

The Sexual Politics of Moral Citizenship and Containing “Dangerous” Foreign Men in Cold War Canada, 1950s–1960s

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Canadian historians have not fully explored how post-1945 mass immigration heightened contemporary panics about crippled personalities, failing families, and declining moral standards and how these panics also served to bolster state surveillance of those considered a source of contamination. Among the groups considered potentially dangerous, in the discourse of the time, were European refugee and immigrant men. Popular writers, journalists covering ethnic murders, professional researchers, government officials, ethnic Canadians, and caseworkers dealt with the sexual, moral, and mental health of New Canadian men in ways that were often contradictory. An examination of some of these sources sheds light on an under-studied dimension to the exaggerations and alarmist predictions that fuelled the moral panic of the early Cold War years.

Les historiens canadiens n'ont pas étudié pleinement la façon dont l'immigration massive post-1945 a accentué la panique contemporaine à l'égard des personnes atteintes de maladies mentales, des familles perturbées et du déclin de la moralité et comment cette panique a servi à resserrer la surveillance par l'État de ceux considérés comme une source de contamination. Parmi les groupes jugés potentiellement dangereux, dans le discours de l'époque, se trouvaient les réfugiés et les immigrants européens de sexe masculin. Des écrivains populaires, des journalistes couvrant les meurtres ethniques, des chercheurs professionnels, des fonctionnaires, des Canadiens d'origine ethnique et des travailleurs en service social individualisé s'occupaient de façon parfois contradictoire de la santé sexuelle, morale et mentale des néo-Canadiens de sexe masculin. L'examen de ces sources et d'autres documents nous aide à mieux comprendre une dimension sous-étudiée des exagérations et des prédictions alarmistes qui alimentaient l'émoi moral des premières années de la guerre froide.

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IN AN ARTICLE published in Canada's national news magazine, *Maclean's*, in 1958, journalist Sydney Katz told readers that European refugees and immigrants exhibited lower "crime rates" than did Canadians but that their rates of mental illness were higher, "perhaps alarmingly higher". War-weary and psychologically weakened by trauma and dislocation, many anguished newcomers, including refugees of Communism, also tended to display certain symptoms such as paranoia or "feelings of suspicion and persecution". Others may have been inmates in psychiatric hospitals or prisons whose personality disorders or criminal profiles had not been detected because they had escaped the usual medical tests. Katz warned that Canadians could expect yet more troubled personalities, psychotics, and even the odd sex pervert among the recent Hungarian refugees of the failed 1956 revolt against the Communist regime.¹ A liberal journalist with some left-wing sympathies, Katz was not the only journalist, Canadian or immigrant, to write on this provocative theme.² Whispering campaigns and gossip, among ethnic Canadians as well as others, also expressed anxiety about the newcomers' moral and mental health.³ Still, Katz lent a certain authority to his claims by unloading a barrage of statistics on admissions to mental hospitals, citing medical journals, and quoting the dire warnings of various Canadian experts, including Immigration officials, social agency personnel, and especially psychiatrists and therapists.

Katz's essay, which focused on men, offered a pastiche of professional and lay opinion, but highlighted above all medical and especially psychiatric views. His casual borrowing of a psychiatric vocabulary — which particularly marked his discussion of the confused sexual and gender identities of marriageable newcomers, profoundly lonely single men, and the fear that frustrated, alienated, or psychotic European men would develop "serious sex conflicts" with women — reflected the greater popularity in this era of psychiatric definitions of sexual deviance as well as notions of healthy and normal individuals and families.⁴ The often contradictory ways in which

1 Sidney Katz, "How Mental Health is Attacking our Immigrants", *Maclean's*, January 4, 1958.

2 Examples include B. Cahill, "Do Immigrants Bring a Mental Health Problem to Canada?", *Saturday Night*, June 22, 1957, and the German-Canadian newspaper, *Torontoer Zeit'g* [Toronto News], which discussed "several suicide cases" and the small number of "mental cases" among the immigrants who need professional help. National Archives of Canada (hereafter NA), RG 26, vol. 75, file 1-5-11, Part 1, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Citizenship Branch, Foreign Language Press Review Service, translation of Dr. Curt Borchardt's column, "With Pick and Shovel", November 29, 1957. See also the newspaper references in notes below.

3 For examples, see Gerald Tulchinsky, *Branching Out: The Transformation of the Canadian Jewish Community* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1998); Paula Draper, "Lost Children: Child Survivors and the Toronto Jewish Family and Child Service, the Early Years" (manuscript); her videotaped interviews with survivors as part of her Oral History of Holocaust Survivors; Marlene Epp, *Women Without Men: Mennonite Refugees of the Second World War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

4 Gary Kinsman, *The Regulation of Desire: Homo and Hetero Sexualities*, 2nd ed. (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996).

popular writers like Katz, journalists covering ethnic murders, professional researchers, government officials, ethnic Canadians, and front-line community and professional caseworkers from outside psychiatry dealt with the sexual, moral, and mental health of New Canadian men shed light on the immigrant and refugee dimension to the exaggerations and alarmist predictions that fuelled the moral panic of the early Cold War years.⁵

Canadian historians have not fully explored how post-1945 mass immigration heightened contemporary panics about crippled personalities, failing families, and declining moral standards — or what I call, with deliberate irony, democratic decency — and how they also served to bolster state surveillance of those considered a source of contamination. Yet, both public and confidential discussion of troubled and violent European men, and the varied responses they engendered, encapsulate some of the themes central to the social and gender history of Cold War Canada. I am not, of course, saying that foreigners alone were cast as emotionally troubled, mentally tenuous, and potentially dangerous — so too, for instance, were leftists, homosexuals, and Canadian veterans — but rather focusing on an under-studied feature of Cold War Canada's domestic and sexual history. More rigorously gendered analyses of immigration, nation-building, and citizenship are called for to explore the argument that sexual morality issues could be central to new-comer-gatekeeper relations. Immigration and citizenship policies were (and are) sexualized and shaped by prevailing bourgeois and heterosexual norms within receiving societies. Immigrant officials' discretionary powers permit them to reject applicants dubbed morally unsuitable, usually without having to admit to moral prejudices or face public scrutiny.⁶ Hegemonic notions of bad men, damaged women, and backward families also affected how new-

5 My working definition of a moral panic is borrowed from moral regulation theorists and historians of sexuality, who suggest that professional and popular discourses, including public pronouncements by leading professionals and media over-reporting, can help to create the impression that certain "folk devils" (Jeffrey Weeks's term) or dangerous tendencies, usually involving a sexual component, are threatening society's moral order to a degree out of all proportion to the challenges or changes being discussed. Jeffrey Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society: The Regulation of Sexuality Since 1800* (London and New York: Longman, 1981); see also Stuart Hall, *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order* (London: Macmillan, 1978); Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1980), vol. 2; Mariana Valverde, *Diseases of the Will: Alcohol and the Dilemmas of Freedom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

6 For a contemporary debate, see Fred Bosworth's "What's Behind the Immigration Wrangle?", *Maclean's*, May 14, 1955; and my book manuscript covers the parliamentary, court, and public debate about "petty officialdom" and the arbitrariness of exclusion and deportation decisions. Bromley L. Armstrong recalls in *Bromley: Tireless Champion for Just Causes* (written with Sheldon Taylor, Pickering, Ont., 2000), that immigration agents at Malton Airport in Toronto gave medical tests to Caribbean women arrivals and grilled them about their sex lives (pp. 163–164). For more recent attacks against Caribbean women as promiscuous single mothers and Somalian refugee women as welfare cheats, see Cynthia Wright, "Immigrant Women, Nowhere at Home?" in Franca Iacovetta and Tania Das Gupta, guest eds., "Whose Canada Is It?", *Atlantis*, vol. 24, no. 2 (Spring 2000), and other essays in this issue.

comers considered racially preferable were judged and their lives regulated; paradoxically, all this hand-wringing reflected in part the Europeans' status as more preferred immigrants.⁷

The fast-proliferating social history of the Cold War in North America, in which moral regulation emerges as a major theme, has explored how repressive but also insecure national security regimes sought to eradicate or contain perceived or real threats to the bourgeois order, which were often depicted with metaphors of dirt, filth, and disease.⁸ I borrow from this work the concept of domestic containment, perhaps best understood as a corollary to the U.S. (and NATO) foreign policy strategy to lock in Communist threats across the globe to prevent their spreading. Efforts to contain perceived threats from within — whether reds, girl spies, treasonous lesbians, defective refugee men, or abnormal families — were linked to the resurgence of a conservative family ideology and involved trampling on individual rights in the name of democratic rights and freedoms.⁹ Acutely aware that I am enter-

7 To avoid confusion and clutter, I place quotation marks only around verbatim text, but readers should assume quotation marks around such ideologically loaded terms as bad, backward, and normal. The theoretical and historical literature on the normalizing of bourgeois ideals is now extensive; the much-cited work of moral regulation theorists (broadly defined) such as Michel Foucault, Antonio Gramsci, and Philip Corrigan inform many recent empirically based Canadian studies, including Mariana Valverde, ed., *Canadian Journal of Sociology: Studies in Moral Regulation*, vol. 19, no. 2 (1994); Kinsman, *The Regulation of Desire*; Franca Iacovetta and Wendy Michinson, eds., *On the Case: Explorations in Social History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998).

