Studies in Canadian Literature / Études en littérature canadienne

From Hay Fever to Archive Fever
A Metacognitive Reflection on the University of Calgary's Canadian Literary Archive

Jordan Bolay

Volume 42, numéro 2, 2017

URI : https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/scl42_2art08

Aller au sommaire du numéro

Éditeur(s)

The University of New Brunswick

ISSN

0380-6995 (imprimé)
1718-7850 (numérique)

Découvrir la revue

Citer cet article

Bolay, J. (2017). **From Hay Fever to Archive Fever: A Metacognitive Reflection on the University of Calgary's Canadian Literary Archive**. *Studies in Canadian Literature / Études en littérature canadienne*, *42*(2), 154–170.

From Hay Fever to Archive Fever: A Metacognitive Reflection on the University of Calgary's Canadian Literary Archive

Jordan Bolay

I first met Guy Vanderhaeghe not as a best-selling, Governor General's Literary Award-winning author but through a rare copy of *The Trouble with Heroes*, housed in the University Archives and Special Collections at the University of Saskatchewan. Yet in 2014, when I moved to Calgary to pursue/exhume/excavate western Canadian authors' *fonds* at the University of Calgary, I had never set foot in an archive despite its prominent role in my proposed research. I had a background in special collections, but it generally involved determining *if* a book should be archived and then sending it off to the vaults, never to be heard from again, or so I thought. I expected the archive to be a cold, dry, dusty place and, having come from Saskatchewan, felt that I would be at home. I anticipated a romanticized yet somehow prairie gothic experience, straining my eyes in dim light, reading Vanderhaeghe's Saskatchewan as I absorbed dusty pages that smelled like an empty grain bin.

This was not the case. Nor was the archive a collection of "stars, some that seem close to us shining brightly from afar off, while others that are in fact close to us are already growing pale," as Michel Foucault promised (129). Instead, the archive proved to be a far more ephemeral place — one that I have yet to enter — for all materials are fetched from the vaults and brought to the reading room: a naturally lit, climatized space with floor-to-ceiling windows that overlook the Bow River and allow one to gaze out to the Rockies. Furthermore, many of the archive's materials are in the process of being digitized for online access or exist exclusively in audio or video form, requiring otherwise obsolete technologies to "read." Still, romance disillusioned, sublime instilled, at the boundary between "real" and cyber space, I caught the fever.

"I Suppose It Is My Job to Close that Gap Now": A Failed Genetic Criticism, a Textual Topology, and the Question of Digitizing Absence[1]

Sitting in the reading room of the archives a few weeks after moving to Calgary, I dug through my first box of the Vanderhaeghe *fonds*. I began to take preliminary steps toward amending the academic oversights of this author's significant early work. Very little attention has been paid to Vanderhaeghe's early fiction, narratives that use contemporary settings and times (i.e., the Canadian prairies from the 1930s through the early 1980s) as opposed to his later — and more popular — historical fiction. And none of the research on Vanderhaeghe's early short fiction has engaged with the extensive *fonds* housed in the Canadian Literary Archive at the University of Calgary. In preparation for my work with the University of Calgary's Digital Collections (UCDCs hereafter), I began crafting a genetic criticism — what Daniel Ferrer calls a comparison of drafts and an investigation of "the entire range of documents as evidence of the multiple decisions that were taken" during the "process of writing" (49) — of Vanderhaeghe's "Sam, Soren, and Ed." After holding the text — I should say *texts* — in their multiple permutations, after trying to sort and trace their evolutions and regressions, I selected key drafts and fragments to digitize, to share with and preserve for other readers, focusing on the passages that underwent the most substantial changes between versions.

In the process, I became aware of the unique role that place plays in my practice. I read about Sam, who runs toward a "cold grey river flecked with ice floes" as he is chased through the Old West (Vanderhaeghe, "Sam" 258), as Ed himself runs along the South Saskatchewan River in Saskatoon, circa early 1980s. I imagined Vanderhaeghe looking down at the river from his office at the University of Saskatchewan or from the very bench on which Ed sits at the story's opening. This river symbolizes potential salvation after a long struggle, though we are never told whether Sam reaches the safety of the water in Ed's metanarrative, and Ed chooses to withdraw from the River Run that will — he believes — prove his commitment to his estranged wife. The South Saskatchewan is inscribed on Vanderhaeghe's text just as the Bow is inscribed on my reading of it. The spaces in which we read and write, and the places that surround those spaces, affect how we read and write texts, the places themselves, and ourselves as texts inscribed on and decoded by the landscape.

