

“Am I Canadian?”: Hockey as “National” Culture

Patricia Hughes-Fuller, Athabasca University

Introduction: “Hooked on Hockey...”

25

One of the traditional roles of the Canadian state has been to nurture and promote something called “national” culture, and images in the media have frequently contributed to this process. My title derives from (in fact inverts) the well-known series of Molson Canadian beer advertisements aired on CBC television’s *Hockey Night in Canada*. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some viewers find these advertisements amusing and /or take a covert pleasure in watching the “Clark Kentish” Canadians kick American “Super-butt,” while others are offended by what they see as an appeal to a xenophobic brand of national identity—something Canadians, even Canadian hockey fans (with the quasi-ironic exception of Don Cherry), pride ourselves in having managed to avoid. Even so, the juxtaposition of Canadian identity with the sport of hockey that the Molson advertisements at once exploit and promote has become an increasingly prevalent phenomenon. Novelists, journalists, poets, playwrights, film-makers, and television producers have all celebrated the notion that hockey is uniquely Canadian.

Our national identification with hockey has even been sanctioned by officialdom. During the nineties, whenever Prime Minister Chrétien launched trade missions to other countries, he repeatedly referred to the participating politicians and businessmen as “Team Canada,” and this same Prime Minister appointed a retired National Hockey League star, Frank Mahovlich, to the Canadian Senate. A few years ago, the 1972 Canada/Russia hockey series was recognised in a commemorative postage stamp depicting the series-winning goal by Paul Henderson, and, even more recently (2002), “The Pond” was enshrined on the back of the Canadian five dollar bill. These events, while they do seem to indicate an escalating trend, are not without precedent. Decades earlier, during the nineteen forties and fifties, Maurice “the Rocket” Richard achieved celebrity status as the foremost goal-scorer of his day while acting as a flashpoint of tensions

between Quebec and English Canada.¹ Later, in the nineteen eighties, Edmonton Oilers prodigy Wayne Gretzky became an even greater celebrity and a metonym of Canadian /American relations during the era of the free trade debate (Jackson 429).

The persistence—even intensification—of this “national obsession” struck me as paradoxical since ice hockey was never an exclusively Canadian game, and rarely has it been less so than it is today. Furthermore, some argue that nationality is, at best, an outmoded and irrelevant concept and, at worst, a reactionary and exclusionary one, while others question whether or not “in a postmodern landscape characterized by heterogeneity, multiple and fluid identities, blurred boundaries and the globalization of culture, it is useful even to ask... about specific national configurations” (Bodroghkozy 2). In light of these apparent contradictions and because, with other scholars, I share the premise that “something that absorbs so much of a nation’s physical and emotional energy needs to be confronted and explained” (Jarvie and Walker 8), I decided to embark on a study of how representations of hockey articulate Canadian identity. I wanted to understand the basis of this asserted connection and also find out what kinds of images of “Canadian-ness” these cultural texts were constructing.

“The Pond is where the Heart is”

Often hockey is portrayed as something Canadians are (seemingly) born into, and participate in spontaneously. The NFB documentary film, *Shinny: The Hockey in All of Us*, is premised on the notion that we learn to skate almost before we learn to walk. It is also a visually stunning homage to “grassroots” hockey and The Pond. Considering the beauty of the cinematography it is not surprising that *Shinny* won the Rockie Award in the Sports Program category at the 2002 Banff Film Festival. It has been said that in *Moby Dick*, the sea is a character, and in *Shinny*, the ice (rink ice, lake ice, river ice, pond ice, even the frozen surface of the Arctic Ocean) is the clearly the “star.”

¹ Rocket Richard’s death in May 2000 was the occasion of a “state” funeral in Notre Dame de Montréal rivaled only by that of former Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau later the same year.

Shinny is structured around the Twelve Rules of Shinny, including Rule Number One, “Make your own rules”:

Wherever and whenever shinny is played there are never any referees; players are always on their own honour and various unwritten codes of conduct prevail. It is left to the players themselves to work out things between them. Maybe this is why hockey players of an earlier era had a greater sense of sportsmanship than young players today... organized shinny is a contradiction in terms. (Beardsley CI 52)

The themes that are reiterated over the duration of the film have to do with the game’s purity, inclusiveness, and (somehow) intrinsic “Canadian-ness”: Other rules include Number Two: “You Always Play for Fun,” and Number Five: “No team is ever really beaten.”