8 For example, Geoffrey Smith, "National Security and Personal Isolation: Sex, Gender and Disease in the Cold-War United States", *International History Review*, vol. 14, no. 2 (May 1992); his "Containment, 'Disease' and Cold War Popular Culture", in Brian J. C. Mckercher and Michael Hennessy, eds., *War and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (New York, forthcoming); Louis Hyman, "Dirty Communists" (manuscript presented to the Toronto Labour Studies Group, Spring 2000); essays in Gary Kinsman, Dieter Buse, and Mercedes Steedman, eds., *Whose National Security?* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2000).

9 As others have observed, the family ideal served to normalize, or make appear as normal, the conduct associated with an idealized bourgeois model of heterosexual courtship, companionate marriage, female domesticity, male bread-winning, and a nuclear family unit. Such ideals served as unattainable and, for some, undesirable standards against which to judge, often harshly, those accused of not conforming or aspiring to them. On Canada's domestic Cold War, see Reg Whitaker and Gary Marcuse, *Cold War Canada: The Making of a National Insecurity State, 1945–1957* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994); Kinsman, *The Regulation of Desire*, chap. 6–8; Mary Louise Adams, *The Trouble with Normal: Postwar Youth and the Making of Heterosexuality* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); Mona Gleason, *Normalizing the Ideal: Psychology, Schooling and the Family in Postwar Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); Gary Kinsman and Patrizia Gentile (with Heidi McDonnel and Mary Mahood-Greer), *In the Interests of the State: The Anti-gay, Anti-lesbian National Security Campaign in Canada, a Preliminary Research Report* (Sudbury: Laurentian University, 1998); essays by Mercedes Steedman, Julie Guard, Franca Iacovetta, and others in Kinsman et al., eds., *Whose National Security?*; Deborah Van Seters, "The Munsinger Affair: Images of Espionage and Security in 1960s Canada", *Intelligence and National Security*, vol. 13, no. 2 (Summer 1998); Valerie Korinik's *Roughing it in Suburbia: Reading Chatelaine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto, 2000), which challenges easy stereotypes of bourgeois suburbia. On the United States, see, for example (on treasonous lesbians), Jennifer Terry, *An American Obsession: Science, Medicine and Homosexuality in Modern Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999); Elaine Taylor May,

ing dangerous terrain, I offer this preliminary exploration of a controversial topic, the perceived and real sexual transgressions of postwar European refugee and immigrant men, by addressing four key themes. The first is to resist clumsy, reductionist, or otherwise damaging arguments that falsely brand or pathologize all foreign men as brutes and, by extension, all foreign women as the archetypal victims of an imported patriarchy or transplanted male disorder. This challenge requires us to distinguish, wherever possible, between the emotional and psychological pain that newcomers endured and the observations and predictions of observers and outsiders, whether experts or not, whether ill-informed or not. Secondly, we must also scrutinize male subjects who were indeed sexually violent, even if our (limited) sources shed light on a mere handful of them and the form and content of the evidence preclude a clear determination of their mental state. Thirdly, like other women's historians who have studied domestic violence, I mine records created on violent men for what they can also tell us about the women they tormented, including their varying capacity to endure, fight back, or get out.¹⁰ Finally, in putting this highly sensitive topic on the research agenda of immigration historians, I seek to push and pull at the boundaries of the field by grappling with subjects that do not fit comfortably into current analytical frameworks¹¹ and to underscore the value of writing feminist history that has the audacity to be everywhere — including in historical work on refugee and labour migration and diasporas. With notable exceptions, these literatures remain male-focused or ungendered, neglect the usually significant presence of women and children, and ignore gender-specific differences among those who endured forced labour, fled war zones, survived genocide,

Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era (New York: Basic Books, 1988); Joanne Meyerowitz, ed., *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945–1960* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994).

10 For instance, Linda Gordon, *Heroes of Their Own Lives: The Politics and History of Family Violence* (New York: Penguin, 1988). My recent efforts to use case files to write working-class history and to explore critically whether certain postmodern insights can be integrated into the material-feminist perspective to which I remain committed include: “Parents, Daughters, and Family Court Intrusions into Working-class Life”, in Iacovetta and Mitchinson, *On the Case*; “Gossip, Contest and Power in the Making of Suburban Bad Girls, Toronto 1945–60”, *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 80, no. 4 (December 1999), pp. 585–623; “Postmodern Ethnography, Historical Materialism, and Decentering the (Male) Authorial Voice: A Feminist Conversation”, *Histoire sociale/ Social History*, vol. 32, no. 64 (November 1999), pp. 275–293, my response to Nancy Cook’s “The Thin Within the Thick: Social History, Postmodern Ethnography, and Textual Practice”, *Histoire sociale/ Social History*, vol. 32, no. 63 (May 1999), pp. 85–101, in which I also expressed my concerns about standpoint theory and about tackling so complex an issue as mental illness or anguish.

11 I made a plea to respect but also challenge the now-established social history paradigm that for good reasons stresses immigrant agency, networks, and community-building by rethinking those on the margins in “Manly Militants, Cohesive Communities, and Defiant Domestics: Writing About Immigrants in Canadian Historical Scholarship”, *Labour/ Le Travail*, vol. 36 (Fall 1995), pp. 217–252.

and for other reasons joined, by choice or circumstance, the world's peoples on the move.¹²

Morality, Mental Health, and Remaking the Nation?

Early twentieth-century efforts at Canadian nation-building required more than protective tariffs, backroom political deals, and a transcontinental railway. They also involved moral campaigns aimed at encouraging middle-class, white, Canadian women to procreate — or face “race suicide” — and at “uplifting” working-class immigrants deemed in some way inferior.¹³ Similar patterns obtained for early post-1945 Canada, which saw the resurgence of a race suicide argument, at least among certain bourgeois women's groups.¹⁴ The desire for a healthy body politic fuelled nationalist boosters and social and psychological experts keen to play a major, indeed leading, role in postwar reconstruction.

The Cold War's arrival imparted a political and moral urgency to campaigns that were meant to ensure the long-term physical, mental, and moral health of Canada's current and future citizens, but that could also isolate newcomers as special problems requiring more heroic remedies. Such features marked related efforts such as food and nutrition campaigns.¹⁵ Similarly, psyche-based professionals and commentators viewed their work with newcomers as part of a broad agenda to address what Dr. J. D. Griffin, Med-

12 A recent panel on refugees at the 19th International Congress of the Historical Sciences, Oslo, August 2000, ignored women and children. Social scientists writing about current situations dominate the feminist scholarship — for example, special issue on “Women in Conflict Zones”, *Canadian Woman Studies*, vol. 19, no. 4 (Winter 2000) — but notable exceptions within history include Joan Ringelheim's important work on Holocaust survivors, for example, “Gender and Genocide: A Split Memory”, in Ronit Lentin, ed., *Gender and Catastrophe* (London: St. Martins, 1997). Recent women-centred studies include Afua Cooper, “Narratives of Mourning: Marie-Joseph Angélique, a Portuguese Slave Woman in New France” (submitted manuscript); Epp, *Women Without Men*; Donna Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta, “Women, Work, and Protest in the Italian Diaspora: An International Research Agenda”, *Labour/ Le Travail*, vol. 42 (Fall 1998) and “Foreign, Female and Fighting Back: Italian Women Workers Around the World” (in review).

13 Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1855–1925* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1991).

