording, and large granting agencies such as the Canada Council); the provincial and territorial contribution represented

29 percent (allocated mostly to libraries, the performing arts, and heritage institutions); and the municipal contribution represented 26 percent (allocated principally to libraries). "Arts, Culture, and Recreation: Canada Yearbook Overview 2006," Statistics Canada, last updated 2006, accessed July 20, 2016, [http://www41.statcan.gc.ca/2006/3955/ceb3955\\_000-eng.htm](http://www41.statcan.gc.ca/2006/3955/ceb3955_000-eng.htm).

20. *Valuing Culture: Measuring and Understanding Canada's Creative Economy* (working paper, Conference Board of Canada, 2008), iii, <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/e-library/abstract.aspx?did=2671>. The figure may seem high, but it calculates the arts and culture sector's direct as well as the indirect and induced contributions to the economy.

21. "Arts," Scotiabank, last updated 2016, accessed April 26, 2016, <http://www.scotiabank.com/ca/en/0,,7375,00.html>.

22. Tony Comper, CEO of the Bank of Montreal, for instance, has stated that cultural initiatives are important "economically." Sinclair, "Scotiabank," R1.

23. Cheri Hanson, "The Value of a Partnership," *Quill & Quire* 71, no. 11 (Nov. 2005): 12.

24. *The New Literary Middlebrow*, 131.

25. *Prizing Literature*, 21. Stewart Sinclair, "Scotiabank Steps Up to the Plate for Giller," *The Globe and Mail*, Sept. 22, 2005: R1.

26. Henighan, "Kingmakers," 61.

27. "Notes from the Cultural Field: Canadian Literature from Identity to Hybridity," *Essays on Canadian Writing* 72 (2000): 224.

28. "Killing the Beaver: Reading the Scotiabank Giller Prize 2013," *Canadian Notes and Queries* 90 (Summer 2014): 14.

29. Publishers who submit titles must agree to pay \$1,500 if the work is shortlisted. This fee covers the cost of advertising and promotion. Publishers must also agree to "spend an appropriate sum on media advertising for the winning book." "Submissions," Scotiabank Giller Prize, last modified 2016, accessed April 26, 2016, <http://www.scotiabankgillerprize.ca/about/submissions/>. The "Giller effect" on sales is well documented: according to BookNet Canada, a Giller win increases sales of a given title by, on average, 543 percent, and the award has a greater effect on sales than any other literary prize in Canada. BookNet arrives at this figure by comparing sales of titles the week before the Giller Prize announcement with sales from the week following it. "Not Just the Money," *Toronto Star*, Sept. 19, 2014, A16, and Vinay Menon, "A Canadian Bestseller: The Giller Prize, Which Has the Power to Turn a Book Into a Publishing Success Story, Began as an Idea in a Bar 20 Years Ago," *Toronto Star*, Nov. 2, 2013, E1.

30. Turner-Riggs, *Book Distribution in Canada's English-Language Market* (Ottawa: Government of Canada Publications, May 2008), 49. Of the award's twenty-three winning titles (over twenty-two seasons), eight are Penguin Random House titles (or its imprints: Doubleday, Knopf, Viking). (Penguin Canada and Random House merged in 2012, and I have considered them as one company here. They are jointly owned by the transnational media corporations Pearson and Bertelsmann.) HarperCollins titles (owned by News Corp.) have been Giller winners twice. In making the calculations for both the winners and the finalists, I included winning and finalist McClelland & Stewart titles from the period after Penguin Random House's total acquisition of the company in 2012. However, it is worth noting that Random House acquired 25 percent of the company earlier, in 2000. My calculations do not consider the ratio of shortlisted and winning titles to total Canadian-authored, English language fiction titles published by each company in a given year. For a bibliography of Giller winners and finalists up to and including 2014, see Andrew David Irvine, "The Giller Prize (1994–2004) and Scotiabank Giller Prize (2005–2014): A Bibliography," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of Canada* 53, no. 1 (2015): 89–105. According to BookNet Canada's 2015 statistics, books (in all categories) produced by Canadian-owned publishers accounted for only 4.86 percent of the total market share. *The Canadian Book Market 2015* (Toronto: BookNet Canada, 2016), 10.

31. Scott and Tucker-Abramson, "Banking on a Prize," 6, 13. For a similar critique of the way that a transnational "culture of celebrity" engineers a superficial "national pedagogy," see Smaro Kamboureli, "The Culture of Celebrity and National Pedagogy," in *Home-Work: Postcolonialism, Pedagogy & Canadian Literature*, ed. Cynthia Sugars (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2004), 35–55.

