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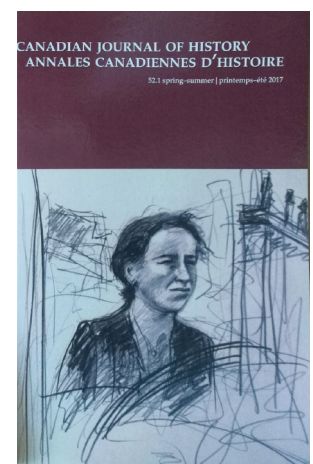
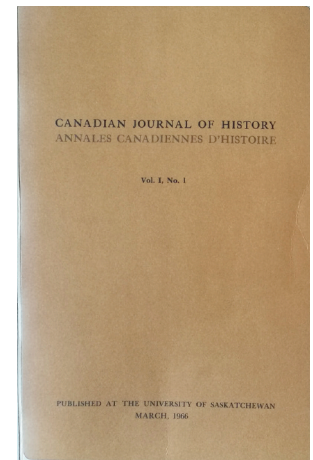
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Abstract

This article provides a history of the *Canadian Journal of History / Annales canadiennes d'histoire* (CJH / ACH), with a focus on momentous transitional periods, and concludes with the journal's current work toward gender parity. As a publication of the history department at the University of Saskatchewan, the CJH / ACH is an established history journal that is not supported by a society. Included herein are its origins as a non-Canadianist history journal within Canada, its reorganization in 2014 to include all fields of history, and its development from its founding in 1966 to the present day. Particular attention is paid to the journal's research into gender parity and its efforts to combat gender bias, especially in the authorship of book reviews.

History of the Canadian Journal of History / Annales canadiennes d'histoire

The *Canadian Journal of History / Annales canadiennes d'histoire* (CJH / ACH) was founded in 1966 by the history department at the University of Saskatchewan, driven primarily by Ivo Lambi, Peter Bietenholz, and Peter Marsh, the journal's first editors. On its masthead they introduced its purpose: the journal would publish "contributions in all fields of history other than Canadian" (CJH / ACH, n.p.). Subscriptions were a modest \$3.50 for two issues annually and those early editors announced that if they reached their goal of making it a quarterly journal, subscriptions would cost \$7 (CJH / ACH, n.p.). Now the CJH / ACH publishes three times a year and has a \$36 subscription fee. Times have certainly changed. When asked to discuss moments of great transition and turbulence, previous editors addressed changes to the administrative and



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organizational structure of the journal, and, in ways that are ongoing, changes to the content it publishes. Within the background of the journal is a history of the changing scope of the financial support of the University of Saskatchewan, the evolution of its history department, and – as the current editorial team adapts to these changes – how the journal is now working to solve the problems of gender bias.

At its founding, the *CJH / ACH* was set up as a subsidiary corporation of the University of Saskatchewan: a financial and legal structure that allowed for the creation of the journal without a supporting society providing funding and subscribers, and that gave the journal moderate autonomy within the larger body of the university. Chris Kent, who was the editor of *CJH / ACH* in 1976–1983, 1995–1997, and 2011–2012, and co-editor in 2000–2003, explained that “in some respects we did better than a society might have done for us because societies don’t have that much money. To get a full-time editor of the quality of editors we had working for us ... we just had rock solid financial and physical support.”¹ The journal was, and still is, provided with office space, photocopiers, technical support, and other amenities built into the organization of the history department. Further to the corporate structure within the university, Kent explained that “it didn’t cost them much except that there were hidden costs that they simply absorbed without questions. Like, we had more secretaries than other departments because they were doing journal work.”² In 2012–2013, the College of Arts and Science, within which the history department exists, initiated a reduction of administrative staff that led to the end of the journal’s semi-independent status. As of 2014, it is now wholly owned by the university. Tasks that were unfeasible to perform after the administrative cuts – subscription and financial management, typesetting and design, promotions and marketing – were outsourced to the University of Toronto Press, Journals Division, a contract that continues to the present. Editorial tasks remain in the history department, performed by a part-time managing editor, two grad fellows, and an editor who receives a three-credit course release, which is roughly the equivalent of teaching one fewer course per year. Traditionally, the editorship has circulated among the faculty of the history department.