Herein lies my first question on digitization. If a scholar were to access digital versions of these drafts online, what kind of inscription would their space and place have on their reading? Had I read Vanderhaeghe's drafts in the cold, dusty, Saskatchewan cellar that I thought the archive would be, how would my reading of "Sam, Soren, and Ed" and, for that matter, this reading of my experience with archiving have been shaped differently? The archive, in the traditional material sense, is fixed in space, self-consciously located in a particular place; its documents "are only kept under the title of the archive by virtue of a privileged *topology*" (Derrida, *Archive Fever* 3). Digitization radicalizes the archive's spatiality — an online, open-access presence weakens its inherent "*institutive* and *conservative*" bonds (7) by allowing institutionally affiliated scholars, independent academics, and hobbyists alike to read the documents without the expense of travel and the permission of gatekeepers. The topology, the geospatial presence, that had "necessitate[d] . . . the *full and effective actuality* of the taking-place, the reality, as they say, of the archived event" (66) begins to crumble as the virtual replaces the "real." Simulation of the archive becomes the "*archiving* archive" that "[re]determines the structure of the *archivable* content" (17). That is, the digital archive becomes, for most users, the only extant archive; it gradually replaces the physical collection of documents and becomes the reality thereof. The digital archive records its own history (i.e., through metadata) and thereby redefines the notion of what can be recorded — every instance of access is inscribed on the document rather than recorded in a paratext such as a library's logbook. But what happens when the "actual, real" document does not exist, not as a result of simulation, but as an *a priori* state of being?

My original hope was to use the drafts in the Vanderhaeghe *fonds* as a case study to examine his early works' treatment of progressivism, to map the collection's layers of social commentary through the archive, and to investigate the evolution of Ed's social politics across drafts and through the process of writing multiple, potentially simultaneous works. I would then digitize the relevant passages, making the foundation of my research openly available in an online collection, allowing new discussions to be born of the text's genealogy. This goal was subverted, ironically, by the archive itself. The holograph fragments of "Sam, Soren, and Ed" — the key story that establishes Ed's criticism of progressivism and his self-undermining voice — are exclusively from

the story's final six pages, wherein his estranged wife, Victoria, has challenged Ed to prove that he has changed his behaviour, his lifestyle, and his tendency toward sloth (593/92.1, 14). This focus suggests that Vanderhaeghe might have been particularly concerned with constructing the shift in Ed's characterization at the story's end, encouraging a focused reading of the creative process behind characterization and closure rather than one of social progressivism. Although engagements with socio-political ideologies are prevalent in the story's first half, there is a lack of significant variants pertaining thereto in the incomplete holograph draft found in the Vanderhaeghe *fonds*. Thus, the archive lends itself to a ghostly visitation of the author that limits an investigation to particular themes and topics proscribed by the archive's traces of the text.

More importantly, these unexpected gaps in the archive raise the question of how we represent absence in a selected and selective collection that has undergone a change in form and media, such as a digital exhibit. This question relates to the inherent spectrality of the archive. As Derrida writes, "the structure of the archive is spectral. It is spectral *a priori*: neither present nor absent . . . , neither visible nor invisible, a trace always referring to another whose eyes can never be met" (*Archive Fever* 84). We seek the archive *after* we have read a text. We bring a reading to the archive, and then what we discover confuses and complicates that reading with its presence or absence or trace of evidence. So, knowing that we will call on the archive to lend our reading further voice, the archive haunts our analyses, affecting our present reading of the past with the potentiality of what we might find in the future. Adina Arvatu challenges this notion of the spectral archive within the context of scholarly methodology by asking "what happens when scholarship is no longer defined by the long hours spent *in* the archives, . . . when that *askesis* is replaced by . . . an interview with a ghost or spectre, who is . . . silent, even mute?" (149). But the hours spent in the archive *are* interviews with spectres — the ghosts of texts, of monuments and documents, of times, of conceptualizations of a place and its politics. Even the authors themselves, including those still living, can only exist spectrally to the reader of an archive. Whether we are reading a holograph fragment, a "completed" draft, or a personal letter, we are only ever engaging with one of the many Vanderhaeghes who present themselves through their *fonds*, just as Derrida is only ever engaging