Shinny represents a uniquely Canadian pastime enjoyed by enthusiasts of all ages. Consider the statistics: an average of 16,000 hockey sticks are bought in Canada every day, according to the 1996 Canadian census, and hockey is played by about 1.4 million Canadians. Hey, even Wayne Gretzky plays shinny. (CNW)

The film takes us on a tour of various “shinny venues” throughout the country. We meet the ordinary folk and “everyday guys” who participate in the game—not just the players, but also the parents who build backyard rinks, the “rink rats” who look after small town community arenas, people who scrounge, share, and donate equipment, and others. However, while *Shinny* is presented as the quintessentially democratic “people’s game” it is in no way insurgent. Cameos by author Roch Carrier, Governor-General Adrienne Clarkson and Prime Minister Jean Chrétien remind us that shinny too has the blessing of Canada’s cultural and political authority figures.

Shinny ends in Nunavut, in the village of Kuglugtuk, where the entire community is shown playing on the frozen Arctic Ocean (their “rink” is lit by snowmobile headlights). One of the goalies, an Inuit boy of about ten, is shown proudly wearing hockey equipment donated by a Toronto manufacturer, a kind

“fairy godfather” figure. The background music is not traditional—e.g. throat singing—but rather is the hymn, “Amazing Grace” (although sung in Inuktitut), and one could argue that there is something paternalistic, and even patronising, about the charitable efforts of these well-intentioned southerners. However, this is not the point of view the film takes. Hockey (in its “pure” incarnation as shinny) is portrayed as transcending differences in order to build community. The final shot is a near duplicate of the opening one: landscape, snow, and ice.

The manner in which the film *Shinny* represents hockey has much in common with the works of writers such as Doug Beardsley and Bruce Kidd. Commenting on what they see as a tendency to romanticise and essentialise hockey, Gruneau and Whitson observe that “in our view it is wrong to base the discussion on an idealized, organic conception of hockey as a natural Canadian cultural resource, something that developed almost magically out of an exposure to ice, snow and open spaces” (26). Gruneau and Whitson’s aim is to demystify. They intend to purge us of the fantasies that circulate about “Our Game”(Beardsley), “The Game of Our Lives” (Gzowski), and the immanent “Death of Hockey” (Kidd & McFarlane). But while they accurately identify certain notions about hockey as romantic and essentialist, and while their criticisms are both temperate and balanced, they do not address the seemingly inexplicable persistence of this tendency to idealise what is, after all, “only a game.” Technically complex, yet thematically simple, if *Shinny* is a naïve film it is so deliberately. It partakes of the “conscious fictionality of pastoral” (Blodgett 181) thus assuring its place in what has become a Canadian cultural tradition. According to Northrop Frye,

At the heart of all social mythology lies what may be called, because it usually is called, a pastoral myth, the vision of a social ideal. The pastoral myth in its most common form is associated with childhood, or with some earlier social condition—pioneer life, the small town, the habitant rooted to his land—that can be identified with childhood. The nostalgia for a world of peace and protection, with a spontaneous response to the nature around it, with a leisure and composure not to be found today, is particularly strong in Canada. (556)

A “Small-Market Country”

As Canadian media critic Paul Rutherford has noted, it is possible to ascribe the appeal of the pastoral tradition to the fact that it shows how different we are from the Americans (276).² (Canada is small, rural, innocent and old-fashioned; the U.S. is large, urban, and corrupt) and in most respects *Shinny* is the antithesis of what is almost certainly the prototypical American hockey movie, *Slapshot*. Although made in the 1970s, in a blackly comical way the latter anticipates and addresses much of what’s “wrong” with hockey today: gratuitous violence, greedy owners, sleazy managers, and especially the plight of small market franchises. These themes resurface and are explored in the Canadian television series, *Power Play*. Again, Canadian innocence is contrasted with American experience, but this time the clash of values is explicit rather than implicit. “Made in Canada” by Alliance Atlantis, the series was introduced in the late 1990s, and ran for two seasons on the CTV network before finally being cancelled due to poor ratings in the U.S. Half morality play, half soap opera, *Power Play* tells the story of the Hamilton Steelheads, a fictional small-market Canadian NHL franchise, and the embattled team’s efforts to survive in the high-priced world of professional hockey.

