

Bylines, Headlines, Gender Lines:

Women in *Canadian Business* Magazine in the late 1970s

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Abstract

This paper examines the inclusion of women journalists, story subjects, and readers in *Canadian Business* magazine, in the 24 months before and after its change in ownership, editor, and design in 1977.

Introduction

In July 1977 *Canadian Business* magazine presented the results of a survey on women executives in which Canada's "Top 200" companies, profiled in that year's annual listing, were invited to participate. The survey, according to writer Eileen Goodman, probed the respondents' efforts "to eliminate any disparity between men and women in the incentives and opportunities they provide for executive development" (70). The results of the survey were summarized in the story's title, "Still a long way to go": while women were slowly making inroads into upper management, they were still largely shut out of the top leadership positions in these large Canadian companies.

"Still a long way to go" is also a fair—perhaps euphemistic—assessment of the inclusion of women in *Canadian Business* magazine's own publication at this time. From September 1975 to August 1977, for example, just 6% of its articles were attributed to female writers (see Table 1); the percentage of stories *about* women was even lower.

Many participants in the survey on women's executive advancement, while not satisfied with the current situation, expressed hope that change for the better was imminent. Change was in fact imminent at *Canadian Business* magazine itself when Goodman's article appeared in the summer of 1977. After nearly five decades of association with the Canadian Chamber of

Commerce, the magazine was sold to a private partnership: Michael de Pencier; Roy MacLaren, who became publisher; and Alexander Ross, who took over as editor. In their first issue, September 1977, the new owners introduced themselves and laid out their “basic editorial conviction”: “We also believe that business decisions are made by people, not by impersonal automatons; and that business reporting, therefore, should reflect the drama, the absurdities, the pride and—yes—the passion of the Canadian business community” (“New owners” 10). Their new philosophy and dramatic reinvention of the magazine resulted in staff, content, design, format, and tone changes. The surface changes were readily apparent, and journalism scholars later credited the new partnership with not just revamping the publication (Sutherland 288), but revolutionizing business journalism in Canada (De Wolf). My study highlights a less immediately obvious, but notable change in the newly designed publication: the presence of more women. The dimensions, depth, and significance of the increased inclusion of women in *Canadian Business* magazine in the late 1970s are examined in this article.

Canadian Business is Canada’s oldest, best-selling, and arguably most influential business periodical. Its main competitors, *Financial Post Magazine* and *Report on Business Magazine*, are newspaper supplements, but *Canadian Business* boasts “100% paid circulation” and claims to have more than one million readers (“For Advertisers”). The magazine’s archives stretch back more than eight decades to February 1928, when it began as an internal publication of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, newly formed itself in 1925. These 80-plus years of publication offer a rich resource for both Canadian business historians and media scholars, a resource that, like the financial media in general, has gone largely unexamined.

Some years before he became editor of *Canadian Business* magazine, Alexander Ross was the ghost-writer (Sutherland 208) of a government report that posited an important role for

magazines in Canada. “In terms of cultural survival,” states the 1970 report of the Special Senate Committee on the Mass Media, “magazines could potentially be as important as railroads, airlines, national broadcasting networks, and national hockey leagues” (Canada. Parliament 153). This statement rests on the assumption—later a tenet of both Cultural and Media Studies—that magazines, as part of the ‘mass media’, bring members of a group together and create a space for the production and exchange of meanings, thus giving us “a sense of our own identity, of who we are and with whom we ‘belong’” (Hall 3).

Likewise, I propose that business magazines can be seen as an important site for the formation and sustenance of business culture, in the classic anthropological sense of culture as the shared knowledge, values, beliefs, and customs within a community (see Tylor). The Conference Board of Canada, in its 2000 report *Creating High Performance Organizations: Leveraging Women’s Leadership*, identifies the crucial role of workplace culture for women’s advancement: “women executives look beyond the number of women in senior management to culture and attitudes in their assessment of the rate of change” (Orser 6). Gendered assumptions about male and female leaders, for example, have been shown to be both widespread, in reports such as Catalyst’s 2005 *Women “Take Care”, Men “Take Charge”: Stereotyping of U.S. Business Leaders Exposed*, and inimical to executive employment equity (see Ridgeway). Given the continuing low numbers of women at the highest levels of corporate Canada (see the 2010 *Fifth Annual Rosenzweig Report*), the business media’s involvement in corporate culture—as creator, arbiter, or simply distributor—is a subject of contemporary, as well as historic, interest.