with a certain Marx among the "specters of Marx . . . *Plus d'un* [More than one/No more one]" (*Specters* 3).[2] We know that there are drafts, revisions, and fragments missing from the archive that we can infer through genetic criticism and assume existed in some form. The *fonds* beg us to consider to what extent these absences are significant and how an absence of politics in the archive complicates and brings into question a reading of politics in the text. The question, then, as Robert Kroetsch predicts, is "always a question of trace. What remains of what does not remain?" (8). Although we cannot analyze absence beyond speculating on what is absent, the presence of this absence allows for a consideration of gaps within the archive, for an investigation of texts becoming lost as we pursue them, for we contribute to their erasure as much as their material absence does. Only when a presumably present draft is sought out does its absence become actualized, and therefore investigations of the archive reify its erasure, the becoming lost of documents, the production of trace.

But how do we digitize absence? How do we represent the not-necessarily-obvious gap in a new digital archive or exhibit? Or, as Derrida asks, "How does one prove in general an absence of archive, if not in relying on classical norms (presence/absence of literal and explicit reference . . . ; how can one not . . . take into account *unconscious* . . . and more generally *virtual* archives)?" (*Archive Fever* 64). We can, of course, have a note in the metadata that a particular draft or certain fragments of a draft are absent from the digital collection because they were missing from the material archive upon which the exhibit is based. However, this enunciation of absence deprives the archive of some of its nomological power. Directly informing a scholar about an absence rather than allowing her or him to find it causes the textual trace to *be* lost, as a priori, rather than *become* lost. This pre-erasure dispels the ghost before it appears, limiting our hauntological analyses of the *fonds*. Such metadata serve as *exergue* to the collection, for "To cite before beginning is to give the tone through the resonance of a few words, . . . naming the problem" rather than allowing the archive to function as the name and the law (7). It is within this conundrum that the digital archival simulacrum becomes unstable. Although the virtual simulates the archive and its function as the archiving archive, it yields a different form of reading and exploration because the contents have undergone an additional tier of selection. Thus, through the act of selection, not only

do we reinscribe the collection with the politics of privilege, but also our notion of the virtual remains "limited by the traditional philosophical opposition between act and power" (67). Furthermore, there are consequences to how we digitize what is present and included in an exhibit. We do not simply convert texts from "real" or "material" to digital (remember that, as a series of positive and negative electrical charges, data still have mass — however minute — and take up "material" space on a hard drive). We transform documents from textual objects into images of texts, remodifying them and therefore changing our interactions with them and the way that we read them.

Digitization and Digital Remodification: The Politics of Presence in Digital Exhibits and Archives

In early 2015, a group of undergraduate and graduate students in the University of Calgary's Department of English, me included, constructed the first iteration of the UCDCs: an exhibit of digitized archival materials from western Canadian authors whose *fonds* are housed in the university's Special Collections. These authors include Earle Birney, bpNichol, George Ryga, Rudy Wiebe, Guy Vanderhaeghe, and Aritha van Herk. Having read key texts from each author, we pored over box after box of research materials, holograph fragments, and early drafts, selecting ideal passages to demonstrate aspects of the texts' genealogies. We then worked with library technicians to scan the selected documents, upload them to the UCDCs' digital exhibit, and input the relevant metadata. After we premiered the exhibit, Jerome McGann's claim that a digital collection's "historical backwardness" begins to show as soon as the collection is completed came to mind (189). As a result, the UCDCs serve as a case study not only to examine what McGann calls the "social and conceptual limits of the digital ecology that spawned" the collections (189) but also to reflect on the politics of digitization practices. Furthermore, the UCDCs allow us to engage with Johanna Drucker's concern that, "After decades of digital work, the question remains whether humanists are actually doing anything different or just extending the activities that have always been their concerns, enabled by advantages of networked digital technology" (85). A metacognitive reflection on the project investigates whether "the humanities [have] had any impact on the digital environment" (85). I posit that there is a distinct difference between a digitized text and what I call a digital

remodification of a text. Using the UCDCs as an example of technologically, socially, and conceptually limited remodification that nevertheless facilitates metacognitive reflection, I argue that a fully digitized artifact — in this case text — not only allows humanists to do new work but also affects the direction, function, and consequences of the digital environment, resulting in a new hauntological relationship between author, scholar, and archive.