Power Play is a Canadian product that was obviously created with an eye to the American audience. It makes fun of cultural clichés on both sides of the border and lends credence to the claim that “Canadians’ ‘pragmatic, localized, episodic and fluid’ sense of themselves and their culture needs an ‘absolute, forceful, and mystified [American] Other’ for useful comparison” (Bodroghkozy 7). In the first episode, when the main character, Brett Parker (expatriate Canadian and successful player agent—with headquarters in New York, of course!) tells his American girlfriend he is going home to Hamilton, she insists that Hamilton is in Bermuda. When he argues “No, it’s in Ontario,” she flatly states that she knows perfectly well where it is, since she was there just last week. This is only one of several examples lampooning American arrogance and ignorance about things

² Paul Rutherford identifies a similar phenomenon regarding the ways in which Canadians have traditionally “consumed” American culture. Drawing on data from an H.F. Angus survey done in the 1930s, he notes that Canadian audiences saw Americans as “child-like,” “money-mad,” “lawless,” “corrupt,” “boastful,” and “less-cultured” than were the “quieter, slower in tempo, and saner in quality” Canadians.

Canadian. However, with typically “Canadian” self-deprecation *Power Play* includes comments such as the following: “A young ‘hip’ guy named ‘Ashley,’ plays a fiddle, wears a kilt—only in Canada!” (Episode Eight) and the first episode begins with a scene in which marketing “whiz” Parker vetoes a film clip on the grounds that it is “too Canadian.” This brief (two to three minute) vignette pokes fun at stereotypes (this time Canadian ones) while establishing Brett Parker’s persona as an alienated American “wannabe.”

The conflict that drives the series centres on the interactions of three principal characters. The team owner, “Duff” McArdle (played by Gordon Pinsent) is both a businessman (he also owns McArdle Industries) and a lover of hockey. He is torn because he knows that it would make good economic sense to move the franchise to an American city, but his heart is in his hometown, Hamilton. He hires Brett Parker to manage the team, and instructs him that his preordained task is to keep the team from moving. This pits Brett against Colleen Blessed, president of the Steelheads and CEO of McArdle Industries, who has been instructed, (again by “Duff”), to sell the team to the highest bidder.

“Duff,” himself, lives mainly in the past and is constantly reminiscing³ yet he has problems with his short term memory (implying that recent events are somehow tainted by their proximity to the present, and, as a result, are less meaningful). In the context of the plot structure of individual episodes, he functions as a kind of *deus ex machina*, setting near-impossible tasks for Brett and Colleen, then sabotaging their chances of achieving their respective goals. In true soap opera fashion, a love interest develops between the two, both “hometown kids who’ve (more-or-less) made good” and both characters who must be reminded—in Brett’s case at times forcefully—of where they come from. In a pivotal moment, after seeing the house that Brett grew up in, and in which he lives once again, Colleen observes that: “Parker, you’re just like me” (Episode Ten).

It is clear, in *Power Play*, that the fate of a small-market team is also tied

³ Throughout the series, “Duff” keeps up a continuous patter of anecdotes and remarks on Canadian themes and icons. He recalls Canadian swimmer Marilyn Bell, “a pretty little thing when she wasn’t all pruneey,” laments the cancellation of *Don Messer’s Jubilee*, refers to someone as “huffin’ and puffin’ like [former CTV news anchor] Harvey Kirk,” etc. In another instance he takes Brett Parker’s American girlfriend on a tour of Hamilton, pointing out and describing the buildings that used to be, as she, puzzled, follows him from parking lot to parking lot.

to national survival (Canada as “small-market” country) and a set of values. “Duff” McArdle embodies old-style paternalistic capitalism displaced by the “new world order” and he remarks, in true Tory fashion, that: “Nobody knows why they do anything any more.... There’s *just some things they have to hang on to*” (Episode One, emphasis added). Family is represented by Brett’s teenaged daughter Michele whom he abandoned as a child (in favour of his career) but with whom, upon his return to Hamilton, he re-establishes a relationship. However, when he asks her if she wishes to call him “dad,” she demurs, explaining that “‘dad’ is something you earn, like ‘doctor’ or ‘major.’” Later, when confronting a young “cool” American hockey player who wants to date her she challenges his cynical attitude toward the game and asserts Canadian Difference: “Hockey is not just a ‘gig.’ It’s not just ‘show biz,’ *not in this country*” (Episode Seven, emphasis added).