When speaking of significant instances of change in the journal’s history, previous editors emphasized the switch to including histories of Canada. This change was significant in part because it was a long process, and in part because it was deemed counter to the founders’ vision. In the 1960s, the history department had a strong emphasis in teaching and researching European history, and, at the time, there was no Canadian journal to publish research about the world beyond Canada. Kent stated, “So, what the *CJH* became was the Canadian Journal of non-Canadian History. ... That’s not a very good motto ... it doesn’t really have a ring to it.”³

Mark Meyers was the editor of the *CJH / ACH* from 2012–2016, and the one who officially enacted the new content policy in 2015, after the board ratified the decision. He discussed how including Canadian histories reflected changes to the department: “by not having Canadian [histories] in there, you’re actually excluding about half the department from the possibility of really being involved in this.”⁴ Indeed, since the switch, the *CJH / ACH* has published one theme issue per year, the topic determined by the faculty member who agrees to serve as guest editor. In 2014 Erika Dyck and Kathleen Zwicker

(then a postdoc at the University of Saskatchewan) co-edited an issue (issue 49.3) on the History of Medicine, which included essays treating topics from Ontario, Britain, and Nigeria; in 2015 Keith Thor Carlson and Kathryn Labelle co-edited an issue (issue 50.3) on Indigenous Histories in Canada; and in 2016, with a return to the journal's Euro-centric roots, Matthew Neufeld co-edited with Sebastian Pranghofer an issue (issue 51.3) on the Early Modern Medical-Military Complex. The journal is now receiving more and more work on Indigenous histories within North America – a natural reflection of the changing strengths of the University of Saskatchewan history department, and broader trends within the discipline in North America.

A word on the submission options for the *CJH / ACH*: the journal has three sources for article submissions: general unsolicited submissions; an annual call for articles on a theme chosen by the guest editor(s); and the Linda F. Dietz Prize offered every year to the best article written by a Canadian graduate student or a graduate student studying in Canada. The journal does not solicit authors of academic research, which is a complicating factor during the journal's work toward gender parity. The journal enacts the standard quality-control measures now familiar with academic publishing, including rigorous double-blind peer review. In 2016 the *CJH / ACH* acceptance rate was 11 percent, and this may be a historic low. In 2011, data submitted to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) with an application for subsidy stated the journal's acceptance rate was between 25 to 30 percent.

In reference to the role of the editors in shaping each issue of the *CJH / ACH*, Chris Kent said, "You can't choose what [new research] comes in over the transom, but you can choose what [books] you're going to review."⁵ This is an apt observation with implications for the current drive toward gender parity, the goal of which is to reach fifty-fifty representation of women and men authors within each issue of the journal. The editorial policy of the *CJH / ACH* to work toward gender parity has made little impact in authors of articles, which are out of editorial control, but with directed effort, the book review section is nearing or reaching gender parity in each issue. Michael Hayden, who was editor from 1974–1978 and 1983–1984, wrote, "The policy of the *CJH* with regard to book reviews was to make every effort to provide a review of all scholarly books on every aspect of history (except Canadian) written by a Canadian scholar (wherever he/she lived) by a person prominent in the relevant field, wherever that reviewer lived."⁶ Beginning in 2014, when Maurice Jr. M. Labelle was brought on as book review editor, the policy to publish an equal number of men and women reviewers was implemented. The editorial team considers its current action on gender to be a qualitative addition to its long-standing aim to publish Canadian scholars and the best historical research to a Canadian and international readership.

The current gender parity initiative

According to membership data from the American Historical Association (AHA),⁷ in 2017 its membership was 59 percent male and 41 percent female. The average for the last five years is 57 percent male, 37 percent female, and 6 percent unidentified. The Canadian Historical Association reported⁸ a membership of 54 percent male, 46 percent female, and less than 1 percent transgender in 2017. Prior to any active policy on gender parity, *CJH / ACH*'s records indicate that the journal was below the sixty-

forty split represented by the AHA. To combat gender bias the editorial team’s goal is for fifty-fifty representation. The journal is approaching gender parity in book reviews and peer reviewers – the two areas of the publication that are under direct editorial control. Thus far, the *CJH / ACH* policy is to invite women first as either an assessor or a book reviewer. As the data that follows demonstrates, better results are achieved if editorial staff invite women first and second, before turning to men for assistance.

What follows are anonymized data on gender, gathered through web searches for department biographies of the experts that the *CJH / ACH* has worked with on book reviews, peer reviews, and as article authors. A word on non-binary genders: as more and more persons identify as non-binary, ongoing data collection will reflect their inclusion in the academic community. None of the journal’s scholars identified as non-binary on their department websites, so “he/him” and “she/her” is used in all of the journal’s data.