While the role of magazines, from homemaking to pornography, in propagating and negotiating various notions about gender has been well explored by feminist media scholars (see Carter; Gill; van Zoonen), business magazines have not received comparable critical scrutiny¹.

Many of the feminist analyses of magazines focus on the representation of women, that is, the ways in which visual and written language-based ‘signs’ are used to generate meanings, the underlying ideological assumptions embedded therein, and the accompanying overt or covert pressure on readers to conform and consume (see Gough-Yates, Korinek, Winship). While I share an interest in the pertinent issues addressed in these studies, they start from a presumption that I cannot: the *presence* of women in the chosen publications, a given, seemingly, for representational analysis. In the case of *Canadian Business* magazine, however, I would argue that the very presence, or lack thereof, of female writers, subjects, and readers conveys representational meaning, as does a significant change in their presence. As prominent sites for the production of “meanings” and cultural identity, business magazines, like other forms of media (Hall 3), create the communities they address. Both the content and the constituents of the magazine are part of that creation.

In this article, therefore, I present data and discuss both quantitative and qualitative findings on women journalists, subjects, and readers in *Canadian Business*, from September 1975-August 1979, two years before and after the ownership change. These findings will be compared with Occupation Data from Census Canada and put into context of other developments associated with the so-called ‘second wave’ feminist movement in Canada in the 1970s. The percentage of women writers and subjects in *Canadian Business* will also be compared with that of *Maclean’s*, a nationally distributed newsmagazine.

The first section of the paper presents the data on *Canadian Business* magazine’s inclusion of women journalists, as writers and editors. The percentage of articles written by women in the 24 months prior to the ownership and design change, in September 1977, is compared with that in the 24 months after. Notable changes in the editorial staff as listed on the

masthead are also highlighted. In the second section, I go on to compare the magazine's inclusion of women as story subjects, before and after September 1977, by analyzing quantitative data on cover stories, profiles, and editorial photographs. The third section focuses on the periodical's inclusion of women readers, by examining the implied audience and gendered language in sample sets of articles from the two 24-month periods. The conclusion brings together these separate analyses and, to help put the size of the late 1970s changes in context, provides a brief overview of women's subsequent presence in *Canadian Business* magazine over the next three decades.

Women journalists

Table 1 shows the number and percentage of articles written by women in the 24 months before (September 1975-August 1977) and after (September 1977-August 1979) the ownership change at *Canadian Business* magazine. Given names, as listed in the Table of Contents and bylines, were used to determine the sex of the writer. Unattributed pieces and those with androgynous bylines (e.g. initials) were not included in the total, unless the writer's sex could be verified through research. The percentage of articles written by women more than tripled after the ownership change.

**Table 1: Number and percentage of articles written by women in
Canadian Business before and after ownership change**

| Dates | articles by women | total signed articles | % |
|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| 09/75 - 08/77 | 21 | 351 | 6.0 |
| 09/77 - 08/79 | 128 | 587 | 21.8 |

Before the design makeover of *Canadian Business* in September 1997, the magazine's editorial content was comprised of regular columns and feature articles. The former were all written by men. After the change, the editorial content consisted of columns (the first woman columnist started in March 1978); feature articles; and two new sections of short, signed pieces: "Business Month" and "Small Business." The new format meant fewer feature length articles (see table 2 below), dropping from an average of 8.9 to 6.5 per issue; however the number of articles with bylines increased from an average of 14.6 to 24.5 per issue.

Table 2 shows the number and percentage of feature stories written by women in the 24 months before and after the ownership change. The percentage of features attributed to women more than doubled.

**Table 2: Number and percentage of feature articles written by women in
Canadian Business before and after ownership change**

| Dates | features by women | total signed features | % |
|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| 09/75 - 08/77 | 21 | 214 | 9.8 |
| 09/77 - 08/79 | 35 | 155 | 22.6 |

New publisher Roy MacLaren, when asked in an interview whether the dramatic increase in women writers at the magazine was a deliberate management strategy, said no but explained that new editor Alexander Ross² contracted contributors based on their writing ability, as much as their business knowledge (personal communication, August 4, 2009). Writers before the change, for example, included contributors such as Donald E. Woolley, “vice president and chief economist, Bankers Trust Company” (26), and Vernon Kakoschke, “operations analyst for Canadian Cannery Limited” (55). Ross replaced these business people with professional journalists, many of whom were women. Well known Canadian journalist Margaret Wente, who went on to edit both *Canadian Business* and *Report on Business* magazines, recollected: “He [Ross] gave a lot of talented people a chance to show what they could do, and that’s a tremendous gift if you’re a young journalist trying to test yourself in the world. He gave me that chance” (qtd. in De Wolf).

