

Access to Print: Kass Banning, Will Straw, Rinaldo Walcott

Respondent: Joy Xiang

Organizers: Felicity Tayler and Michael Maranda

Transcript of a conversation that took place as a live broadcast online video event on 30 April 2021 as part of the speaker series *Desire Lines: Mapping the Metadata of Toronto Arts Publishing*, hosted by the AGYU in coordination with Artexxe and the SpokenWeb.

Note: This transcript has been edited for clarity and published without a Q&A section in keeping with the other event transcripts of this series.

Michael Maranda: Welcome. In recognition of our place on the traditional territory of numerous Indigenous nations, the Art Gallery of York University thanks the Wendat, the Haudenosaunee and the Anishinabek, who have and continued to care for this land. This land is the subject of the Dish With One Spoon Covenant and Wampum between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Three Fires Confederacy as well as other allied nations, in an agreement to share the land and its resources. The gallery occupies land referred to in Crown Treaty 13, also known as the Toronto Purchase, which was originally signed in 1805.

While the government of Canada and the Mississaugas came to an agreement in 2010 on the claims arising from this treaty, we should also acknowledge the treaties are not isolated in time and the obligations outlined in them should be understood as part of an ongoing relationship, not a one-off historical exchange. The land which we are acknowledging here is not an area to be found on a surveyor's map. It is a set of interrelationships between the ecologies and subjects. It is an understanding of a set of responsibilities to others.

I would ask that we all consider the territories in which we currently find ourselves in and please feel free to use the chat for your own personal acknowledgement.

Thank you, and welcome to "Access To Print," the third in a series of online conversations on art publishing in Toronto. It comes out of a project of mapping the metadata of a series of magazines active in the seventies and eighties to establish a network diagram of the social relations within the pages and the offices of those magazines. These maps are not end points however, like the land of our land acknowledgement, these maps stand in for these social relations which we are here attempting to document. If you haven't familiarized yourself to this project I would encourage you to visit our website for a fuller description. We are also uploading documentation of all the panels, and shortly, responses to the panels will start to appear.

Before turning this discussion over to Felicity Tayler, I would like to thank her for all the work she's putting into this project. It's been a real pleasure as it has unfolded over the past few months and I'm sure we'll continue to surprise in the coming months as we continue along. I would also like to extend thanks to both Faith Paré and Josie Spalla, who have been key in helping keep us on track. And of course I need to thank the two organizations whose resources have been vital in supporting this endeavor: Artexxe and the SpokenWeb network.

We also have to acknowledge the support of our funders; the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, the Toronto Arts Council, York University and our donors, friends, and supporters. The staff of the

gallery have been unfailing in their support of this series and I want to thank them as well. Finally, of course, the participants in these conversations whom all have been generous with their time, their experience and their knowledge. And with that, please welcome Felicity Tayler, who will be introducing today's conversationalists.

Felicity Tayler: Hi everyone. Thank you, Michael, for that introduction. I'm speaking to you today from unceded, unsundered Algonquin Anishinabek territory. For two years I've lived here with my family, and especially during the spring pandemic moment, we're extremely grateful for the many generations of stewardship of this land. I'd also like to take a moment to acknowledge that this particular event in the series is taking place during a province-wide stay at home order, which disproportionately affects minoritized and racialized people, and people our economy has designated as essential workers. In addition, some of those working on this series including myself, are presently negotiating full-time jobs with additional childcare responsibilities, as school and daycares are closed. To my mind it's an act of generosity for the AGYU, in making this series public with the care that they're bringing to it. And also for our speakers to have accepted to be with here with us today.

The frictions in our personal lives are echoes of extreme contradictions that the pandemic has brought to cultural fields. We look to arts and culture to sustain us through this long stretch of painful isolation. But when we must stay apart to keep each other healthy and safe, the material worlds of encounters and inventions are experienced as a lack. The *Desire Lines* series emerges from these contradictions. We gather here for a live event in a Zoom format. On one hand, I have a feeling of being social, on the other I'm conscious that we're producing what Hito Steyerl has called poor images. A mediated live event and its documentation in which, in her words, visuality is a resolutely compromised, blurred, amateurish, but also full of artifact.

Our images are a product of a particular digital media environment and attendant economic and social conditions that bring it into being. On one hand, the *Desire Lines* series opens up greater public access to interviews, curatorial, or historical work, that really is a work-in-progress. Essentially, we're bringing public big data sets, and publishing histories, back to the multiple complex interrelated communities who have produced them.

Nevertheless, the unexpected popularity and visibility of the series highlights a burden of representation that's experienced differently according to the positionality of speakers and listeners.

So, to this end, the series is drawing on the SpokenWeb methodologies for event-based literary oral history. We look to the Zoom session as an environment that can go beyond the visual to enable oral experience; to expand the act of "looking" to engage "listening" as a multisensory practice. I keep coming back to be grounded in the principle that this series is about *listening with intention* and with an awareness of how our positionality influences what we perceive in the questions, pauses, omissions, and memory work of our speakers. Our colleague Faith Paré will be featured in an upcoming SpokenWeb podcast coming out on Monday, featuring Jamilah Malika and Jessica Karuhanga, that touches on these questions of how to listen intentionally to an archive of events. Faith, I just wondered if you wanted to say a few words about this podcast right now?

Faith Paré: Yeah, thank you so much, Felicity, for that intro. Hello, everyone. Thank you for coming today. My name is Faith Paré.

I'm an RA for SpokenWeb, a research network that is partnering with the Art Gallery of York University, as well as Artexite, on the series. So, I've been really thrilled to be a collaborator. And one of our ongoing concerns as researchers and creators at SpokenWeb and being engaged with sound is how we we're able to attune listening to a mode that is anti-extractive and is mutually beneficial. And among the many projects going on in the network, including an amazing Oral History protocol developed by Mathieu Aubin and Deanna Fong, we've also been lucky and delighted to host two amazing artists, Jamilah Malika and Jessica Karuhanga, as artists and our students with SpokenWeb this year, where their practices are entrenched in how Black feminist ethos can be heard in, and amplified by experimentations and sound art. I've been very lucky to have worked with them in the archives this year, and to be developing some of these questions and answers with them. So, we'll be hosting a listening party for the podcast created by affiliated researcher, Katherine McLeod, who is with us today as well. That features both artists in conversation and that will be next Tuesday, May 4th. And for anyone who's interested, will be at noon Eastern Standard Time, we'll be listening and live tuning along at noon. And then there will be a Zoom discussion to follow at 1:00 PM with the artists present, hopefully. So, details will be dropped in the chat and we hope to see some of you there to continue this discussion about how to make listening expansive, but not extractive. Thank you.

Felicity: Awesome, so, Faith, are you going to drop the details in the chat?

Faith: Yes.

Felicity: All right, thanks very much, Faith. At this point I just want to raise a couple of etiquette points of how the Zoom space is going to work today. I also want to thank everybody for coming, and I want to remind you that the event is being recorded and it will be published in and transcribed for accessibility. We have many participants with us today who were part of the magazines and social scenes that we'll be discussing. We are definitely interested in hearing from you, however, there's no live Q and A section at the end of the event. Instead, we encourage you to submit your comments and questions in the chat throughout the event and myself or one of the other organizers will ask the questions on your behalf as the conversation between Kass, Rinaldo and Will unfolds. You can also add details to what they're talking about if you would like to contribute your own memories. Just please be aware that your text statements or your questions may appear in the published versions of the video and the transcript later on.