The journal’s data on the gender of article authors is a fair representation of what base values are without editorial intervention. Table 1 includes all submissions that were assessed through peer review in 2015 and 2016, but not submissions that were rejected prior to peer review. This omission is deliberate because many articles not deemed ready for external assessment arrived from persons not found online nor represented by an institution, and therefore their gender was not part of the public record. In the *CJH / ACH* application for SSHRC funds in 2001, the journal reported that, by using its

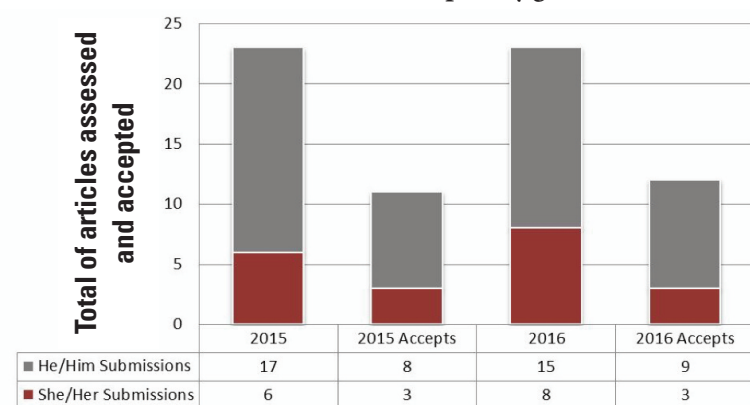
previous ten issues to calculate the average, 40 percent of its article authors were women. Using the same methods, that value is presently 32 percent.

As Table 1 shows, the journal receives approximately twice the number of submissions from men than women averaged over 2015 and 2016. Also shown in the table is that the average acceptance rate is slightly higher for men than for women. Combining the data from 2015 and 2016, the *CJH / ACH* accepted 17 of the 32 (53%) assessed submissions from men and 6 of the 14 (43%) assessed submissions from women. Since the journal uses a double-blind peer review

process, the assessors do not know the identity or gender of the authors and vice-versa. The journal has not yet reached its goal for publishing an equal number of men and women.

The journal is also committed to gender parity for assessors. Assessors must be recognized as experts in their field and have a PhD. As Table 2 indicates, there has been considerable variation in the gender of peer assessors from one year to the next. In 2015, 65 percent of peer assessors were women and, in 2017, 50 percent were women. These results are attributable in both cases to the intervention of the editor and guest

Table 1: Submissions received and accepted by gender, 2015–2016



Notes: When a submission is co-authored all contributors are recorded. “Accepts” from each year also include submissions from previous years.

editors. The 2016 data, when 18 percent of all peer assessors were women, is typical of what the journal's gender data would be like if the problems of gender bias were ignored. The 2016 male-dominant data suggest that there may remain a tendency among those selecting peer assessors to think of men as experts rather than women, a pattern that the journal has encountered when asking for recommendations for both assessors and reviewers. While the *CJH / ACH* policy is to ask women first, after the invitation is declined, editorial staff then tended to invite a male expert.

Since the *CJH / ACH* publishes more book reviews than the number of articles the journal receives, the amount of data is greater in Table 3, which looks at the gender of book reviewers. The choice of book reviewers was also the *CJH / ACH*'s first foray into editorial policies regarding gender parity.

The journal invites hundreds of scholars annually to submit book reviews to accommodate its aim of publishing forty to fifty book reviews in every issue. The *CJH / ACH* requirements for acting as a book reviewer are that one be employed as an expert or have a relevant PhD. As with the peer reviewers, the initial steps were to first ask women to work on reviews. However, the data in Table 3 also show the progress made by asking women first and second, starting with issue 51.3, which saw an increase in women book reviewers. This issue still featured an overwhelming majority of reviews written by men because of late submissions, which were requested before the implementation of parity policies.

The baseline for the gender of book reviewers is to be found in the records for issues 49.2, 49.3, and 50.1. The average number of women in those three issues combined was 32 percent. This mirrors the data on gender of authors in the last ten issues. These were reviews put in motion prior to actively working toward parity. During the production of those issues, the policy to ask women first began, but their reviews did not enter production until later in the cycle in issues 51.1 and 51.2 in which the number of women increased from 32 percent to 41 percent. Then, to bolster numbers further, the policy changed to asking women first and second, and there was a marked improvement in reaching parity in issues 52.1 and 52.2, in which the number of women reviewers reached 46 percent.