32. Smaro Kamboureli, *Scandalous Bodies: Diasporic Literature in English Canada* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2000), 82.

33. For other critiques of official multiculturalism that point to these contradictions, see Mackey, *The House of Difference*, and Himani Bannerji, *The Dark Side of the Nation* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2000). For recent research on the question of income disparity between visible minority and white Canadians, see Krishna Pendakar and Ravi Pendakar, "Color By Numbers: Minority Earnings in Canada, 1995–2005," *International Migration and Integration* no. 12 (2011): 305–29, doi: 10.1007/s121340010-0160-6. For an extended analysis of the ways that temporary migration arrangements are supplanting immigration for permanent settlement in Canada, see Nandita Sharma, *Home Economics: Nationalism and the Making of "Migrant Workers" in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006).

34. Dobson, *Transnational Canadas*, 164, 159. Critics have particularly observed the way in which Canada Reads (a Canadian public radio program) serves to recontextualize the work of authors like Michael Ondaatje and Joseph Boyden within a "nationalist multiculturalist framework, where the project of national unity mandates the erasure of meaningful differences," yet tendencies in the work of these authors also contribute to their success in contexts like that associated with Canada Reads. Anouk Lang, "'A Book That All Canadians Should Be Proud to Read': Canada Reads and Joseph Boyden's *Three Day Road*," *Canadian Literature* no. 215 (Winter 2012), ProQuest (1373225412). See also Kamboureli, "The Culture of Celebrity," and Danielle Fuller and DeNel Rehberg Sedo, "A Reading Spectacle for the Nation: The CBC and 'Canada Reads,'" *Journal of Canadian Studies* 40, no. 1 (2006): 5–36. For interesting new work on the thematic and formal tendencies of recent prizewinning novels (including novels shortlisted for the Giller and the Governor General's Awards), see Andrew Piper and Eva Portelance, "How Cultural Capital Works: Prizewinning Novels, Bestsellers, and the Time of Reading," *Post* 45, May 10, 2016, n.p., <http://post45.research.yale.edu/2016/05/how-cultural-capital-works-prizewinning-novels-bestsellers-and-the-time-of-reading/>.

35. "The Scotiabank Giller Prize Gala 2006," YouTube video, 1:11:08, from a performance televised by CTV on November 7, 2006, posted by "The Giller Prize" November 29, 2015, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHkk\\_QyU\\_cc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHkk_QyU_cc).

36. Susan Walker and Judy Stoffman, "T.O. Doctor Wins Giller; Lam's Stories of Chinese-Canadian M.D.s 'Subtle in Emotion,' Says Atwood," *Toronto Star*, Nov. 8, 2006, E1.

37. In "The Forms of Capital," Bourdieu notes: "A general science of the economy of practices, capable of reappropriating the totality of the practices which, although objectively economic, are not and cannot be socially recognized as economic, and which can be performed only at the cost of a whole labor of dissimulation or, more precisely, *euphemization*, must endeavor to grasp capital and profit in all their forms and to establish the laws whereby the different types of capital (or power, which amounts to the same thing) change into one another." He concludes the essay by stoutly resisting "economism," which "ignores what makes the specific efficacy of other types of capital." *The Routledge Falmer Reader in Sociology of Education*, ed. Stephen J. Ball (London: Routledge Falmer, 2004), 16, 24.

38. English, *Economy of Prestige*, 4. For analyses of Florida's work on the "creative economy" and the value of diversity and the ways this has been taken up in the United Kingdom, see Sarah Brouillette, *Literature and the Creative Economy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014), 117–19, and Imre Szeman, "Neoliberals Dressed in Black; or, the Traffic in Creativity," *English Studies in Canada* 36, no. 1 (2010): 20.

39. On the emergence of the phrase “cultural industries” in government discourse, see Kevin Dowler, “The Cultural Industry Policy Apparatus,” in *The Cultural Industries in Canada*, ed. Michael Dorland (Toronto: James Lorimer, 1996), 342.