While Brett and Colleen occupy the slots of protagonist/antagonist, the role of moral exemplar is shared by Brett’s secretary Renata (devout Catholic and daughter of Italian immigrants) and the aptly named “Terminal” Todd Maplethorpe⁴ the Steelheads’ “enforcer” who is the archetypal Saskatchewan farm boy turned professional hockey player. Both can always be relied on to “do the right thing.” In Renata’s case this includes everything from acting as Brett’s conscience to singing the pre-game national anthem when Ashley McIsaac cancels. Todd tempers justice with “Canadian” deference when, after delivering a bone-crushing hit to an opposing player who had previously body-checked Steelheads’ star Mark Simpson into the boards, he politely remarks: “I’m asking you not to touch Mister Simpson” (Episode One). Later, when a rumour that one of the players is gay threatens to divide the team during their crucial drive to the playoffs, Todd “outs himself,” proclaiming his gayness to a locker room full of astonished Steelheads.⁵ In a gesture of solidarity, captain Simpson and several other team-mates announce that they too are gay, and harmony is restored. In different ways, both Renata and Todd put the welfare of the Steelheads ahead of their own. These community values are all, in one way or another, opposed to

⁴ Todd’s name and title contain allusions to the *Terminator* films, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, hockey film *Slapshot*’s fear-inducing goon, Ogie Oglethorpe, and, of course, the Maple Leaf (forever!).

⁵ Although it’s not stated explicitly, the context makes clear that Todd himself is not gay, but rather is protecting the identity of the player who is.

economic rationalism because, as the series makes clear, it actually *would* make sense (and dollars) to move the team south. McArdle industries is going broke and the money from the hockey franchise might save the business, which in turn would mean saving jobs for local steel mill employees. Even the players could benefit as a result of potentially higher salaries paid by big-market franchises.

Canadian and Québécois nationalisms of the 1960s were, in large part, a reaction to perceived dominance of the U.S. over the politics, economics, and cultures of Canada. In the case of the latter (Quebec) there was also the dominance of “English” Canada and, internally, a repressive parochialism (Shek 45). The popularity of *Power Play*—at home, if not in the USA—suggests these sentiments still have some credibility. What is more, they may well have new life breathed into them by the triumphalist consolidation of American global hegemony “post-9/11” and, closer to home, the after-effects of a decade of NAFTA. The series *Power Play* is well named, since it is about both play (hockey) and power. It reminds us that:

The subordinate may be disempowered but they are not powerless. There is a power in resisting power, there is a power in maintaining one’s social identity in opposition to that proposed by the dominant ideology, there is a power in asserting one’s own subcultural values against the dominant ones. There is, in short, a power in being different. (Fiske 19)

The “Empire Skates Back”

When the target audience is international, it is often the distinctively national, as well as class or racial associations that tend to be either de-emphasized or transformed into something that other audiences will relate to and identify with. And so it may be with the “Canadianness” of hockey. At its top levels hockey will most likely become a much less Canadian game. As this occurs, we will simply have to get used to the “loss,” if we want to enjoy the game’s presence in global popular culture. (Gruneau and Whitson 282)