Table 2: Peer reviewers by gender, 2015–2017⁹

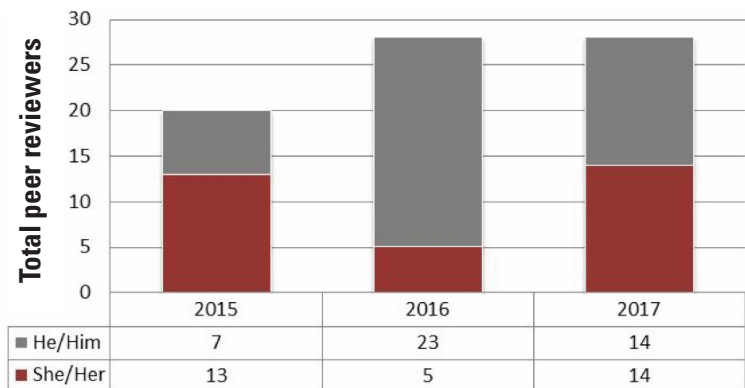
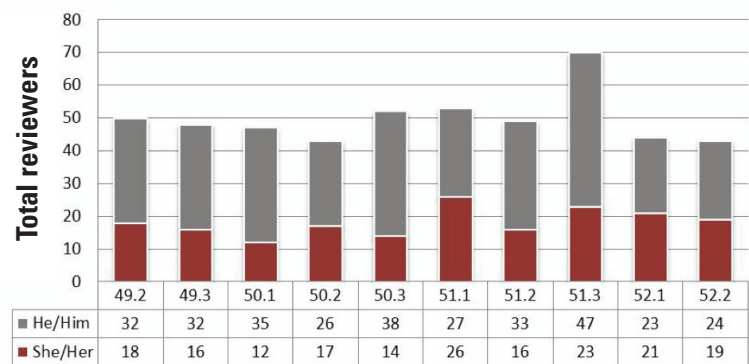


Table 3: Book reviews by gender of reviewer
CJH/ACH 49.2–52.2



Notes: This graph does not include data on the gender of authors of books reviewed, only the gender of the reviewer. The spike in number of reviews in issue 51.3 occurred because of a push for late contributors to send in their work. The majority of late submissions were from men, which is a reflection of the number of men the journal had been inviting to review books prior to the parity endeavour.

Reflections and conclusions

In the *CJH / ACH*'s fortieth year and again in its fiftieth, the editors took stock of the progress of the journal and honoured the work of the many scholars and administrators who took part in creating each issue of the journal. Those retrospectives omitted the nuts and bolts of exactly how the history department managed to run an academic journal in the midst of regular classes and meetings. In short, a host of staff produced the journal – from processing new submissions to mailing issues directly from the journal offices. As cuts to administrative positions changed the structure of the history department, so too did the journal change.

The financial stability of the journal rests with the University of Saskatchewan, and how its administrations value the contributions of an academic journal will inevitably vary as regimes change. Yet, the transition to working with University of Toronto Press Journals has given added heft to *CJH / ACH*'s requests for continuing support. With their labour, the journal has undergone a redesign, moved to ScholarOne for submission management, and to Wiley's Literatum as a host for all of the journal archives. These recent changes have improved the day-to-day labour of administrating and promoting the journal.

When placing the journal's current data on gender alongside what was reported in 2001, the data shows that the journal increasingly publishes more articles by men than by women, counter to the *CJH / ACH*'s parity goals. However, the success the journal has had with each step in pursuing parity with book review authors underlines the reasons for creating editorial policy to combat gender imbalance. Whether this will create a ripple effect to the number of high-quality articles the journal receives written by women remains to be seen. In this regard, changing the focus of the journal has proven to be in its best interest.

Even when the *CJH / ACH* was informally known as the *Canadian Journal of non-Canadian History*, the editors prided themselves on creating a generalist journal. Its strength lay in bringing histories to the whole field, regardless of specialization, and in that task plain language and making complex ideas understandable were key. This aspect of the journal's past remains a guiding force in its present. In Mark Meyers' (2015) editor's note for the journal's fiftieth volume, while announcing the shift to including Canadian histories, he wrote, "Now truly a journal of general history, the *CJH* looks forward to bringing you quality work from all subfields."

Notes

1. Author interview with Chris Kent on November 2, 2017.
2. Author interview with Chris Kent on November 2, 2017.
3. Author interview with Chris Kent on November 2, 2017.
4. Author interview Mark Meyers on November 3, 2017.
5. Author interview with Chris Kent on November 2, 2017.
6. Written by Michael Hayden in an email to the author on 30 October, 2017.
7. From an email sent to the author by Liz Townsend on 20 July, 2017.
8. From an email sent to the author by Michel Duquet on 25 July, 2017
9. Data for 2017 collected from December to May.

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