Digitized texts — products of digitization — and digitally remodified texts — products of digital remodification — are distinct from one another in that they produce different files that mimic their original forms on different levels, shaping the types of work that can be done with them. When I refer to a digitized text, I speak of a file that functions digitally as a text, whereas a digitally remodified text refers to a file that represents a text but exists in another form, such as an image. Remodification differs from what Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin call "remediation" or "the representation of one medium in another" that "ensures that the old medium cannot be entirely effaced" (45, 47). Remediation refers to shifts in media, whereas remodification refers to different modes within different media, such as standard PDFs versus text-searchable ones. For example, retyping an author's text in a Microsoft Word document would be a form of digitization since the words would then exist digitally in the form of text. However, the mimetic representation of the original form of the text on the analog page will not be exact and might in fact differ drastically, as in the case of transcribing scrawled long hand into typed text. In contrast, a digital photograph or standard PDF of a text mimics the structure of the text on the analog page but cannot be digitally interacted with on a textual level since it is an image file; therefore, such files perform as remodified texts. Both forms impose technological limitations on a digital exhibit or an archive in addition to presenting independently conceptual and social limitations. The creation of digitally remodified texts for the UCDCs facilitated the examination of the functions and limitations of these file types from a humanistic perspective.

The UCDCs' van Herk collection exemplifies the technological limitations of digital remodification. The exhibit's first iteration contained five excerpts from typescript drafts and one excerpt from a holograph draft of her 1981 novel *The Tent Peg*. These excerpts were originally scanned as .tdi image files, then converted to .pdf files and uploaded to

the UCDCs, and can be viewed at omeka.ucalgary.ca. The process of remodification is self-evident in this example; not only have the excerpts been remediated from analog objects to digital sites, but also they have undergone modular changes from text to image and from one type of image to another. The files do not function on the textual level since their contents cannot be searched or analyzed by a computer. This feature limits the possibility of large-scale research projects such as Michael Ullyot's "Python script that uses regular expressions to find [rhetorical figures] — first in Shakespeare's works, and then in a 400-play corpus." But the digitally remodified texts do provide what Drucker calls the "advantages of networked digital technology," namely "easier access to primary materials" (85). This advantage facilitates human-based research on archival materials, such as genetic criticism. However, these studies are also limited by the exhibit's lack of completion because of social limitations imposed on the project.

The UCDCs serve as a case study for a McGannian examination of the several conceptual and social limitations imposed on the project's digital ecology and their effects on archival research practices. First and foremost, Dr. Jason Wiens, the collections' editor, selected the authors and texts that would be the subject of the exhibit prior to student engagement. This form of selection pre-establishes the varieties and extents of studies that can be conducted on the exhibit and enforces the "principle of choice," the act of "try[ing] to determine in advance which are the most representative elements" of a study, and this has been one of many "methodological problems" of archiving (Foucault 10). For example, in the case of the Vanderhaeghe *fonds*, permission had been obtained to work only with the collection of short stories *Man Descending*. However, Ed, the protagonist of the two final stories, also appears in the novel *My Present Age* and the uncompiled story "He Scores! He Shoots!" published in *Matrix*. Thus, a study of the relationship between these works' drafts and the interconnectivity of their production is not possible through the UCDCs.

Second, there were issues of copyright: in the case of van Herk's *The Tent Peg*, the publisher prohibited the digital reproduction of entire drafts because they were too similar to the published version and would therefore be considered an infringement of copyright, causing us to focus our collection on several versions of selected chapters. This approach facilitates a genetic criticism of key scenes from the novel

and synergizes with the exhibit's technological limitations. However, it prevents larger studies from being undertaken, such as an examination of the evolution of pronoun use over the course of the novel and across multiple drafts. More importantly, these politics of selection add a second layer to the "archontic injunction to guard and gather the archive" (Derrida, *Archive Fever* 77), for it has now been gathered into a specific selection of texts and then an even more specific selection of files. Where an online, open-access exhibit should liberate a text from its institution, allowing it to be read outside of a specifically located library, this second tier of collection instead "[re]institutes the archive as it should be, that is to say, not only in exhibiting the document, but in *establishing* it" (55). The exhibit, as reselection, allows for new reading but obliges reclassification and reinstitutionalization. Yet Foucault tells us that the "never completed, never wholly achieved uncovering of the archive forms the general horizon to which the description of discursive formations, the analysis of positivities, the mapping of the enunciative field belong" (131). This metacognitive examination of the UCDCs would not be possible without the — ultimately inevitable — limitations placed on and the lack of completion of our exhibit. Both elements allow us to examine the relationship between humanistic theory, forms of digital production, and practices of collection.