Whether deliberate or not, the increase in women writers was clearly highlighted in the magazine. Before the design change, articles written by business professionals were often accompanied by photographs, the caption for which identified the writer’s profession. After Ross became the editor, writers’ photographs no longer accompanied articles. However, the new “Business Monthly” section at the front occasionally included a short piece on that issue’s “Contributors.” Five female *Canadian Business* writers are introduced and photographed in this section, in the 24 months after the change; by contrast, there is just one picture of a male writer during this time: Doug Fetherling, accompanying the announcement of his National Business Writing Award (May 1978).

Canadian Business magazine’s employment of women journalists can be examined in the context of contemporary Occupation Data from Statistics Canada. In Canada as a whole, the

percentage of women journalists showed a significant increase in the 1970s. While the *1971 Census of Canada* indicated that 31.2% of “writers and editors” were female (Canada), by 1981 that number had increased to 42% (Canada, *1981 Census*). In August 1977, *Canadian Business* lagged far behind the Census numbers, even those from six years earlier³. The changes instigated by Alexander Ross helped *Canadian Business* begin to catch up to the national trend and to comparable national magazines like *Maclean’s*, where 30.1% of articles were attributed to women from September 1975-August 1977. In contrast to the increases noted in *Canadian Business* after August 1977, the percentage of stories in *Maclean’s* by women decreased to 27.4% over the same time period, suggesting that this increased hiring of female journalists was not a universal trend in the Canadian magazine industry.

“Writers and editors” are grouped together in the 1971 and 1981 occupation data published by Statistics Canada⁴. In addition to the Table of Contents and bylines, however, it is notable that female names also appear more often and more prominently on the *Canadian Business* masthead (the listing of the magazine’s editorial staff) after the ownership change. In the mastheads appearing in the January 1976 and January 1977 issues, the editor, associate editor, and four of four contributing editors are all male; the assistant editor and editorial assistant are female. By January 1978, the women listed on the masthead include the associate editor, editorial assistant, editorial coordinator, and one of six contributing editors. The January 1979 masthead lists women as two (of three) associate editors, the two editorial assistants, the production artist, and two (of eight) contributing editors.

The mastheads reveal both the increased editorial opportunities for women at *Canadian Business* after the ownership change, and how far the publication had previously lagged behind. The mastheads at *Maclean’s* magazine from 1976-79, for example, show no comparable

increases in the number of women holding key editorial positions. There, however, women's names appear consistently, although always in the minority, as associate editors (later called senior editors) and contributing editors, throughout the four-year period. While female names consistently dominate the "assistant" categories at *Maclean's*, the top three positions of editor, managing editor, and executive editor are exclusively held by men.

Gertrude Robinson discusses the lack of opportunity for women's advancement to top editorial posts in her 1977 article "The Future of Women in the Canadian Media" (128). A contemporary anecdote in Fraser Sutherland's *The Monthly Epic: A History of Canadian Magazines 1789-1989* illustrates the skewed perspective produced by a lack of diversity at the top of the editorial chain of command. Sutherland recounts the unheeded objections of *Maclean's* then sole female associate editor, Joann Webb (who would later join and eventually serve as editor at *Canadian Business*), to an August 1977 cover photo, promoting a story on the metric system, which "depicted an elderly bewildered tailor holding a hand calculator while measuring the bust of an attractive, bikini-class woman" (273). The cover raised the ire of many readers, including a group called Women After Rights (WAR), who tried to accost Editor Peter Newman in his office (Sutherland 273). The possible correlation between the presence of female editors and journalists and the coverage and representation of female subjects in business magazines is a subject I hope to explore in a later study.

Robinson's analysis of the situation for women in Canadian journalism in the late 1970s describes both social and systemic obstacles faced by female journalists. An example of the former were persistent stereotypes about gendered occupations (e.g. 'analytic' male professions vs. 'nurturing' female professions) that limited the number of women who become journalists, through hiring practices and self-selection (125). The latter, systemic, barriers included the

segregation of women journalists into ‘soft’ beats, such as lifestyle and arts, rather than ‘hard’ news departments, such as politics and business. Bucking these trends, under its new editorial direction *Canadian Business* magazine dramatically increased its employment of women to both cover and edit business news, in the late 1970s. Indeed, by September 1980, *Canadian Business* would go on to appoint a female editor⁵.