14 For instance, The Provincial Council of Women in Ontario (PCWO) lobbied Ottawa to recruit domestics selectively from the “DP” camps on the grounds that the failure of Canadian “mothers” to acquire “home help” might prompt them to have fewer children, thereby “decreasing” the Canadian birth rate and “limiting” Canadian families, and might also result in “depriving the nation of the leadership of capable women” so crucial to volunteer work. Archives of Ontario (hereafter AO), PCWO Collection, MU 2343, Minutes of Meetings, February 12, 1947, Final resolution. See also my “Remaking Their Lives: Women Immigrants, Survivors, and Refugees”, in Joy Parr, ed., *A Diversity of Women: Ontario, 1945–80* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995).

15 For details, see my “Recipes for Democracy? Gender, Family, and Making Female Citizens in Cold War Canada”, *Canadian Woman Studies*, vol. 20, no. 2 (Summer 2000); Valerie Korinek and Franca Iacovetta, “Jello Salads, One-stop Shopping and Maria the Home-maker: The Gender Politics of Food”, in Marlene Epp *et al.*, eds., *Sisters or Strangers* (book manuscript in progress); Korinek, *Roughing it in Suburbia*.

ical Director of the Canadian National Committee for Mental Health, described as Canada's widening mental health problem. Significant indicators, he noted, included: the high percentages of Canadian soldiers disqualified from military service in WWII and of emotionally disturbed war veterans; the "steady" and "relentless" increase of "psychotic, unstable, ineffective or dull" persons leading "uncomfortable and unhappy" lives and unnecessarily burdening their families; and a virtual epidemic in people suffering from psychosomatic illnesses — "vague pains and aches and physical disorders" that have their "origin in psychological or emotional disturbances".¹⁶ Such mandates, along with the (uneven) influence of psychiatric models within social welfare work, offer critical contexts for considering how issues of sexuality influenced reception work with the Europeans who figured so prominently among the 2.5 million people who entered Canada by 1965.¹⁷

Katz's Misfits and Menders?

Given how Katz began his *Maclean's* article, he likely started with the idea of writing about ethnic crime, a timely topic in light of some high-profile murders involving Europeans that, as he noted, renewed age-old arguments about foreign men's greater propensity to criminal acts, especially those of passion. Having discovered that the foreign-born crime rate was "only half that of native Canadians", Katz acknowledged the point¹⁸ and then moved on to report that the evidence pointed unmistakably to the existence of "more mental illness among the foreign-born".¹⁹ He cited medical authorities and comparative statistical studies of admission rates to mental hospitals. According to Katz, a national survey by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics of newcomers who had arrived in the years 1948 to 1955 showed

16 J. D. Green, MD, "Problem of Mental Health in Canada", *The Social Worker*, vol. 15, no. 1 (September 1946), pp. 3–10. Green's description reflects the more psychologically and socially oriented approach; he also stressed the growing number of mentally disabled people who escape detection. See also Terry Copp and Bill McAndrew, *Battle Exhaustion: Soldiers and Psychiatrists in the Canadian Army, 1939–1945* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990); Gleason, *Normalizing the Ideal*; Iacovetta, "Gossip, Contest and Power".

17 See, for example, Dorothy Chunn, *From Punishment to Doing Good: Family Courts and Socialized Justice in Canada, 1880–1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992); Iacovetta, "Gossip, Contest and Power". Contemporary examples include Green, "The Problem of Mental Health"; Margaret M. Burns, MS, "The Allan Memorial Institute of Psychiatry", *The Social Worker*, vol. 15, no. 2 (December 1946); Dr. R. R. Prosser, "The Community Psychiatric Clinic and the Social Worker", *The Social Worker*, vol. 19, no. 4 (April 1951). The literature on post-1945 immigration is vast; a useful survey is Donald Avery, *Reluctant Host: Canada's Response to Immigrant Workers, 1896–1994* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1995).

18 For example, he devoted some space to ethnic journalists who decried the damaging effect created by media overkill of individual criminal acts committed by immigrants and to a recent incident involving the Deputy Attorney General of Ontario, who issued, then retracted, an erroneous statement about newcomers committing 90% of recent murders in the province.

19 I assume that the statistics included the non-European foreign-born. In the 1950s the focus was on Europeans but later shifted to racialized newcomers from non-white countries.

that five of the eight yearly immigrant groups registered a higher (by about 10 per cent) first-admission rate to mental hospitals than that of non-immigrants; a 1952 study of Manitoba's mental hospitals, too, found higher rates among New Canadians as compared with the general population; a University of Western Ontario study of 2,000 patients admitted to two Ontario mental hospitals from 1950 to 1952 singled out as special problems men between 15 and 44 years of age who had been in Canada for five years or less.²⁰ Noting that a Canadian medical journal's "studies in grief" indicated the widespread nature of emotional troubles among newcomers, Katz quoted a recent editorial warning that, since "overt acute reaction" to deeply "distressing" events could take years to surface, constant vigilance was required. American studies, added Katz, made similar points.

Statistics, however, captured only part of the story. The "immigrant breakdown rate", wrote Katz, was much higher than official records suggested, but fear of deportation or ignorance largely kept New Canadians from approaching psychiatrists or clinics. For support, Katz cited several authorities, including Dr. Libuse Tyhurst of Montreal's Royal Victoria Hospital, who reported that a recent study of 48 mental patients revealed "several" instances of paranoia, including some refugee men "who believed that Canadian state authorities and employers had it in for them; that they were being spied on".²¹ Others warned that Canada's decision to give quick refuge to the anti-Communist Hungarians, waiving the usual medical screening tests, was bound to increase "appreciably" the rates of immigrant crime and mental illness — an observation that probably reflected exaggerated reports that, when the rebels opened the prison gates to liberate political prisoners, many ordinary criminals and even the criminally insane had gained freedom and later joined the refugee stream to Canada.²² The prominent McGill University psychiatrist

20 He reported that the relevant higher rates were 20% (Manitoba study) and 40% (UWO study), respectively.

21 Without meaning to diminish anyone's mental pain, I note that, given what historians now know about the extent of RCMP spying, blacklisting, and CIA brainwashing experiments in Montreal, it is ironic that a fear of being watched, which some saw as a disease of Communism, could be an indicator of a paranoid personality. Kinsman *et al.*, *Whose National Security?*; Anne Collins, *In the Sleep Room: The Story of the CIA Brainwashing Experiments in Canada* (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1988).

22 The debate whether the dramatic events of October and November 1956 constituted a genuine students' and workers' revolt against Stalinism or a bourgeois counter-revolution drove deep divisions in the international and particularly the Communist left, producing an instant literature with conflicting accounts. Many accounts do note that, when prisons were opened to free political opponents of the regime, a small proportion of the released inmates were common or hard-core criminals, but specialists of Hungarian immigration to Canada have yet to scrutinize this subject (a very preliminary essay is Nandor F. Dreiziger's "The Impact of the Revolution on Hungarians Abroad: The Case of Hungarian Canadians", in Bela K. Kiraly, Barbara Lotie, and Nandor F. Dreiziger, eds., *The First War Between Socialist States: The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 and its Impact* (New York: Brooklyn College Press, distributed by Columbia University Press, 1984) or to determine what percentage of those deemed criminal or criminally insane entered Canada as refugees. A sample of work on the revolt includes Peter Fyer, *Hungarian Tragedy*, expanded rev. ed. (London: Index Books, 1997), by

Dr. Alastair MacLeod claimed to have spotted “several psychotics” among a group of Hungarian 56ers, including two or three people who “showed the scars of brain operations” and a man haunted by the voice of a former vicious (female) factory boss. Katz also cited non-medical experts, including a crown attorney who, having just prosecuted a Hungarian man for assaulting a lawyer, announced that many Hungarian criminals had arrived and were busy “beating and extorting money” from their compatriots²³ and a Hungarian-Canadian minister who reported that Hungarian “girls” were being “beaten and tortured” by refugee youth gangs.²⁴

Katz did place some blame for problems on Canadians, whose indifference to or rejection of the newcomers posed a “mental health hazard”. Many immigrants, he wrote, said “Canadians refuse to accept us” and “we are forced to live as a race apart”. As those cited already belonged to community programmes, their criticisms were particularly pointed. One such man claimed that even the “liberal-minded” women volunteers who came to the social club events run by the International Institute of Metropolitan Toronto “won’t associate with us outside our club or invite us into their homes”.²⁵ A Polish journalist living in what he called a Canadian neighbourhood complained that “the closest” they came to such “social contact” was when a father came looking for his child. More revealing were the experts’ admissions; a clinical director of a mental hospital said that Canadian psychiatrists were “often hostile towards New Canadians, especially when they criticize our way of life”, and a social agency supervisor noted that “our” social workers “freeze up if a new client speaks in a foreign language”. “Such unfriendliness”, wrote Katz, could destroy newcomers who already were suffering from feelings of inferiority. Dr. MacLeod warned that the isolated person who remains for “too long” deprived of “social contact” may well “build his own world of paranoia”.

the journalist for the London *Daily Worker* who was expelled from the Communist Party for supporting the revolt and denouncing the Soviet repression; François Fejto, *Behind the Rape of Hungary*, with foreword by J. P. Sartre (New York: D. Mackay Co., 1957); Bela K. Kiraly and Paul Jonas, eds., *The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 in Retrospect* (New York: East European Quarterly, distributed by Columbia University Press, 1978); Reg Gadney, *Cry Hungary! Uprising 1956* (London, 1986). Readers interested in how anti-Communist refugees might have influenced a Canadian Cold War mindset can consult Sandor Kapszis, *In the Name of the Working Class: The Inside Story of the Hungarian Revolution* (Paris, 1979; translated Toronto: Lester Orpen Dennys, 1986), and journalist George Jonas’s foreword. Thanks to Cynthia Wright for the reference and a copy of the book.

