Contingencies of *Wacousta*'s Value: Revaluation, Reproduction, and Retroactive Invalidation

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Canada's geographical position on the far edge of the British Empire and the northern edge of the United States was a major factor in the publishing history of early colonial texts, many of which were pirated in the United States due to the exclusion of foreign authors from American copyright before 1891.¹ John Richardson's 1832 novel *Wacousta* is one such text, as its piracy in *Waldie's Select Circulating Library* in 1833 was a determining factor in the text's history. Waldie's abridged and altered text, a derivation of which served as the copy-text for the 1967 New Canadian Library (NCL) edition of *Wacousta* edited by Carl Klinck, was later seen by Mary Jane Edwards, the general editor of the Centre for Editing Early Canadian Texts (CEEECT), and by Douglas Cronk, editor of the CEEECT edition of *Wacousta*, as "bad" and "textually corrupt." Cronk, for example, considered the Musson copy-text derived from the Waldie edition to be "the most textually corrupt of all the textually corrupt and unauthorized editions of Richardson's novel" and "the most corrupt copy-text that could have been chosen" for the NCL's 1967 edition.² Cronk's CEEECT edition of *Wacousta*, published in 1987, undertook to remedy these perceived corruptions. It sought to "provide the reader with an unabridged text that reflects as perfectly as possible the author's known intentions,"³ using the first edition as copy-text.

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¹ See Meredith L. McGill, *American Literature and the Culture of Reprinting, 1834–1853* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003) for a comprehensive examination of the way a national mass market for books in antebellum America was built and sustained through piracy of foreign works.

² Mary Jane Edwards, "Early Canadian Literature in English: A Survey and a Challenge," *College English* 51, no. 5 (1989): 508–16 (514); Douglas Cronk, "The Editorial Destruction of Canadian Literature: A Textual Study of Major John Richardson's *Wacousta*; or, *The Prophecy*" (master's thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1977), 1–2, 56.

³ Douglas Cronk, "Editor's Introduction," in *Wacousta; or, The Prophecy: a Tale of the Canadas*, by John Richardson, Centre for Editing Early Canadian Texts 4 (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1987), xvii–lvi (xlvii).

The legitimacy of this attempt to restore the novel to an ideal state based on authorial intention has recently been critiqued by Dean Irvine, who points out how much unauthorized editions reveal about the instability of the colonial text, asserting that “[t]o say that the London edition fully manifests Richardson’s intentions is to ignore its textual history, not least its mediation by multiple non-authorial intentionalities.”⁴ The divergence of editorial positions on *Wacousta* evinced by Waldie, Klinck, Cronk, and Irvine suggests that the text has been evaluated by different criteria over time, as its perceived purpose or use value changes. This paper uses Barbara Herrnstein Smith’s comprehensive explanation of the interrelation of need or desire, perceived functionality, and evaluation of literary objects to explain the process by which editions of *Wacousta* that were well suited to the particular needs of certain subjects have been devalued by others with different needs and functional expectations. Viewed through this lens of value contingency, the enduring value of *Wacousta* clearly appears to be the result of persistent revaluations and editorial reproductions of the text according to new purposes, accompanied by a retroactive invalidation of the editorial models, purposes, and evaluations of previous editions. Approaching *Wacousta* in terms of value contingency follows Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, Stanley Fish, and others in extending textual meaning-making to shifting audiences and challenging the romantic construction of single-author intentionality.

Wacousta was first published by T. Cadell of London and W. Blackwood of Edinburgh in three volumes in 1832. Adam Waldie pirated the novel in serial form in his “New, Cheap, and Popular Periodical,” *Waldie’s Select Circulating Library*, in four instalments between 16 April and 7 May 1833.⁵ In this edition, Richardson’s novel was edited and abridged in ways specifically intended to make the work more appealing to an American audience. For this “first

⁴ Dean Irvine, “Editing Archives] Archiving Editions,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 40, no. 2 (2006): 183–215 (189).

⁵ In fact, *Wacousta* appeared in the *Waldie’s Select Circulating Library* twice, the second impression stemming from the same setting of type as the first; this series ran concurrently with the first. Douglas Cronk, “The Americanization of *Wacousta*,” in *Recovering Canada’s First Novelist: Proceedings from the John Richardson Conference*, ed. Catherine Sheldrick Ross (Erin, ON: Porcupine’s Quill, 1984), 33–48 (34). William F.E. Morley speculates that “Possibly the number of subscriptions exceeded anticipation and a new series was produced to satisfy the demand.” William F.E. Morley, *A Bibliographical Study of Major John Richardson* (Toronto: Bibliographical Society of Canada, 1973), 67–68.