I will also be throwing things into the chat that take you to supplementary materials. This link [<https://osf.io/5jqc6/wiki/home/>] should take you to the repository. It's not very beautiful, but it's a place where we're temporarily keeping the texts and other objects, digital objects that we refer to during the events. There's an access to print folder and there's also the folders from the other events. And you can explore that while you're on the call today or after that. You can also spend some time exploring the network visualizations that brought us here today. This is the link to those on the internet

[<http://photomedia.ca/visualizations/artexte/sigma/agyu/>]. They were created by my SpokenWeb colleague, Tomasz Neugebauer. So, thank you, Tomasz.

I will give introductions to our speakers now and then also talk briefly about the network visualizations that brought us here together today. And I encourage you to see the event webpage on the AGYU site for longer descriptions of everybody's contributions. So, with us today, we have Kass Banning, who teaches at the Cinema Studies Institute at the University of Toronto. Her research focuses on aesthetics and screen alterity to include minor cinemas and new media, ranging from diasporic to Indigenous to queer. Banning co-founded and co-edited two Canadian quarterlies, *CineAction* and *Border/Lines*, for over a decade. We also have Rinaldo Walcott, a full professor in the Women and Gender Studies Institute at the University of Toronto and member of the graduate program at the Institute of Cinema Studies. He was on the editorial committees of *Fuse*, *Border/Lines*, and *TOPIA*. His latest book, *The Long Emancipation*, has just been released from Duke University Press. Will Straw is the James McGill Professor of Urban Media Studies at McGill University in Montreal, where he teaches within the department of art history and communication studies. Much of his career research focuses on the nighttime culture of cities. Another of his current projects has to do with mimeography and science fiction fanzines from the forties through the seventies. And our respondent with us today is Joy Xiang, a writer, arts worker, and "perpetual late bloomer" born in Shanghai and based in Toronto. She has edited for *Milkweed* and *Reel Asian*, written for Mercer Union, Ada X, and Hamilton Artists, Inc, and held positions at VTape and Blackwood Gallery. She was, until recently, assistant editor at *Canadian Art*, and is a member of the feminist working group, EMILIA-AMALIA. [FORPUBLICATION START HERE]

So, the title of this panel, "Access To Print," is a phrase borrowed from Makeda Silvera's 1986 anthology of articles for *Fireweed Magazine*. In her introduction, she uses these words to argue that the publishing fostered through second wave feminist thought was strongest when the page marked a space for voices and analysis that made links between race, class, and sexuality. For Silvera and her colleagues, the space was hard won through guest editorial roles at *Fireweed* in the mid-eighties.

Today, we'll look at the discursive and real-world communities around *Border/Lines*, a magazine whose first issue appeared in 1984 and whose discursive community, as we can see in the network drawing of magazine contributors is shared with both *Fireweed* and *Fuse*. The pink cluster is all the contributors to *Fuse*, the green clusters are all the contributors mainly associated with *Fireweed*, and today we'll be talking about the orange cluster which is the contributors associated with *Border/Lines*. If you want to know more about these diagrams I encourage you to watch the recording of our first event in the *Desire Lines* series with Lillian Allen and Clive Robertson.

But briefly today, I'm proposing that these diagrams visualize the fields of production around three magazines as a collectivity of action with a material grounding in Toronto between 1978 and 1987. So, this is *Fireweed*, *Border/Lines* and *Fuse*, which was began as a *Centerfold* in 1976. All of these magazines have been acknowledged as spaces where cultural race politics, or intersectional feminism, were worked through as modes of activists cultural criticism. The computational algorithms that produce this network emphasize connectedness within the network through co-contribution relationships to the magazines, as people occupied multiple roles. So, it's not just

people who are writing, it's also people who have roles as editors or run other kinds of committees, or who have worked as typesetters, illustrators or photographers. So, it's not simply the people who are contributing writing, it's everybody who contributes all the roles and production to the material object. What that means in the diagram is that the dots get bigger the more connected people are to other people, through contributions to magazine issues. So, for example, in this network around *Border/Lines* contributors, we can find both Will Straw and Kass Banning. But Rinaldo, for example, isn't on this graph because he comes into the network in the nineties and this mapping ends in 1987. So, that's one kind of limit, the visual limitations of the graph. It's also easy to, it's also interesting to note for example, that in this earlier period, leading up to 1987, that Ioan Davies, who's the founding editor and a key figure in *Border/Lines* has a smaller dot than somebody like Jody Berland or Rosemary Donegan. The other thing that we might look at today is that *Body Politic* appears as a contributor to *Border/Lines*, and Alexander Wilson is one of the figures that bridge these two magazine spaces that I hope we'll talk about today. And you'll see that his dot is pretty large too. So, he connects a lot of people on this network, and he connects between *Fuse*, because that's what the pink [lines in the network] shows us, and *Border/Lines*.

And now I'm going to begin by sharing an article from Ioan Davies in 1986, which asks, "on what grounds and to what purpose is an alternative press possible?"¹ Davies compares the overt government censorship of the press, both political and literary, in the Eastern Bloc to non-establishment publishing in Canada, which, as long as it's not pornographic can be subsidized in some part by Canada Council or SSHRC or provincial cultural funding bodies. He calls this "officially sponsored alternative culture." He then sketches out a blueprint of what an independent coalition of the left might look like in the mid-eighties. So, this is interesting because, in his words, he says, "with its own printing presses, credit union, marketing strategy, educational network ... if, for example, *Fuse*, *Body Politic*, *This Magazine*, *Fireweed*, *Pulp Press*, *Parachute*, DEC, Bread and Roses Credit Union, and the Marxist Institute really organized themselves, *Border/Lines* would certainly be interested."

This panel takes Davies's blueprint as a framework for oral history questions about the conditions and purpose of access to print. And this is where I'm going to transition to asking Kass the first question. If you're ready, Kass? So, you've talked about the network of relations around *Border/Lines* for your experience of the editorial production and print imaginary in terms of collectivity, friendship, and having a sense of agency and futurity as a graduate student, and all this in an era before the neoliberal university. Would you like to elaborate on how you became involved with the magazine and the key role of Ioan Davies in shaping a space of agency for you?

Kass Banning: Okay, I met Ioan in the fall of 1983, when I began my MA, and in that class itself, I mean, Monica [Kin] Gagnon was in the class, Christine Davies, Mark Lewis would visit occasionally, Andy Payne. It was just a very different moment.

There was a sense of possibility, a sense of openness. I mean, you didn't really have to be invited. I was talking to someone about this just the other day. You showed up; you would not be shunned. It was a kind of open door policy. And when you think of all these so-called collectives, that, of that era and variably, they were set up... I

¹ Ioan Davies, "Samzidat" *Border/Lines* 5 (1986), 8–9.

was involved within, very much involved with *CineAction* as well. Like the older white men, not, and invariably there were, to be truthful, kind of power shifts that ensued, even in the piece that you just pointed to. I mean, Ioan this time is very much engaged with Eastern Europe so, he would want to generate a dialogue around that but things changed as different kinds of folks came in and out.

Ioan was very, I mean, you know, Ioan was, was British. I think his dissertation—EP Thompson might have supervised him, I'm not sure—was on the unionization of miners in South Africa. So, through his Britishness he'd had his finger on what was happening [there], on all the exciting coalitions that were going on in London. I think he's a key figure for all of us who had our eyes elsewhere, [asking]: "why don't we have that here?" I mean, there were certain kinds of infrastructure or a senses of possibility that were different elsewhere. And I think if he hadn't come from that environment and tried to model...not exactly because he wasn't exactly Stuart Hall... we didn't have a Stuart Hall, unfortunately at that time in Toronto. We of course have other folks now.