Digitally remodified texts encourage, even obligate, computer-human interactions (CHIs hereafter), allowing for the insertion of humanistic theory at the analytical level. Because of the files' lack of textuality, they cannot be analyzed computationally by methods akin to Ullyot's project on Shakespeare's gradation. Thus, digitally remodified texts require CHIs to be conducted on them, limiting objective and positivist approaches to the texts and allowing us to "cast an interpretive gaze on these instruments from a humanistic perspective . . . and . . . build humanities content at their base" (Drucker 86). For example, the holograph notes of preparatory work for Rudy Wiebe's "Where Is the Voice Coming From?" were consciously digitally remodified as opposed to non-mimetically digitized (i.e., transcribed). According to David Kang's presentation on the Wiebe section of the exhibit, this remodification maintains the ambiguity and allows for the multiple interpretations of Wiebe's unclear handwriting. Comparably, when we digitally remodified excerpts from van Herk's *The Tent Peg*, we drew exclusively from holograph drafts and typescripts heavily annotated and edited by

hand, even though there are two copies of nearly every draft within the van Herk *fonds*: one clean and one annotated. We made this decision because we knew that the project's products would not be text-searchable and therefore elected to exhibit the versions that would both resist true digitization — since only the typed text and not the annotations would be searchable — and facilitate more humanistic studies, such as genetic criticisms, by depicting the passages' evolution rather than their fixed versions. These applications of humanistic theory at the analytical level shift drastically when we consider digitized texts as opposed to digitally remodified texts.

Although digitization leads to mechanical analysis and therefore enables problematic positivistic approaches to subjective texts, the ability to interact with texts in digital environments allows for distinctly humanistic representations of those texts and engagements with digital environments. Drucker asserts that "visualisation and processing techniques" are "[p]ositivistic, strictly quantitative, mechanistic, reductive and literal," and they "preclude humanistic methods from their operations because of the very assumptions on which they are designed: that objects of knowledge can be understood as self-identical, self-evident, ahistorical, and autonomous" (86). However, archives exist paradoxically: they are institutionalized and therefore hegemonic structures, yet, as Kathy Ferguson claims, they are also, "to some degree, counterhegemonic; they position themselves more or less defiantly as archons of anarchist resistance." She writes that an archive "can be counterhegemonic in its practices as well as its holdings: it can be inviting, not forbidding; welcoming, not controlling; its archons can offer interpretations while also letting materials have their excess." In the same vein, an exhibit can contain materials that subvert the positivistic processes by which they are created and represented. For example, bpNichol's *Absolute Statement for My Mother* was digitally remodified as part of the poetry component of the UCDCs' exhibit, but the group in charge of this remodification realized that an accurate digital representation of this poem could not be done with a two-dimensional scanner.

The concrete poem, constructed as a booklet that folds out to resemble an accordion with text on both sides, could be rendered in a mimetic digital form through video footage of someone interacting with the textual object or through a three-dimensional rendering (Rafael). A true digitization of the poem would only serve to replicate a physical engage-

ment with the analog textual object within a digital space and therefore would only facilitate humanistic interpretations of that textual object. Having a text-searchable model of *Absolute Statement* would not privilege quantitative positivistic analyses of the poem any more than the analog version does because of the simplicity (linguistically speaking) of its contents: a series of pages that repeat "I / AM / I / MA" (UCDCs, Document 28). Thus, digitally exhibiting such texts separates them from their topology and "remove[s] the concept of virtuality from the couple that opposes it to actuality, to effectivity, or to reality" (Derrida, *Archive Fever* 66). The geospatial context of *Absolute Statement* becomes irrelevant, and only the spatiality of interaction with the text, whether it is analogical or virtual, is significant. Therefore, remodifying the poem invites a non-binary notion of the virtual, a way of thinking about it beyond a reductive opposition to materiality. Remodification presents virtuality as an alternative materiality rather than its antithesis.

Although remodification allows for subjective interpretations of digital texts and undermines or even subverts many of the "hostile" values of positivism and quantitative analysis, it does not allow us to "creat[e] computational protocols grounded in humanistic theory and methods," which Drucker sees as "essential if we are to assert the cultural authority of the humanities in a world whose fundamental medium is digital" (86). However, placing digitized text within a digitally interactive and therefore *evolving* environment creates multiple possible connections that refute objective quantitative analysis *and* representation.