23 He had just succeeded in convicting a 26-year-old Hungarian in Toronto who, as Katz put it, “with no provocation” had “viciously” beat up a lawyer.

24 In assessing Hungarian Canadian leaders or spokespeople, we should keep in mind that the older community of pre-WWII and of the immediate post-1945 era differed significantly from the new 1956 community — an observation that also applies to other East European groups.

25 On the IIMT, a large social agency that served non-English-speaking newcomers, see my “Making New Canadians: Women, Social Workers and the Reshaping of Immigrant Families”, in Franca Iacovetta and Mariana Valverde, eds., *Gender Conflicts: New Essays in Women’s History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992).

While all new arrivals felt “anxiety and insecurity”, most vulnerable were the iron curtain refugees who had grown dependent on the same totalitarian state they detested because it had “looked after” them when they were sick or unemployed. As the refugee soon learns that Canada’s social security system “won’t attend to all his needs” and that public charges can be deported, Katz wrote, with sympathy, “he lies awake nights, wrestling with the nightmarish question ‘What will happen to me if I become sick or lose my job?’ ” When refugees try to eliminate such fears, he wrote, usually by pushing themselves to make money as quickly as possible and never taking a holiday, they endanger their “physical and mental health”. Many Canadians working with newcomers witnessed this “emotional damage”, Katz added, including Father Michael Smith, who said of his mostly Polish congregation at St Casimir’s Church, Toronto, that many couples now had “some money, maybe a house” but were “nervous, high-strung and depressed”. In the past five years, he added, “I’ve had five suicides in my parish.”

Of particular concern to Katz, and many others, were the European male professionals and intellectuals who suffered severe downward mobility, retreated, and dwelt obsessively on their past. Katz’s “tragic figures”, all male, included a former literary magazine editor who now wrapped parcels, a “respected” parliamentarian who became an elevator man, and a “university graduate” from a “distinguished old European family” too ashamed to tell family back home that he was a janitor in an office building. To make matters worse, the janitor’s wife had landed “a responsible job” with the result that the “formerly cheerful and charming” husband had become “bitter, irritable, taciturn and voluble in his criticism of Canada”. Offering a (surprisingly?) rosy-coloured portrait of working women in a liberal capitalist country, Katz said that such deeply depressed men had also to adjust to the “North American custom of the wife working at a separate job, having her own bank account and pursuing her own interests with considerable freedom”. The observation also suggests that, while discourses of domesticity enjoyed much currency, there were competing discourses of women’s “employability” that could be deployed to emphasize the benefits that working women could accrue under capitalism.²⁶

Regarding sexuality, Katz’s discussion of the markedly changed and hostile contexts in which single newcomers had to negotiate relationships raised a common theme in the reception discourse: Canada gave single European

26 Laura Belmonte, “Mr. and Mrs. America: Images of Gender and the Family in Cold War Propaganda” (paper presented to the Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, Chapel Hill, N.C., June 1996); Jennifer Stephen, “Deploying Discourses of Employability and Domesticity: Women’s Employment and Training Policies and the Formation of the Canadian Welfare State, 1935–1947” (PhD thesis, OISE/ University of Toronto, 2000). One of the few women to appear in Katz’s article is a German woman who, according to a Toronto social agency staff person, had gone to a lawyer complaining that everyone was laughing at her and that a television performer, who she insisted was a former RCAF pilot who “hates all Germans” and had bombed her city, had insulted her during a television programme she was watching.

women the possibility of modern and egalitarian forms of courtship and marriage. He also stressed the “special problems” of the non-English-speaking “single male”, whose “prospects” of “enjoying female company” or “finding a woman to marry” were “dim”. Those who hoped to find and marry “a New Canadian girl” soon found they were “in short supply”. By contrast, immigrant “girls” were “besieged” by marriage offers from immigrant men “as soon as they’re off the boat”, but quickly recognize the greater benefit of courting more modern-minded Canadian men. The women say, wrote Katz, “We don’t want to be dominated. Canadian men are easier to live with.” Also potentially harmful to individual psyches was a third scenario: the young immigrant man who “aspires to court a Canadian girl” invariably “runs the risk of being cold-shouldered”. To elaborate, Katz quoted a young Pole who articulated the resentment of many single newcomer men: “‘Canadian girls talk and dance with us at an affair sponsored by an organization or a club’ but ‘won’t date with us privately’.” A “blonde Italian” with “fairly good” looks similarly remarked: “I’ve gone out with girls who didn’t know I was Italian [but] [w]hen they found out, they dropped me. Women here tend to regard me as a ‘dirty’ immigrant.” Most of the self-identified immigrants who wrote in response to Katz’s article were single men, albeit British, who expressed the same sentiment.²⁷

In Katz’s article, the always complex, often confused, and potentially explosive gender and sexual relations in which foreign-born men engaged posed the greatest possible threats to women and the institutions of marriage and family. While attributing some of the men’s “difficulty” to differences in Canadian and European “wooing habits”, Katz and his experts stressed that these men’s failure to resolve their heterosexual²⁸ needs and to contain and channel their sexual drive into appropriate codes of courtship and marriage could produce many dysfunctional individuals and, moreover, would challenge wider Canadian social and moral standards. All possible scenarios were worrying, including that of lonely men who “resorted to prostitutes”,

27 On letters, see “Mailbox”, *Maclean’s*, January 18, February 1 and 15, 1958. In 1969 the IIMT’s “Group Services” supervisor admitted that it was a social programme that had largely failed: “single men appear at all activities but since the Institute has always failed to attract single women, the men don’t return.” AO, MU 6389, File Programme Committee, 1970–71, Group Services Report — Programme Evaluation, May 1969. See also Martha Ophir, “Defining Ethnicity in Postwar Canada: The International Institute of Metropolitan Toronto, 1953–1974” (Graduate history, University of Toronto, 1993).

28 None of the sexual transgressions described here refer to same-sex practices, but Canadian officials and experts were clearly very concerned about homosexuality: the amended *Immigration Act* (1952) introduced for the first time an anti-homosexual clause. Anecdotal information from a later period suggests that social welfare workers could offend the immigrant parents of boys by flagging as “homosexual” behaviour that carried no such (negative) connotation in the parents’ culture (confidential conversation). On the new criminal sexual psychopath laws which, ironically, assumed a homosexual psychopath even though most molesters were and are self-defined heterosexuals and other important details, see Kinsman, *The Regulation of Desire*; Kinsman et al., *In the Interests of the State*.

but most disturbing were acts of sexual aggression or assault against Canadian women.

Katz concluded his essay with suggestions for helping New Canadians “to adjust with a minimum of emotional wear and tear”, which ranged from calls for patience and more English classes and local programmes to an expansion of social and mental health services. By adopting such measures, Canadians could “more effectively” show their concern for the newcomers and spare them “the emotionally corroding feeling that results from rejection”. In such an “atmosphere of friendliness and acceptance”, newcomers would quickly meet the “goal” of becoming “healthy and useful” members of “our society”.