I don't know if I'm answering your question but it was very exciting. There you were. I mean, this reminds me of, you know the Pat Benatar song, "We Were Young", right? You would know Will, is that it? I keep thinking about that. ♪ We were young ♪ or we just thought we could.... There was a sense of possibility. And especially there are other things, we'll get to this eventually but when you just look in that short time, "okay, let the white feminist in." Okay, that's shifted. I mean there was a sense of expansion and possibility, but for me as a white feminist, it was like, oh! it was a miracle to be involved in something and have somewhat of a voice. And it was Ioan, and some of the older folks had been there an issue or two before me who set that up. But I would say it was mostly Ioan, and his welcoming disposition that really set the tone. And of course, Alex Wilson.

Felicity: Thanks, yeah, I'm just thinking where to take this next. And I wonder if I can show the "Bad Sisters in the Big Apple" article² and we can talk a little bit about feminism and the Bad Sisters reading club and how you were working with your other colleagues in that earlier period.

Kass: Okay, how *about* my generation? This is a real shock for my younger colleagues at the university, but in a way we were autodidacts. We taught ourselves because we had to; we were very interested in French feminist theory but there were no professors around who taught it, maybe with the exception of Barbara Godard up at York. So, we started this reading collective called the Bad Sisters. Of course, it was based on a book by Emma Tennant, one Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen made a video based on.³ I don't know if I can impart the sense of excitement [we had]. There's it was all, there's also a sense of translation. Like, "Oh, look, Julia Kristeva has a translation, just came out in this journal" and we would jump on that and consume it; eat it, so to speak. So, that came out at York, I mean, Monika [Kin] Gagnon, Kim Sawchuk, Brenda Longfellow, Janice Williamson, Pat Elliot[, and Dot Tuer as

² Kass Banning, Brenda Longfellow, Janice Williamson, "Bad Sisters in the Big Apple: Feminist Film Theory" *Border/Lines* 2 (1985).

³ Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen, *The Bad Sister* (1983) 90 mins. Produced for The Moving Picture Company for Channel Four. <https://www.artforum.com/print/reviews/198402/the-bad-sister-64636>

well]. I mean there was just a lot of excitement around reading this work in translation. Okay, so there was a crossover there. Even that article came out of [the influence of] Kaja Silverman, we'll talk about the Semiotics Institute shortly, but she was here and she invited, I think, Brenda and myself to go to New York. There was a secret feminist film conference at NYU, invitation only.

Neither of us, working class girls, had ever been to New York City. So, we went; we observed; we were shocked. We wrote a very bratty piece that the editors of *Camera Obscura* will never forgive us for where we just noted the nastiness. It was like a real eye-opener about mainstream academic institutions, even under the guise of so-called feminism and the behaviors they're in. Yeah, but so we wrote it together, yeah, and it was fun.

I guess that segues into the Semiotic Institute.

Felicity: Yeah, well, I guess I was going to give you an option if you wanted to talk about Alex Wilson a bit more and we can bring in other people's memories around that too. Or we can go to the Semiotic Institute.

Kass: Yeah, I guess he figures in the Semiotic Institute, too. He was [like] an apparition. He was tall, he had long blonde hair; he wore cowboy boots. He was from California, but he was a very grounded, very generous. Anyone could come and join and be part of the conversation. I remember one time he just brought me [computer] disks over because I couldn't figure out some startup disks. And then at the same time he would give me organic seeds, right? He was just a lovely enabling person. And in a way *Border/Lines* benefited tremendously from the shitty way he was treated at the *Body Politic*, right? He wanted to bring in not just theory but he also he wanted to critique how it was a white boy establishment. And he had at that early time the capacity to see how that was problematic. So, we benefited from his move.

Then the Semiotic Institute, again, thrilling because we weren't learning about, you know ..., who was there? Jacques Derrida, Cixous ... no, Cixous wasn't there ... Luce Irigaray, Kaja Silverman gave a course. So, you got to sit at the feet of these giants and take courses with them, which I did. David Galbraith wrote a very funny scathing kind of send up of the event that I think is that in the materials?⁴ I think that's there.

Something else came out of that because if I recall Colin Campbell also made a video.⁵ I don't know when... He made fun of myself and Dot Tuer and I think it was Lynn Fernie, or maybe that was in the other group, but he was, you know, I was Sassy [after Kassy] in the tape. There are tributaries there. I remember he was at that conference. Real colonial types, right? Like, oh, the continentals are coming, we could run with them or whatever. It was a fun time. [Frederic] Jameson was there too, I recall. Were you there, Will?

⁴ Dave Paparazzi [David Gailbraith], "Excursions into Gossip: Disseminating Scruples" *Border/Lines* 9/10 (1987–1988): 4–5.

⁵ Colin Cambell, *Fiddle Faddle*, 1988 26min, colour video. Distributed by vTape. From the vtape catalogue: "A cash-strapped woman video artist is commissioned to write a review of a colloquium on "Sex and Semiotics" for a 'serious' art magazine. Laugh along as this learned gathering and its cultural critique take a tumble."

Felicity: Will, I was wondering though if you did want to talk a little bit about about Dave Papparazzi or Alex Wilson. It's an open part here where you can talk about either one of them. The article I showed earlier about Alex Wilson is Rosemary Donegan and Jody Berland's obituary to Alex Wilson⁶ that is really quite beautiful and it really does a great job of describing his meaningful existence but I'd love to hear your memories as well.

Kass: Very much, I think he was the most welcoming kind of feminist, letting more folks like myself get involved. He wasn't into single issue identity politics at all. Yeah, his intellect and the breadth [of his thinking]. He was just a very fabulous guy and welcoming, you know. There was always a sense of, there always was an I-thou relationship, right? He was always present, always interested, positive without being foolish. He just had a great, great energy. I really haven't worked with anyone since in any kind of professional capacity like that. And as I said over the years, it was about friendship and, you know, kinship and ... it was very much about friendship and, when it came to Alex, a form of love, and other people, not originally, but [they also] grew into that.

Felicity: Thanks, Kass. Will, did you have anything you wanted to add about Alex?

Will Straw: Well, just that, without sounding self- ... doing self-parody, Alex Wilson was someone who connected scenes. You know, I knew him first through the *Border/Lines* U of T scene. He was good friends with David Galbraith, who is still perhaps my best friend, and who knew Peter Fitting. And he would hang out with Frederick Jameson when they came to town and, and so on. But then, you know, Alex was also *Body Politic*. He was also Queen Street. He was also connected to various kinds of art scenes and publishing scenes and so on. So, he was one of these people who if people around the edges didn't know each other they all sort of knew Alex. And, you know, I didn't know him all that well 'cause I didn't live in Toronto, but you certainly got a sense of the way his energy built connections and so on.

Felicity: Thanks. Rinaldo, do you have anything to add to that? Or is that too far before your time?

Rinaldo Walcott: Yeah, too far before my time, except to really say that Alex Wilson as a figure, as someone who people told stories about, circulated well into the nineties. You know, you can still walk Richmond Street and see the garden that's dedicated to him. Much like Will Munro for a younger generation, he became a kind of talismanic figure of a certain kind of queer culture. Alex Wilson held that position for people my generation and older for a really long time. So, when you walked into *Border/Lines* his presence was felt still, even though he had passed on.

