

The Past, Present, and Future Potential of Publishing Collectives

by
Claire Cavanagh

PhD. University of Southampton, 2017
MSc. (TESOL), University of Bristol, 2012
BA. (Arts) National University of Ireland (Galway), 2005

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Declaration of Committee

Name: Claire Cavanagh
Degree: Master of Publishing
Title: The Past, Present and Future Potential of Publishing Collectives

Committee:

Suzanne Norman
Supervisor
Lecturer, Publishing Program

John Maxwell
Committee Member
Associate Professor, Publishing Program

Rebecca Rose
Committee Member
President, Breakwater Books

Abstract

This report describes and analyzes a range of publishing collectives from the past and present in anglophone Canada and considers the potential for future development. It begins with a focus on the past with an emphasis on the role of collectives in overcoming the threat of foreign influence on Canadian publishing. Moving into the present, some key current issues facing independent publishers in Canada are outlined and collectives are found to form part of the solutions to these problems. A critical discussion of collectives is also included so as to provide a comprehensive insight into the role collectives are currently playing. The report ends with a view to the future, building on the previous section to provide recommendations and suggestions for how collectives could develop. This report relies heavily on interviews with publishing professionals who outlined their experiences within collectives. Overall, this report illustrates the value collectives bring to the industry while also recognizing where improvements could be made.

Keywords: Publishing collectives; independent publishing; small presses; publishing associations

Dedication

For Elton.

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I begin by thanking Rebecca Rose who not only gave me an opportunity to work for the Newfoundland Women Publishers Network, but also with Breakwater Books during my placement. To Marnie Parsons and Beth Follett whose experience, help, guidance and generosity with time was invaluable during my placement. These three women introduced me to the concept of collectives and opened my eyes to the benefits to such initiatives.

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Table of Contents

Declaration of Committee	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements	v
List of Acronyms	vii
Chapter 1. Introduction	1
Chapter 2. Collectives of the Past.....	4
2.1. A Brief History of the Canadian Publishing Landscape	4
2.2. The History of Collectives	7
Chapter 3. Collectives of the Present	13
3.1. The Present State of Publishing Collectives.....	13
3.2. A Critical Perspective on Publishing Collectives	21
Chapter 4. The Future Potential of Collectives	27
References	32

List of Acronyms

ABPBC	Association of Book Publishers of British Columbia
ACP	Association of Canadian Publishers
APMA	Atlantic Publishers Marketing Association
BTL	Between the Lines
CBPC	Canadian Book Publishers Council
IPA	Independent Publishers Association
LPG	Literary Press Group
RPA	Radical Publishers Alliance

Chapter 1.

Introduction

In May 2021, I moved to St. John's, Newfoundland to complete my internship placement during the summer of 2021 with a publishing collective. The Newfoundland Women's Publishers Network comprised three women-owned independent publishers, Breakwater Books Ltd., Pedlar Press, and Running the Goat Books and Broadsides. The original aim of the collective was to augment their presence at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2020 where Canada was to be Guest of Honour. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Canada's Guest of Honour status was moved forward to 2021 which allowed the network to continue their shared goal of increasing connections with international publishers. My work for the network was in Foreign Rights, developing relationships and scheduling meetings with international peers.

Although the idea of a publishing collective was new to me, this innovative and exciting opportunity was one I jumped at. From the beginning I realised from the network that publishing collectives confer many benefits such as shared resources, peer learning and increased lobbying capacity. My placement also taught me that collectives require collaboration and consensus building to achieve common objectives. Further to this, through my placement I participated in a professional development program offered by the Association of Canadian Publishers (ACP), another publishing collective, which focused on US Distribution. Each week guest hosts from various Canadian independent presses presented a seminar on various aspects of distribution in the US. These learning opportunities not only offered various insights into the challenges of US distribution, but also enabled me to experience firsthand the value of collectives.

As may be evident from my brief mention of the Newfoundland Women Publishers Network and the ACP, collectives take many forms. There are groups comprised of publishers such as the ACP which is a national organization and provincial collective associations exist such as the Atlantic Publishers Marketing Association (APMA). There are collectives comprised of specific genres such as the

Literary Press Group (LPG) whose members are all literary trade publishers. There are smaller, informal collectives such as the Newfoundland Women Publishers Network and there are groups and individuals which come together to create presses which are still collectives but obviously with a different focus from larger associations. There are also author collectives and publishing employee collectives.

Despite the prevalence of collectives and the benefits they confer, there is a paucity of literature which examines and analyzes the work and benefits of collectives. The history of associations such as the ACP is recorded (e.g. Lorimer, 2012; McSkimming, 2007) and often, but not always, the websites for collectives will offer an insight into their work and origins (e.g Association of Canadian Publishers, 2021; Literary Press Group, 2021). However, there is a lack of critical insight into the role these collectives play in the Canadian publishing ecosystem. This is an interesting omission as collectives often appear in response to specific events and conditions and provide a blueprint as to how publishers can navigate some of the issues facing their industry.

Marian Thorpe (2019) describes a publishing collective as “an initiative that is the result of a group of artists working together, usually under their own management, towards shared aims.” While Thorpe is referring to groups of authors joining together, the concept remains valid for publishing professionals and this definition embraces all collectives in that they are self-governing and work towards shared aims. In this report, I will provide an insight into various types of publishing collectives, but the major focus will be on collective associations such as the ACP and LPG along with provincial associations, informal collectives which have generally developed in response to specific events and challenges, and finally, there will be some description of presses which were formed as collectives. While these collectives may have different purposes, their overall objective is that of creating a more successful Canadian-owned and managed publishing industry.

In order to complete an analysis and provide insight into collectives, I begin this report by focusing on the Canadian publishing landscape of the past and the various types of collectives which arose in response to foreign takeovers in the late

sixties and seventies. I decided to limit my examination to this era for various reasons: this time is often pinpointed as a particularly fruitful era for Canadian publishing, collectives such as the ACP and LPG along with many provincial associations are rooted in this era and for the scope of this report it is impossible to provide a thorough insight into collectives across a range of decades. Following this, I will discuss collectives of the present which will be described with reference to current issues in Canadian publishing. This section will also contain a critical analysis of publishing collectives. Finally, using the information from the past and present I will make recommendations and offer proposals as to how existing collectives can develop and grow while providing suggestions for new types of collectives. Throughout this report, interviews with publishing professionals will play a significant role in framing my discussion and analysis.

Chapter 2.