Assessing Katz in Contested Contexts

Katz’s article illustrates several of the competing and familiar discourses of the period: social optimism and moral danger, female domesticity and employability, and Canadian abundance and modernity versus European scarcity and backwardness. Also familiar were the contrasts drawn by reception activists between earlier assimilationist models and their own more enlightened models of integration, and their call to ordinary Canadians to welcome the newcomers actively. So, too, was the warning that integration, to be successful, had to be a free, not imposed, process, particularly for those who remembered how “foreign conquerors” had tried “to assimilate them by threat, lash, and imprisonment”. As elsewhere, Canada’s postwar professionals lobbied for more state-funded resources, training facilities and institutions, and greater influence over people’s lives. These themes, too, emerge in Katz’s article, as do the frustrations particularly of psychiatrists, psychotherapists, and psychologists who complained about insufficient staff and resources, the general public’s ignorance about mental health, and other barriers to more effective treatment.

It is not clear whether Katz understood that competing paradigms of diagnosis and treatment characterized Canadian postwar psychiatry, that inter-professional conflict existed between psychiatrists and both psychologists and medical doctors, or that in mental hospitals the newer approaches — which were associated with more psychologically oriented and Freudian-influenced psychiatry and psychoanalysis and with therapeutic models that combined psychotherapy with efforts to resocialize the patient — did not replace older, organic-based theories of mental illness to nearly the same extent as in Europe and the United States. Given his generally progressive profile, it is nonetheless possible that Katz, like others, highlighted the newer paradigms, including talk therapy, because they appeared to be more enlightened. In practice, however, especially in Canada (and most particularly at the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital), doctors still commonly applied the traditional treatments, namely shock therapies (including ECT) and lobotomies, and, with growing frequency, drugs — especially the breakthrough psycho-active drug of the 1950s, chlorpromazine. Much to the psychiatrists’ dismay, medical doctors for the first time could prescribe the drug to their

clients. As part of training, psychologists, social workers, and nurses would be exposed at least briefly to the various paradigms; they were also were part of hospital and clinic therapy teams.²⁹

Did Katz treat a complex and sensitive subject in a sensationalist manner? Clearly he did, though his obvious sympathy for his subjects and his liberal faith in the power of experts to mend problems are also evident.³⁰ Also, his article drew both supporters and critics, and newspapers offered plenty of instances of evidently deranged European men, both advocates and refugees of Communism.³¹ A senior researcher in the Citizenship Branch, Nancy Elgie, who assessed Katz's article at least twice, concluded that, while his major claims had an element of truth, he was guilty of a highly selective reading of his sources and of "gross exaggeration". As confidential documents, Elgie's reports cannot be treated as a parallel public discourse or rebuttal to Katz, though her superiors would have used her findings to allay public anxieties. Elgie's discussion of Katz's medical sources and her carefully compiled statistical profiles are illuminating. Her first report showed that Katz neglected findings in his sources that did not support or indeed "contra-indicate[d] his position". For instance, Katz claimed that the Dominion Bureau of Statistics documented the consistently higher (by 10 per cent) first-admission rate of immigrants to mental hospitals, when the data actually indicated a more complicated pattern: for example, in 1949, 1954, and 1955 the Canadian rate exceeded that of immigrants.³² As for the 1952 Manitoba survey indicating a higher immigrant admission rate to provincial mental hospitals, Elgie noted that the researcher (who had studied but one small hospital in Winnipeg) concluded that "mental illness" among the Displaced Persons was "not a particular problem *quantitatively* [her emphasis]" but

29 The 1970s to the 1990s have seen a return to organic and bio-chemical paradigms, in which heredity and brain biology are considered key factors, particularly neurological diagnoses. ECT is electro-convulsive therapy. Post-1945 Canadian psychiatry is sorely in need of historians, but if one reads past the editor's swipes at Marxist historians, Edward Shorter, ed., *TPH: History and Memories of the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital, 1925–1966* (Toronto: Wall & Emerson, 1996) is a useful starting point. See also the postwar studies, including on CIA brainwashing experiments at the Memorial Institute, in Geoffrey Reaume, *A Classified Bibliography on the History of Psychiatry and Mental Health Services in Canada* (Toronto, 1998). My thanks to Alison Kirk-Montgomery for helping to clarify the postwar psychiatric scene and to Mona Gleason for her references to the large number of lobotomies done to women.

30 For a stimulating debate on my use of Katz's article and several other points raised in this essay, I thank, as always, my scholarly comrades and constructive critics in the Toronto Labour Studies Group.

31 For examples, letters from Henry Oersen (Victoria), Gray Campbell (Cowley, Alberta), East Allwood (Montreal), and Denise Levebvre (Montreal) in "Mailbox", *Maclean's*, January 18, February 1 and 15, 1958; and the following front-page news items from the *Toronto Star*: "Find Red Data in Box After Man Suicides" (on a Ukrainian executive member of the Association of Ukrainian Canadians and the "anti-subversive detectives" who found the "boxful of Communist documents"), January 24, 1952; "Russian Immigrant Seals Up Room...", April 14, 1952; "Doctor Slain in his Office, D.P. Held", September 26, 1953; see also references that follow in note 40.

32 The relevant percentages were 10%, 18%, and 40% respectively.

rather “a qualitative one due to diagnostic and therapeutic barriers” stemming from language difficulties.

Katz had similarly “stretched” the University of Western Ontario’s findings: the immigrant men’s rate was actually 30 per cent higher, not 40 per cent, and age- and sex-related distinctions were ignored. The first-admission rate of immigrants living in Canada for more than ten years was lower (by 6 per cent) than that of “native-born Canadians”, while that of newcomers (five years or less in Canada) was “practically equal” to the Canadian-born rate. Katz also missed the significant presence of Canadian women and the elderly among mental hospital admissions: for most age categories, Canadian-born women had a higher rate than did foreign-born women; among persons over 65 years of age, the Canadian-born rate “far exceed[ed]” the immigrant one. Elgie also criticized Katz for attributing to a deportation chill the under-reporting and treatment of immigrant mental illness.³³ With only about one immigrant deported on grounds of mental illness for every 500 admitted to a mental hospital, Elgie doubted that the newcomers were as terrified as Katz presumed. While probably too dismissive of the deportation issue,³⁴ Elgie’s research so challenged Katz’s article that she quipped, “One wonders whether Mr. Katz ‘looks up’ or ‘makes up’ his facts.”

Discussions between senior Immigration and Citizenship officials about whether Canada should send a delegate to Vienna for a World Conference on Mental Health dealing with refugees suggested that an argument in favour of doing so was to counter the kind of misleading information spread by journalists like Katz. Again, Elgie commented on the “quasi-evidence” which “proves to be so shaky as to call for important qualifications”.³⁵ Given the huge qualitative differences among the new arrivals since 1946, she added, one could not answer a “dichotomous yes or no” to the question of whether newcomers posed a major mental health problem, particularly since, as

33 NA, RG 26, vol. 80, file 1–19–5 Pt 2, Citizenship Branch, Research Division, 10–2–19, Mrs. N. [Nancy] Elgie, Research Division to The Director, Report on Sidney Katz, “How Mental ... Immigrants”, *Maclean’s*, vol. 71, no. 1 (January 4, 1958), pp. 9, 44–46.

34 *Ibid.* Elgie showed that the total number of those deported on physical and mental health grounds during the previous 11 years was 669, not 800, as Katz claimed — a figure that represented a very small proportion of all immigrants (5,617) deported for the period 1946 to 1956 and less than half the total number (1,496) deported for “criminality”. She then compared it with the total number of immigrant first admissions to Canadian mental hospitals for the same period (29,373). Still, I raise the question because the scholarship suggests that the threat of deportation, whether used against alleged subversives or misfits, could instil fear out of proportion to its use. For examples, see Barbara Roberts, *Whence They Came: Deportation from Canada, 1900–1935* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1988); Franca Iacovetta, *Such Hardworking People: Italian Immigrants in Postwar Toronto* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1992).