The University of Saskatchewan's *The Grub Street Project*, edited by Allison Muri, embodies such an environment, anticipating the potential for qualitative computational techniques. The project is a "digital edition of eighteenth-century London" that attempts to depict Grub Street as "both a real place and an abstract idea" in which both location and metaphor represent "the print culture of eighteenth-century London (both high and low)" and its construction as a "network of textual representations" (Muri). The project's numerous maps feature clickable key locations accompanied by informative hyperlinks, virtual tours of historical records, and citations from literary works that refer to the location. By including maps from various time periods, the project depicts the evolution of perspectives and representations of historical sites. Furthermore, all reader-text interactions are recorded for future metacognitive interpretations by mining meta- and microdata. Thus, the project exemplifies

one of the elements of Drucker's proposed "humanistic spatial modeling" in which "space is constructed as an effect, rather than a basis, of experience" on both a historical literary level and a contemporary academic one (92). The project also deconstructs historicity through its multiple and at times ambiguous temporalities, as seen in the map of London as it "was" in 1553-59. These ambiguities result in graphic representations of what Drucker calls the "experience of temporality . . . [or] the temporal dimensions of narration and mutabilities of duration" (93). In time, *The Grub Street Project* will also deconstruct positivistic representations of "fact" through the multiple connections and references among the sources of varying levels of fiction. The next phase in humanistic digital methodology might well be multi-temporal *four-dimensional* exhibits that depict *potential* interactions among texts over their timelines as well as within our own. Projects such as the UCDCs and *The Grub Street Project* could be developed to depict plausible genetic timelines of texts' production, edition, and then reproduction within the exhibit, resubjectifying the texts originally objectified through digitization or remodification. These steps could ultimately lead us toward what Lee Hannigan alluded to in his talk "In/Audible History: Developing a Literary Audio Archive at the University of Alberta": a plurality of media and interpretations functioning together in a socially prescribed space, resulting in new spectral and humanistic presences in the digital ecology.

Theories regarding the rereading and recreation of texts further challenge the perceived positivism of digital reproduction and representation. Marcel Cornis-Pope and Ann Woodlief, using Fredric Jameson's *Postmodernism: Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* as a theoretical framework, write that "Hypertextual criticism stimulates interactive authorship" and that "Textual interpretation becomes thus an act of 'rewriting,' both individual, in which a particular reader mediates the relationship between text, author and culture, and collective, in which an interpretive community negotiates not only its reading of a particular text but also its interpretive habits and ideological views" (147). By extension, when a user interacts interpretively with a digitization or digital remodification of a text, she or he contributes to its authorship and the construction of the cultural and ideological contexts of that text. The ideologies and methodologies of the reader (in this case a humanist) will be imprinted on the text and its context through such a reading. Matthew Kirschenbaum applies Jameson's theories to texts and

other files on the digital level. He writes that "the preservation of digital objects is *logically inseparable* from the act of their creation — the lag between creation and preservation collapses completely, since a digital object may only ever be said to be preserved *if* it is accessible, and each individual access creates the object anew." Accessing a text within a constructed digital context foregrounds the subjectivity of that context and the impossibility of a single objective reading of the text; this is signalled through metadata and microdata, which record the countless rereadings/rewritings that the text undergoes yet are incapable of quantifying what those readings yielded. Thus, regardless of how objectively, mechanically, or positivistically a digital text is produced or represented, it is always reproduced and reread on a subjective humanistic level through reader-text and computer-human interactions.

The Ghost in the Authorial Machine: Archiving, Digital Collecting, and Necromancy

Although it is not my aim to impose a radical revision of the terminology surrounding archival and preservation practices, it is essential that we recognize the different procedures, products, and their implications for both the materials being modified and the scholarly activities based upon them. Just as an incorporation of the *fonds* into literary analysis offers new and meaningful interpretations, so too must we recognize the remnants, absences, and decisions at play within the archive and its study. Each of the *fonds* partially represented in the UCDCs contains a different form of trace and de-cision: trace in the form of absence, trace in the form of concealment through an overpresence of materials or an author's/editor's illegible hand, and trace in the form of presence, the re-presentation of what had been forgotten.