Collectives of the Past

2.1. A Brief History of the Canadian Publishing Landscape

“Publishing...is a people’s way of telling its story to itself”

Roy McSkimming

The history of Canadian publishing parallels the history of Canadian society at least in the late nineteenth century when the English language publishing industry in Canada began to take hold. At that time publishing in Canada was strongly linked to the printing industry and heavily influenced by two powerful anglophone countries - the UK and the USA. This influence was particularly pertinent when in 1847 the Foreign Reprints Act was introduced by the British government as a method of controlling the publishing industries of its colonies which at the time included Canada. The purpose of this Act was to prevent the colonies from printing cheap reprints of British books which was customary at the time. While Canadian publishers could import books directly from the UK, this expensive practice allowed American publishers to inundate the market with cheap reprints effectively destabilising any Canadian publishing efforts. These issues would ultimately affect the establishment of a domestic trade industry in Canadian publishing.

Two main publishing models would also become entrenched in Canadian publishing: schoolbook publishing and the agency model whereby American and British companies operated Canadian branches. However, the twentieth century would usher in a new era of Canadian publishing as publishers who had honed their trade in the struggling presses began to establish their own independent publishing houses. Toronto was established as the centre of the anglophone industry in Canada and presses such as McClelland & Stewart¹ and University of Toronto Press would reinvigorate an industry along with well-established educational presses such as

¹ Founded in 1906 as McClelland and Goodchild.

Ryerson Press² and W.J. Gage. The First World War would prove lucrative for the Canadian publishing industry, however after the war as the economy crashed and the Depression took hold, Canadian publishing entered into a lean period. For the English language sector, this would continue well into and after World War Two which contrasted greatly with French language publishing in Montréal which was experiencing something of a resurgence during the war (McSkimming, 2007).

Continuing into the 1950s, the traditional structures of the agency model and educational publishing would remain dominant in Canadian publishing. By now the influence Britain once had on the Canadian industry had decreased substantially, however MacSkimming (2007) estimates that around 60% of textbooks used in Canadian schools at that time were American. Trade publishing had not disappeared entirely but had certainly dwindled and was viewed as particularly unprofitable due to the competition from US and UK publishers and the distinct lack of interest Canadians had in Canadian literature (Lorimer, 2012). It is against this backdrop of foreign influence that the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences issued a report on the state of arts and culture in Canada. The immense research which would inform the report would begin in 1949 and in 1951 The Massey Report³, as it became known, was delivered initiating Canada's 'cultural awakening' (Lorimer, 2012, p. 70).

The report questioned whether Canada was a country without a literature and overall aimed to instill a sense of Canadian identity and nationalism through arts and culture. The report argued that publishing was immeasurably valuable in creating and maintaining Canadian national identity and therefore the government had a responsibility to protect the industry from foreign control. Potts (2018, p. 3) states that the report contained 'the subtle belief that if Canada began to fund its publishing industry, then the country could come into its own culturally'. While the report curiously did not contain explicit recommendations for publishing (Lorimer, 2012), it did eventually lead to the creation of the Canada Council and the National Library of

² Originally called the 'Methodist Book Room', it rebranded as Ryerson Press in 1919.

³ The report was chaired by University of Toronto Chancellor Vincent Massey.

Canada. However, change in the industry was slow and a review of best-seller lists by Lorimer (2012) highlights that in 1962 only three Canadian authors featured on the fiction list with only two of the titles set in Canada.

As the revolutionary sixties took hold, the political and social upheaval which was transforming American society also spread into Canada. The push towards nationalism and realizing a Canadian identity which had been put forward in the Massey Report, was further galvanized by the 1967 Centennial Celebrations. Speaking of 1967 as a watershed year for Canadian identity, Roht (1978, p. 528) states "That year, in other words, gave direction to and support for Canadian nationalism." Edwardson (2008, p. 137) notes that the mid-sixties was 'a moment in Canadianization in which a new generation of intelligentsia turned to culture as a means of imprinting a sense of nationhood in a time of crisis'. Nevertheless the Canadian publishing industry was still not in particularly better shape than it had been with McSkimming (2007, p.300) noting that by the '70s "Canada's bookstores, libraries, book clubs, educational curricula, and mass media were all so dominated by American books...that extreme measures were needed to bring Canadian books above-ground."

What would follow in the '70s were two related events which would irrevocably change Canadian publishing forever. First, in September 1970, W.J. Gage, the Canadian family educational press established in the 1840s, was sold to Scott Foresman, an American publisher. This event was treated with alarm by the media and publishing industry. This was followed by the announcement two months later that Ryerson Press, deemed the largest and most influential educational publisher in Canada, would be sold to yet another American publishing press, McGraw-Hill. What followed was nothing short of a radical turn of events which completely altered the publishing industry, government policy and Canadian society. On the announcement of the Ryerson sale there were immediate widespread protests and lobbying of the Pierre Trudeau government to take action. Over the next few years, more companies would be sold to Americans while McClelland & Stewart would receive a bail out from the Ontario government, further drawing attention to the dire state of the industry. Speaking from a contemporary viewpoint, some publications, particularly those which lean more conservative, try to ridicule and downplay the Ryerson sale and resulting

outrage (e.g. Fulford, 2017). However, the Ryerson sale was never really about Ryerson as such, but rather the sale 'became the symbol of the problems facing the Canadian publishing industry' (Roht, 1978). Coupled with rising anti-American sentiments, more aggressive than ever because of the Vietnam war, and rising Canadian nationalism on the back of the Centennial celebrations, then it is no wonder that this turn of events changed Canadian publishing forever. Along with this, it would also result in the formation of many collectives which would revolutionize the industry and usher in a new era for Canadian publishing.

2.2. The History of Collectives

"I saw it as a political activity to publish books"

James Lorimer

While the Ryerson sale was responsible for a rise in publishing collectives, it would be misleading to suggest that no collectives had formed prior to 1970. In 1910 the Canadian Book Publishers Council (CBPC) was formed, somewhat ironically given its title, by five American branch publishers. By 1972 it had 45 members including McGraw-Hill Ryerson and Oxford University Press. May Cutler, President of Tundra Books provocatively stated that "most of [the CBPC] are not publishers at all - mostly jobbers for U.S. and English companies" (McSkimming, 2007, p. 308). The main criticisms directed at the CBPC beyond their 'American' identity was that they dominated professional services such as the Canada stand at the Frankfurt Book Fair and the attention of the Federal Government (Clarke & Knights, 2013). The majority of these criticisms came from a new collective which formed directly as a response to the infiltration of foreign firms and lack of homegrown publishing – The Independent Publishers Association (IPA).

In 1969, publisher Peter Martin of Peter Martin Associates, contacted four publishing colleagues in Ottawa, Montréal, and British Columbia about the prospect of collaborating on sales. With a limited team⁴ Peter Martin found that their books could only reach a small readership within their Toronto environs and

⁴ The Peter Martin sales team at that time consisted of Martin and his wife Carol.

some other locations, yet they believed a larger readership was available. In his correspondence to the four other publishers, Martin suggested a sales collective arguing that 'combining their lists...could accumulate enough volume to support a full-time sales rep' (McSkimming, 2007, p. 307). Martin even went so far as to suggest that the proposed collective could grow to include other independent publishers leading to even more sales. The response was less than positive with the other publishers noting that they had no plans to expand beyond their regions and one publisher suggested that joining the CBPC was probably the best solution to these problems. Another publisher was interested however, the aforementioned May Cutler, who suggested that a collective should go beyond sales and that a new collective should be established of independent Canadian-owned publishers.