Felicity: Hmm, that's really beautiful. I'd never really, I don't know why I hadn't made the connection between Will Munro and Alex Wilson in terms of the iconic figure that really generates a sense of scene or space around them and for multiple years after their passing. It's really beautiful. Thank you, everyone, for sharing your

⁶ Jody Berland, Rosemary Donegan, and Peter Fitting, "Obituary: Alex Wilson" *Border/Lines* 31 (1993): 16–17.

memories. I guess I want to try jumping to the Semiotic Institute again and, you know, since there is kind of a connection there. Will, I'd love to hear you talk a little bit more about Dave Paparazzi. I know that when I first started looking through the pages of *Border/Lines* and I came across this article, I was like, what is this?! And because it's kind of like this gossipy filtration take down of a seminar with a bunch of prominent French theorists happening in Toronto; [there are] lots of things happening in this. And then, this maybe a question for Kass, I don't know, the kind of satirical nature of it, and the tabloid format of *Border/Lines*, resonated with me when I thought about [General Idea's] *File magazine* as well. So, then it made me wonder whether there's some kind of semiotic kind of conversation going on with File in this article.

Will: Well, if you're asking... Are you asking Kass or me?

Felicity: Both.

Will: Just to say a bit about Dave Paparazzi: So David Galbraith, who was very involved in a lot of things, didn't publish a lot but his Dave Paparazzi column I think is one of the great milestones of this. I knew him from my undergraduate days at Carleton where he saw me walking around as a pretentious undergrad with a copy of Laplanche and Pontalis' *Vocabulaire de la psychoanalyse* under my arm, which I was doing basically so people would talk to me. And we became good friends and he moved to Toronto after finishing a MA, he ended up for a while rooming with Peter Fitting, and was very involved in the really the political side of it, the Marxist Institute, and so on. And good friends with Alex and Peter, was a very good friend, and still is, with Frederic Jameson. So, there was a kind of, you know, really 'boys club' in a way around that edge of the Semiotics Summer School. But a lot of stuff came out of that, yeah.

Felicity: And then maybe Kass, I wanted to ask you because I think we talked about this before, about *Border/Lines* and, you know, we will talk about the Marxist Institute a little bit further because I talked to Peter Fitting a couple of years ago about what *was* the Marxist Institute? And so that's another puzzle piece I want to bring in a bit later. But the idea that, you know, university curricula didn't cover these areas and it was something that people were thirsty for, and so they had to find different places to get access to it.

Kass: Yeah, indeed. To speak personally, I don't know, I was just finishing my undergrad and going into my MA but I took a course with Peter Fitting on Gramsci and it, and he puts in a public school, I think it was [Lord] Lansdowne [Junior Public School], and was in a kindergarten class. I remember sitting on these tiny chairs reading Gramsci! But I mean that, but then my life intercepted with Peter, you know. And so, it was, I hate to say it, it was very fluid, not overdetermined. Maybe we'll get into conversations about the difference between, you know, *Fuse* or *Border/Lines* or even, you know, different attitudes towards different understandings, practices, living around Left politics. And I think that's important, the gradations between those journals and the folks that were attached to them, or even this magazine. I mean, we were snobs. We would say, oh, that's kind of crude or, I mean,

admittedly, we were theory heads that wanted, strove to have a praxis, if you will, in our lives and in our working lives, in our social relations.

Felicity: I think we can make a slip here to talk about the different magazines because Rinaldo is somebody who wrote for both *Fuse* and *Border/Lines*. And I do think it is interesting to think about the different, *Fuse* and *Border/Lines* were publishing parallel to each other and there's a lot of overlap with writers, but there is definitely a difference between the space and the social scenes I would imagine around the two magazines. And so, I would be interested in hearing more about that either from Rinaldo, Kass, or Will, even, as a reader of the magazines.

Rinaldo: I'll say something. I mean, first I have to begin by saying that I'm really glad that Kass is on this panel because I wouldn't be here if it wasn't [for] Kass, right? It was Kass who got me involved in *Border/Lines*. It's actually Kass got me to write and publish the very first thing I actually published, which was a review. Kass will not remember this but it was a review of M. NourbeSe Philip's collected essays *Frontiers* that you arranged for me to review that was published in what used to be the *Metro WORD* edited by Phil Vassell. I don't know if you remember that, that used to be a kind of community newspaper.

Kass: Yeah.

Rinaldo: That's exactly. And then, like, I don't recall where and how we met anymore, Kass, but it must have been at some kind of film festival or something.

Kass: No, it was Winston Smith.

Rinaldo: Winston Smith, okay.

Kass: He was editing an issue on race for *CineAction* and I said, you know, I need to, we need more writers, and he suggested I, in those days, call you up. I think that's how we met, over the phone.

Rinaldo: Yeah, and I'm glad you mentioned Winston Smith because I think when I heard you guys talk about *Border/Lines* just now, one of the things that I, and I know, Kass, you're hinting at it and then you're stopping yourself. So, you kind of hint that, you know, feminism happened at *Border/Lines*, and then, by the nineties, race happens, and there were all these tensions. But of course Winston Smith was in-between both of those moments happening, right? As a member of the *Border/Lines* editorial collective in the late eighties and early nineties. And then obviously his wonderful radio show Expandable Language with CKLN and the most amazing bookshop, Writers & Co, that this city has ever seen, that's no longer with us. But going back to, yes, Kass was thinking at this, too: there was this kind of sense that *Border/Lines* wasn't an academic journal, but it was a magazine much more interested ideas than for instance, the kind of sly unspoken sense that was given to *Fuse*. Once *Border/Lines*

disappeared, that kind of snide response to *Fuse* also disappeared because even though there was traffic between the two, once there was only *Fuse* left, and we can talk about *Mix Magazine* and others, *Fuse* was the place that not only took the question of feminism and race and queerness, but the place where the kinds of ideas that used to appear in *Border/Lines* also went to live. But when I entered *Border/Lines* in the nineties, yes, there was this silent unspoken thing where *Border/Lines* was the place where you did the real thinking and *Fuse* was the place that you did the description, and—

Kass: And validation.

Rinaldo: And validation, yes.

Felicity: Thank you, that was interesting.

Will: That's interesting— If I could just jump in?

Felicity: Yeah, go ahead.

Will: When *Border/Lines* starts, it's the kind of, you know, extra-institutional non-academic journal, but by the time the things that you just described, Rinaldo, are happening, *Fuse* is the outside thing and *Border/Lines* is, if not institutionalized, of course, but it's still overlapping with the academic part of it to a greater extent.

Felicity: Yeah, I also just want to pause and just say that I think this event, the fact that we are all together here today and the way that the abstract was written for it initially, really was a great debt to conversations that I had with Rinaldo for several years, like two years ago. So, I did just want to take a moment to just say, Rinaldo, thank you so much for all the storytelling that you gave me two years ago that allowed me to come to this point today.

Rinaldo: You're welcome.

Felicity: I also wonder if I could share issue 36 of *Border/Lines* at this point and we can maybe do a little talking around that. So issue 36 was co-edited by Kass and Rinaldo in nineteen-ninety...

Rinaldo: Five.

