Table 5
NATIONAL STRATEGIES OF THE 2+4

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Component	*ROK*	*DPRK*	*US*	*PRC*	*Russia*	*Japan*
Values	materialism, individualism	non-materialism, collectivism	materialism, individualism	materialism, collectivism	materialism, individualism	materialism, collectivism
Strategy	— (drift)	high-stakes gambling	enlargement of democracy and market system	pragmatism	step into the USSR's shoes and exploit the position	regain self-respect via economic performance
Core Idea	—	—	from containment to enlargement	"it doesn't matter if it is a black cat or a white cat, so long as the cat gets the mouse"	—	beating the US at its own game
Goals	contiued economic growth, more domestic reform, eventual integration with DPRK	regime survival	reducing costs of being world leader	regime survival	improved economy	become an economic power
Tactics	economic opening to international competition; deterrence, *nordpolitik* and engagement of DPRK; alliance with US	*juche*; extremely gradual economic reform; no political reform; nuclearization as bargaining chip	shifting responsibility for international security; using political clout to improve economic position	gradual economic reform; maintain domestic political status quo	domestic reforms; foreign relations based on actual or potential economic contributions	priority to economy; weak political leadership; emasculated military
Style	new liberal democratic	unpredictability; piecemeal decision-making	weak, indecisive	personalised politics	rhetoric	restrained rhetoric, conservative

THE FOLLOWING ARE TWO ESSAYS, ONE IN THE FORM OF A "LETTER TO THE EDITOR"; THE OTHER THE "CLOSING REMARKS" PRESENTED AT THE SEMINAR: AUSTRALASIA-CANADA: NEW CONNECTIONS. BOTH REFLECT ONGOING DEBATES ABOUT THE DIRECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF CANADIAN STUDIES - ED.

WILL STRAW
DILEMMAS OF CULTURAL NATIONALISM

One of the most compelling recent books on Canadian identity is by Ian Angus, a professor of the Humanities at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia. It is entitled *A Border Within: National Identity, Cultural Plurality, and Wilderness*. While this book is many things, its author offers it as a "swansong" for a particular current in English-Canadian intellectual life. This current is that which he names "left nationalism," and its substance should be familiar to anyone acquainted with the broad contours of intellectual life in English Canada. Left nationalism, Angus argues, has been the dominant impulse in English Canadian thinking since World War II at least. It is the impulse which most obviously fueled the rise of Canadian Studies as an institutional force in the 1970s and 1980s. The content of left nationalism is easy to describe: it joined a critique of capitalism, principally U.S. capitalism, to the belief in a strong, centralised Canadian state as the antidote to U.S. capitalism. Left nationalism resisted the pressures of globalisation, both because it saw globalisation as the ideological gloss on continued U.S. domination of our economy, and because it saw a new global economic order as reducing the Canadian state's ability to effectively shape our economic and cultural life.

The death of left nationalism, Angus argues, came in battles over the Free Trade Agreement with the United States in the mid-to-late 1980s, an agreement which left nationalists vigorously apposed. The loss of this battle, for Angus, was the death knell for left nationalism as a dominant force.

With the signing and implementation of the Free Trade Agreement with the United States, Angus and many others would concur, the capitulation of Canada to the logic of global economic integration was complete. The accuracy of this as an explanation for the decline of left nationalism in a broad sense is something I am not qualified to judge. However, I wish to suggest that the waning of cultural nationalism, an integral and longstanding dimension of left nationalism more generally, has come as the result of a longer process. This process is one in which the economic and symbolic components of left nationalist critique have been slowly disarticulated.

Four four years now, I have taught an advanced undergraduate seminar on Canadian culture to a diverse body of students at McGill University in Montreal. I have been struck above all by the extent to which a high level of cultural nationalism among my students is unaccompanied by the sense that the weaknesses of English-Canadian culture might be ascribed to a structural economic dependency. Indeed, the prevailing sense is that the weaknesses of Canadian culture stem from a moral failing on the part of its intended constituents, an unwillingness to struggle against the temptations which lead us to seek our amusement elsewhere.