Despite Cutler's enthusiasm spurred by her disdain for the CBPC, it would take another year for this to become a reality. The day the Ryerson sale was announced, Peter Martin, who had not been prepared to join Cutler on her previously proposed crusade, contacted other Toronto independent publishers and suggested giving a joint response to the news of the foreign takeover. What resulted was the Emergency Committee of Canadian Publishers whose members organized a press conference the following day which was covered extensively by the Canadian media. Developing into the Interim Council of Canadian Publishers by the end of 1970, the Independent Publishers' Association (IPA) in early 1971 and finally the Association of Canadian Publishers (ACP) in 1976, the collective presented to government a five-point manifesto: the formation of a federal loans program; both federal and provincial governments would begin programs to increase Canadian books in libraries; a significant increase in Canada Council support for publishers and authors; book publishing would be categorized as a key industry; and finally, foreign companies would be prevented from taking over Canadian-owned publishers (Clarke & Knights, 2013; McSkimming, 2007). McSkimming (2007, p. 313) asserts that the main principle behind the IPA was that 'a vigorous, Canadian-owned and controlled book publishing industry is essential to the educational, cultural, social, and economic life of a united Canada'.

Literature on the IPA/ACP in the 1970s mainly outlines their attempts at lobbying government for financial support – goals with which they had some success. In 1970, the same year the association presented its demands to government, the Royal Commission on Book Publishing was established by the Ontario government and in 1971, McClelland & Stewart received a loan from the Royal Commission which prevented a potential foreign takeover. As the decade moved along, more initiatives were put in place with the government announcing an increase to the Canada Council's financial support for book publishing in 1972. This represented the first federal initiative for publishing. In 1974 a significant measure was announced with the government effectively moving to prohibit all foreign takeovers of Canadian-owned publishers and in 1975, the Canada Council furthered their efforts by establishing a program which would help book promotion and distribution. Towards the end of the decade, more measures were announced including the Canadian Book Publishing Development Program which planned to distribute \$20 million over three years to Canadian publishers.

In 1975, the Literary Press Group (LPG) was created as a branch within the IPA. The IPA's growth had resulted in an effective but extremely broad collective with publishers representing different markets and sizes. Speaking of the need for both groups, Rebecca Rose, President of Breakwater Books elaborates "Literary publishers probably felt they had distinct aspects not adequately addressed by the focus of the ACP. How to publish literary titles and how to sell and market those titles is a whole other business within the publishing business" (personal communication, Oct. 22, 2021). A separate branch focusing on literary titles also meant that the LPG could lobby government to adequately support literary presses which are not necessarily as profitable as other publishers with different focuses. The LPG began a series of collective marketing initiatives to not only promote and sell books, but also to raise awareness of the available literary titles.

A need for a focus on more concentrated markets also led to the creation of regional associations such as the Association of Book Publishers of British Columbia (ABPBC) which was founded in 1974 by four presses. Speaking of the need for regional associations, Heidi Waechtler, the current executive director of

the ABPBC, suggests that “they sprang up in response to the locus of publishing being located in Toronto and a lot of the funding and resources being centred around that region. Trying to address those problems of being outside of that circle like distribution costs and just the logistics of trying to get the books across the country [allowed the regional publishers] to collectively think about those issues together and strategize” (personal communication, Oct. 13, 2021). A lot of the work of the ACP was to lobby the Ontario government for funding and while members pushed for a national effort, having regional associations allowed those publishers to successfully lobby the provincial governments for funding. Waechter explains “A lot of these groups sprang up around political advocacy and making sure that that regions’ creators were as well supported as those in Ontario” (personal communication, Oct. 13, 2021). The importance of regional collective associations was expressed by Barbara Kuhne of Press Gang publishers who noted their involvement in the ABPBC and not the ACP because they believed they only really needed the support of the provincial associations (personal communication, Oct. 29, 2021).

Beyond the publishing associations which arose in response to market conditions, other forms of collectives also emerged. In 1952 Contact Press was established by three poets, Louis Dudek, Raymond Souster and Irving Layton as a response to the lack of publishing opportunities for Canadian poetry (Gnarowski, 2012). Lasting 15 years, Contact Press at first published only the works of its owners before finding wider success with poetry by Leonard Cohen and Margaret Atwood. In 1969, two newly established independent publishers in Toronto decided to collaborate on a range of publishing activities. Coach House Press was founded by artist Stan Bevington in 1965 in Toronto, while House of Anansi Press was founded in 1967 by two authors, Dennis Lee and David Godfrey also in Toronto. Coach House which was (and still is) also a printing press, designed and printed one of Anansi’s titles and the houses decided to collaborate further with a joint catalogue where readers could order books by each of the publishers.

In the early seventies more collectives would emerge, two of which were founded with political purposes. Press Gang publishers was a feminist publishing

and printing collective founded in 1970 in Vancouver. In the beginning Press Gang included both men and women, however when that arrangement did not work out, the women continued the press as a women-only collective. Barbara Kuhne who would later join the press can not firmly say why the original collective did not work but expresses “it was probably because the men kept trying to tell the women what to do” (personal communication, Oct. 29, 2021). Speaking of the collective structure, Barbara notes “our motivation was that we would make decisions by consensus and there was no hierarchal structure so everyone had an equal voice” (personal communication, Oct. 29, 2021).

A similar sentiment was behind the creation of Between the Lines (BTL) in 1976 when two Ontario activist co-ops Dumont Press Graphix⁵ and The Development Education Centre⁶, decided to join forces. According to Clarke (2017, p.1) the group was ‘keen on changing things. Big time. And doing it differently with no bosses’. There were not many financial resources which led to members of the individual co-ops questioning the collective at first and in addition to this, even after a long meeting to discuss the collective, there did not seem to be much of a plan (Clarke, 2017). While the collective had to take time to agree on terms their joint commitment to publishing economic, social, and political works allowed the collective to begin with ‘an intense commitment to horizontal decision-making’ (Clarke, 2017).

It was not just Toronto and Vancouver which had a number of collectives emerging from the political environment in 1970s Canada. In Newfoundland, Breakwater Books was founded in 1973 by Clyde Rose and four Memorial University professors. The men were among those frustrated that the majority of books used in education were American or British rather than Canadian, or even more importantly from Newfoundland. Rebecca Rose notes that the press was founded in the basement of her childhood home and grew from there. While they

⁵ Dumont Press Graphix was itself a publishing collective founded in 1971 which had published a student newspaper, a labour journal and various political pamphlets (Clarke, 2017)

⁶ Also a collective, the DEC was a Marxist, radical activist group which sought to promote ‘revolutionary social change’ (Clarke, 2017)

were motivated by the lack of Canadian and indeed Newfoundland academic books, the collective began with an anthology featuring plays, prose, poetry, and short stories and as Rose explains because local content was not available “it was just as well received by the trade market as it was by the local academic market so they fared well right out the gate because people wanted to read their own stories here and no-one was making them available” (personal communication, Oct. 22, 2021).