Women subjects

Three methods were used to assess *Canadian Business* magazine's coverage of women in business before and after the ownership change. First, the content of each issue's cover story was analyzed to quantify the inclusion of men and women as subjects and sources. Second, all profile articles that focus on an individual(s) were counted, including i) individual profiles, ii) company profiles in which specific people (such as the CEO or owner) are prominently discussed, and iii) profession profiles that include particular individuals. Third, named individuals in photographs accompanying editorial content were counted.

Women in cover stories

The Global Media Monitoring Project's coding tool⁶ was adapted to analyze the people included in the cover stories from September 1975 to August 1979. Each person who appears in the article was counted and classified by sex and by his or her primary function in the story. The four functions used for this paper (adapted from the GMMP system) were: major/minor subject; spokesperson; expert or commentator; personal experience commentator. Until August 1977, just one story was featured on the cover; the covers thereafter showcased a number of stories from the issue, but with one story made prominent, through larger font and an illustration. Pursuant to the discussion of women writers above, three of the 23 signed cover stories from September

1975-August 1977 were attributed to female writers; women wrote or co-wrote six of the 24 cover stories from September 1977-August 1979. Table 3 shows the number and percentage of women in cover stories before and after the ownership change.

Table 3: Number and percentage of women in *Canadian Business* magazine cover stories before and after ownership change

| Dates | women | total people | % |
|----------------------|--------------|---------------------|------------|
| 09/75 - 08/77 | 2 | 75 | 2.6 |
| 09/77 - 08/79 | 5 | 128 | 3.9 |

Although the increase in women in cover stories is small, the more prominent function of the women in the later articles is also notable. The two women who appear in stories before the ownership change are Patty Hearst and Beryl Plumptre. Hearst is mentioned at the start of an article on electronic surveillance; her image (included in the issue, see below) captured on CCTV toting a machine gun is credited by the writer with doing “more to focus attention on electronic security equipment than all the sales presentations in the past year” (Parry 24). While her function is coded as minor subject, infamous celebrity hook is a more accurate description of her role in the story. Plumptre, a former vice-chair of the Anti-Inflation Board, is quoted in an October 1976 critique of the federal government’s negative impact on Canadian economic performance (Linnell 13). Plumptre, a minor subject, is the only woman quoted in these 24 stories; by contrast, 57 men are quoted therein, in their functions as subjects, spokespeople, and commentators.

In the two years after the ownership change, five women appear in cover stories: expert commentator Rosemary Christensen, a lawyer and film producer (Dzeguze 47); an unnamed “female bank employee” quoted as a personal experience commentator in a March 1978 story on

executive stress (Base 69); and, Jackie Taylor, Mary Proctor Barr, and Aline Smolensky, in a June 1979 story on entrepreneurs (Eamer 98). The latter three function as the major subjects (along with six men) of their cover stories. The number of women quoted also increased slightly: to four, a continuingly negligible number compared to the 107 quotations from male sources.

Women in profiles

There are 11 profile articles in the 24 issues before the ownership change; nine of these profile individuals, while two are business profiles which include a substantial discussion of an individual important to those companies. Of the nine individuals profiled, four were prominent politicians, such as Joe Clark and Rene Lesvesque. The businesspeople profiled include an executive photographer (in the September 1975 issue), the new Executive Director of the Canadian Manufacturers Association (in March 1976), and Claude Taylor, Air Canada's new CEO (Schiele "Rebuilding" 13). The 11 individual subjects of these profiles are all men.

As seen in the substantial increase in the number of people and quotations in the cover stories, Alexander Ross held firm to his "editorial conviction" to personalize the magazine, making people central to the content and shifting the emphasis away from its former impersonal analyses of industries, trends, government relations, etc. Accordingly, there was a more than tenfold increase in the number of profiles in the 24 issues after the ownership change: from 11 to 133 profile articles. Individuals are the main subject of 119 of these articles, ranging from single shopkeepers to tycoons. Ten articles (compared to two, before the change) tell the story of an individual company, including a substantial discussion of an individual important to the business, such as the June 1978 piece on Canada Dry and its president, John Bull (Fetherling 66). Four professions are the subject of feature articles during this time, such as the September 1977 story

“The Consultant as Cowboy,” in which six consultants are profiled (Ross 37); as implied by the gendered term “cowboy” in the title, all six are male.

While 40 of these 133 profiles are feature articles, more than two-thirds (93) are found in the new sections of short articles “Business Month” and “Small Business.” With the exception of features in which multiple people are profiled (e.g. the June 1979 cover story on entrepreneurs noted above), the profiles of women are found in either the “Business Month” or “Small Business” sections of the magazine. As table 4 shows, of the 188 individuals profiled in these 133 articles, 16 are women.