American edition" of the novel,⁶ either Waldie or his editor, John Jay Smith, cut somewhere between fifteen and twenty thousand words from the novel's one hundred and seventy-five thousand, changing its political orientation, language, and characterization.⁷ As Cronk notes, "[r]eferences to Canada and Canadians, passages of patriotic enthusiasm, [and] historical references that did not show Americans in a favourable light" were removed.⁸ The first clear change of this nature is the subtitle: Richardson's original "a Tale of the Canadas" was removed in favour of "a Tale of Detroit and Michillimackinac." The introductory chapter, in which Richardson gives a detailed description of the geographical and political setting, was also heavily edited. Turns of phrase in which the original used "we" to denote the British or British Canadians are changed to "the British," so that an American audience may more readily identify with the text.⁹ As Cronk has pointed out, not only references to British Canada, but also portions of the text which complicated the characters of, most notably, Wacousta and de Haldimar, were excised in the Waldie edition, presumably in order to streamline the plot. Such omitted passages included revelations of Wacousta's more reflective, emotional side, such as a passage in which he describes his former self to Clara.¹⁰ In the Waldie edition, Wacousta is a less sympathetic character, and his exoticism is more pronounced. Richardson's emphasis on de Haldimar's integrity and honour is likewise lost in the Waldie edition, in which de Haldimar appears an "arrogant, unbending, unemotional villain."¹¹

These changes can be read as reflections of an alteration of the function of Richardson's text, a change affecting perceptions of its value. To clarify this idea, I turn to Barbara Herrnstein Smith's "Contingencies of Value," a 1983 essay that foregrounds the notion of functionality in literary evaluation. "Of particular significance for the

⁶ Note to the first American edition of *Wacousta; or, the Prophecy: A Tale of Detroit and Michillimackinac*, Waldie's *Select Circulating Library*, 16 April 1833, 209–70 (209).

⁷ Cronk, "The Americanization of *Wacousta*," 36; Cronk, "Editor's Introduction," xxix.

⁸ Cronk, "Editor's Introduction," xxix.

⁹ For an expanded discussion of the changes Waldie made to the Canadian context of the novel see Cronk, "The Americanization of *Wacousta*," 44–46.

¹⁰ John Richardson, *Wacousta; or, The Prophecy: a Tale of the Canadas* (London: Cadell; Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1832), 3: 221–22, Early Canadiana Online.

¹¹ Cronk, "Editor's Introduction," xxx; Cronk, "The Americanization of *Wacousta*," 41.

value of ‘works of art’ and ‘literature,’” she writes, “is the interactive relation between the classification of an entity and the functions it is expected or desired to perform. In perceiving an object or artifact in terms of some category – as, for example, ‘a clock,’ ‘a dictionary,’ ‘a doorstep,’ ‘a curio’ – we implicitly isolate and foreground certain of its possible functions and typically refer its value to the extent to which it performs those functions more or less effectively.”¹²

The 1832 Cadell and Blackwood edition was classified as a novel written from the perspective of a Canadian in Britain, and was evaluated on its ability to perform the function of, among other things, promoting British colonial nationalism among British and Canadian audiences. As Cronk himself observes, Waldie was aware of a very different audience for the *Wacousta* that would appear in *Waldie’s Select Circulating Library*: “an American, anti-British, and Puritanical audience.”¹³ Once classified by Waldie as a popular serial publication, the function *Wacousta* was expected to perform changed to one of entertaining Americans and eliciting subscriptions for the periodical. That Waldie’s editing was intended to enable the performance of this new function seems confirmed by his remarks in the introduction to *Memoirs of Dr. Burney* regarding his practice of taking “the liberty of omitting” sections of texts from the British edition “that would be entirely uninteresting beyond the precincts of Great Britain.”¹⁴

Contemporary reviews and advertisements of *Wacousta* reflect the extent to which the value of each edition of the novel hinged on the different functions it was expected to perform. A review in the British journal *The Satirist* in December 1832 noted the charm with which the writer of this “Tale of the Canadas” “occupied the new ground” of North America, and with which he “described [its] localities and the incidents to which they give rise.” Richardson’s ability to weave Britain’s military history in Canada and the geographical details of the area into his novel formed the basis of this review’s conclusion that *Wacousta* is “one of the most delightful stories that has issued from the press for some time.”¹⁵ A review in the London *Athenaeum* in the same month tied the value of Richardson’s London novel even more

¹² Barbara Herrnstein Smith, “Contingencies of Value,” in “Canons,” special issue, *Critical Inquiry* 10, no. 1 (1983): 1–35 (13).

¹³ Cronk, “The Americanization of *Wacousta*,” 44.

¹⁴ Introduction to *Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, *Waldie’s Select Circulating Library*, 18 June 1833, 145.

¹⁵ Literature, *The Satirist; or, the Censor of the Times*, 30 December 1832, 424.

closely to its representation of “the many exertions, both of valour and prudence, by which the Canadas were secured to England.”¹⁶ By contrast, American reviews based their evaluations of the *Wacousta* they read on the novel’s ability to entertain. An 1851 announcement in the New York *Daily Tribune* of the recent publication of the Dewitt and Davenport *Wacousta* (an edition based on Waldie’s)¹⁷ proclaimed the novel “the best Romance of the day,”¹⁸ while an 1851 Hartford publication notice for *Matilda Montgomery*¹⁹ described Richardson as an author skilled at choosing, multiplying, and arranging incidents, but one who “fails in conciseness and condensation.”²⁰ Interestingly, early Canadian reviewers exhibited the same focus on the work’s literary nationalism that later scholars and editors like Cronk would emphasize. In March 1839, Montreal’s *Literary Garland* published a chapter of the forthcoming *Canadian Brothers*, along with a notice of appreciation for the permission to do so. This expression of appreciation saw the sequel to *Wacousta* and its potential Canadian publication as ushering in “an epoch in our history, well deserving of record in [the] annals” of Canadian national literature – an epoch the reviewer was optimistic about, due to “the host of authors of eminence at present among us.”²¹ These reviews clearly indicate the link between function and value perception, as each one justifies a particular evaluation of *Wacousta* through references to the text’s ability to perform expected functions.