In 1970, Brian Conacher, self-described “journeyman” hockey player, and son of sports legend Lionel Conacher, hung up his skates, stating that he was retiring “from the game I loved, but from the business I had grown to find unbearable” (Conacher 117). Today, many of the changes that Kidd and McFarlane predicted back in the 1970s have come to pass. The NHL continues to cater to “big market” (i.e. American) franchises. High player salaries, combined with fact that “hockey alone among the professional team sports doesn’t have a major revenue-sharing agreement” (Cruise and Griffiths 326), have meant that (with the possible exception of Toronto) Canadian franchises are facing the very real possibility of extinction. Season tickets to watch even small market teams like the Edmonton Oilers are already too expensive for many. These inequities, if not entirely produced, are certainly exacerbated, by economic globalization. There are parallels here with the poor of Brazil, who cannot afford to buy tickets to “the Sambodromo... where the annual carnival parade is now held” and who “have to watch on TV the spectacle that develops only a few feet away from them” (Morley 198).⁶ Even that simple, yet symbolic, object, the hockey stick, once hand-made by Mi’kmaq carvers, is now made of graphite and manufactured transnationally (Dowbiggin 4) while the players themselves are walking (or rather skating) billboards, augmenting their already inflated salaries with endorsement money. As one former hockey equipment manufacturer puts it “The world’s become a branded nightmare. It’s a branded nightmare out there” (Dowbiggin 93).

Does all this mean then that “the mystique of Canadian hockey...[will be] reduced—like so much of the heritage industry today—to the marketing of nostalgia”? (Gruneau and Whitson 283). The situation vis-à-vis professional hockey does seem bleak, but perhaps Canadians can take heart in the knowledge that, at the amateur level at least “our” game has proliferated on a global scale. As Dave Bidini’s *Tropic of Hockey* shows, in the case of hockey the local and global have come together in ways that might well astonish the hockey traditionalist. Bidini’s quest for the game “in unlikely places” was inspired by a sense of loss and the desire to

See hockey as it was before it became complicated by economics,

⁶This is doubly ironic when one considers the folk roots and politicised origins of carnival.

corporate lust, the ravages of progress; before the pro game had betrayed tradition for quick-buck teams and a style that relied more on chalkboard patterns than spontaneous, tongue-wagging river play. Maybe I could find a bunch of kids who'd never heard of Alexei Yashin, who'd never been prompted by a scoreboard [i.e. JumboTron] command. Maybe I could see hockey the way it was once played here: a game of passion, of the people. (Bidini xviii)

Bidini's pursuit of a version of hockey not tainted by big money and bad management, (not to mention the "left-wing lock" and "the neutral zone trap") takes him to China, Transylvania,⁷ and even the United Arab Emirates. ⁸ It also provides him with the opportunity to play on a variety of foreign teams. His journey is successful in that he finds satisfying hockey and a sense of community in "the company of strangers," and his departure from the UAE is marked by regrets:

During my seven days in Dubai I'd grown as close to the Falcons as any team I've played on... Hockey had allowed me a rapport with these strangers, my Arab brothers of the ice. Playing with the Falcons gave me the same feeling I've had countless nights while skating with the Morningstars,⁹ love and acceptance and brotherhood. But with one difference—I would never see the Falcons again. (214)

In Transylvania Bidini finds parallels with the symbolic power invested in hockey by Canadians:

Just as the Ciuc fans encouraged players from their community to fight against the imperialists from Bucharest, there was once a time when the dreams of citizens in Toronto, Montréal, and other Canadian cities were

⁷ One of the chapters on hockey in Romania is playfully entitled "Where Spearing Comes From."

⁸ Some of the UAE teams' names were derivative, e.g. "The Riyadh Rangers," some not, e.g. "The Dubai Mighty Camels."

⁹ The name of the team in the Westwood (recreational) Hockey League for which Bidini plays left-wing.

acted out by skaters with whom they shared a heritage, and whose teams wilfully triumphed over rival Americans. (252)

Bidini, however, suggests that this is how Canadian hockey “used to be,” but (perhaps) is no longer. The question then becomes since “true” or “pure” hockey is languishing at home, is its globalized equivalent still “Canadian”? The only reply I can venture takes the form of another question: are Coca-cola, McDonald’s, and baseball perceived as less American simply because these highly visible cultural symbols are now consumed globally? I suspect most of us would agree that they are not.