35 The conference theme was “Uprooting and Resettlement”. NA, RG 26, vol. 80, file 1–19–5 Pt 2, Director, Citizenship Branch to Deputy Minister, Dr. Laval Fortier, Immigration and Citizenship, Re: World Conference on Mental Health, June 4, 1958. Other arguments included the importance of demonstrating to the international community Canada’s commitment to improving its mental health services. Fortier rejected the request.

recent Canadian studies showed, there were marked differences in the first-admission rates to mental hospitals of different immigrant groups.³⁶ In her view, the problem was largely confined to the DPs who arrived from 1947 to 1950, whose traumatic history had increased their chances of becoming mentally ill. Uprooted and stateless, many of them had lost homes and families and were haunted by “absolutely devastating wartime memories”. They had lived in “impoverished emotional and physical conditions” and suffered from “despair, depression and extreme mental anguish”, and their adjustment problems were compounded by their unfamiliarity with English (or French) and Canadian “cultural patterns” and the absence of Canadian kin or friends. After 1950, with the pressure of wartime refugees largely alleviated, volunteer immigrants began arriving in large numbers. While they too had “suffered the wartime conditions” and had to overcome language and other barriers, most had “re-established a considerable degree of security after the war”, and they had migrated in “family groups” and benefitted from the many organizations in place to provide economic and emotional support. They shared more in common, added Elgie, with the war brides and close relatives of Canadians who had come in 1946. Recent newcomers, then, raised no serious mental illness problems, and the same was expected of future immigrants, who would benefit from still better services. As for the Hungarian 56ers, Elgie partially agreed with Katz but stressed that, for most of them, the “difficulties” would be “transient”, that is, confined to the initial adjustment years.³⁷

We cannot say for sure what readers made of Katz’s article, including his casual use of psychiatric vocabulary, but they got a large dose of it. They were given a psychological profile of the average newcomer’s life in Canada, for instance. It began with an initial phase of feeling “on top of the world”, then, several months later, in response to the challenges of daily living, the newcomer shifted into a phase of “psychological arrival” and suffered from its attendant symptoms — anxiety, depression, and chronic complaining. Nothing, wrote Katz, was exempt from complaints: “our women, food, housing, weather and culture”. In keeping with the newer paradigms in psychiatry, Katz’s experts drew links between mental stresses and psychosomatic illness, such as chronic fatigue, insomnia, asthma, palpitations, and stomach pain, and warned that those refusing professional help risked a total mental breakdown. That one of his authorities, Dr. Vladimir Kaye, was not a psychiatrist or doctor, but an academic with a specialty in eastern Europe and Chief Liaison Officer in the Citizenship Branch, suggests as well that, fully understood or not, psychiatric labels had entered the mainstream.

³⁶ These studies, explained in *ibid.*, showed that, while some immigrant “subgroups” registered a higher first-admission rate to mental hospitals, others exhibited “considerably lower rates than the native born population”.

³⁷ NA, RG 26, vol. 80, file 1-19-5 Pt 2, Mrs. Nancy Elgie, Research Division, Citizenship Branch, to Director, Canadian Citizenship Branch, Re: Immigrants and Mental Health, June 3, 1958.

Not surprisingly, the psyche-based experts claimed superior knowledge and expertise, dispensed advice (be patient and tolerant), and called for more “vigorous” education to sensitize Canadians to the newcomers’ plight. In patronizing terms, one of Katz’s psychiatrists likened matters to that of “adopting a child who’s been mistreated — you can’t expect him to be reasonable in all the things he says.” Others, however, including Montreal psychiatrist Dr. Anthony Meszaros, admitted to a less than impressive track record with newcomers. Those who would see a therapist or visit a psychiatric clinic often came with a companion and said very little. Social workers and clergymen also noted the difficulty of getting newcomers, many of whom had been through experiences that made them fear authorities and institutions, to seek psychiatric help. Language difficulties also undermined the quality of treatment. Most therapists, who could not speak the relevant languages, used untrained people as interpreters and even resorted to telephone interviews, all with poor results. A Quebec psychiatrist admitted that most doctors in regular or mental hospitals were “so handicapped by language” that “sometimes” they could not tell whether a patient was “mildly or seriously ill”. Given this situation, “foreign-speaking” clients, even those agitated by such normal problems as unemployment or bad news from home, were no doubt acutely vulnerable to being wrongly diagnosed, unnecessarily or overly medicated, and institutionalized.³⁸

Predictable comparisons between supposedly abnormally patriarchal European families and idealized modern and egalitarian North American ones also featured in Katz’s essay. Thus he writes that “family relationships” in Canada “differ” from many European countries, where “the family tends to be father dominated”. (Some drew similar contrasts between English Canadian and Quebec families.) Significantly, an immigrant discourse about gender inequality was (and is) common in receiving nations and could serve as justification for denying foreign men full rights or social acceptance.³⁹ Few discussions about immigrant families failed to note generational con-

38 It also begs the question (that, alas, my research base cannot answer): if the language divide made newer talk therapies impractical, except perhaps when European psychiatrists were available, were those newcomers also more likely than Canadian patients to be subjected to the shock therapies? The psychotherapists’ battle for better funding might also have been a struggle with older approaches (for example, ECT) in which the entrenched practices still received most of the funds and attention, as was the case at Toronto Psychiatric Hospital. If so, then the seizing (or creation) of a new problem — deviant immigrants — might have changed the arena of contest and permitted therapists to ask for new funds to treat a new problem, not for a redistribution of traditional funding, and thereby also possibly reduce their conflict with older practitioners.

39 To draw an example from the country, Germany, where I first presented this paper and which has very restrictive citizenship laws, there is a slippage in current public discourse between the observation that overly patriarchal Turkish immigrant men mistreat their women and the argument that “the Turks” really are not ready for citizenship because of their outmoded gender relations — a process that serves to displace the problem and blame to outsiders. See also Lori D. Ginzberg’s discussion about matters of morality and inclusion and exclusion in this volume, “The Nation’s Mission: Social Movements and Nation-Building in the United States”.

flicts; Katz's comments came typically close to blaming parents, especially mothers, for producing in their more rapidly Canadianizing children feelings of anger and resentment and perhaps even permanent psychological and emotional scars. There was a hint, too, that, left alone, ignorant, backward mothers would create a new generation of dysfunctional sons!

On Male Perpetrators and Female Targets

Katz did try to avoid the trap of branding all foreign men as potential sexual predators, though his article was not entirely immune from the tendency, evident in the mainstream media, to dwell on lurid sexual topics. English-Canadian newspaper sources reveal extensive media coverage in the 1950s of individual criminal acts, some truly heinous, committed by European-born men.⁴⁰ Journalists did show sympathy for depressed or distressed male newcomers, and the press covered instances of mentally anguished men victimized by ignorant or indifferent police.⁴¹ A particularly compelling media image, however, was that of a sexually aggressive, perhaps mentally deranged, and potentially violent European patriarch. Generally, European women were depicted in newspapers as damaged women (poor widows, rape victims, suicidal), though mistreated women were hardly passive victims — as indicated, for instance, in their letters to newspaper advice columns.⁴² Much of the evidence on women and sexuality is in less public sources, such as social agency case files and family court cases; it reveals many caseworkers' inability to resist making moral judgements. Recent work on Jewish survivors and Mennonite refugee women (some of whom were rape victims) suggests that ethnic Canadians and reception workers

40 From the *Toronto Star*, examples include coverage of the following stories of European-born men accused of violence, including murder, toward women, children, or both: "Hunt All Night in Vain for Shotgun Terrorist, May Call Army to Aid" (Italian man who beat wife and daughter and held police hostage in Alliston, Ontario), September 17, 1949; "Fires 100 Shots at Police, Flees Tear-Gas-Filled Shack with Bride" (Russian railway worker and wife abuser in Northern Ontario), January 7, 1956; "Immigrant Hangs Jan. 25 for Strangling Wife" (Italian man who killed newly arrived wife he suspected had committed adultery, St. Catharines), November 6, 1954; "Son Taken from School, Slain, Guard House of Mother" (a Hungarian stepfather and murder of an eight-year-old boy in Simcoe, Ontario), October 18, 1958. With the invaluable assistance of Cheryl Smith, I have compiled a large sample of articles and columns (in the thousands) on newcomers and related issues (such as family, women, sexuality, youth, Cold War) in the newspaper and its weekend supplements for the period 1945 to 1965.

41 On the last point, see, for example, a 1955 Toronto case involving a Ukrainian man arrested for trying to stop two policemen from beating his mentally ill friend. The arrested man later won an appeal to have conviction dropped. *Toronto Star*, January 15, 1955. A more detailed treatment is in my book-in-progress.