Herrnstein Smith also reminds us that the process by which the function of a literary work dictates its value is not one-way, but interactive: “the relation between function and classification also operates in reverse.” Expanding on her previous examples of the relationship between perceived function and value for a clock,

¹⁶ “Wacousta; or, The Prophecy – A Tale of the Canadas,” *Athenaeum*, 29 December 1832, 837–38 (837).

¹⁷ For a description of additional changes made in the Dewitt and Davenport edition see Cronk, “The Americanization of *Wacousta*,” 35.

¹⁸ Just Published, *New York Daily Tribune*, 26 February 1851.

¹⁹ *Matilda Montgomery* is a shortened and slightly different version of the 1840 edition of *The Canadian Brothers*, the sequel to *Wacousta*, which was printed from a copy Richardson had slightly altered. Donald Stephens, “Editor’s Introduction,” in *The Canadian Brothers; or, The Prophecy Fulfilled, A Tale of the Late American War*, by John Richardson, Centre for Editing Early Canadian Texts 9 (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1992), xvii–lxxxii (lxxi).

²⁰ New Publications, *Hartford Daily Courant*, 23 September 1851, 2.

²¹ “To the courtesy of the author, we are indebted...,” *The Literary Garland*, 1 March 1839, 192.

dictionary, doorstep, and curio, she explains that “under conditions that produce the ‘need’ for a door-stopping object or an ‘interest’ in Victorian artifacts, certain properties and possible functions of various objects in the neighborhood will be foregrounded, and both the classification and value of those objects will follow accordingly. As we commonly put it, one will ‘realize’ the value of the dictionary as a doorstep or ‘appreciate’ the value of the clock as a curio.”²²

We can read this reverse process in action in the editorial choices made by Waldie to change Richardson’s text into an Americanized potboiler. Because there was a need or desire for cheap, entertaining local colour in the American literary market of the period, Waldie “realized” the value of *Wacousta* in terms of its entertainment value and transferability to an American consciousness, and emphasized these aspects of the text while altering it to fit the format of his cheap periodical. This recognition adds important context to Cronk’s lament that Americans, unlike Canadians, “were quick to see the value of Richardson’s work.”²³ The work Americans valued was a textually different one performing different functions than the British edition.

The Waldie serial was to be the basis for all other reprints of *Wacousta* for many years, including the first American book edition, published by Key and Biddle in 1833, the 1851 Dewitt and Davenport edition mentioned above, and the Musson edition of 1924, which became the copy-text for the NCL edition of 1967 (NCL no. 58). The NCL was a self-consciously canon-creating venture imbued with the liberal humanist nationalism common to Canadian critics of the middle decades of the twentieth century.²⁴ It was also, however, a series within a financially insecure publishing house which

²² Herrnstein Smith, “Contingencies of Value,” 13.

²³ Cronk, “The Americanization of *Wacousta*,” 34.

²⁴ “Liberal humanist nationalism” is Paul Litt’s term for the type of cultural nationalism represented by Canada’s mid-twentieth-century elites. In this conflicted ideology, the liberal humanist appreciation of cosmopolitan high culture was coupled with a romantic nationalist valorization of the popular and nation-specific. Paul Litt, “Liberal Humanist Nationalism,” in *The Muses, The Masses, and the Massey Commission* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 104–120. As Janet Friskney points out, the tension between aesthetic merit and nationalist authenticity runs throughout the history of the NCL, and was a clear influence on Malcolm Ross, who included certain titles in the series for “extra-aesthetic” reasons, and believed that the NCL had contributed to “the self-knowledge of Canadians, even if such self-knowledge has not always flattered self-pride.” Janet B. Friskney, *New Canadian Library: The Ross-McClelland Years, 1952–1978* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 13.

sought, primarily, to bring back out-of-print Canadian works in an inexpensive format suitable for students of Canadian literature. The two functions NCL titles were expected to perform – the promotion of Canadian literature, on the one hand, and the provision of cheap, practical texts to students in particular, on the other – often conflicted with one another. This was the case with the 1967 NCL edition of *Wacousta* edited by Carl Klinck.