Breakwater Books was not only a publishing collective itself, but also sought collaboration with other groups and networks. They partnered with other arts and cultural groups creating touring shows which travelled around Newfoundland with shows consisting of music and poetry and other cultural activities. It was these trips which raised awareness of the Breakwater titles to a more general audience outside of academia. Along with this, Breakwater also sought partnerships with other Atlantic publishers creating sales and distribution networks for textbooks. Breakwater even collaborated early on with international publishers, attending the Frankfurt Book Fair almost from their inception and purchasing international co-editions: “They were convinced, as I am to this day, that Newfoundland writers are just as talented as anywhere else in the world and at that time there was a cultural renaissance, not just for writing and publishing but also for our musicians and artists, so it was good timing for Breakwater to be representing these Newfoundland authors and bringing that to the world stage” (Rebecca Rose, personal communication, Oct. 22, 2021). While Clyde Rose took the lead in managing the company within ten years of its creation, the other partners would still remain involved behind the scenes as an unofficial board.

The 1970s in Canada proved to be fertile ground for the formation of publishing collectives both with publishing houses joining together to create associations and groups of likeminded individuals pooling their talents to form new presses. These collective endeavours paved the way for contemporary collectives which still respond to the precarious market conditions in which Canadian publishers find themselves.

Chapter 3.

Collectives of the Present

3.1. The Present State of Publishing Collectives

“Wow! Three women collaborating, cooperating, doing this together, not competing, not being secretive. People loved it and that’s political”

Beth Follett

In the first section, the sale of Canadian-owned publishers to foreign companies was described as a major turning point for the Canadian publishing landscape. It was also noted that the Pierre Trudeau government established the Foreign Investment Review Agency to regulate foreign ownership of Canadian businesses. It developed into the Investment Canada Act in 1985 which is still in operation today. However, despite this Act, and almost 50 years since the uproar following the sales of Ryerson Press and W.J. Gage, foreign-owned companies still dominate Canadian publishing and many independent publishers who were struggling to survive have been bought out by foreign companies. The dominance of foreign publishing conglomerates has become even more of a concern since the announcement that Penguin Random House, which already occupies 32% of the Canadian trade market (Dewar, 2017), would be absorbing Simon & Schuster.

“The greatest concern [in Canadian publishing] remains the dominance by multinational publishers” states Rebecca Rose (personal communication, Oct. 27, 2021). She continues “It has only got worse over time despite federal legislation that’s meant to prevent it.” To further back up her argument, Rose notes reports which illustrate that independently-owned Canadian publishers only take up 4%-6% of bookshelf space in Canada. Gabrielle Etcheverry of Livres Canada Books agrees with Rose stating that, from her perspective, one of the main issues in Canadian publishing today is “being able to keep that independent voice...the amalgamation of the big publishing houses, the Big 5 becoming the Big 3. They’re taking up a lot of the oxygen in the room. So, that makes it a lot harder to get those smaller houses and smaller

titles out” (personal communication, Oct. 25, 2021). What makes it all the more egregious is the fact that the government has put policies and funding schemes in place to try to combat this but is not implementing its own policies to derive benefits from the industry in which it is investing. It is this contradiction that Rose finds particularly frustrating, arguing that “you have one government department saying that they are protecting the industry, investing in the industry and they exist to ensure that the industry continues to exist and then you’ve got another government program that says it exists to do the same thing when in fact it is not doing that” (personal communication, Oct. 27, 2021). The publishing professionals I spoke to for this report are far from the only voices making such arguments. Dewar (2017) argues that the sale of McClelland & Stewart to a foreign publisher when there is an Act preventing such a sale ‘may be one of the country’s worst cultural crimes’.

It is against this backdrop that the work of the collective associations becomes essential for Canadian-owned independent publishing. While government support is now a norm in publishing under the Book Fund and Canada Council and various other government bodies, associations such as the ACP, the LPG, and the ABPBC still work tirelessly to make sure independent publishing survives in Canada, something which would be impossible without government support (Dewar, 2017). In 2021 the ACP comprises over a hundred ‘Canadian-owned and controlled’ publishers (Association of Canadian Publishers, 2021). Their website states its focus is fourfold including advocacy through government lobbying, strengthening the competitive capability of Canadian independent publishers by providing collaborative marketing strategies, conducting and disseminating research amongst members, and providing professional development for members. Members also benefit from subsidized programs and services including Professional Development programs provided by external organizations, anti-racism and equity training, and a mentorship program which prepares publishing professionals for leadership positions by strengthening skills in various areas such as metadata and distribution.

Within a large organization such as the ACP, there is a need to address issues relating to certain subsets and, in order to do this effectively, the ACP has created specific committees such as those for education, trade and children’s publishing.

Further to this, the ACP has created various different branches to support its members such as eBound Canada which has programs including digital asset management, marketing, and metadata management. Should particular issues arise that need to be urgently addressed, the ACP will create taskforces such as a copyright taskforce in 2012. Speaking about the ACP, Rebecca Rose explains “I think [the ACP] primarily focuses on lobbying on behalf on the industry, raising awareness of the Canadian publishing industry and professional development for the members within it” (personal communication, Oct. 27, 2021). So, while the ACP still focuses largely on advocating with government on behalf of Canadian independent publishing which mirrors the origins of the collective, it has grown and developed to address the challenges facing the contemporary publishing industry.

The LPG has also grown enormously since its inception and now includes 60 members. Its website states that it works on behalf of its members to lobby government and other funding bodies, provides professional development opportunities for members, provides access to sales and distribution services within Canada and the US, and also provides advertising and marketing opportunities (Literary Press Group, 2021). Similar to the ACP, the LPG has remained committed to its mandate to support and raise awareness of Canadian literary culture while also growing, adapting and responding to the various issues which arise within publishing. LitDisCo, the distribution arm of the LPG, was established in 2002 in response to the collapse of General Distribution Services which was one of the largest distribution conglomerates in Canada. In providing support during this crisis, LitDisCo could offer distribution services to independent publishers who struggled to get these services from larger distributors. This collective represents a significant core membership of the LPG which are small operations staffed by one or two people. These smaller presses would inevitably fail to get distribution services from larger distributors or sales representation from a salesforce. Providing these services not only supports and sustains small publishers, but also illustrates where the LPG and the ACP differ in mandates and focus.