Table 4: Number and percentage of women in *Canadian Business* profile articles before and after ownership change

| Dates | Women in profiles | Total subjects in profiles | % |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|
| 09/75 - 08/77 | 0 | 11 | 0 |
| 09/77 - 08/79 | 16 | 188 | 8.5 |

Although 8.5 is still a small percentage, any amount over zero is obviously an improvement.

Women in photographs

Table 5 shows the number of female subjects, the total number of named photographic subjects and the resulting percentages for 24 months before and after the change in ownership. Hand-drawn illustrations, unnamed subjects, and advertisements were not included in the count, and neither were pictures of *Canadian Business* writers (see discussion above on women journalists).

Table 5: Number and percentage of female photograph subjects in *Canadian Business* before and after ownership change

| Dates | Photos of women | Total photographic subjects | % |
|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|------------|
| 09/75 - 08/77 | 1 | 106 | 0.9 |
| 09/77 - 08/79 | 24 | 322 | 7.5 |

The lone female photograph subject in the first sample is Patty Hearst. After the ownership change, the total number of photographed subjects more than tripled. The female professionals pictured included small business owners, a financial analyst, a realtor (profiled as one of Canada's six top salespeople), the vice president of an Alberta gas company, the manager of the Retail Council of Canada, and an economist (one of five invited to make predictions for 1979).

Taken together the three measures discussed here show a clear increase in the inclusion of women as story subjects in *Canadian Business* after the ownership change. Their heightened *presence* is important because it alters the composition of the 'community' *represented* in the magazine, through the interplay of 'signs' (text and pictures), content (what Stuart Hall labels "things" from the "real" world (19)), and readers' interpretations. The conceptual 'community' created in the magazine is no longer the almost exclusively male enclave which it was before September 1977. Nevertheless, 3.9 percent of people in cover stories, 8.5 percent of profiled individuals, and 7.5 percent of photographic subjects is still a small presence. In *Maclean's* magazine during this same 24 month time period, by comparison, 20.4 percent of identified

photographic subjects were female and women accounted for 17.5 percent of individuals (subjects and quoted sources) in cover stories.

In the same year as the findings of the Special Senate Committee on the Mass Media were published, 1970, the Canadian Royal Commission on the Status of Women published its own highly anticipated report. One of the explicitly stated principles underlying its 167 recommendations was that “women should be free to choose whether or not to take employment outside their homes” (Canada, Royal Commission xii). Census Canada data shows that women were indeed increasingly choosing employment outside their homes, accounting for 37.8 percent of the workforce by 1976, up from just 22 percent at the mid-century census of 1951 (Canada *Canada’s Female*). A Statistics Canada publication titled *Canada’s Female Labour Force* points out that the actual number of women in the workforce more than doubled in the fifteen years prior to the 1976 census (Canada). More pertinent to *Canadian Business* magazine’s targeted audience, 15.6 percent of managers were female at the time of the 1971 census (Canada); by 1981 the number had increased to 21.4 percent (Canada *1981 Census*). The Canadian Association of Women Executives, still active today⁷, was formed in 1975 (Black 173). The *Canadian Business* data indicates both the significant gains in the magazine’s coverage of women as subjects, under the new owners, and the ongoing need for further and increased coverage to reflect changes in the workforce, and especially in the managerial audience to which the magazine addressed itself.

Women readers

As the census data indicates, the management audience *Canadian Business* targeted increasingly included women; but did the magazine itself acknowledge and include women when

it directly addressed that audience in the 1970s? While quantitative data was useful to measure the changing numbers of female journalists and subjects in the publication, a qualitative approach is required to ascertain the inclusion of female readers. Using reader-response criticism's notion of the implied reader as a hypothetical or virtual reader, embedded in and constructed by the text itself (see Prince, Tompkins), this section of the paper examines the pronouns and terminology in samples of how-to articles from before and after the ownership change, to see if the implied readership is gendered. The gendering of the implied readers is important because readers, both implied and 'real,' are key constituents of the cultural community created by the magazine; gender could thus be seen as a criteria for inclusion or exclusion, of oneself and others, in that conceptual community.

How-to articles were chosen because the commonplace use therein of second person pronouns and the imperative voice (e.g., "you should...", "do.../do not...") speaks directly to the implied reader. A random number generator was used to select ten how-to stories from each of the two 24-issue samples. The number of these types of instructive articles decreased with the design change (from 66 features to 40 mostly short articles), as the publication shifted away from its formerly pedagogical tone.