The affordability of this edition, which sold for two dollars and fifty cents in 1967, is foregrounded on the front cover, where “\$2.50” is printed in type about half the size of the title, next to the words “New Canadian Library,” which appears in type of the same size. The fact that the text was abridged is mentioned on neither the front nor back cover; rather, the words “an abridged edition” appear on the title-page. Neither this identifier nor the small paragraph on the copyright page, which insists that all necessary rewriting in this abridgement is based on “Richardson’s own words” and is in keeping with “the sense of the original,” indicates the extent of the textual alteration, which was considerable. Compared to the original three-volume set numbering 903 pages in total, this one-volume NCL *Wacousta* numbers 298 pages.²⁵ Many of the alterations to this edition were carry-overs from Klinck’s chosen copy-text. Klinck had decided on the Musson text because his investigations indicated that it was a complete version of Richardson’s original, though in 1977 Klinck became aware that this edition was in fact not complete but rather based on Waldie’s abridgement.²⁶ This choice of copy-text ensured that the political and geographical decontextualizations and character simplifications first made by Waldie would reoccur in the 1967 NCL edition. Klinck then added to the changes that already existed in a number of ways; for instance, his edition excises the contextualizing introductory chapter altogether, in favour of Richardson’s introduction to the 1851 Dewitt and Davenport edition. Klinck also added to the entertainment-value edits made to the Musson copy-text by further altering the text for “the modern reader,” through the removal of overly romantic language, characterizations, and whole passages. Most of the omissions, he explained, were made “where Richardson presented a major happening from several points

²⁵ It should be noted that type size, typeface, and layout choices also contribute to the difference in page totals.

²⁶ Friskney, *New Canadian Library*, 139, 141; Cronk, “Editorial Destruction,” 55–6, 119.

of view,” and were accomplished by lifting some of the “heavy load of sentiment” from the narrative and reworking it “with respect for the taste which favours the ‘lacrosse’ scene.”²⁷

Like other NCL editors of pre-1900 titles, Klinck showed dual concerns for making “stiff, rhetorical, even archaic prose”²⁸ palatable for modern readers while cutting production costs. It should be noted that Klinck lamented the necessity of abridging *Wacousta*, which largely followed a measure instituted to cut the costs of producing longer pre-1900 prose works: after the fall of 1961, the directors of the NCL had decided to limit the length of all novels to 256 pages, “a quota they felt would allow them to ‘accommodate a normal 320-page book.’”²⁹ Abridgement was especially common for pre-1900 prose works, which tended to be lengthy; eight of seventeen pre-1900 prose works issued in the main series of the NCL were abridged, including *Wacousta*, all of which were originally quite long. Indeed, *Wacousta* ran substantially over the suggested 256-page limit even when heavily abridged. McClelland and Stewart’s considerable financial concerns³⁰ were cited as “the compelling reason for such abridgement.”³¹ In all,

²⁷ Carl F. Klinck, introduction to *Wacousta; or, The Prophecy*, by John Richardson, ed. Carl F. Klinck, New Canadian Library (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967), v–xiii, (xi, xii).

²⁸ Ibid., vi.

²⁹ Friskney, *New Canadian Library*, 140–1, 58.

³⁰ McClelland and Stewart’s (M&S) initial difficulties financing the NCL had persisted into the 1960s. As Janet Friskney notes, the success of the series had prompted other publishers to reprint titles from their own backlists, impeding M&S’s ability to obtain paperback reprint rights to those houses’ titles. New Canadian publishing houses were also popping up, some of which began to print Canadian quality paperbacks and educational materials for students of Canadian literature, competing for the NCL’s target audience. Friskney, *New Canadian Library*, 45, 62–63, 68, 72, 79. M&S’s decreasing annual revenue throughout the decade was exacerbated, George Parker points out, by competition from American “jobbers” in the Canadian market, cutbacks in textbook purchasing by provincial departments of education, and generally a decline in the condition of the book trade in Canada. George L. Parker, “Trade and Regional Publishing in Central Canada,” in *History of the Book in Canada*, vol. 3, 1918–1980, ed. Carole Gerson and Jacques Michon (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 168–78 (174). M&S’s mandate for the NCL, to keep an exhaustive inventory of titles on backlist, was also proving detrimental to the survival of the enterprise; as Roy MacSkimming observes, the company’s financial health was threatened less by operating costs than by the demands on capital made by its massive backlists. Roy MacSkimming, *The Perilous Trade: Publishing Canada’s Writers* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2003), 141.

³¹ Friskney, *New Canadian Library*, 137.

Klinck's abridgement removed twenty-six thousand words that he deemed unnecessary to the central action or unappealing to modern readers, which, added to the fifteen thousand words removed from the Musson edition, made for a total of approximately forty thousand words removed between the 1832 edition of *Wacousta* and its 1967 NCL abridgment.³²

The editorial principles of abridgement, non-authorial emendation, and minimal bibliographical scholarship used to produce the 1967 NCL *Wacousta* were in keeping with McClelland and Stewart's mandate quickly and cheaply to produce useful, affordable texts for classroom use and general trade rather than exhaustive editions requiring funding and time. This reprint of *Wacousta*, like most, if not all the NCL titles of the Ross-McClelland years, was a practical rather than a scholarly or definitive text – the kind of text which, in the words of Fredson Bowers, “present[s] to a broad audience as sound a text ... as is consistent with information that may be procurable through normal scholarly channels and thus without more special research than is economically feasible,” as opposed to the scholarly or definitive edition, a “unique creation of scholarship in which, ideally, the profit motive does not enter.”³³ Using a practical edition of a text with as complex a textual history as *Wacousta* to promote cultural nationalism is an inherently conflicted endeavour, as biographical and bibliographical contexts are essential to the text's national flavour. The edition fulfilled its main function, which was to provide Canadian students with an inexpensive Canadian text. However, as the degree of importance assigned by critics and reviewers to this function began to wane and the degree of importance assigned to the function of the edition as an object of cultural nationalism rose, the value of the edition was called into question.