The growth of these two national collectives has not reduced the need for the provincial associations which have also grown in membership and focus since their

inception. Speaking on the contemporary mandate of the ABPBC, which currently has 28 members, Heidi Waechtler specifies that a lot of the work she does as executive director involves “looking at what funding other regions are getting and going to our government to say ‘Hey! We need to step it up a little bit’” (personal communication, Oct 13, 2021). In a strategic planning process undertaken in 2021, lobbying for funding emerged as the number one reason for the existence of the ABPBC (Heidi Waechtler, personal communication, Oct 13, 2021). However, that is far from the only reason the ABPBC manages to grow and retain members. Members benefit from collective marketing projects, particularly smaller presses which may not be able to hire dedicated marketing personnel. Much like the other national collectives, being part of a collective offers cheaper alternatives for necessary activities such as advertising and eBook accessibility.

These regional collective associations can also respond to the unique challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic which can affect regions in different ways. For example, major issues in the supply chain have been exposed during the pandemic with David Heatherington, the Vice President of distribution group Books International, estimating that the current disruption to the supply chain is the worst he has personally ever witnessed (Book Industry Study Group, 2021). The demand for shipping containers has led to a scarcity and also increased costs (Gaviola, 2021). There is a shortage of truck drivers globally, particularly in the UK, but also in Canada where the workforce is nearing retirement age (Bernstein, 2021) and with e-commerce demand heightened during the pandemic, ports have become increasingly congested (Book Industry Study Group, 2021). Significant labour shortages in areas like warehousing and paper have led to severe bottlenecks in the supply chain. While these are all issues of global concern and affect industries beyond that of publishing, Canadian publishers are demonstrably feeling the effects which are even more magnified for certain regions.

As an island, shipping in Newfoundland has even more significant barriers and currently postal rates are rising even higher. “When you’ve got people trying to buy a product where the shipping of it is as much and sometimes more than the purchase of the product itself, how are you encouraging the sales of that product,” argues Rose

who also notes the impossible situation of a small publisher trying to compete with the free shipping offered by Amazon or Indigos on that front (personal communication, Oct. 27, 2021). “There’s yet another huge obstacle to Canadian publishers being able to adequately satisfy customers, if they are able to garner their attention away from the dominated marketplace” (Rebecca Rose, personal communication, Oct. 27, 2021).

Regional associations can therefore respond and at least offer more support to publishers in their regions during this challenging time. The Atlantic Publishers Marketing Association (APMA) is a collective representing Atlantic publishers. It coordinates many promotional initiatives to support publishers in the Atlantic provinces. “We’re a smaller region so it’s important we work together for volume” explains Rebecca Rose. “Half of the provinces in the Atlantic region are islands, so there are unique issues that come with that, the differences in some of the tastes in literature here, what sells here, the lack of bookstores in the region, so there are a lot of unique representation and distribution issues in Atlantic Canada. So it was recognised that it would be better to work together” (Rebecca Rose, personal communication, Oct. 27, 2021). With this in mind, the APMA works to raise awareness and promote Atlantic Canadian literature through initiatives such as Atlantic Books Holiday Gift Guide, the Best Atlantic-Published Book Award and Pitch the Publisher, while also organizing professional development sessions. It also distributes the twice-yearly magazine *Atlantic Books Today* throughout the Atlantic provinces which allows readers in Atlantic Canada to receive news on literature from the provinces. Such assistance can prove extremely significant when publishers are losing out on revenue during COVID-19.

As is suggested by the range of collectives available to respond to unique challenges, not every issue can be adequately addressed by each association, so publishers have also come together to form innovative collectives in response to contemporary challenges. One example of this is the aforementioned Newfoundland Women Publishers Network formed in 2018 by Breakwater Books, Pedlar Press, and Running the Goat Books and Broadsides to augment their presence at the 2020 Frankfurt Book Fair where Canada was Guest of Honour which was extended to 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Beth Follett of Pedlar Press explains “All the

Newfoundland publishers were getting a little pressure from the government to do something with Guest of Honour upcoming in Frankfurt" (personal communication, Sept. 20, 2021). The publishers initially sought a Newfoundland wide approach which would include more presses across the island, however when that proved to be difficult to establish, the three women-owned publishers decided to forge ahead: "This felt very radical...we're going to take a feminist point of view and we're going to run with it" remembers Follett (personal communication, Sept. 20, 2021).

The three publishers have very different focuses: Breakwater Books, the largest of the three, publishes a range of genres including commercial and literary fiction, poetry, children's and YA, and cookbooks, Pedlar Press was⁷ an avant-garde press with an emphasis on high literary works of poetry and prose which challenge traditions in form, while Running the Goat Books and Broadsides publishes fine, illustrated children's titles and more recently, YA. Despite these differences, the women found commonalities based on their shared status as women-owned, independent presses. Beth Follett attended the Leipzig Book Fair on behalf of the network in March 2019 followed by a full network presence at Frankfurt later that year. The network operates under a signed agreement with scheduled weekly meetings particularly leading up to the 2021 Fair. Much like the larger associations, taking a collective approach to selling rights at Frankfurt allowed the network members to share costs of shipping books to Frankfurt and their booth along with developing joint initiatives such as a rights catalogue which can be difficult for small presses such as Running the Goat and Pedlar to produce independently.

Another even more recent collective is the Radical Publishers Alliance (RPA) of which Between the Lines was a founding member. This is a global collective of left-wing presses which has two Canadian members - BTL and Fernwood Publishing. The RPA grew out of already established relationships between radical left presses which tended to connect each year at the Frankfurt Book Fair (Amanda Crocker, personal communication, Oct. 7, 2021) and was initially formed as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As Amanda Crocker, managing editor of BTL, explains "early on in the

⁷ Beth Follett announced in 2020 that Pedlar Press was closing, and it will close indefinitely on December 31, 2021.

pandemic I reached out to publishers in the US and the UK that we often co-publish with to see if there was a way we could help each other” (personal communication, Oct. 7, 2021). From this, a group of twelve publishers got together on Zoom and realizing how helpful the connection had been, they continued to meet each week. The group formalized the gatherings and began to invite other presses which led to a steady growth of membership in publishers from all around the world.

The RPA’s website states that the main focus is on sharing online promotions and author events of fellow members, cooperating on virtual panels and book launches, and maintaining an online hub for readers to find books from radical publishers (Radical Publishers Alliance, 2021). The members also participate in skill-sharing opportunities and collective marketing efforts. One of the first collective events they organized was #RadicalMay in partnership with the radical book fair LITERAL from Barcelona for which they built a collective website and did a mail-out to relevant bookstores. While at first the RPA met weekly, it now meets less frequently yet are no less motivated by their collective cause and plan to bring the RPA into the future (Amanda Crocker, personal communication, Oct. 7th, 2021).