42 See, for instance, their letters to advice columnists clearly identifying their problems and requesting concrete help. The advice columns tracked for the period 1945 to 1965 come from the *Toronto Star* and include psychologist J. D. Parks's "Let's Talk it Over" and two women's advice columnists, Mary Starr's "If You Take My Advice" and Dorothy Lasch's "New Horizons", the latter created specifically to dispense advice to New Canadians. These themes receive detailed treatment in a chapter in my book-in-progress.

were equally susceptible to moralizing when dealing with women who had survived horrific life-threatening situations by exchanging sex for food or adopting other forms of “situational morality”.⁴³

The demonized image of European men received a huge boost when reporters covered the 1954 Toronto murder case of two East European refugee women that some called, in reference to the grizzly Jack-the-Ripper murders in Victorian London, the DP Strangler case. It also illustrates how mainstream media reporting fed postwar and Cold War anxieties. Both victims — Maria Lypoweczyj and Olga Zacharko — were “DPs” living with family in the heavily immigrant neighbourhoods of Toronto’s west end. Maria was a Ukrainian refugee who had been in a German slave labour camp in Ukraine before entering Canada in 1952 with her husband and teenaged son. Her body was dumped in a narrow alley between two houses located near the home of her uncle. No witnesses came forward, but police found her purse in a nearby garbage can and some personal items in the vicinity. The murder a few weeks later of Olga, a Russian-born cleaning lady employed by the University of Toronto, while she returned to her rooming-house after grocery shopping, raised fears that a serial killer was on the loose. Married to a man she met in a German DP camp near Bremen, Olga was pregnant and had a daughter. Her body was in a laneway near her front door. She had not been raped, but the semen on her clothing indicated that her murderer had been sexually violent.

I draw on Elise Chenier’s recent valuable analysis of the newspaper coverage of the case⁴⁴ and note the responses it provoked from within and outside the ethnic communities. Local journalists reporting on the police investigation noted early on that Maria had not been raped or mutilated, but a safety pin had been pushed into her upper body. They also drew some independent conclusions — for instance, that Maria’s crushed throat indicated her murderer’s “abnormal strength”. Both Maria and her husband John worked the night shift at the posh King Edward Hotel and usually took the streetcar home together, but when John worked a later shift Maria went home alone. According to acquaintances, Mary was very nervous whenever travelling alone and usually ran the distance between the streetcar and her house. Evidently, she had even been “assaulted” previously and so had wanted to find a daytime job.

Journalists with the Toronto *Star* offered more elaborate plots of political

43 Epp, *Women Without Men*. On Jewish survivors, see Tulchinsky, *Branching Out*. The theme also emerges in videotaped interviews conducted by Paula Draper for her Oral History of Holocaust Survivors project. My own observations are derived in part from reading confidential case files culled from AO, International Institute of Metropolitan Toronto, MU 1952–1965, and case histories of Toronto-based settlement houses, particularly Central Neighbourhood House and St. Christopher House. See also my “Making New Canadians” and “Remaking Their Lives”.

44 Elise Chenier, “Seeing Red: Immigrant Women and Sexual Danger in Toronto’s Postwar Daily Newspapers”, in “Whose Canada Is It?”, *Atlantis*, vol. 24, no. 2 (Spring 2000). Chenier examined the Toronto *Star*, *Telegram*, and *Globe and Mail*.

intrigue. In a Communist-bogey-man-meets-Jack-the-Ripper narrative, *Star* coverage at one point highlighted police theories that Maria's murder was a reprisal for her husband's "campaign against communism". He belonged to the Ukrainian government-in-exile, the National Republicans, and regularly produced what was described as "violent anti-communist propaganda" for their magazine. He dismissed the theories, insisting that his wife had never been involved in his political activities. Other Cold War plots surfaced when police discovered a portrait of a Russian woman known for her anti-Communist views hanging in Maria's bedroom, but she turned out to be Lieutenant Lyudmila Pavlichenko, whose killing of German soldiers during the Russian offensive against Hitler's invading army had also endeared her to the Allied Forces. The discovery soon afterwards of a snapshot of a smiling Maria posing with a German Storm Trooper triggered a lovers' triangle theory according to which Maria, now cast as a *femme fatale* who had ended an affair with a Nazi, had been killed by the vengeful ex-lover.

As Chenier notes, the news coverage helped give a human face to the victims and expose the vulnerability of immigrant working women who toiled at low-paying and risky jobs and headed home alone late at night. In interviews with reporters, Maria's friends wove a compelling Cold War morality tale, saying that Maria had been doubly victimized, first by Communism and then by a crazy man. Once an educated and cultured woman who travelled in the best circles and thrilled audiences with a fine soprano voice trained at the Warsaw Conservatory of Music, Maria had been turned by Communism into a refugee and exploited salad-maker. Other observers insisted that plots of foreign intrigue were diverting police from the obvious explanation: Maria had been killed by the criminal "known the world over", namely "the man who walks dark streets by night and preys on solitary women". The women's husbands also came under the media gaze: Maria's husband won the media's sympathy as a man whose own vulnerable position as an exploited worker had rendered him incapable of protecting his wife, whereas Olga's husband was criticized as a selfish man. He had first told reporters that he had gone to play pool that evening despite his wife's protest that a married man and father should not be out at night. In an effort to clean up his image, he quickly switched his story, telling reporters that Olga, though normally opposed to his pool playing, this time had encouraged him to join his friends at the billiards hall as he deserved a reward for having worked so hard.

Of particular interest here was the striking discussion of the criminal sexual psychopath. Journalists sought out the opinion of psychiatrists and sex experts, who warned readers of the growing number of sadistic sex fiends who could have committed the crime. The police promised to round up the city's known sex offenders, searched the immigrant wards for other harassers, and offered a \$700 reward for tips leading to the arrest of the strangler, whom they racialized as a man likely to be a European with a dark complexion. Journalists declared that, as a *Star* reporter put it, the many "acts of immorality" indicated that "several perverts [were] loose". Police told

women not to go out at night, except with an escort, while others called for a more organized response. In this and other ways, the strangler case permitted more attention to psychiatric definitions, especially of sex crimes, that also challenged traditional policing and judicial concepts. Despite continuing tensions between the legal system and psychiatric experts, here the police and psyche-based experts agreed that the strangler had to be mentally deranged. Along with greater public funding for mental health,⁴⁵ the strangler case helped to give greater credence to the argument that sex criminals could seem normal in status and appearance and so resist detection. Thus, Chenier concludes, what appeared initially as an immigration problem became a broad issue about sexual danger in the Cold War city.

The racial-ethnic or immigrant-refugee dimensions of the case also bolstered popular notions of newcomers as more susceptible to mental instability and crimes of passion. Despite evidence to the contrary, the journalists speculated about categorizing crime by racial-ethnic group, at one point reporting that the police had infiltrated the immigrant quarters to find out which European group(s) favoured strangulation as a mode of murder and whether the safety pin in Maria had a specific cultural reference. Anglo-Celtic bigots linked the strangler murders to other recent crimes committed by allegedly degenerate German, Austrian, and East European men. J. V. McAree's columns in the *Globe and Mail* featured the opinions of angry and partisan Canadians who decried the arrival of mentally inferior and threatening foreigners — including “A Tory Loyalist” who blamed the “shocking increase of murders, rapes and robberies by DP's” on the Liberal government's “arrogant” and “dictatorial” plot to “flood Canada with German, Italian, Ukrainian, Polish, Slavic and other non-British immigrants”. In a manner befitting a moral panic discourse, he grouped together violent and non-violent crimes, and Europeans from different regions and regimes, to denounce the “dump[ing]” of “tens of thousands of illiterate, diseased and mentally unfit” newcomers in a time of “serious unemployment” and “business recession”.⁴⁶

Within the ethnic communities, the strangler case prompted embarrassment, which some “New Canadian men” tried to alleviate by openly declaring that the culprit was terrorizing all women, not only newcomers, and by offering to set up “vigilante committees” to help catch him.⁴⁷ East European groups protested the criminalized image of immigrants. The Toronto *Globe and Mail* reprinted one such petition, written by Ukrainian-Canadian law-

45 Roger Baskett, “The Life of the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital”, in Shorter, ed., *TPH History*; Elise Chenier, “Take Women, a Telephone, and Stir: Women and Lobbying Against Sex Perverts” (paper presented to the Canadian Historical Association, Sherbrooke, 1999).

46 NA, Clippings, *Globe and Mail* columnist J. V. McAree, January 8, 20, and 22, 1955, Mr. J. V. McAree published in *Globe and Mail* “opinions direct against the newcomers to Canada”.