How-to articles in the first 24-month sample include pieces such as "Are you your employees' worst enemy?" (Richardson 33), "How's your TV image?" (Law and Queenan 44), and "Make your management style flexible" (Martin and Edginton 84). One of these ten articles was written by a woman.

As noted above, the gender-neutral second person pronoun ("you", "your") is used frequently in instructional articles. However, when the second person pronoun is immediately followed by a masculine pronoun, as happens frequently in these articles, "you," the implied

reader, is constructed as male, as in this example from a September 1976 article on “How to cope with inter-personal conflicts”: “Experts advise: don't let the heat of battle cause *you* to do things which will damage *your* reputation or make permanent enemies... The boss who is generally fair in *his* judgment may be tempted to discriminate or use psychological brass knuckles under stress” (Cuthill 92, emphasis added). The quotation also resonates with masculine connotations, through the metaphorical references to war and aggression (“heat of battle” and “brass knuckles”), echoing gendered imagery which proliferates in business writing (see Koller). Likewise, writer Joe Kelly in another how-to article describes the “classical manager” as “tough” and “paternal” (“Classical” 57).

Gendered language is also seen in these pieces in the common usage of terms such as “businessman,” “salesman,” “spokesman,” and phrases like “the new man,” “the key man,” and “the one man/one boss approach to management” (Martin and Edginton 84). A typical instance of the commonplace use of the so-called “gender neutral *man*” is seen in this March 1976 article on management style, in which Martin and Edginton report: “The findings on synergy suggest that in a stable environment decision-making is best made in upper levels by one man” (88). However, that *man* is, indeed, often gendered male in these pieces is made clear in the following passage, which again incorporates violent imagery:

Management consultants to top Canadian business executives report that in business a man must take his licks without complaining, and act as though the outcome was exactly what he wished. He may later tell his wife that he got a rotten deal, but around the shop it's unacceptable to sulk. (Cuthill “How to” 90-1).

Likewise, while a February 1976 story on television appearances specifically includes women in its clothing and make-up advice (Law and Queenan 45-6), Joe Kelly’s July 1977 piece on “How

to play the interviewing game” signals male implied readers in the instructions “The best bet is wear a suit, white shirt, dark tie...” (42). Tellingly, also, is Kelly’s closing reminder to always address the interviewer as “sir” (44).

Robin Schiele, editor of the magazine before the ownership change, expressed his view on gendered grammar and style in his March 1977 column:

Now, I have had some sympathy for the women in the work force who have complained about the discrimination against them by business (though I hasten to add that I think the mauling of the English language in an attempt to avoid discrimination often borders on the ludicrous.) (“Off the Cuff” 4)

To avoid, presumably, such mauling of the language, the publication consistently uses only masculine pronouns (“he”, “his”) after generic nouns, such as the following: president, chief executive, boss, worker, individual, manager, subordinate, employee, business owner, financial advisor, applicant, etc. The argument that this so-called “generic he” is meant to be read as ungendered is untenable, however, in the face of the ubiquitous use of feminine pronouns after the generic noun “secretary.” The sample includes just two instances of alternative pronouns, both in the same article: co-writers Bobele and Buchanan use “their” following “the worker’s” (22 *sic*, i.e. the “singular they”), and “he or she” following the generic antecedent “person” (24); notably, they elsewhere in the same piece use a feminine pronoun for “secretary” and repeatedly use masculine pronouns after “a manager” (24).

In summary, this analysis of pronouns gendered terminology in the sample of how-to articles published in the 24 months before the ownership change suggests that the implied readership is specifically and exclusively male. Female readers looking for advice would thus be shut out of what cultural studies critics call the “dominant hegemonic” reader position, in which

one understands and accepts “the message conveyed by a text,” and must take up instead either a “negotiated” reader position of understanding but not applying the message to oneself, or, perhaps, an “oppositional” position of understanding but rejecting a message and/or its underlying assumptions (Lacey 88-9). While a rejection of the notion that all business people are male seems welcome, it is only female readers who are placed in the oppositional position by the gendered pronouns and language.

How-to articles in the second 24-month sample include titles such as, “Banking without fear” (Lilley 72), “Making time” (Barrett 94), and “How to fight the skip-work crisis” (Kendall 118). Two of the ten articles in this sample were written or co-written by women. New editor Alexander Ross appears to share Robin Schiele’s editorial stance on discriminating grammar, as masculine pronouns continue to be the norm after generic antecedents, including: manager, executive, boss, client, customer, owner, buyer, banker, employee, worker, etc. The feminine pronoun (generic she) is found only after “secretary,” as in the following: “The secretary’s role is to help *her* boss achieve *his* objectives” (Barrett 96, emphasis added). Mixed pronouns appear twice in the sample: “she (or he)” after the antecedent “your secretary” (Barrett 96), and “his (or her)” after the generic noun “a manager” (Cuthill “Why nice” 34).