Felicity: Yeah, 1995! My memory today, I'm sorry. So, I'm really interested in this because in earlier panels in the series we've heard people talk about the importance of [M.] NourbeSe Philip's critical writing, the massive importance of it and its development in these magazine spaces. So, we have an article by her, and then we also have an article from you, Rinaldo, that talks about dub poetry. And there's a poem from Clifton Joseph that's

printed in this issue, so there's a nice like resonance with the first panel with Clive Robertson and Lillian Allen where we talked about the figures that were important to that scene. So, that's what I think is interesting about this issue. And then on top of it there's also, maybe it's sly, I don't know, but there's also kind of this, in the editorial itself, at the same time that you and Kass are articulating a very strident challenge to the idea of multiculturalism or what is a repressive tolerance of multiculturalism policy, but at the same time you're very clearly saying that the magazine itself is funded through the Multiculturalism Program of the Department of Canadian Heritage. And so these are the things that kind of drew me to this issue, but I wondered if the two of you wanted to talk a little bit about it, if you remember it.

Rinaldo: Do you want to go first, Kass?

Kass: Sure. I mean, I just was lucky enough to come across this just a little while ago. In so far as looking at the editorial, and I mentioned this earlier, I mean, we were a bit harsh around other paradigms. There was also this shift between the eighties *Border/Lines* and the nineties *Border/Lines* in as much as, you know, there was a kind of whiff of nationalism, even though [there was] the gesture towards internationalism, but there was a whiff of 'Canadians doing it for themselves' or whatever. But what I was saying earlier is that in the context of, I mean, we're lucky enough to have jobs in universities, the three of us, is this critique is reminiscent, or reminds one, [of] a critique we're making right now in so far as what universities are trying to do, and so, first, EDI [Equity, Diversity, Inclusion], right? It just had this similar kind of critique that perhaps Rinaldo can speak to. You know, it's not changing the system, et cetera. Do you want to elaborate on that?—because Rinaldo gave a wonderful talk on this aspect—But there's points of contact between what we're saying here and your present critique of EDI. Do you think that's true, Rinaldo?

Rinaldo: Yeah, yeah, it is. I mean, I've got a couple of contextual things. One is, in that period that we did that special issue, Kass, who is one of the most amazing writers that you can ever know, that issue was funded from a special grant from Multiculturalism. And it was at a time—and this reference is something that Will just said—it was at a time when the Canada Council and the Ontario Art Council were all tightening up their grants in all kinds of ways that was making it increasingly impossible for the kind of magazine that *Border/Lines* was to actually survive.

So, we were becoming kind of entrepreneurial and knew that there were these pockets, and there were, at that time, still some people in multiculturalism who understand these kinds of cultural venues. Kass was able to write this special grant that we got to do that particular issue which meant the other monies could be saved for other issues, right? We were having to do all of these different kinds of hustles to keep the magazine going. But the issue was really an attempt to intervene into what was very quickly becoming a kind of conversation where all the Black people were either Americans, or Black people and other non-white people were simply imported, or seen to be imported, from the US, their own cultural practices and forms and debates and so on. And of course NourbeSe's response to Neil Bissoondath's *Selling Illusions* book on multiculturalism was a part a pushback against that kind

of logic: that somehow folks in, non-white folks in Canada really had nothing to complain about and if you were complaining it had to be borrowed from somewhere else, and people like NourbeSe and Dionne Brand were somehow selling an the illusion that racism existed here, too, and he was going to take it upon himself to call them out. So we were entering a kind of debate and pushing back against a set of logics.

At the same time—and again, this was something that I learned from Kass really powerfully—Kass was doing all of this amazing work of programming and bringing Black British film into the Toronto scene. And that work she had begun much earlier, but she'd been doing that work, you know, publishing some of Isaac Julian's work in *Border/Lines* and elsewhere, and so building a way for us to think about how Blackness might circulate in Canada. And it's out of that work that I began to think about its own impact on Black Canadians and how Black Canadians themselves were creating their own cultural forms which, of course, immediately led me to dub poetry but then, later, to Black Canadian hip-hop and so on. So, we were kind of building an intellectual and critical apparatus for thinking about what we were doing here, too, but in dialogue with elsewhere. Not simply to rep it as, you know, the uniqueness of the Canadian scene, but to say "what's happening here is actually in dialogue with what's happening in Black Britain, [with] African-American[s], and that we need a different kind of intellectual corpus to make sense of it. That is not simply a one-on-one translation or exchange but that rather these things speak to each other, but they also are impregnated with significant differences. There was very little space for that kind of conversation so that issue was a real attempt to intervene into a kind of broader conversation and, of course, the late David Sealy⁷—who was a real talker and many of us spent hours on the phone at night talking to David—David, in some ways, should have been a co-editor for that because so many of his ideas were actually behind this notion of speaking to the specificity of Black Canada and non-white Canada but recognizing its own relationship to elsewhere. That's really how that issue comes to be and if we're a little bit sounding aggressive in the very short introduction, it's because at that moment it really did feel like much was at stake—and indeed much was at stake. You know, by the time that issue is published and comes up, Canada Council, Ontario Arts Council—listen,

⁷ David Sealy's bio from his contributor notes in *The African Canadian Legal Odessey*, redited by Barrinton Walker. University of Toronto Press, 2000.

"David Sealy posthumously received his PhD in criminology from the University of Toronto in 2010. This is how he described his work shortly before his death in 2009: 'My work in areas pertinent to studies of law and society rotates around questions generated in two interconnected spheres directly related to the discourses of Black diasporic modernity. On the one hand, there are questions on the way that nineteenth-century colonial and imperial racial knowledges, articulated through, for example, discourses of the negro question, are 'translated' into modern and late modern discourses of Black crime and criminality. On the other hand, there are the related and more fundamental questions about the social construction of racial and ethnic categories, and the multiple ways that racial and ethnic knowledges are deployed in the constitution of criminality and penalty and in the development of legal technologies to address the problems of minority populations. Here, it must be emphasized how racialization and ethnicization work through other categories such as gender, class, sexual orientation, and nation to constitute social identities or social identifications.'"

Toronto Arts Council, they have redesigned their programs and continually make it much difficult for independent small magazines to be able to live. Literally circumscribing—I mean, *Border/Lines* really died because the grants began to circumscribe what the nature of what could be published would look like, and so things that *Border/Lines* would have published in the eighties would have never been eligible to make it into a magazine by the mid-nineties. That's how we saw neo-liberalism begin to reshape public culture in really substantive ways, that we now live with.

Felicity: That's really fascinating and I think that there's a lot of echoes with some things that people are thinking about and experiencing right now. And so with that, I think I'm going to cede the floor to Joy for a little interlude of [a] question, if you have one.

Joy Xiang: Yeah, this ties in really well to things I've been thinking about the present day. First of all, it's a pleasure to be here and to be invited in to listen and respond to all these panelists. But yeah, I have a bunch of buzzing fragmented thoughts around these structural problems of discourse in publishing, like who has access, what is published, how is it funded? Like Rinaldo, you just went over why *Border/Lines* died. I want to say that the strategy of funding that number 36 of *Border/Lines* using Multiculturalism funding to critique the sweeping generalizations of the myth of multiculturalism is amazing, so I'm thinking about structure and then how to strategically work within it. This leads to something you said in your 2014 keynote talk for *The State of Blackness*, Rinaldo, and you're speaking specifically towards developing a sustained critical voice in Black diaspora communities and arts within this Canada that is fundamentally anti-Black to keep its own idea of nationhood as it stands. But you say something crucially that these structures of exclusion and anti-Blackness are quote, "not fixable, only malleable," and that really stuck with me. I want to ask, what does it mean to work within that malleable portion? I mean, you've described some of it, what does that to work within that malleability or to create that malleability against, within, and simultaneously with something that's not fixable? And is there a moment where you can tell where cultural and public understanding might shift so they can never go back so you don't have to keep repeating a Black Canadian history or context, for example? And maybe speaking to some of your editorial and critical roles in these publications.