40. *Valuing Culture*, iv, 42. Although Canada’s new Liberal government made significant increases to public funding for arts and culture in its 2016 budget, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s 2015 mandate letter for the new Minister of Canadian Heritage (Mélanie Joly) employs this same construction of Canada’s “cultural and creative industries” as shaped by “immense diversity” and as “an enormous source of strength to the Canadian economy.” “Minister of Canadian Heritage Mandate Letter,” Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau, accessed March 17, 2016, <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/minister-canadian-heritage-mandate-letter><http://pm.gc.ca/eng/minister-canadian-heritage-mandate-letter>, and Government of Canada, *Growing the Middle Class: Budget 2016* (Ottawa: Department of Finance Canada, 2016), 184.

41. “Prize for Literature Points to the Future of Our Nation,” *Toronto Star*, Oct. 12, 1994, A23. Gwyn’s quotation refers to Giller-nominated writers Shyam Selvadurai and M.G. Vassanji. “Writing Thru Race” was a 1994 Writers’ Union of Canada conference that limited enrolment to “First Nations writers and writers of colour.” The Gwyn article cited here is just one example of the many negative responses the event elicited in the nation’s media. For a fuller account of the conference and its politics, see “Notes for Writing Thru Race,” in Dionne Brand, *Bread Out of Stone* (Toronto: Coach House, 1994).

42. Victoria Ahearn, “Eclectic and Vibrant’ Giller Shortlist Revealed,” *The Canadian Press*, Oct. 6, 2015, ProQuest: CBCA Complete (1719463395). The 2015 shortlist included André Alexis, Samuel Archibald, Rachel Cusk, and Heather O’Neill. Alexis, who won, is a Trinidadian-Canadian writer.

43. “About the Bash,” Scotiabank Giller Light Bash, last modified 2016, accessed Feb. 4, 2016, <http://gillerlightbash.com/about-the-bash/>; “Frontier College Letters: One Hundred Years of Teaching, Learning, and Nation Building,” Frontier College, accessed April 26, 2016, [http://www.frontiercollege.ca/english/learn/history\\_letters.html](http://www.frontiercollege.ca/english/learn/history_letters.html).

44. “About the Bash.” I have not found evidence of another major literary prize hosting a fundraising gala in support of literacy, but, of course, literacy organizations around the world use high-profile fundraising events to connect them to the resources of the media and publishing industries. A good example of this is the annual “Evening of Readings and Gala Dinner Dance” hosted by the New York City-based organization Literacy Partners.

45. Canada News Wire, “Keep Your Eyes on the Prize at the Scotiabank Giller Light Bash!,” Oct. 25, 2012, ProQuest: CBCA Complete (1114967110).

46. Marketwired, “Canadians Bring Excitement of the Scotiabank Giller Prize Closer to Home,” Nov. 6, 2014, ProQuest: CBCA Complete (1620573411).

47. Canada News Wire, “What Do You Get When You Fill a Room With Young, Hip Readers? A Literary Party for the Books?,” Nov. 11, 2008, ProQuest: CBCA Complete (453105696).

48. “About the Bash.”

49. Marketwired, “Canadians Bring.”

50. Canada News Wire, “Keep Your Eyes.”

51. Carol Goar, “Pall Hangs Over Literacy Day,” *Toronto Star*, Jan. 26, 2007: A14, ProQuest: CBCA Complete (439133206), and Matthew Pearson, “Literacy Organizations Say Federal Government Abandoning Them,” *Ottawa Citizen*, May 20, 2014, accessed Feb. 20, 2016, <http://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/literacy-organizations-say-federal-government-abandoning-them>. According to its Annual Report for 2015, between April 2014 and March 2015, Frontier College received 5 percent of its total funding from the federal government, and 37 percent of its total funding from provincial and territorial governments. The 2004 Annual Report does not distinguish between provincial / territorial and federal funding, but notes that 50 percent of its revenue was derived from government sources. The proportion of revenue that

comes from government sources has thus declined, probably largely due to the closure of the National Literacy Secretariat in 2006. Annual reports may be consulted on the Frontier College website: "Annual Reports," Frontier College, accessed Apr. 15, 2016, [http://www.frontiercollege.ca/english/learn/literacy\\_annual\\_reports.html](http://www.frontiercollege.ca/english/learn/literacy_annual_reports.html).