Both Toby Miller (1993) and Michael Dorland (1998) have noted the exhortations to good cultural citizenship which issue from modern forms of statehood, and the sense of a moral deficit which they instill. In Canada, as Dorland has noted, this has been particularly noticeable in the case of the film industry. For fifty years, Canadian policy discourse has insisted on the need for a popular film industry as the mark of a nation's maturity. Commentators have traced both the absence of such an industry and the disinterest of Canadians in their own films to ongoing structural and national-psychological weaknesses which must be struggled against perpetually. Arguably, students internalise the moral dimensions of Canadian cultural nationalism, making of their own failure to go see Canadian films the sign of a personal failing they must overcome. This moralisation of the problem signals, at one level, that the problem of English-Canadian culture is no longer pereceived as one of scarcity and availability. Students live with the perception that Canadian films, books and theatre are out there, awaiting audiences.

They are, of course, as the result of policies which few among these students would question.For thirty or forty years, the rhetorical strength of Canadian cultural nationalism has depended on its capacity to produce outrage: to hold up unambiguous examples of cultural impoverishment or diminished choice caused by our cultural dependency. In the present context, I would argue, we see abundance and pluralism all around us: there is little to feel outraged about, no obvious examples of Canadian culture suffering from a multinational industry which seeks to displace Canadian products with those which come from elsewhere. In this context, it is unsurprising that Canadian cultural nationalism is in a crisis.

In the last five years, in Canada, there has been a noticeable shift in the focus of cultural debate. For roughly 35 years, from the postwar period through the mid-1970s, Canadian cultural life was marked by the importance accorded our great institutions of cultural purpose: the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the National Film Board, the Canada Council, which funds the arts, and so on. The scale of these institutions mirrored the immensity of the perceived threat coming from the south, from the culture of the United States. Whatever Canadians thought of these institutions, their size and public visibility were, in a variety of ways, comforting. Their scale compensated, as well, for what many people in English Canada sensed was the lack of a more pervasive and everyday cultural tissue binding us together. (The lack of this tissue has been one reason for English Canadian jealousy towards Francophone Canadian culture.) The introduction of these institutions has organised our cultural history and focused debate. These institutions possessed, we might say, a monumentality: they stood, however ambiguously and sometimes ineffectively, as the sign of a national cultural will. In the last five or ten years, however, it might be argued that they have lost this monumentality. There are, I would argue, two reasons for this. One has to do with shifts in the ways and the places in which cultural debate is now centred. In the last decade, culture life in Canada has been marked by a series of ongoing controversies. Each of these has received high levels of press coverage and generated widespread public debate. Each of these controversies has been saturated, as well, with questions of cultural

identity and responsibility—questions that are among the most crucial which Canada is currently facing.

The first of the controversies I wish to discuss emerged over the acquisition and exhibition policies of the National Gallery of Canada. In 1990, the Gallery, which is located in Ottawa, spent almost two million dollars to buy a painting by the abstract U.S. artist Barnett Newman—a painting called "Voice of Fire." Normally, events such as this would have past unnoticed, but the price paid for the work, in the midst of an economic recession, became a political issue. Members of Parliament began questioning the price paid for a work which, they claimed, they could have themselves painted in twenty minutes. In the debate which followed, members of the House of Commons debated questions over the relationship between public taste, government expenditure and political control. This debate was taken up in barber shops, on radio call-in shows, and in a variety of ways which involved thousands of Canadians. For a brief period Canada had acquired, in the words of my friend Kevin Dowler, a public tribunal of art.

Around the same time, controversy erupted within Toronto's literary community over what came to be called the "appropriated voice": over the right of authors to create characters of a race or gender other than their own.

In the wake of this debate, authors' associations split into factions; friendships or collaborations were ruptured. Indeed, in the minds of many observers, this controversy signalled a major generational transfer of power, as our literary establishment confronted claims by writers of colour and new immigrant authors for greater recognition. This controversy has still not been resolved in any conclusive sense. Shortly thereafter, the revival of the musical play *Showboat*, in Toronto, led to widespread protest within Toronto's black community over the public performance of a work denounced as racist and offensive. Speeches, pamphlets and books have been written as part of this controversy; it has persisted as a resonant event within Canada's largest city.