A final collective I will touch on is the BIPOC of Publishing which is ‘a non-profit collective for Black, Indigenous, and people of colour currently working in the Canadian book publishing industry’ (BIPOC of Publishing Canada, 2021). The issue of diversity in publishing has been discussed with more urgency in recent years with a survey from the ACP in 2018 highlighting the huge racial discrepancies within the industry. The report highlighted that out of 279 participants, 82% identified as white, 74% identified as female, and 72% identified as heterosexual (Association for Canadian Publishers, 2019). This is particularly alarming given that the majority of publishers in Canada are located in Toronto and Vancouver; urban centres where the majority of the population identifies as non-white (Fraser, 2020). One of the prevailing arguments about publishing is that the extremely low-paying work which tends to be centred in expensive urban areas, creates a system whereby only the advantaged can afford entrance. In addition, it is an industry dependent on networks and the right connections which leads to gatekeeping which is true of both publishing and authors seeking publication. In 2020 following the murder of George Floyd and the Black

Lives Matter protests, diversity in publishing came under further scrutiny. In Canada, this includes a spotlight on Indigenous presence in publishing.

The events of 2020 led to many publishers pledging to create a more diverse workforce and publish diversified titles. A survey from Booknet Canada illustrated that Canadian readers desired more “diverse” books with the definition of “diversity” for these readers spanning a wide range of definitions including race, class, colonization, gender, and body types (Booknet Canada, 2021). Barbara Kuhne believes that diversity in publishing has improved substantially since her time with Press Gang in the eighties citing Indigenous writers who have become more well-known. This is also highlighted within this very report whereby the descriptions of nationalism completely ignore Indigeneity. Literature on publishing history in Canada such as sources used in this report (e.g. Lorimer, 2012; McSkimming, 2007, Roht, 1978) do not explore the fact that trying to strengthen and create a Canadian national identity from a settler perspective is entirely disingenuous. While collectives such as Press Gang and BTL focused on and emphasized marginalized voices, it did not seem to feature in the policies of the IPA/ACP of the seventies reflecting the utter lack of considered reflection on colonization which is now coming under more scrutiny. Despite the improvement, there is still a long way to go before the publishing ecosystem is adequately diverse.

The BIPOC of Publishing collective therefore is an essential initiative within Canadian publishing. The collective was founded formally in June 2019 with the aim of providing support and a platform for BIPOC working in the Canadian publishing industry. The collective was founded by four BIPOC women, Aeman Ansari, Hana El Niwairi, Marina Ferreira, and Paige Gunning, who had found their experiences working in publishing to be isolating: “We realized there was a large void in publishing for the BIPOC working within the industry: a lack of community” (Carter, 2018). While initially their focus was on support for BIPOC working in publishing, the collective now organizes mentorship programs, publishes a quarterly newsletter and also provides links to important and relevant resources such as where to report workplace complaints. They are an inclusive collective whose main goal is to provide

safe spaces for BIPOC to come together and share experiences and perspectives of the industry.

While this description of contemporary collectives is not exhaustive, it does provide an insight into the innovative and creative ways collectives are responding to current market conditions. However, it is important to move beyond description and look critically at these collectives, so that their work can provide a blueprint for future collectives.

3.2. A Critical Perspective on Publishing Collectives

“There are people who have institutional memory about how policies developed over the years but how do we keep that expertise and make room for new people to take leadership positions”

Heidi Waechtler

One of the main questions surrounding collectives is whether they are successful and whether their policies and aims are being achieved. The sheer staying power and growth of the associations imply success. A Booknet Canada survey from 2019 found that only 10% of the publishers they surveyed did not belong to an association with nine out of ten belonging to a provincial association and seven out of ten belonging to the ACP (Booknet Canada, 2020). The work that the associations do when it comes to lobbying for funding is essential for independent publishing. “To see a united front from so many publishing houses and showing the shared challenges that the industry is up against so there is power in numbers for both lobbying and negotiating power with places like Amazon” states Rebecca Rose (personal communication, Oct. 27, 2021). Heidi Waechtler also notes the need for a collective approach to compete stating that within the Vancouver publishing community “there is a sense that ‘we’re up against Ontario and the multinationals, so a rising tide raises all boats’” (personal communication, Oct. 13, 2021). The need for a collective approach is also demonstrated by Livres Canada Books. While not a collective, it offers collective approaches to rights and marketing through initiatives such as the Canada Stand at the major international book fairs, the collective rights catalogues

and Canadian Studies Collection initiative. "It's much more affordable to rent that space [at book fairs] as a group than it would be for individual publishers" explains Gabrielle Etcheverry (personal communication, Oct. 25, 2021). Affordability is a major benefit to publishers when participating in collectives. As mentioned, the ACP, LPG and ABPBC all offer discounted rates to various programs and along with collectives such as LitDisCo, the collectives ensure that small presses can participate and survive within publishing.

While such assistance is crucial for small presses, the question of power dynamics within collectives needs to be examined. It would seem that trying to gain a voice as a small, recently formed publisher may be difficult particularly when sharing a platform with larger, more established publishers who have been a part of these associations since the 70s. To attempt to satisfy these concerns, the associations have certain policies in place such as rotating board members. In a smaller association such as the ABPBC this can be more difficult: "It can be challenging...some of our members sit on the board for 10-12 years...but there is just a limit to the number of people who have the time and who have the experience to be part of a board" states Heidi Waechtler who also notes that this is something they are continually trying to address (personal communication, Oct. 13, 2021).

The fact remains however, if a publisher has 20 employees, participating in volunteer opportunities for a collective is a much easier endeavour than it would be for smaller publishers. Similarly, for associations where members are availing of advertising and marketing opportunities in catalogues, such as those from Livres Canada Books or the APMA, large publishers will inevitably be able to afford more space. With all this in mind, it seems like an impossible task to ensure that all voices are heard equally and as Heidi Waechtler suggests "there is a risk that if only the larger publishers can afford the time, then that may change the type of policies we advocate for" (personal communication, Oct. 13, 2021). For Rebecca Rose, her experience as a member in a variety of associations including the ACP, LPG, and the APMA has led her to believe that the associations address all concerns as best they can: "The issues that are relevant to all members are very adequately addressed and in trying to address particular interests of subsets of publishers within the organization

they do that forming other committees and taskforces” (personal communication, Oct. 27, 2021).