Rinaldo: Thank you, thank you. I mean, I think for me that kind of question of the malleability of using a structure that is really fundamentally lodged against your life is the attempt— You know, Kass invoked Gramsci, studying the course Gramsci with Peter Fitting, is to kind of create these cracks. I think part of what we were doing, at least by the time I entered *Border/Lines* and definitely at *Fuse*, was the attempt to create cracks in the structure so that at least new kinds of foundations might begin to emerge. And sometimes they begin to emerge and they don't come to full fruition, but that's what it means to kind of work with the malleability of the system, to push it to the very end of the claims that it wants to make. So, Canada says its a multicultural society, we're going to push that as far as we can possibly push it and see what happens. And sometimes it rebounds. Sometimes it rebounds with violence. In 1992, we had the Yonge Street riots, there was a rebound of violence. By the mid-nineties, the

rebound is the full-on neoliberal assault from the Chrétien Liberals, mind you, right? From the Chrétien Liberals that plays itself all the way down, and Andy [Paterson] just put in the chat that he remembers the distinction between art periodicals and political ones, and that is exactly it, right? Andy's memory is right on. I remember by the end of *Border/Lines*, we were counting how many pages were going to designated— can be read as art criticism, so as to keep the grant, right? And, you know, the designer and the managing editor, Julie Jenkinson and others, you know, we have long nights and debates about whether or not a particular piece could be published because it might be too political and therefore put the grant in jeopardy. So then, part of the process became applying for other kinds of incentivized grants, right? A grant to increase subscriptions and so on, so that you can do the work. So, we were pushing the system to its absolute limit to be able to engage in the kind of public culture that we thought was really useful and that I believe continues to be the foundation of the kinds of public culture that we have, even if it is not as widely perceived and understood. But I think those magazines really laid the groundwork for something important that continues today. I feel like Will was going to say something.

Felicity: Yeah, I was just going to say, Will or Kass, do you have anything to add before I bring us back to the Marxist Institute?

Will: Well, maybe I'm jumping ahead. The first issue of *TOPIA*, which the four co-editors, the founding co-editors, were David Galbraith, myself, Janine Marchessault, and Jody Berland. We published that basically, you know—getting back to Chrétien, I somehow had money that the federal government had thrown into Quebec because of the 1995 referendum, right? And I had a grant and that funded the first issue of *TOPIA*. Nobody in the government agency who funded it ever saw the journal or even knew that was what it was for, but then, you know, *TOPIA* enters into the more familiar university press thing. Ioan Davies, you know, his last significant accomplishment is getting a big, what they used to call, major collaborative research initiative grant just before he, alas, passed away. The academic part of it gets absorbed into these expanding structures for supporting research and everything else and all of these programs and so on. And that, you know, in many ways is victories won, but it also shrinks that space between the academy and various kinds of art scenes and so on.

Rinaldo: If I might say one thing that I think is really important. Kind of what you saw after 1995 is really that a lot of us ended up having to be— Enough spaces between the academy and other communities had shrunk so that many of us ended up, those of us in the academy, turning those spaces into the objects of our research. Before, we used to participate in them, we were active in creating and making them, and by 2001, 2002, with the re-regulation of all of these spaces— I mean, really and truthfully academics got turfed out of art spaces in a very significant way because of how the Canada Council, OAC, and Toronto Art Council reorganized the granting criteria: who can participate, who counts as an artist and who doesn't, and so on. And so, we had to then turn around and return to things like SSHRC as a way to engage and study the very communities that we understand ourselves to be a part of and that those magazines were a foundation of our own participation in.

Will: I mean, one of the jokes we'd make in Montreal is that the biography of every writer in a Toronto magazine in the late eighties was "So-and-So is doing a doctorate in SPT at York and is an artist." We assumed that everybody was, right?

Felicity: Kass, you have thoughts?

Kass: Yeah, the cleavage between... Rinaldo spun it in an interesting way because then our eyes went on the objects that were being produced in those communities. Yeah, I think there was a cost. I mean, can we throw out that question, was some of the vibrancy lost? Was there a sense of ossification once it became *TOPIA*? I'll be careful what I'm saying here, I won't say it but, for example, hierarchies would have emerged like, "No, you can't be on the editorial board because you don't have a PhD," that kind of thing. It would never ever ever have happened at *Border/Lines*. It's based on credentials rather than the person who was.

Felicity: Maybe that might be a good time to cyclically go back in time to talk about Peter Fitting and the Toronto Marxist Institute again? Just thinking about Marxist Institute as kind of like a popular culture model, for example. I just want to spend some time talking about that again, too, because Kass, you talked about this memory of learning about Gramsci in like these small public school chairs and I'm just going to quickly screen share an ad that I found in one of the issues for *Border/Lines* that Will wrote an article in which has a whiff of nationalism to it, but it's sort of like a leftist nationalist fascination with Quebec, like the way that Quebec link language politics and socialism.⁸ But the other thing I found in that issue was this ad for Toronto Marxist Institute lectures that included a co-sponsored lecture by Will on the politics of rock music at A-Space. And when I talked to Peter Fitting a couple of years ago to try to understand what was going on here, he explained to me that the Marxist Institute was a shifting core group of about 10 people who would organize, give courses, organize lectures, and do postering to promote it, and that they held courses on Marx's *Capital* and that he taught on culture and aesthetics because the methods and topics were not available in the university curricula at U of T, I think maybe a little bit more in York. And then from the mid-seventies to the mid-eighties, they taught in free public school space, so the elementary schools were giving them free space which is why you would have been in those weird chairs, but then they started to charge for the space, and so that's when they started to shift their events to places like A Space. A-Space became the place where the Marxist Institute was hosting events and meetings when they lost access to the public schools. So, Will, I don't know if you have a couple of words to say about the politics of rock music or what it was like to give a talk at A Space.

Will: Well, I mean, first of all, it's appalling looking down [at] this, like talk about an all-male panel or several panels. But I sort of remember the chairs being set up and I probably was making my, at the time, argument for the radicality of pop and dance music against rock. I think Clive Robertson who's here may have been there when we

⁸ Will Straw, "Movements and Messages: Media and Radical Politics in Quebec" *Border/Lines* 4 (1985/86), 42.

got in an argument, or maybe we got into a friendly argument at other times. I booked a certain point in a period when I was going regularly to Toronto, between that talk and then going and talking in 1992 or 1993 at CineCycle, which I felt was the coolest thing that had ever happened to me, you know, lecture and smoke, everybody drinking a beer. I just thought I had, you know, like I said in a published article,⁹ I felt like Cinderella just before midnight, and then I had to get on the train and go back, then, to Ottawa where I was living. There was that kind of scene and those kinds of places in Toronto. They probably existed in some form elsewhere but the energies I didn't find anywhere else, not even in Montreal, which is not known as being an a dull city.