52. Many scholars have pointed to the influence of neoliberalism on the definition of literacy found in the OECD literacy surveys. See Tannis Atkinson, "Grade 12 or Die: Literacy Screening as a Tactic of Bio-Power," in *Canadian Education: Governing Practices and Producing Subjects*, ed. Brenda L. Spencer, Kenneth D. Gregory, Kari Delhi, and James Ryan (Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2012), 7–21; Mary Hamilton and David Barton, "The International Adult Literacy Survey: What Does It Really Measure?" *International Review of Education* 46, no. 5 (2000): 377–89; and Judith Walker, "The Needy and Competent Citizen in OECD Policy Documents," in *The State, Civil Society, and the Citizen: Exploring Relationships in the Field of Education in Europe*, ed. Michal Bron Jr., Paula Guimarães, and Rui Viera de Castro (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2009), 97–112. Although Frontier College seems to have been largely spared the scalpel that has eviscerated literacy programs across the country in the past decade, the kind of work it is able to do has not remained untouched by the new state priorities. Its famed Labourer-Teacher program, for instance, has recently been expanded to include a "Second-Century" project, which is sponsored by the federal government's Office of Literacy and Essential Skills and promoted as a program that will bring the benefits of "improved labour productivity" and "profitability" to employers. "Programs," Frontier College, accessed 20 Apr. 2016, <http://www.frontiercollege.ca/english/learn/programs.html>.

53. See Shukin, "The Hidden Labour," for a discussion of literary reading as a form of productive labour in the capitalist economy. Such theorizations of the reader offer strong implicit critiques of the reader theorized in certain strands of poststructuralist or cultural-studies-oriented thought (in Michel de Certeau's canonical essay "Reading as Poaching," for example). Of course there is a great deal of scholarship on "co-creative labour" that is more sanguine. For a review of this literature, see John Banks and Mark Deuze, "Co-Creative Labour," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 12, no. 5 (2009): 420–31.

54. "Immaterial Labour," trans. Paul Colilli and Ed Emery, accessed Dec. 1, 2015, <http://www.generation-online.org/cf/cimmateriallabour3.htm>.

55. Eugenia Siapera, *Understanding New Media* (London: Sage, 2012), 47.

56. "Education: Literacy," UNESCO, accessed March 29, 2016, <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/education-building-blocks/literacy/>. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (established by the United Nations in 1948) stipulates that everyone has the right to education. "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights," United Nations, accessed April 5, 2016, <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>.

57. "Government of Canada Commemorates the National Historic Significance of Frontier College," Parks Canada, last modified May 22, 2009, accessed April 5, 2016, [http://www.pc.gc.ca/APPS/CP-NR/release\\_e.asp?id=1333&andor1=nr](http://www.pc.gc.ca/APPS/CP-NR/release_e.asp?id=1333&andor1=nr).

58. Richard Hoggart, *An Idea and Its Servants: UNESCO from Within* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); UNESCO, *The Experimental World Literacy Programme: A Critical Assessment* (Paris: The UNESCO Press, 1976), 120–22; UNESCO, *50 Years for Education*. (Paris: UNESCO, 1997), 125–26; and Phillip W. Jones with David Coleman, *The United Nations and Education: Multilateralism, Development, and Globalisation* (London: Routledge Falmer, 2005), 61–62.

59. Jones, *The United Nations*, 52–72.

60. Jones, *The United Nations*, 61–62.

61. Susan Robertson, "The New Global Governance Paradigm in Education: Public-Private Partnerships and Social Justice" (Public Lecture Series on Global Rights to Education, Amsterdam, May 27, 2008), and Laurence Tamatea, "The Dakar Framework: Constructing

and Deconstructing the Global Neo-Liberal Matrix,” *Globalisation, Societies, and Education* 3, no. 3 (2005): 311–34.

62. Robertson, “The New Global,” 11–13, and “Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” UNESCO, accessed April 12, 2016, <http://en.unesco.org/themes/education-21st-century>. For an example of the way that UNESCO retains the language of a humanist vision of education in the context of neoliberal priorities, see the *Incheon Declaration*, which reaffirms a commitment to “a humanistic vision of education and development” while amplifying its insistence on “quality” education as a means of “improving learning outcomes, which requires strengthening inputs, processes and evaluation of outcomes and mechanisms to measure progress.” UNESCO et al., *Incheon Declaration: Education 2030* (working paper, World Education Forum, 2015), iii, 2, accessed April 12, 2016, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2015/12/25662441/incheon-declaration-education-2030-towards-inclusive-equitable-quality-education-lifelong-learning-all>. As Tamatea affirms, the emphasis on “quality” in neoliberal discourses of education “draws ‘consumer’ attention to the ‘product’ as opposed to the social relations of production.” “The Dakar Framework,” 318. The *Incheon Declaration* also repeatedly employs neoliberal terms such as “accountability” and “transparency.”

63. Atkinson, “Grade 12 or Die,” 17.