The subsequently masculinized second person pronoun is less common than in the previous sample but still evident in passages such as “you must listen—*really listen*—to what your kids and other around you say about your father-child relationships” (Burke and Weir 54). This quotation comes from a story with a gender-specific title, “The Sad Failure of Executive Dad,” and dek, “Why good managers make lousy fathers” (Burke and Weir 51).

The second sample is also replete with masculine terms such as “salesman,” “career man,” “corporate man,” and gendered phrases like “the man who hired you” (Tennant 42), “it

happens to the best of men” (Palter 105), and “the owner or his wife” (Lilley 104). Another example which indicates that the implied managerial audience is male comes from this January 1978 story, titled “Why Nice Guys Make Bad Bosses”: “You can often tell a dictator from a coach simply by the way a man drives his car or drinks his whiskey” (Cuthill 34). The same article includes the statement: “*Show us a boss who is nice, they say, and we’ll show you a man who’s afraid of his own power*” (Cuthill 33, italics in original). As in the previous sample, the most inclusive article concerns not managerial strategy, but appearance. In humorous piece on inappropriate work-wear, titled “How to dress like a loser,” Alexander Ross includes “one simple rule for both sexes: don’t look sexy” (Ross 83). The “Saturday Night Fever Look” from which this quotation comes is the only section of six (others include “The Columbo Look” and “The Mafioso Look”) which offers advice for women. Notably, however, Ross does use the term “business person” in this article (82). He is the only writer in this sample to deviate from the otherwise ubiquitous “businessman.”

The discrepancy is clearly striking between the significant increases seen in the quantitative data on women journalists and subjects, and the persistence of the gendered status quo revealed in this qualitative analysis of implied readers. The effect here is contradictory, with women obviously welcomed as journalists, increasingly included as subjects, but still seldom addressed or acknowledged as readers, and hence full members of the business community conceptualized here. This lack of change may speak to the reactionary nature of written English grammar and entrenched editorial positions, like that articulated by Schiele and seemingly followed by Ross, that style must not be sacrificed to inclusivity. However, even taking the most conservative view of magazines as not shapers but merely reflectors of the issues and subjects they write about, the new owners of *Canadian Business* missed an opportunity, in the late 1970s,

to implement a timely stylistic and presumptive shift, one that would have been complementary, furthermore, to the changes seen in content and contributors.

Conclusion

By 1975, the UN's International Women's Year, the 'second wave' of the women's movement in Canada was well underway. The need for change was articulated in the 1970 report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, and advocated for by groups such as Voice of Women, la Fédération des femmes du Québec, and the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (Black 171-72). Indeed, a minority report from a "radical caucus" at NAC's founding convention, in 1972, called specifically for "all-women media crews" (Black 167). *Canadian Business* magazine, while under the auspices of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, had not caught the wave. While boasting to potential advertisers in June 1977 that it "reaches more than 47% of the total mid and senior management universe," ("Why is" 87), the important changes underway in the makeup of that "universe" were in no way reflected in its coverage thereof. The positive effects of the radical redesign that accompanied the ownership transfer in 1977 certainly helped to redress the hitherto sexist imbalance of the publication. While the increased inclusion of women did not extend to implied readers, and continued to lag behind reported national statistics, the vast improvements must be acknowledged.

The sudden upsurge in the presence of women in both bylines and headlines in the late 1970s is all the more impressive when seen in context of the subsequent decades. The percentage of articles written by women made a modest increase during the decade following; an average of 24.5% of stories were attributed to women in the three years from 1987-89. However, from 1997-99 just 20% of articles were written by women, a smaller amount than two decades earlier⁸.

While the percentage of *Canadian Business* stories written by women recovered in recent years, at 26.1% in 2007-09, the increase has never been as dramatic as it was in the late 1970s, as table 6 below shows. Meanwhile, Statistics Canada data indicates that women have accounted for at least 45% of journalists since 1986.