Rinaldo: If I might add something to that, and it bridges two comments. Since CineCycle is the one that you invoke, Will, but for me, one of the things that was really exciting about that period, and again, one of those moments where the world of ideas and the world of everyday life and hipness collided, was obviously Culture Lab, which I went to a number of events of Culture Lab with Banning—with Kass. We would sit at the bar and drink wine, and Andrew Ross or Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick would give a lecture. You might be listening, but you might not be. But those were the places that, I think, were really generative around understanding and thinking about what Cultural Studies meant in the world as a kind of everyday practice. And it's that kind of worldliness that I think both of the magazines inhabited, meaning *Border/Lines* and *Fuse*. I'm now one of three editors of *TOPIA* and, of course, *TOPIA* has gone through many iterations in its now two— more than two decades of life. And the new iteration is for us to try to center the work that focuses on non-white Canadians as the central vehicle for *TOPIA*— not excluding others but that's the central focus. But it doesn't have that same kind of vibrancy. It doesn't spill out into the streets. And I keep toying with the idea that we're going to get back to launching issues of *TOPIA* and do them in bars and that kind of thing because the vibrancy of how ideas live in the world, it has become far more abstract since the late eighties into our present even though we seem to have more volume.

Kass: Maybe Joy has something to say about this given your different generation, because I mean, I can just think of one student. I mean, is your generation is doing it differently? I had this amazing M.A. student who came out of Ryerson, she makes work, she has a queer Asian collective of young people doing amazing things, mostly video work, and she crowd-sources. What I'm asking is, how does vibrancy in this context set up possibility? How has it translated to your moment? I'm just curious about that.

Joy: Yeah, thanks, Kass. Yeah, your question, and then what Rinaldo introduced about this vibrancy and how it exists today, just sparked ideas in my head, 'cause I was trying to think of maybe a parallel to a scene from *Fuse* or *Border/Lines*, but it feels like— Like I've been involved in zine culture, say, and then through my recent

⁹ Will Straw, "Bewitched, Bothered, and Bewildered" in *Theory Rules: Art as Theory, Theory and Art*, edited by Jody Berland, David G. Tomas, and Will Straw. University of Toronto Press, 1996, 30–39.

experience at *Canadian Art*, it feels like a divide.¹⁰ And I see a lot more people in my generation starting their own small publications, maybe they're undergrad, university-based. I was just thinking of a bunch of examples, like *Yiara's* a feminist undergrad journal from Concordia, I think. And then there's Kelsey Adams starting *Ripe Zine* in Toronto, which is about food and politics and social justice. I have a friend who started a zine called *Prude Mag* which is about reclaiming the "no" from female empowerment, free-buyer yes, free-buyer no. So, I can think of lots of little scenes. I think there's *Sticky Rice* and maybe that's in Montreal, too. It's like a queer Asian-based online publication, but I think can think of lots of little examples like that that are engaging with culture in different, vibrant ways, but not necessarily in this kind of arts-writing sphere. So, that to me is a bridge, and I'm not really sure what to make of that, but it still seems like there's existing structures, maybe of access or language or funding bodies where certain things can only exist when they're small. Maybe they're fundraising within their local communities or and getting small grants from the TAC [Toronto Arts Council] and others, and that doesn't really become larger. I think it's a difference of platform. So, it seems like many smaller nodes now to me rather than that mapping of maybe a field of three main things that people move between and I think it's interesting. I don't think it's good or bad, but that's kind of my feeling about today.

Yeah, and it leads into— I have notes from this whole talk but it leads into my question of, maybe to all the panelists, what can we learn when a publication changes, or needs to change, or ends? And I know those relations of work and sociality and personal connections don't end. It moves with the people through different forms. But what can we learn when a publication changes or ends?

Rinaldo: I'll say something, and I think I raised this with Felicity at one point when we were discussing. The thing about that moment in terms of publications ending that stays with me as a kind of powerful understanding of not just feminism coming into those spaces but race coming into those spaces—so it was an ending but there was also a beginning—was the question and the early nineties debacle around ANNPAC [Association of National Non-Profit Artists Centres], and the fallout from [the collapse of] ANNPAC that led to *Parallelogramme* folding but re-emerging as *MIX magazine*.¹¹ And in this re-emergence, you had Kyo Maclear, Asian Canadian writer, editing at

¹⁰ At the time that this event took place, the Canadian Art Foundation Board of Directors had suspended employment for a significant number of staff, and issued a statement to the effect that the magazine was under financial constraints due to the coronavirus pandemic. The statement also acknowledged shortcomings in addressing equity issues with regards to BIPOC staff and collaborators. See <https://canadianart.ca/news/statement-from-the-canadian-art-foundation/> On October 4, 2021 a second statement was issued announcing that the magazine would be ceasing publication. See: <https://canadianart.ca/news/statement-from-the-canadian-art-foundation-board-of-directors/>.

¹¹ ANNPAC essentially imploded in 1993 from pressure brought through its refusal to constructively deal with the demands for diversification posed by the Minquon Panchayat collective. Core members of Minquon Panchayat included Lillian Allen, Shirley Bear, Gloria Eshkibok, Marrie Mumford, Monika [Kin] Gagnon, Sherazad Jamal,

one point. You had Peter Hudson, who's now a professor in African-American Studies at UCLA, editing at another point. And then you had the artist Karen Miranda Augustine editing at another point. And so, in the one moment you had something end but you had the emergence of something new and in that emergence, again, was the question of how *MIX* would attend to the question of race. Under their editorships it was attended to in various kinds of ways and at various points in time, and there continued to be a kind of whiff of a debate of, in that moment I think, with ANNPAC, it was more like the white feminists felt that they were pushed out.

So, what we see, at least in part, with some of the magazines is the sense that as various kinds of iterations, of political moments, at these various conjunctures, magazines don't necessarily die, but they're transformed. And of course, some came to an end, but some of them were able to have really significant lives after these kinds of interventions. Like I think *Fuse*, you know, which also went through transformations— like, people like myself didn't just arrive at *Fuse*. *Fuse* went through multiple transformations that allowed it to be able to open up that people like myself could arrive there and *Fuse* lived on for quite a long time. I think the thing that really killed the magazines is not the kinds of political moments, emergent political moments, but really the conjuncture of those moments alongside of, you know, we were government-funded projects, and the transformation of policy in the neoliberal managerial cultural moment is more important to understand in terms of the death of these magazines than the political moment.

But I would say that in the nineties, in particular, it was—and I've written about this is one of my essays—if you look at the end of Isaac Julien's film *Young Soul Rebels*, at the end of that film, the white, the black, the gay, the straight, everybody's dancing together. And the nineties felt a little bit like that. We actually kind of felt like there was a moment where we could actually bridge these radical differences and create these communities of possibility. And I'll go out on a limb and say that we are not there right now. That as much as we talk and use the language of diversity and equity and inclusion, we're actually much further from the possibility of trying to figure out and work and live across difference. I think it's important to note that because part of what helped to break that was government policy, neoliberal policy, right? Demanding that we manage ourselves into discreet identities in really powerful ways that I still don't even have the language to talk about what that has meant fully just yet.

Felicity: Thanks, Rinaldo, that's really powerful. Will, I saw you mute and unmute. Did you want to say something as well?

Will: No, I was just fiddling. No, not at this point, no.

Felicity: Kass, do you have something you want to add?

Zool Suleman, and Cheryl L'Hirondelle. See Monika Gagnon, *Other Conundrums* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2000).

Kass: But the setting up of that, but also making it advantageous for those subjects who are categorized as such, so it's a really hard moral complex thing for racialized subjects to think through, and not all folks have that choice.

Felicity: This seems like a very full pause, but I'm also kind of keeping an eye on where we are with the time like a good moderator, and usually we transition into a response from our respondent. You feel like we're kind of holding that space right now?