There are also valuable learning experiences from collectives which benefit small presses greatly such as mentorship programs, professional development and even the benefits from learning from more experienced peers. Marnie Parsons of Running the Goat emphasizes these points when discussing her membership of the Newfoundland Publishers Network within which Rebecca Rose is bringing a wealth of experience of rights sales and attendance at Frankfurt. Marnie notes that the expertise shared by Rebecca is extremely valuable for a small, relatively young press (personal communication, Sept. 27, 2021). For the larger presses in collectives, the key question is whether they derive benefits from their membership commensurate with their investment in time and effort. Speaking of her place in the Newfoundland Women Publishers Network, Rebecca Rose suggests that she is also getting a worthy learning experience from the collective: “I have learned a lot from the other women, both from the areas of expertise and parts of publishing that I don’t know nearly as well as they do and that’s been hugely beneficial to me and Breakwater because we can bring that intelligence in house” (personal communication, Oct. 22, 2021). Rose also emphasizes the importance of relationship building within the publishing industry and notes that while relationships obtained through the network may not necessarily seem important straight away, “but it might pay off on some other project down the road” (Rebecca Rose, personal communication, Oct. 22, 2021).

A related benefit to collectives is the sense of community that membership can offer. The publishing professionals I spoke to almost all commented on the collegial nature of the industry which is then further compounded by membership in collectives. This is an aspect which is important to Amanda Crocker as being a fringe publisher can sometimes make you feel like “the weird goth kids” and connecting with publishers who share your vision can offer a sense of belonging and community (personal communication, Oct. 7, 2021). The publishers of the RPA had already developed strong relationships through their connections at book fairs and in a time of crisis, were able to rely on their community for support. Barbara Kuhne also emphasizes community as a strong motivator for collective publishers. Press Gang

developed relationships with other feminist presses including in the U.S. and the sense of community “provided inspiration and motivation...people have a passion for community and people feel strongly about maintaining a strong community” (personal communication, Oct. 29, 2021). Providing a sense of community is one of the major goals of the BIPOC in Publishing collective as a way to allow marginalized voices share experiences and ultimately become stronger in the process.

There are, therefore, many benefits to collectives and they offer a variety of advantages ranging from the practical to the emotional. One aspect of collectives that needs to be addressed however, is the loss of individuality which may be a disadvantage in membership of a collective association. This is something Gabrielle Etcheverry and Heidi Waechtler both mention when discussing potential downsides to the collective approach. “Yes, the benefit of a collective advertising or promotional project is you get to be part of this bigger campaign, but do you forsake the individual sensibility of your press?” ponders Waechtler (personal communication, Oct. 7, 2021). Etcheverry considers the rights catalogues from Livres Canada Books and how “some of the uniqueness of those titles might get lost...the fiction category is huge and you have pretty avant-garde literary works and then something like a romance novel and there’s nothing wrong with any of those but they’re very different” (personal communication, Oct. 25, 2021). This was a challenge that I also faced when working for the Newfoundland Women Publishers Network in that there was sometimes confusion about our mission and identity. This was exemplified by international publishers tending to categorize all the publishers in our collective under the Breakwater Books umbrella.

A final issue that needs to be addressed are the barriers to membership that exist for collectives. Each collective has its own particular policies about who is eligible. For the ACP there are two categories of membership: a full membership for which, along with being a Canadian-owned publisher, you must have published at least ten Canadian titles and publish four Canadian titles annually and an associate membership which only requires two original Canadian titles published within the previous three years. The LPG has a number of requirements including the need to have published no fewer than five original Canadian titles and publish two titles per

year. You also have to be recommended by two member publishers. There are also membership fees involved with many collectives such as the ABPBC and the ACP structuring their fees on sales. While it is understandable that there are specific criteria, it could lead to gatekeeping for publishers who struggle to meet minimum requirements. In an industry as challenging as publishing, being able to get the support and benefits offered by the large collectives early in their establishment could provide a strong foundation for success. It can also be questioned whether such policies have adverse effects on marginalized publishers which only serves to maintain the status quo in this generally homogenous industry. These are issues that Heidi Waechtler has tackled in her position as executive director of the ABPBC and she hopes to widen the scope of membership criteria and access to the collective structures (personal communication, Oct. 13, 2021).

With an analysis complete, the final aspect to focus on is what exactly makes a collective successful. From a practical perspective it is important to have agreements and contracts which clearly underscore the role of the collective and if needed, the division of labour within the collective (Marnie Parsons, personal communication, Sept. 27, 2021). All the women in the Newfoundland Women Publishers Network strongly value cooperation and view themselves as collaborative people who can make compromises, qualities which are essential especially in a smaller network which may require more effort from members. However, two aspects which almost every publishing professional cited as necessary for successful collectives was having a strong focus and shared vision something which was exemplified by the short-term partnership of Coach House and House of Anansi in the late sixties. In contrast, success achieved by having these commonalities is perhaps best observed by a publisher such as BTL which began as a radical political collective comprising two activist groups and is now a founding member of a global collective of like-minded, radical publishers.

Barbara Kuhne believes that having a shared political goal was essential for Press Gang: "At the beginning we were just publishing local authors, we weren't focused but when we started getting women of colour and lesbian authors it gave us a shared goal and a more focused program we were passionate about" (personal

communication, Oct. 29, 2021). For Beth Follett, the feminist standpoint of the Newfoundland Women Publishers Network is what motivates her, stating that “for me the whole is about women coming together to see what we have in common and how powerful we can be when we join together” (personal communication, Sept. 20, 2021). While these shared goals and focuses are currently being applied to the smaller publishing collectives, the same can be said for the larger associations. The collective associations began as political movements with the sole aim of establishing and strengthening a Canadian-owned publishing industry which publishes Canadian original titles and this shared goal ensures future success and sustainability.

Chapter 4.

The Future Potential of Collectives

“Working together is for the betterment of the industry and ultimately if we don’t have an industry then we don’t have our presses”

Rebecca Rose

As this report has shown, collectives are a worthwhile and even essential aspect of publishing. Associations such as the ACP and LPG, along with their provincial counterparts, provide assistance which allows independent publishers to survive and succeed in the perilous industry of publishing. Moving into the future, it would be of immense benefit if collective associations could provide even more assistance to publishers, however a scarcity of time is always a major issue. Heidi Waechtler explains “There are lots of things I would love to do...there’s a limitation on time. We have two and a half staff people and there’s a never-ending amount of work that we could be doing” (personal communication, Oct. 13, 2021). For a small publisher such as Running the Goat, time is the main barrier to development in areas such as rights sales (Marnie Parsons, personal communication, Sept. 27, 2021). Being able to have someone assist in such areas who would be funded by the associations could help many small presses. This is a scheme that was considered by both the LPG and ABPBC, however the logistics of such a scheme have proved difficult (Heidi Waechtler, personal communication, Oct. 13, 2021).

Along with this, the aforementioned issue of barriers to membership should be addressed. Allowing access to publishers who find it difficult to meet criteria would not only level the publishing playing field but also allow marginalized voices a seat at the table. One barrier that exists is the insistence of association such as the ACP and the LPG that 25% of their members works must not be authored by the principles or directors of the publishing companies. This serves to exclude publishers who mainly publish their own work and can cut them off from funding initiatives. One solution to such issues could be that larger or more established publishers sponsor a small publisher or even pledge to pay the fees for a small publisher to either join the

association or even to simply access some of the programs they provide to strengthen their skills. This could serve to raise the voices of less established, but no less worthy publishers and might even serve to diversify the collectives and allow publishers who publish their own work to strengthen and diversify their programs.