In the mid-1970s, critics began to voice concern over the accuracy of reprinted materials, citing a lack of sustained bibliographical research in Canada and calling for full-scale endeavours of textual scholarship. In terms of the NCL, “abridgement of pre-1900 prose titles [was] the editorial intervention for which the NCL of the Ross-McClelland era [was] most well known and most often criticized.”³⁴ To recall Herrnstein Smith, under conditions that produce certain

³² Cronk, “Editorial Destruction,” 120.

³³ Fredson Bowers, “Practical Texts and Definitive Editions,” in *Two Lectures on Editing*, ed. Charleton Hinman and Fredson Bowers (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1969), 21–70 (25–34).

³⁴ Friskney, *New Canadian Library*, 123, 137.

needs or interests, certain properties and possible functions of various objects will be foregrounded, and both the classification and value of those objects will follow accordingly. The interest in scholarly editions of pre-1900 prose works that arose in Canada in the 1970s foregrounded the functionality of the NCL edition of *Wacousta* as a scholarly edition, but because the edition did not effectively perform functions expected of a scholarly edition, its value dropped. The increased emphasis placed on bibliographical scholarship, and therefore on the expected scholarly function of historical Canadian texts, was tied to the rise in cultural nationalism post-1965. At this point, the Americanization of *Wacousta* began to affect the text's perceived value in Canada, as the "renewed interest in Canadiana" and in "great figures of our past," like John Richardson, was tied, according to Derek Crawley in 1973, to "the upsurge of nationalistic feeling in Canada in recent years."³⁵ The basing of the 1967 NCL *Wacousta* on a non-Canadian copy-text that negated authorial intent thus came to be seen, in John Sorfleet's terms, as "a distortion of our literary heritage."³⁶

This shift of evaluation onto the text's performance of literary nationalism was strongly tied to authorial intent, as Richardson himself saw *Wacousta* in a nationalist light. That Richardson regarded *Wacousta* as a novel of Canada, which he wanted to make available in its entirety to Canadian readers, is evident from a number of his statements and actions. These include his description of *Wacousta* and its sequel, *The Canadian Brothers*, as "the only two tales connected with the early history" of the Canadas, his description of himself as Canada's "first and only author," and his attempts to distribute *Wacousta* in Canada, first in an unrealized eight-part serial (advertised in Ontario newspapers in the summer of 1838), and next by importing, in the spring of 1841, the original edition of *Wacousta* for sale to Canadian audiences.³⁷ This last effort was a response by Richardson to an enthusiastic American reception of *Wacousta*, which outstripped its lacklustre reception in Canada, as well as to the American serial publication itself. Richardson found the Waldie text to be "an abridged and very imperfect edition," and included this

³⁵ Derek Crawley, introduction to *A Bibliographical Study of Major John Richardson*, by William F.E. Morley (Toronto: Bibliographical Society of Canada, 1973), xiii–xix (xiii).

³⁶ J.R. Sorfleet, "The NCL Series: An Appraisal Past and Present," *Journal of Canadian Fiction* 1 (1972): 92–96 (96).

³⁷ Cronk, "Editor's Introduction," xvii, xxxiii, xxxvii–xxxviii.

description in an advertisement for a “New Edition of ‘Wacousta’” placed at the end of the second volume of *The Canadian Brothers* in January 1840.³⁸ This “new” edition was in fact the fourth issue of the Cadell and Blackwood edition of *Wacousta*,³⁹ three hundred copies of which arrived in the Canadas in 1841.⁴⁰ Though the books aroused little interest, Richardson continued to exhort “Canadian readers,” for whom they had been “expressly” retrieved, to buy his series of “National and Historical Works,” thus relieving the author from “a weighty responsibility incurred in the furtherance of Canadian National Literature.”⁴¹ These related intentions on the part of the author to contribute to a national literature and to provide Canadian readers with the “correct” edition of *Wacousta* were taken up by Cronk, Edwards, and the CEECT, who sought to restore the text to the state intended, as far as could be determined, by Richardson.

Cronk saw that the literary nationalism of the 1832 text had been obscured by changes first made by Waldie in accordance with the text’s American use value, and reiterated throughout the large part of the novel’s textual history. Much of Cronk’s “The Americanization of *Wacousta*” is dedicated to delineating the interrelated changes to character, theme, and plot produced by Waldie’s editing, a discussion one might conclude simply by noting that the extent of the mediation between the 1832 Cadell and Blackwood *Wacousta* and the 1833 Waldie *Wacousta* made them two very different works.

³⁸ John Richardson, *The Canadian Brothers; or, The Prophecy Fulfilled, A Tale of the Late American War* (Montreal: A.H. Armour and H. Ramsay, 1840), 229, Early Canadiana Online.