Bidini’s concern (and nostalgia for the “real” game) is understandable, but there are also encouraging signs on hockey’s “home front.” Gruneau and Whitson appear to take heart from “the extent to which the transformations of hockey at the top levels... have also been accompanied by a resurgence of interest at the recreational and community levels” (282). They add that:

Old-timers hockey and industrial hockey are booming, as are hockey programs for girls, women and special populations. There has also been a remarkable growth in organized ball hockey... and more and more children are playing a... newer version of ball hockey wearing “in-line” skates. At the spectator level, teams like the NHL Old-timers and the Flying Fathers continue to play to large crowds.... As the price of NHL hockey goes up in Edmonton and Vancouver there is increasing talk of bringing back junior hockey. Moreover, with the addition of Charlottetown the American Hockey League has six teams in Maritime cities thereby providing plenty of good quality hockey for a substantial regional Canadian audience. (282-283)

Gruneau and Whitson are speaking from the vantage point of the early nineteen nineties. Since that time women’s hockey in Canada has received an increasing amount of attention, culminating in the Canadian Women’s Team’s gold medal victory in international competition at Salt Lake City, following their disappointment in the previous Winter Olympics at Nagano. Although “women have been playing hockey for over 100 years” (Avery and Stevens 14), it is only

relatively recently that women's hockey has begun to "come into its own."¹⁰ Today, many of those involved in women's hockey are wondering, since the advent of "Olympics and world championships, what else is there to add to the sport? Maybe a professional league?" (Avery and Stevens 247). The argument has also been made regarding the likelihood of a large and enthusiastic audience for women's hockey because "women have something more to offer—hockey the way it should be—graceful, precise and fast" (Avery and Stevens 247).

The idea of "hockey the way it should be" and "the way it was" persists in the minds of Canadians, as does the connection/ association with national identity. When Canada won "double gold" in Salt Lake City, Canadians responded with passion.¹¹ Television ratings for the Canada vs. U.S. men's final (held Sunday Feb 24 2002) were the highest in the recorded history of Canadian programming. The following Monday, as returning athletes were met by fans in Canadian airports "the loudest cheers were reserved for the gold-medal winning women's hockey team" (*The Edmonton Journal*, Feb 26, 2002, D4). That same day on CBC Radio One, *This Morning* host Shelagh Rogers summed up the Olympic hockey victories in one word: "Shakespearean." The Canadian media were virtually unanimous in their enthusiasm, and well aware of what (symbolically) was at stake. As one reporter put it: "no matter how much sovereignty we've lost, no matter how little our little loonie is worth, we're cool"! (*The Edmonton Journal*, Feb 26, 2002, D/4)

Where hockey is concerned, the NHL has, in a negative sense, functioned as a kind of Master Narrative and my suspicion is that, as hockey singular continues to become more plural, we will likely see greater access to, and enjoyment of, the game itself. The Olympics have confirmed that, in the eyes of many, the most exciting hockey today is not being played in the NHL. There is of course the ever-present threat that—assuming it isn't devoured by its own greed—the NHL will persist in "cherry picking" the best amateur players, as it has done for decades (Kidd and McFarlane). Furthermore, the possibility exists that the professional league would refuse to allow the players who "belong" to NHL

¹⁰ Avery and Stevens point out that this is in part the result of "lawsuits in the 1970s and 1980s [which] allowed girls to legally skate alongside the boys" (14).

¹¹ According to Shaikin, "the mixing of sport and politics may be regarded as good or bad, but it is a fact that needs to be recognized in order to comprehend the political nature of the Olympics" (11).

teams to compete for their home countries in the Olympics. Also, whether or not hockey traditionalists would consider anything other than NHL hockey to be “world class” is a vexing question.

Conclusion: Am I Canadian?

According to John Ralston Saul, “Canada... suffers from a contradiction between its public mythologies and its reality”(1), and certainly the tenacity of the Canadian assertion that “hockey is ours” says something about the power of myths. Roland Barthes defines myths as signs which become signifiers of something beyond themselves, a “second order” of signification (Barthes; Fiske and Hartley), and sometimes that “second order” constructs narratives of collective identity: “Myths are stories that dramatise important themes and tensions in a culture” (Gruneau and Whitson 133). Myths about national identity are also politically loaded; they are “ideological” in the Althusserian sense, i.e. they describe “the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence.” Are imaginary things real? Where questions of culture and consciousness are concerned, I believe they are. Benedict Anderson famously describes nations as “imagined communities,” but since *all* communities can be understood as being in some sense imagined, I think it would be a mistake to say that either local and national identities have been superseded by global ones. In fact they all exist simultaneously. So, to answer my question “Am I Canadian?” Yes—at least I imagine I am....