It is through these debates and controversies that culture has come to be lived as a public phenomenon within Canada in recent years. These events have provoked discussions of artistic purpose and \responsibility; they have reawakened the older impulse to provide

definitions of a Canadian culture. If there is a paradox in this, I would argue, it is rooted in the fact that each of these cultural forms—the art gallery, the literary work, the stage play—is a form one might have considered old-fashioned. These forms are the ritualistic institutions of an earlier age; yet it is around them that debates over cultural purpose have been fought in the most explosive ways. These forms have become reinvested, we might say, with symbolic capital; they have come to stand as barometers of Canadian cultural identity and its current problems.

In doing so, these forms or institutions have acquired something of the monumental function once occupied by large, national institutions such as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. This shift of focus to the local has many causes. In large measure, it is because our cities have become the place in which relations between our different racial, ethnic and linguistic communities are most obviously lived out. This shift, as well, has much to do with the transformation of city economies, which have come more and more to resemble theme parks for the tourist trade, repeating tendencies one may observe throughout the Western world. Montreal, for example, seems to replace every dying industry with a new festival of comedy or music.

What is striking is that these forms have little to do with the cultural changes promised us in scenarios about the information superhighway or home entertainment centre. This brings me to the second reason why Canadian cultural nationalism might be diagnosed as in a state of crisis. We read, in each day's newspapers, about the new convergences of industries, the new alliances and developments which are remaking our communications and cultural infrastructures. These developments, nevertheless, are characterised by a fragmentation and invisibility which ensures that they will never become monumental. By this I mean that they are unlikely to produce weighty new institutions of well-defined ideological purpose. Indeed, the strategic thinking behind these developments includes perpetuating the sense that very little, at a symbolic level, is at stake.

There is little in these transformations for traditional nationalist and moralistic criticism to grab on to: no overwhelming evidence of cultural impoverishment, of a shrinking number of voices, of a

homogenisation of cultural forms. It is here that the problem of pluralism and abundance reasserts itself.

Longstanding traditions of nationalist cultural critique in Canada have depended on the inseparability of economic and symbolic power, on the promise that unmasking the operations of the first will reveal the secret agendas of the second. Canadian cultural nationalists have long shown an effective vigilance towards any instance in which economic and symbolic capital appear to nourish each other—when the economic weight of Hollywood, for example, is accompanied by the propagation of the American way of life. In the new media environment promised us, examples of this inseparability are harder to find.

The problem of cultural nationalism in Canada, in 1997, comes from the fact that warnings about corporate centralisation are unlikely to mobilise public outrage. For cultural nationalism in Canada to renew itself, it would need to stop seeking examples of dependency which we would experience as spectacular. As the global cultural industries increasingly learn to derive marginal profits from thousands of minutely differentiated products—videocassettes, compact disc reissues, specialty programming channels for television—the nationalist preoccupation with blockbusters such as *Titanic* seems less and less appropriate. If our dependency continues, it is likely to be hidden within the revenue flows generated by millions of sub-cultural transactions. For communications scholars, such as myself, there is a growing divergence of approaches. Once, arguably, cultural studies in Canada could neatly balance the economic and the cultural: in the economic dependence of our cultural industries we found the reasons for our weak sense of national identity. In recent years, however, there has been a growing gap between economic and cultural analysis.

The symbolic character of Canadian culture is, as I have suggested, being fought in controversies over forms which are locally-based and frequently traditional in nature. At the same time, the economic restructuring of our media and cultural industries offers no obvious evidence of major changes at a symbolic level. In this context, my colleagues and I find ourselves having to choose between a lively, exciting analysis of symbolic forms and a well-intentioned but rather

dull political economy.

My own work is perhaps symptomatic in that I now move between the two, no longer seeking the synthesis which earlier waves of Canadian cultural nationalism felt was both possible and necessary.

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