³⁹ Fredson Bowers provides the definitions that apply here: an edition is made up of “the whole number of copies printed at any time or times from substantially the same setting of type-pages ... includ[ing] all issues and variant states existing within its basic type-setting, as well as all impressions.” An issue comprises “the whole number of copies of a form of an edition put on sale at any time or times as a consciously planned printed unit and varying only in relation to the form of an ‘ideal copy’ of this unit.” Fredson Bowers, *Principles of Bibliographical Description* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1949), 40–42. Because they were printed from substantially the same type-pages – the only difference being the dedication (the 1832 issue included a dedication to “His Majesty’s 41st Regiment,” while the 1841 works were dedicated to “Her Majesty’s 8th”) – the copies of *Wacousta* disseminated in the Canadas in 1841 were, from a bibliographical point of view, part of the same “edition” as the 1832 works. Cronk, “Editor’s Introduction,” xxxviii.

⁴⁰ Cronk, “Editor’s Introduction,” xxxviii.

⁴¹ “Wacousta and the Canadian Brothers,” *The New Era, or Canadian Chronicle*, 26 January 1842, 109.

Instead, Cronk ascribes a moral significance to the 1832 edition, an ascription tied to both his regard for authorial intent and his literary nationalism. According to Cronk, Waldie's editing "changed *Wacousta* from being probably one of the first realistic historical novels into being just another romance" and "turned Richardson's pro-British, pro-Canadian historical novel into a non-British, non-Canadian novel which took as its main geographical setting the U.S.A. rather than Canada."⁴² Cronk's interpretation here links realistic fiction to nationalist literature, reiterating a connection which, as Robert Lecker notes, formed the basis for Canadian literary evaluation post-1965.⁴³ Bound up in valorizations of literary nationalism and authorial intent, Cronk judges Waldie's alterations to be corruptions of an original, authorially sanctioned text, and the NCL edition derived from it as "a fraud on the reading public" and "a national disgrace."⁴⁴ His assertion that the textual history of *Wacousta* "indicates a need for looking at our early literature very carefully and uncovering as much as possible the intentions of the authors" in order to avoid "studying and analyzing works that, because they have been tampered with and perhaps altered by foreigners, bear very little resemblance to the works the authors intended,"⁴⁵ underlines the convergence of authorial intention and literary nationalism in the editorial approach he applied to the CEECT's *Wacousta*.

The CEECT's production of a scholarly edition of *Wacousta*, edited by Cronk, followed editorial principles and procedures derived from the Modern Language Association's Center for Editions of American Authors (CEAA, 1963–75) and its successor, the Committee on Scholarly Editions (CSE, est. 1976), which "respect authorial intention, privilege one version as a copy-text, construct an eclectic text from multiple textual witnesses, and record textual variants only from authoritative editions."⁴⁶ As Dean Irvine notes, this editorial model "foregrounds the authority of the author as the agent of a national literature";⁴⁷ such foregrounding is apparent in Cronk's devaluations of non-authorial, non-Canadian editions of *Wacousta*. The objective of the CEECT in producing an authoritative edition

⁴² Cronk, "The Americanization of *Wacousta*," 36.

⁴³ Robert Lecker, *Making it Real: The Canonization of English-Canadian Literature* (Toronto: Anansi, 1995), 31–32.

⁴⁴ Cronk, "Editorial Destruction," 120.

⁴⁵ Cronk, "The Americanization of *Wacousta*," 47.

⁴⁶ Irvine, "Editing Archives] Archiving Editions," 186.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 190.

of *Wacousta* was, then, to reclaim the novel in terms of Richardson's original intentions, including his claims of instantiating a national literature and his evaluations of various forms of the novel. All alterations and abridgements not authorized by Richardson were considered, in the CEECT's approach, to be corruptions or distortions of the authentic text of *Wacousta*. The CEECT *Wacousta* rectifies such corruptions by providing the unabridged text of the 1832 edition, along with paratextual materials delineating the various editions of the novel, expanding upon references in the novel, and describing emendations made to the copy-text. Extensive textual research was undertaken by the CEECT to ensure that the published manuscript was an accurate version of the 1832 edition, including an analysis of every pre-publication version of the novel "known to exist" (Cronk mentions manuscripts and proofs in his foreword); thorough bibliographical study of every published edition; oral, ocular, mechanical, light-table, and computerized collations; and proofreading against copy-text.⁴⁸ Certain editorial changes were also made to the 1832 copy-text, consisting of both changes requested by Richardson and alterations made by the CEECT editors for the sake of spelling, punctuation, or consistency.⁴⁹

The resulting text is a realization, insofar as possible, of Richardson's "ideal" text, as Irvine calls it. Irvine uses this term to distinguish the text produced by the CEECT from the "real" text, which, from a social-textual editor's view, includes not only the manuscripts, errata lists, and final copy authorized by Richardson, but also all those pirated, abridged, and otherwise altered versions produced without authorial permission or knowledge. "[T]o say that the CEECT edition is the 'real' *Wacousta* is to mistake the editor's intentions for the author's," Irvine asserts, "and thus to misidentify the 'ideal' as the 'real,' since Cronk's critical edition indeed produces an idealized

⁴⁸ Douglas Cronk, foreword to *Wacousta; or, The Prophecy: a Tale of the Canadas*, by John Richardson, Centre for Editing Early Canadian Texts 4 (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1987), xi–xii (xii).