Whatever the future may hold in store for hockey, I am reasonably certain that Canadians will not be readily dissuaded from our stubborn insistence that it is “still” our game. In the future, however, our heroes will include Hayley Wickenheiser and Cassie Campbell as well as Howie Morenz, Gordie Howe, Rocket Richard, and the first transnational hockey star, global celebrity Wayne Gretzky. Meanwhile, beyond the confines of organised hockey, on the ground, in the places that Raymond Williams refers to as “rooted settlements” of “lived, worked and placeable social identities” (qtd in Hall 58) we are still making our own rules and celebrating, the stick-and-ice game of shinny. It’s worth remembering—lest we forget that our “romantic” connection to ice and snow is

material as well as mystical—that as long as water freezes this will likely remain the case!

Works Cited

- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso, 1996.
- Avery, Joanna and Julie Stevens. *Too Many Men on the Ice: Women's Hockey in North America*. Victoria: Polestar, 1997.
- Barthes, Roland. *Mythologies*. Annette Lavers, trans. London: Granada, 1973.
- Beardsley, Douglas. *Country On Ice*. Winlaw, BC: Polestar, 1987.
- Bidini, David. *Tropic of Hockey*. Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 2000.
- Blodgett, Edward D. *Configuration*. Downsview ON: ECW, 1982.
- Bodroghkozy, Aniko. "As Canadian As Possible....: Anglo-Canadian Popular Culture and the American Other." *Hop on Pop: The Politics and Pleasures of Popular Culture*. Ed. Henry Jenkins, Tara McPherson, Jane Shattuc. Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1998.
- Conacher, Brian. *Hockey in Canada: The Way It Is*. Toronto: Gateway, 1970.
- Cruise, David and Alison Griffiths. *Net Worth: Exploding the Myths of Pro Hockey*. Toronto: Viking, 1991.
- Dowbiggin, Bruce. *The Stick: A History, A Celebration, An Elegy*. Toronto: Macfarlane, Walter and Ross, 2001.
- Fiske, John. *Television Culture*. London: Methuen, 1987.
- Frye, Northrop. "Conclusion to the Literary History of Canada (First Edition)" *An Anthology of Canadian Literature in English*. Eds. Russell Brown and Donna Bennett: Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1982. 533-565.
- Gruneau, Richard, and David Whitson. *Hockey Night in Canada: Sport Identities and Cultural Politics*. Toronto: Garamond, 1993.
- Gzowski, Peter. *The Game of Our Lives*. Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1981.
- Hall, Stuart. "Culture, Community, Nation." *Cultural Studies* 7.3 (1993): 349-363.
- Jackson, Steven. "Gretzky, Crisis, and Canadian Identity in 1988: Rearticulating the Americanization of Culture Debate." *Sociology of Sport Journal*. 11 (1994): 428-446.

Jarvie, Grant and Graham Walker. "Ninety Minute Patriots? Scottish Sport in the Making of the Nation." *Scottish Sport in the Making of the Nation: Ninety Minute Patriots*. Ed. Grant Jarvie and Graham Walker. Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1994. 1-8.

Kidd, Bruce and John Macfarlane. *The Death of Hockey*. Toronto: New Press, 1972.

Morley, David. *Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity*. London: Routledge, 2000.
Power Play. CTV. Oct. 1998 - Feb 2000.

Rutherford, Paul. "Made in America: The Problem of Mass Culture in Canada." *The Beaver Bites Back: American Popular Culture in Canada*. Ed. David H. Flaherty and Frank E. Manning. Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993. 260-280.

Saul, John Ralston. *Reflections of a Siamese Twin: Canada at the End of the Twentieth Century*. Toronto: Viking, 1997.

Shek, Ben-Z. *French-Canadian and Québécois Novels*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1991.
Shinny. Dir. David Batistella. Videocassette. National Film Board of Canada. 2001.

Todd, Jack. "Our Loonie Land is Just So Cool." *Edmonton Journal*, Tuesday, February 26, 2002. D/4.