With a shared vision an essential component of collectives, like-minded publishers could start to develop collectives to share experiences and knowledge. The RPA illustrates how like-minded publishers can work together to grow their marketing needs and increase skills through skill-sharing sessions. The different committees within the ACP prove that there are unique challenges facing different subsets within publishing. For example, a collective comprised of small independent children's publishers could allow support in this specific and challenging area. Taking the lead from the Newfoundland Women Publishers Network could incentivize more women-owned publishers to join forces. Beth Follett expresses the view that joining a network of publishers who have programs dedicated to experimental works would have been beneficial, particularly for funding. Avant-garde presses are an important part of the publishing landscape yet their audience is small, so a collective approach could be of immense benefit: "Now that we've done it, I see there are opportunities for all the publishers. To see who best reflects their work and to double up the power" (Beth Follett, personal communication, Sept. 20, 2021). The possibilities in this regard are endless.

The global collective exemplified by the RPA also provides an example of how collectives could grow in the future. The RPA is just one example of a global collective. For example, The International Alliance of Independent Publishers based in France includes over 750 members from 50 different countries while the International Publishers Association is a federation comprised of publishers' associations including the ACP, so there is obvious value in a global approach. However, as we have learned from the example of the ACP, while strength in numbers is a great asset, a broad program cannot always adequately address the needs of specific types of publishers. The possibility of a global collective was initially introduced to me during my placement when an Italian women-owned publisher mistook my request for a meeting to present our titles as an invitation to join a global network of women publishers.

While it was beyond the scope of the Newfoundland network at that time, it dawned on us all what an interesting proposition that was.

During our Frankfurt meetings, Beth Follett and I met with a small press from Sweden run by two women who largely focused on feminist works. Their description of the struggles they faced within the industry mirrored many of the issues Follett had encountered in her twenty-three years at the helm of Pedlar Press. As has been discussed, community is a massive advantage to collectives and perhaps Canadian publishers should take BTL's example and look for community beyond the confines of the Canadian border. Some publishers may even find commonalities in other countries which can be used for collaboration. For example, in 2009, Newfoundland publishers with support from the local government brought Irish publishers to Newfoundland to explore areas of collaboration owing to the cultural similarities of the regions. While this was not an organized collective, it resulted in lasting relationships.

The example of the RPA also perhaps demonstrates how the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the need for partnerships whether formal or informal. It has also forced the notoriously traditional publishing industry to embrace change and adapt quickly to new ways of working, something which Rebecca Rose identifies as a strength: "We saw it all through COVID...the industry has been very innovative and responsive to new issues that come up and they have always recognized that they are going to be more successful in addressing new initiatives from a collective point of view" (personal communication, Oct. 27, 2021). Technology such as Zoom which has become commonplace during the pandemic offers new ways that collectives can get around geographical limitations whether within a large country such as Canada or indeed globally. In addition to this, examples such as taskforces created by associations or the Newfoundland Women Publishers Network which was formed solely in anticipation of Frankfurt 2021, illustrate new forms of on-demand collectives which respond to specific challenges and can deconstruct and reconstruct when required. Collectives can therefore have the flexibility to adopt common measures to meet unforeseen challenges with the option of dissolving once those challenges are met.

While exploring opportunities outside the country may be promising for collectives, considering industries outside publishing may also prove rewarding. Rebecca Rose believes that publishers and authors should connect more, and although she emphasizes that there is collaboration on some level between publishing and writing associations, she believes that more collaboration could lead to enhanced capacities to withstand the multinationals: “I feel like authors and Canadian independent presses have so much in common it always blows my mind there isn’t a more united relationship on that particular front” (personal communication, Oct. 27, 2021). Further to this, collectives comprised of arts and cultural industries such as publishing, music, and film are also of interest to Rose. “There is so much crossover with content. Books can be converted for film or opera; a stage show can be published as a book so there’s so much potential for closer collaboration” (Rebecca Rose, personal communication, Oct. 27, 2021). Looking outside the publishing industry may even provide further solutions to some of the issues which have arisen due to COVID. Regarding these challenges Gabrielle Etcheverry notes “it’s things you don’t always think about like the connecting metadata and being able to have proper metadata to help you get a book to that library, to that bookseller, so even at that level of the supply chain [there are issues]” (personal communication, Oct. 25, 2021). With this in mind, potential collectives with digital industries could lead to stronger web development and digital properties. Collectives with independent bookstores could result in enhanced lobbying powers to the mutual benefit of both parties negatively impacted by the shipping crisis.

One of the most necessary collectives is BIPOC in Publishing which has massive potential to grow into the future. Still in its early years, one can only hope that this collective eventually has sufficient membership capacity to provide various branches. BIPOC in Publishing has links on its website where supporters can donate money or time to the collective. The ACP has donated money to this collective (Rebecca Rose, personal communication, Dec 2, 2021), however there is always room for more transformative supportive initiatives in the future. BIPOC in Publishing is a collective for individuals, so in the future it would be encouraging to see collective associations comprised of publishers of colour such as an Indigenous Publishers Association emerge. The already existing Indigenous Editors Association is made up

of editors and publishing professionals, but an association of Indigenous publishers would further serve to decentralize the power that exists in publishing and could challenge the dominant culture which is omnipresent within the industry. An Indigenous publishers' collective could also lobby for translation funding, so their books could be available in other indigenous languages or indeed so English language books from other publishers could be translated into Indigenous languages. A multicultural approach to collectives could begin to reflect the Canadian social landscape and further provide readers with titles that adequately showcase life in Canada from a range of perspectives. While Indigenous authors are becoming more visible than ever, there is still a tendency for specific types of Indigenous literature to receive attention such as those focusing on residential schools. These titles are incredibly important and provide an important focus on brutalities that were for too long ignored. However, it is time to see other types of Indigenous writing in a multitude of genres and collectives could provide the support and assistance to see this become a reality. For Gabrielle Etcheverry how we are approaching diversity in publishing in general needs an overhaul: "How we think about diversity is really limited...what about people who write in different languages. We've just started recognizing that finally in terms of Indigenous languages, so it's limited, and I think it would be nice if we could throw off blinkers in that sense" (personal communication, Oct. 25, 2021). Collectives of the past have illustrated how powerful a joint approach can be so there is no doubt that present and future collectives which highlight and emphasize diverse publishing can help lead a traditional industry towards a more inclusive future.

The possibilities for collectives are endless and should be considered by all publishing professionals going forward. In an industry facing a myriad of challenges and undergoing constant upheaval, collectives can prove their worth in overcoming the many obstacles which undoubtedly lie ahead.

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