⁴⁹ In 1837 Richardson included a number of corrections along with his selection of the novel in the *Morning Post*, all of which were kept in the CEECT edition. Cronk, "Editor's Introduction," xlviii–xlix. Corrections by CEECT editors include misspellings, missed or repeated words, inconsistencies (such as De/de Haldimar, Will/Dick Burford), and apparently wrong word choices (fragrant/flagrant dereliction of duty). Douglas Cronk, "Emendations in Copy-Text," in *Wacousta: or, The Prophecy: a Tale of the Canadas*, by John Richardson, Centre for Editing Early Canadian Texts 4 (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1987), 575–76.

text that exists only as the aggregate of extant evidence of the author's intentions."⁵⁰ This idealization brackets the "multiple authorial and editorial intentionalities"⁵¹ evident throughout *Wacousta's* textual history by holding up the fulfillment of authorial intent, including intentions of instantiating a national literature, as the only, or at least the most important, function of a scholarly edition. While I do not wish to denigrate the still unequalled amount of research and care put into the CEECT edition of *Wacousta*, I think it worth underlining that the CEECT's valorization of an edition that fulfills this nationalist function gains legitimacy by invalidating all other functions, present and past, that the text has served. The CEECT's editorial approach illustrates a process Herrnstein Smith describes as "privileging absolutely – that is, 'standard'-izing – the particular contingencies that govern the preferences of the members of the group and discounting or ... pathologizing all other contingencies."⁵² Such privileging maintains that the particular functions that a given group – here, the CEECT – expects and desires certain objects – such as editions of *Wacousta* – to perform are "their intrinsic or proper functions, all other expected, desired, or emergent functions being inappropriate, irrelevant, extrinsic, abuses of the true nature of those objects or violations of their authorially intended or generically intrinsic purposes."⁵³ The CEAA, CSE, and CEECT have "'standard'-ized" the value of the scholarly edition as being contingent upon its fulfillment of authorial intentions and its promotion of national literatures, and the institutional nature of these bodies marginalizes alternate or "emergent" functions on which other readers might ground their evaluations of scholarly editions.

The effects of this standardization are evident in the NCL's approach to the production of a new edition of *Wacousta* in 1991, in response to the progressive devaluation of the 1967 edition. The 1991 edition (reprinted in 2008) is as preoccupied as the CEAA, CSE, and CEECT with authorial intent, and similarly privileges the Cadell and Blackwood iteration of *Wacousta* as its "original" and most authoritative one. The edition presents the complete text of the 1832 London edition in 575 pages, in three volumes, under

⁵⁰ Irvine, "Editing Archives] Archiving Editions," 189.

⁵¹ Ibid., 187.

⁵² Herrnstein Smith, "Contingencies of Value," 18.

⁵³ Ibid.

single cover.⁵⁴ The introductory chapter and all other excisions are reinstated, and the 1851 introduction, substituted for the first chapter in the 1967 NCL edition, appears here as an appendix. The back cover of the work advertises *Wacousta* as “the best-known work of the first Canadian-born novelist,” and notes that this NCL edition “is an unabridged reprint of the complete original text.” Despite the presence of emendations which remedy inconsistencies and correct apparent mistakes in the Cadell and Blackwood edition (changes made more obvious by their correspondence to those made, and identified, in the CEECT edition),⁵⁵ no editor’s introduction or critical apparatus is included, and the afterword, by James Reaney, confines itself solely to plot readings. This unabridged but edited edition is thus an amalgam that emphasizes its presentation of an authoritative, original text, without providing the bibliographical scholarship and explanation of editorial procedure. Such silence suggests that there is nothing to explain or justify regarding selection of copy-text or emendations made: these editorial choices are legitimized because they replicate those standardized by the CEECT.

Irvine’s devaluation of the CEECT’s intentionalist-nationalist editorial policy is based on his application of “emergent” expectations regarding the function of a scholarly edition. Irvine contrasts the functions of editions produced by intentionalist editorial policies with the function of an edition produced by a social-textual approach. “For the intentionalist editor, the pirated edition is the antithesis of the author’s intentions,” he notes, “but for the social-textual editor or critic, these unauthorized editions reveal much about the instability of the colonial text, the legal, political, and cultural liabilities faced by colonial authors, and the history of colonial publishing before

⁵⁴ That the complete text – originally 903 pages – is here presented in 575 pages indicates the extent to which formatting affects page count.

⁵⁵ For instance, the 1832 edition’s inconsistent or incorrect mention of “Dick” Burford (1:119.13) is changed in the 1991 NCL edition to “Will” Burford (72.14), exactly as in the CEECT edition (67.24); its presumably incorrect use of “fragrant” (1:139.1) is changed to “flagrant” (84.15), as in the CEECT (77.36); and where the 1832 edition prints that a shudder pervades De Haldimar’s “fame” (1:189.13), the NCL (113.18), like the CEECT (105.31), substitutes “frame.” The NCL also includes emendations indicated on the errata page included by Richardson in the 1832 edition; for example, the 1832 edition’s “adjutant” (1:200.10) is changed in the 1991 NCL edition, as suggested, to “governor” (120.2), as in the CEECT (111.24). “Pontecac” in the 1832 edition (1:207.22) is changed to “Pontecac” in the NCL edition of 1991 (124.12), again replicating the CEECT (115.33).