Table 6: Average % of *Canadian Business* articles written by women compared with Census Canada data 1975-2009

| Date | Average percentage of articles written by women | Census Canada data on writers & editors (1971-86) → journalists (1996 - 2006) |
|----------------------|--|--|
| 09/75 - 08/77 | 6.0% | 31.2% female (1971 Census) |
| 09/77 - 08/79 | 21.8% | 42% female (1981 Census) |
| 1987 - 89 | 24.5% | 45.8% female (1986 Census) |
| 1997 - 99 | 20% | 47.8% female (1996 Census) |
| 2007 - 09 | 26.1% | 45.1% female (2006 Census) |

While a full analysis of the inclusion of women as journalists, story subjects, and readers over the past three decades is beyond the scope of this paper, a quick editorial photograph count (using the same criteria outlined above), suggests that for female subjects, too, the gains made at the end of the 1970s have never been duplicated. As seen in table 7 below, while the percentage of female managers continues to slowly rise, the percentage of female photograph subjects in *Canadian Business* has been steady near 13.5% since 1987.

Table 7: Average percentage of female photographic subjects in *Canadian Business* compared with Census Canada data 1975-2009

| Date | Average percentage of female photographic subjects | Census Canada data on managerial & management occupations⁹ |
|----------------------|---|--|
| 09/75 - 08/77 | 0.9% | 15.6% female (1971 Census) |
| 09/77 - 08/79 | 7.5% | 21.4% female (1981 Census) |
| 1987 - 89 | 13.6% | 28.0% female (1986 Census) |
| 1997 - 99 | 13.5% | 31.7% female (1996 Census) |
| 2007 - 09 | 13.5% | 36.7% female (2006 Census) |

By contrast, the one element which showed no change after the ownership transfer in 1977, reader inclusivity, has seen steady improvements over the past three decades, to near complete equity. Masculine titles, such as salesman, have been replaced with gender neutral alternatives. The “generic he” pronoun has gradually given way to either the combination “he or she” or the increasingly popular “singular they.” The implied audience includes women now, with female readers deliberately acknowledged. The 1970s businessmen, both subjects and readers, have become business people, but not all of those business people receive equal, or even proportional, coverage.

This close-up look at the inclusion of women in *Canadian Business* in the late 1970s reveals that in addition to their acknowledged accomplishment in transforming the publication, the new owners – and especially editor Alexander Ross – deserve credit for significantly increasing the presence of women in the magazine, as journalists and subjects, if not as readers. The very presence of more women writers and subjects changes the concept of the corporate ‘community’ the magazine covers and creates, both within the publication and, perhaps, without. As Stuart Hall reminds us, shared cultural meanings “are not only ‘in the head’. They organize and regulate social practices, influence our conduct and consequently have real, practical effects” (3). The immediate surge in stories by and about women, evident in the 24 months after the ownership change, speaks to the power of editorial leadership to make a difference, in this case to both female journalists and to the perception of women in business, by expanding the concept of the business ‘community’ to include more women. The data from subsequent decades both highlights the new partnership’s impressive accomplishment in this area in the late 1970s, and underscores the need for a similarly dramatic infusion today, for women to have an equitable

presence both in this flagship periodical of Canadian business journalism and in business in Canada.

Notes

1. Veronika Koller does a critical discourse analysis of metaphors in American and British business magazine features in her article “Businesswomen and war metaphors: ‘Possessive, jealous and pugnacious’”.
2. Alexander Ross died in 1993.
3. Unlike 1971 and 1981, the 1976 census did not break down occupation data by sex.
4. Starting in 1996, the former “Occupations in Writing” category, in which “Writers and editors” were grouped together, was renamed “Writing, translating and public relations professionals,” with subdivisions between writers, editors, and journalists (*Canada 1996 Census*).
5. Margaret Wente served as editor from September 1980 to July 1984. Joann Webb, the second of just two female editors at *Canadian Business*, held the post from March 1987 to April 1989.
6. My thanks to the Global Media Monitoring Project for allowing me to use and adapt its coding tool. GMMP codes people into seven functions: subject, spokesperson, expert or commentator, personal experience, eye witness, popular opinion. See: www.whomakesthenews.org for full information about their coding tool and important work.
7. Now called The Canadian Association of Women Executives and Entrepreneurs.
8. This decline is at odds with Gertrude Robinson’s data on newspaper subject assignments over the same time period: She lists “business” as one of eight newsroom beats that go from being male dominated (74% male) in her 1975 survey to balanced assignments in her 1995 survey (*Gender, Journalism, Equity* 41).

9. The percentage calculations are based on the data for “managers and administrators” from the 1971, 1981, and 1986 censuses, including government, but excluding the “related occupations” category. The “related occupations” group was relocated from “Management occupations” to “Business, finance, and administrative occupations,” starting with the 1996 Census. The “Management occupations” category was used for the 1996 and 2006 calculations.

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