Derrida writes that the web of a text "indefinitely regenerat[es] its own tissue behind the cutting trace, the decision of each reading" (*Dissemination* 63), which determines a meaning for the text, but it does so through *caesura*, through a cutting off or pruning of other potential meanings. Any reading of a text that ignores the evidence within its *fonds* maintains its validity only through a collective agreement to disregard the archive, to choose the published version or perhaps even one particular published version among the many other permutations that make up the rest of the text's web. Furthermore, decisions evident within the *fonds* of any text and within any archive limit or encourage

different readings, depending on what is present. Thus, the readings and reflections collected in this study are evidence of the collector's politics at play in an exhibit's or archive's construction, in the obsessive accumulation of particular authors, particular works, and particular personal, historical, and artistic documents and monuments. There is also the author's politics — some authors choose at specific points to preserve their personal letters, just as Vanderhaeghe chose to document his literature almost exclusively — haunting our interpretations decades after "The Death of the Author." And, of course, the critic's agency cannot be ignored. On what have I decided to focus? What have I pruned away in my own readings of the archive?

Comparing these authors' *fonds* allows for a cumulative examination of their insights into the functionings of the archive and of the interrelations of personal politics, literary politics, socioeconomic politics, discursive politics, and archival politics. But among these politics are also questions of hegemony, privilege, and access. Ferguson claims that "Even the grimmest assessments of archives recognise the political potential of broadening access to archival space." Although Derrida writes that "There is no political power without control of the archive," he also recognizes that "democratization can always be measured by this essential criterion: the participation in and the access to the archive, its constitution, and its interpretation" (*Archive Fever* 4). Archives "bring order to flows," and there is thus "always some kind of governing voice or central point of view in archives," though radical new approaches to archiving can "function as 'aspiration rather than recollection,' anticipating and enabling fresh possibilities for collective memory" (Ferguson, quoting Appadurai). There is an inherent politics in the question of what is deemed worthy of archiving. It is a question of "ownership vs use," as Joel Salt and Craig Harkema pointed out, and of the authority held by the librarian, the researcher, those who fund a university's special collections, and the general public.

These acts of selection inscribe on the archive a politics that mirrors the politics of literature, which Jacques Rancière describes as a "partition of the visible and the sayable, which allows (or does not allow) some specific data to appear; which allows or does not allow some specific subjects to designate [experiences, data] and speak about them" (10). Of course, Rancière is describing the nomological function of literature on an epochal scale — the ways in which Victorian literature parti-

tioned discourse compared with Romantic literature. But I would posit that the same principles apply to the archive and, even more so, to the digital exhibit. Each tier of selection — the author's, the archivist's, the scholar's — further partitions the enunciative field of a particular web of texts. The consequences of this inescapable practice (for it is impossible to save *everything* and to preserve and retransmit all that was saved) are significantly multiplied when a selection of texts is digitized or remodified and made public. The collection becomes, for any user who interacts with the digital exhibit and not the material archive upon which it is based, the simulation and therefore the extant version of the text's genealogy and the author's creative process.

Thus, archival selection, particularly in the case of a virtual archive, serves a necromantic function. It does not undo the death of the author, but it raises the author from the dead and puts uncanny simulation on display. Authors continue to haunt the text and the archive, but they are now less distinctly disconnected from their bodies (of work). No longer a mere ghost, the author has been made into a revenant, coming back to the text, the selection, the present. And who is the necromancer? The archival scholar, who reselects and remodifies pieces of the reanimated creature. But the source of the magic is as much the author — the point of commencement — and the archive — the textual topography — as the critic — the site of commandment, demanding that the ghoul yield insight. This trifecta of intertextuality and interauthoriality, facilitated by the construction of a digital exhibit, challenges the singular authority of the archive, which, according to Foucault, is "first the law of what can be said, the system that governs the appearance of statements as unique events" (129). The Rancièrian political act of repartitioning the sayable deconstructs the archive's own "*eco-nomic*" nature of "making the law (*nomos*)" (Derrida, *Archive Fever* 7). The archive is no longer solely "the *commencement* and the *commandment*" (1). The "moment *proper* to the archive, . . . the instant of archivization" (25), is no longer singular or static but has occurred many times and is continuously occurring. The event is not a "prosthetic experience" (25) but an uncanny inscription, a mystical enunciation. The humanistic necromancers and their risen author creations haunt the ecology of the digital environment. The relationship between author, archive, and scholar created through a digital exhibit conjures up humanities content at its base. The digital collection is built upon virtual necromancy.

Notes

[1] The quotation here is from an early draft of Vanderhaeghe's "Sam, Soren, and Ed" (593/92.1, 11.1, [1f28]). (Archival citations are formatted as accession number, box, folder, and page number when available and applicable.) Although the sentence appears as the last line of the story's first published iteration in the *Journal of Canadian Fiction* (31), it is absent from the more canonical iteration in *Man Descending*.