copyright legislation in 1891.”⁵⁶ The function that Irvine desires a scholarly edition to perform is the extensive collation of authorized and unauthorized texts in a format that would allow the reader to study “such matters as changes in publishing policies and popular tastes that influenced the various transformations of the text.”⁵⁷ The CEECT’s edition of *Wacousta* poorly performs this function and therefore loses value within his model. Furthermore, the standardized editorial principles behind the edition lose value when the very classification of a scholarly edition is challenged in this manner. Irvine’s critique of authorial intent, authoritative texts, and the medium of print itself opens scholarly editions to evaluations based on non-institutional contingencies and criteria, and demonstrates a shift in value away from intentionalist and towards social-textual editorial approaches.⁵⁸

The publishing history of *Wacousta* makes it particularly clear that “the value of a literary work is continuously produced and re-produced by the very acts of implicit and explicit evaluation that are frequently invoked as ‘reflecting’ its value.”⁵⁹ In each case reviewed in this paper, a need or desire arose that extant editions of *Wacousta* came, by default, to fill, and the value of these editions fell according to the new evaluative criteria accompanying new function ascription. New editions were then created, according to updated editorial principles, that allowed the text to meet the current need, and the functions of previous editions were retroactively devalued or invalidated altogether. Adam Waldie’s serial *Wacousta* adequately fulfilled its function as a cheap source of entertainment for an American audience; this function and its attendant evaluations were devalued by the NCL editors, who sought in 1967 to provide an affordable

⁵⁶ Irvine, “Editing Archives] Archiving Editions,” 188.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 187.

⁵⁸ An initiative that has done much to grant such emergent functions institutional legitimacy is Irvine’s Editing Modernism in Canada (EMiC), which emphasizes editorial collaboration and digital presentation. To my knowledge, a social-textual edition of *Wacousta* such as the one Irvine hypothesizes in “Editing Archives] Archiving Editions” has not been attempted. While very few of the editions in progress under EMiC’s aegis actually need to contend with the same issues of piracy a social-textual edition of *Wacousta* would address, many EMiC editions (such as the digital edition of George Whalley’s selected writings that I am co-editing with Michael DiSanto and Robin Isard) will effectively use digital platforms to present extensive collations of extant versions of texts in the manner Irvine describes.

⁵⁹ Herrnstein Smith, “Contingencies of Value,” 30.

(and profitable), practical edition of the text to modern Canadian readers. The devaluation of this first NCL edition arose from the growing need or desire for scholarly editions of pre-1900 Canadian texts, a function the NCL edition did not fulfill. The unabridged edition of *Wacousta* produced by the NCL in 1991 partially followed the editorial approach exemplified by the CEECT in its attempt to restore the text to an original state intended by the author. The value of this kind of approach and the versions of *Wacousta* it produced may now be falling, as practitioners of social-textual editing perceive an emergent function for the edition beyond the presentation of one editor's interpretation of the authorial intentions behind one iteration of the text.

The canonization of *Wacousta*, then, can best be understood as a process of rejection and renewal, a process in which, as Herrnstein Smith describes it, "an object or artifact that performs certain desired/able functions particularly well at a given time for some community of subjects ... under changing conditions and in competition with newly produced and other re-produced works ... continues to perform some desired/able functions particularly well, even if not the same ones for which it was initially valued."⁶⁰ *Wacousta* is a "classic text" whose value lies not merely in the story it tells, but in its revelation of "a set of shifting values" that are all too often unexplored.⁶¹ Exploring shifts in the expectations and desires governing various evaluations of *Wacousta* allows us to chart the social, political, and economic contingencies out of which these shifts arise; it does not, however, remove the text necessarily from canonical or classic status. *Wacousta* continues to be cited and recited, and to be visible and available, as it is reproduced to better perform functions that become desirable.

SOMMAIRE

L'article retrace les étapes de la publication du roman *Wacousta* à travers la théorie des valeurs littéraires de Barbara Herrnstein Smith, qui focalise «la relation interactive entre une entité existante et ce qu'on anticipe ou désire faire à son sujet». On veut ici élucider l'évolution des manières d'envisager une œuvre au moyen d'éditions

⁶⁰ Herrnstein Smith, "Contingencies of Value," 27–28.

⁶¹ Lecker, *Making it Real*, 187.

variées d'un roman en tenant compte des contextes social et culturel qui ont influé sur les précédentes contributions. L'article examine principalement les approches éditoriales des diverses éditions de *Wacousta* entreprises par Adam Waldie en 1833, Carl Klinck et la maison McClelland and Stewart en 1967 et Douglas Cronk et l'équipe CEECT en 1987 tout en passant en revue leur réception respective à travers ces années. Au lieu de réagir négativement contre toute altération et coupure infligées au texte, l'article les explique comme reflets des choix des éditeurs. L'article fait valoir en dernier ressort que la republication de *Wacousta* doit être perçue à la fois comme un procédé de renouvellement et une sorte de mise à l'écart rétrospective – un procédé dans lequel chaque modèle rédactionnel cherche à invalider et remplacer le précédent.