Joy: I feel like we've, well, I've asked my question. I have notes, but I feel like I'd rather hear more from the panelists if they have any more to say I'm digesting a lot right now, but definitely, yeah, I agree with Rinaldo this present moment. I mean, it's interesting to put it in the perspective and context of these neoliberal policies that have kind of pushed this project of liberation backwards and how so much is tied to funding and how structures of our existing arts orgs or publications are structured in terms of funding and governance models, and all of that matter so much.

Will: I mean, I would just want to add that when I think of like the late eighties Toronto scene, and I would come down and go to clubs with people who—I was reading their academic work, and there was official funding for some of this stuff, but a lot of it was unofficial like TA-ships, fellowships to do graduate work, funded in part the labour, at least at the time or at least the availability of time, to do the other things. So, it was multiple forms of public support, some of which were designated for producing magazines but a lot of it is just a kind of ecology that allows people to live for a while. Not very well, but enough to involve themselves in all kinds of activities. If magazines got money to people— So many people I know were assistant editors or did kind of grunt work for magazines but got some payment for it and that doesn't take a lot of money from that many levels of government to seed that. And I'm not sure to what extent we have it now. I mean, yeah, I'll just stop there.

Felicity: This is one of these questions that people's memories are not able always to recall but there is always the question of "how much were you paid for an article," you know? And I think at some point, I do remember— Dot's in the audience so feel free to correct me in the chat, but I do remember at one point Dot [Tuer] was telling me that the articles, those really in-depth articles in *Fuse*, like you could get about \$1000 for that, and so that's why you have these like really incredible pieces. But I don't know how long, I haven't been able to trace how long that kind of payment was available. I think it came from the Ontario Arts Council, I don't know if it was special funding, but I was just wondering the context of *Border/Lines* what kind of payment for writers were you seeing?

Kass: It wasn't as generous as that, that's for sure. I would say a third of that. Maybe \$50 for a review or something, right? Well, we didn't have any money.

Will: \$50 was pretty standard for a review. I looked at my CV to see where I was publishing, for some reason the place I published the most was *C Magazine*. As if I knew anything about art, but they paid you \$50 for a review.

Rinaldo: But by the nineties—and Kass, you can correct me, and so could you, Will—I think one of the things that we used to do a lot—and yes, Andy [Patterson] just put it in the chat—was News Writers’ Reserve. So, you would be able to pay \$100 for an article but encourage the person to apply for Writers’ Reserve, where they would get some extra money. And Writers’ Reserve still exists, is my understanding.

Felicity: So, I don’t know, do you want to end on like an extremely technical question? Or Joy, do you have any other thoughts you want to bring?

Joy: I mean, I have something I can just read off. They’re notes but I find that, yeah, even talking about these rubs of relations—this is related to your mapping metadata—but like at the beginning, Michael said this is also like a [map of] social relations, not the full thing, but I’m able to picture it. So, like finding visuals for things we’re talking about or just even starting off from one point, and I’ve just been thinking about— Rinaldo said finding the cracks in the structure. I think I was thinking about sites of futility and momentum in finding those cracks and maybe futility is a bit of a cynical word but how do you stand against something that’s unfixable? And so, thinking about pressure like the bowling ball on a mattress following the curve of gravity, the indent of skin on skin, a cat pressing into your sleeping body, a finger pushing your flesh downward, pressure to riot, to keep saying and saying and saying the other sayers and doers until it sticks, like moth wings on a screen filling in specific gaps, between fixability and malleability, the pressure of trust and bonds that map the metadata, the ghosts of a new net for gravity. That’s it for me.

Felicity: Lovely, Joy.

Rinaldo: Beautiful, beautiful.

Felicity: Thank you. Michael Maranda says, “Wow, thanks, gorgeous.” You’re getting lots of props in the chat. There’s also a few other comments in the chat correcting me or making a clear that it was Writers’ Reserve and the OAC had small writers grants, and Vera Frankel has shared a memory the earlier shift, even earlier shift between *Arts Canada* to *Canadian Art* and how there would have been editorial shifts there as well. So, I think it was— Oh, Will, did you want to say something?

Will: Yeah, sorry to interrupt. When I think of Montreal and think of people, maybe younger generation, they want to open spaces now, not start magazines and I wonder if that sense of building a space has had— I mean, it was always there. Is that more of a thing now, maybe?

Felicity: I don’t know, that might be a question for another panel, Will. It’s a good question, right? They’re both spaces, they’re just different kinds of spaces and they have relations. I think though I’m going to ask for last words

and I'm also going to say thank you's, and I'm going to wrap up the session for us, if that makes sense. Kass, Rinaldo, do you have any burning questions you want to ask that will open a whole new panel?

Rinaldo: It's not a burning question but first, thank you for this nostalgic ride. It's proof that nostalgia is not something that you can throw away because it's really kind of helped me to focus on my own intellectual development. I guess the one thing that I would say is that the story of these magazines are also the story of how Toronto becomes a global city. And it's that history—and I'm not saying this because Kass is my good friend and has been my teacher—but when you think about these magazines and the work of *CineAction*, the kind of programming that they did, there was a time when, for instance, the work of Isaac Julien would appear in this city well before it appeared anywhere else in the world and that's because of these magazines and the kind of work that they did. And so, we've got to also think much more carefully about the story we tell of Toronto and the unnamed people that made Toronto the kind of city that it is today. The last thing I'll say is in this period I was a graduate student until 1995. You went to a place like the Cameron House on a Wednesday night and that was a place where acid jazz which was just all the rage, it was one of those places where we lived across difference: white, black, queer, straight, and so on. But after 1995, for instance, at *Fuse*, we do an issue on Caribana, and where do we launch the issue? In El Convento Rico, right? So, there are histories to be told about the making of this city and the crossing of all kinds of cultural, racial, sexual, class difference that are still yet to be emerge, but you can find traces of them in these magazines.

Felicity: I think that's a really excellent summing up of what I've been trying to reach at. A lot of it is instinct. Thank you for making it explicit. Kass, do you have thoughts?

Kass: No, just thanks for, as Rinaldo said, the memory lane and [like] the song, "we were young," and I get these hidden histories. Like your mapping is amazing—it's not individuals, it's the encounters that individuals had with one another and often it was planned, often it was chance. They were encounters, not just nodal points. They had energy, affection. And I can see in the chat that Christopher Smith says "Amazing conversation, and Isaac Julian was at the ROM [Royal Ontario Museum]." Yeah, that was a definitive moment for me. It was the last Grierson seminar because, I mean, I wrote about this, but it was like a pivot—it changed the way I thought about so many things because you would see, unfortunately, different groups vying for the position of "the Other" and that his work was not accepted by certain stratas of Canadian society because it was "other," it was outside. I think that was 1987. It just turned my whole way of thinking around — So, you just invoked Isaac but I just wanted to say that just to witness that was pivotal for my birth as a thinker.

Felicity: Well, thank you. Thanks to all of you for your generosity, of what you brought here today. I just feel so rich for listening to it. Thank you to Joy, for the beautiful response that you gave to us and the questions that you brought to the event. Thank you all, to the participants in our audience who have been listening very attentively and have been also generously offering us comments in the chat. And thank you to the AGYU, and to Michael, and

to Josie and to Faith, and to the SpokenWeb network, all of the bodies and the encounters and the emotions that have gone into bringing this series together and bringing this particular iteration in this series to all of you. Thank you.

Kass: Bye, everyone.

Felicity: Bye, now.

Rinaldo: Bye!