[2] The brackets are in the original and indicate the translator's addition.

Works Cited

Arvatu, Adina. "Spectres of Freud: The Figure of the Archive in Derrida and Foucault." *Mosaic*, vol. 44, no. 4, 2011, pp. 141-59.

Bolter, Jay David, and Richard Grusin. *Remediation: Understanding New Media*. MIT P, 1999.

Cornis-Pope, Marcel, and Ann Woodlief. "The Rereading/Rewriting Process: Theory and Collaborative, On-Line Pedagogy." *Intertexts: Reading Pedagogy in College Writing Classrooms*, edited by Marguerite Helmers, Lawrence Erlbaum, 2003, *Virginia Commonwealth University Archive*, .

Derrida, Jacques. *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*. Translated by Eric Prenowitz, U of Chicago P, 1996.

—. *Dissemination*. Translated by Barbara Johnson, U of Chicago P, 1981.

—. *Specters of Marx*. Translated by Peggy Kamuf, Routledge, 1993.

Drucker, Johanna. "Humanistic Theory and Digital Scholarship." *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, edited by Matthew K. Gold, U of Minnesota P, 2012, pp. 85-95.

Ferguson, Kathy E. "Theorizing Shiny Things: Archival Labors." *Theory and Event*, vol. 11, no. 4, 2008, *Project Muse*, muse.jhu.edu.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/article/257578.

Ferrer, Daniel. "Production, Invention, and Reproduction: Genetic vs. Textual Criticism." *Reimagining Textuality: Textual Studies in the Late Age of Print*, edited by Elizabeth Bergmann Loizeaux and Neil Fraistat, U of Wisconsin P, 2002, pp. 48-59.

Foucault, Michel. *The Archeology of Language and the Discourse on Knowledge*. Translated by A.M. Sheridan Smith, Pantheon Books, 1972.

Guy Vanderhaeghe Fonds. Canadian Literary and Art Archives, U of Calgary, 1992.

Hannigan, Lee. "In/Audible History: Developing a Literary Audio Archive at the University of Alberta." Digital Textualities/Canadian Contexts. Canadian Writing Research Collaboratory Launch Conference, Sept. 2016, U of Alberta, Edmonton.

Jameson, Fredric. *Postmodernism: Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Duke UP, 1991.

Kang, David. "UCDCs Presentation: The Wiebe Collection." U of Calgary, 2015.

Kirschenbaum, Matthew. "The .txtual Condition: Digital Humanities, Born-Digital Archives, and the Future Literary." *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2013, www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/7/1/000151/000151.html.

Kroetsch, Robert. *The Hornbooks of Rita K.* U of Alberta P, 2001.

McGann, Jerome. "On Creating a Usable Future." *Profession*, vol. 10, 2011, pp. 182-95.

Muri, Allison, editor. *The Grub Street Project*. U of Saskatchewan, 2005.

Nichol, bp. *Absolute Statement for My Mother*. Seripress, 1979.

Rafael, Andrew William. "UCDCs Presentation: The Nichol and Birney Collection." U of Calgary, 2015.

Rancière, Jacques. "The Politics of Literature." *SubStance*, vol. 33, no. 1, 2004, pp. 10-24.
Salt, Joel, and Craig Harkema. "The Al W. Purdy Digital Archive: Archival or Scholarly?" Digital Textualities/Canadian Contexts. Canadian Writing Research Collaboratory Launch Conference, Sept. 2016, U of Alberta, Edmonton.
Ullyot, Michael. "Language Use and Cognition: Shakespeare's Gradation in Context." *UCalgaryBlogs*, 2015, ullyot.ucalgaryblogs.ca/2015/04/04/shakespeares-gradatio-in-context/.
University of Calgary Digital Collections. Edited by Jason Wiens, U of Calgary, 2015-, omeka.ucalgary.ca/.
Vanderhaeghe, Guy. "He Scores! He Shoots!" *Matrix*, vol. 13, 1981, pp. 3-14.
—. *Man Descending*. 1982. McClelland & Stewart, 2000.
—. *My Present Age*. 1984. McClelland & Stewart, 2000.
—. "Sam, Soren, and Ed." *Journal of Canadian Fiction*, vols. 31-32, 1981, pp. 5-13.
van Herk, Aritha. *The Tent Peg*. Red Deer P, 1981.