47 Stephen Paulik, president of the Ukrainian branch of the Canadian Legion, cited in “Hunt is Urged for Strangler by Vigilantes”, *Star*, December 16, 1954; *ibid.*

yers, that first appeared in a recently created Ukrainian-Canadian newspaper *Nasha Meta*.⁴⁸ Calling themselves freedom- and justice-loving people, respectful of “the mutual responsibility which underlies the principles of the society of civilized nations”, the petitioners made several points. First, like Katz’s ethnic informants, they declared that “nobody” should “judge over a million immigrants in Canada by mentioning a few confused criminal cases”, especially since the immigrant criminality rate was lower than the national average. Rather, the “true picture of the DP’s” lay in the “excellent records” and “good character” of the “thousands of new Canadians who got their citizenship papers recently”. Secondly, they emphasized the professional profile of many DPs and the contributions that scientists, artists, and intellectuals had made to Canada. Next, they denounced political partisanship. As to motive for emigration, the petition’s fourth assertion — that “most” immigrants had “chosen freedom instead of slavery” — was familiar and also hints at the role of anti-Communist refugees in helping to shape Canada’s Cold War democratic discourse.⁴⁹ Also familiar was the next point: that the overcrowded English classes and the rapidity with which adults and children alike “master” English (it “amazes even their teachers”) reflected the newcomers’ commitment to Canada. Their sixth point dismissed the unemployment argument and stressed that refugees work “very hard” and “create” jobs, and that they wish “to create a strong Canadian nation despite not having had the opportunity to be born as Anglo-Saxons”. The final comments indicate how anxious were East Europeans to quell the rumours swirling around them; denouncing the “unfounded and false” charges of “illiterate, diseased and mentally unfit” newcomers, the petitioners declared that “no diseased persons” had entered Canada and “never before” had “so many educated people” arrived.

In the end, the public was not informed of the final outcome; shortly after Olga’s murder, police investigated several psychiatric institutions and determined that Ivan Pop, a former patient at the Ontario Psychiatric Hospital (Whitby), had committed both murders but was mentally unfit to stand trial. They closed the case.⁵⁰ Ironically, the strangler had turned out to be an East

48 NA, MG 31, D69, Press Clippings 1955. The file contains a copy of “An Answer on Behalf of New Canadians”, published in *Nasha Meta*, February 26, 1955 (translated from Ukrainian), signed by executive members of the International Lawyers Association, Jan Aleksandrowicz and Dr. Joseph Glaug, *Globe and Mail*, February 5, 1955, English translation. On the newspaper — the organ of the diocese of the Greek Catholic Church of Eastern Ontario established in 1949 in Toronto and described by officials as politically “moderate”, in favour of the liberation of Ukraine from the Soviet Union but not an advocate of a particular Canadian political party — see NA, Immigration Branch, RG 26, vol. 76, file 1–5–11, Canadian Citizenship Branch, Ottawa, March 1958, Press Review, Profile of Ethnic Press.

49 This theme receives extensive treatment in my book, but for a preliminary consideration, see my “Making Model Citizens: Gender, Corrupted Democracy, and Immigrant and Refugee Reception Work in Cold War Canada”, in Kinsman *et al.*, eds., *Whose National Security?*

50 Chenier, “Seeing Red”.

European man, yet neither the police nor government officials revealed it to the Canadian public — suggesting, perhaps, that the state, in trying to contain dangerous threats to the body politic, was equally concerned to prevent further spreading of fears about threatening foreign men. Authorities were prepared to deny women information of critical importance to their safety. In this regard, the DP strangler case, though much publicized, shares much in common with similar decisions made by social agency staff who tried to avoid pandering to racism by suppressing information about sexual assault cases involving newcomer men.⁵¹ Given their role in opening the doors to Europe, it is also not surprising that Liberal government officials (and perhaps their high-ranking civil servants) would wish to downplay anti-immigrant fears unleashed by this or other violent crimes.

Female Subjects and Containing Brutal Newcomer Men?

A critical examination of the alarmist claims described above does not relieve us of the task of grappling openly with the sources, however fragmentary, that pertain to men who evidently fit a profile of sexual predator, even when the evidence reveals more about the experts' gaze, or glance,⁵² than the perpetrator's acts and his victims' responses. Here, I scrutinize a disturbing case file created on a Hungarian man, Lajos J., selected from a large data base (1,105) of confidential case files of the largest Toronto social agency serving non-English-speaking newcomers, the International Institute of Metropolitan Toronto, for the period 1952 to 1965.⁵³ It belongs to a tiny fraction of cases (approximately 3 per cent) dealing with men considered to be both mentally unstable and violent. Like L.J., most of them lashed out at a female partner — whether called wife, common-law wife, girlfriend, or mistress⁵⁴ — and in some cases children. Rejecting an entirely insular post-

51 In 1958, for example, IIMT staff decided not to report a Hungarian refugee man who had raped a female compatriot living in the same boarding house on the grounds that such publicity would only encourage more anti-immigrant sentiment. The caseworkers promised to find her better housing and provide better material support in exchange for not pressing charges. See my "Making New Canadians".

52 I discuss the glance — or the on-the-spot categorization of clients — in "Gossip, Contest and Power" and am indebted to Ellen Ross for the insight.

53 AO, IIMT Collection, Restricted Material, Confidential Case Files. To ensure anonymity, I shall not provide precise citation of individual files, which have been reorganized into the data base, and I have modified some details. In addition to the data base, which contains information on each client (for example, age, nationality, sex, date of arrival), overall case file statistics (for example, by nationality, years in Canada, gender), and other features (for example, the caseload of specific caseworkers, domestic violence, unemployment), there are detailed notes on a sample of 315 files (S315), of which what I have called the L.J. file is case S296. I am indebted to Stephen Heathorn for creating the data base.

54 A larger set of approximately 52 case files (treated in more detail in my book manuscript) deals with men deemed depressed, emotionally fragile, neurotic, or mentally anguished but who are never described as or accused or convicted of being violent against others. My categorization of the type of problem at hand does not necessarily follow the IIMT caseworkers' categories; on this approach, see Gordon, *Heroes of Their Own Kind*. As the Institute was part of a large network of voluntary, government, and publicly funded agencies, its case files track people's movements and referrals from a family agency to a social welfare office, from a children's aid society to family court, and so on.

modern reading of the file, I consider the particulars of this case, the wider contexts described above, and the broader patterns evident in other Institute files from which this one cannot be isolated. On one level, the file contains the ingredients of a worst-case scenario: a former Hungarian prisoner⁵⁵ who exudes jealousy, paranoia, and brutishness; the presence of social, legal, and psychiatric experts with less than ideal therapeutic relationships with their clients; and an abused wife negotiating relations with family and caseworkers while surviving on dangerous terrain.

The small number of cases reflects the Institute's mandate as a social agency, not a psychiatric facility, yet the files capture a cross-section of the newcomers who entered a major receiving city like Toronto and thus give a reasonably accurate picture of the varied contexts in which newcomers encountered front-line caseworkers and counsellors. They also offer glimpses into the situation of the women most affected by the male client under scrutiny. Indeed, my reading of the case files on domestic violence confirms the value of recent social history and feminist work dealing with the "tactics" or "weapons" that the weak or the marginal sometimes used, even if these did not always produce the intended result.⁵⁶ As a socialist-feminist historian, I also remain "on the case": attentive to current debates about the status of historical evidence, the inevitability of agency, and the impossibility of objective knowledge and to the challenges but also rewards of writing about marginal subjects and social history with case files. I also remain on the case in another significant respect: rather than issue self-serving declarations about how we must write history, I hope to contribute towards writing history in a truly collectivist spirit, where efforts to challenge conventional wisdom and provoke reflection are appreciated, where rigorous debate, reflection, and exchange occur in a context of mutual respect among committed scholars.⁵⁷

55 We might also keep in mind a certain irony, that the Communist authorities in Hungary, as a way of discrediting the revolutionaries, exaggerated the number of dangerous and deranged criminals freed in the 1956 revolt and thus involved in the refugee streams. My thanks to Carmela Patrias for fielding my questions and echoing my plea for more research on the topic.

56 Elizabeth Janeway, *Powers of the Weak* (New York, 1980); James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985); George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Urban Culture, Gender, and the Makings of the Gay Male World, 1890–1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994). See also Gordon, *Heroes of Their Own Lives*; Margaret Little, "Case Files as a Site of Contestation" (and other essays) in Iacovetta and Mitchinson, eds., *On the Case, and No Car, No Radio, No Liquor Permit: The Moral Regulation of Single Mothers in Ontario, 1920–1977* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998).

57 For examples of the post-structuralism versus historical materialism debate, see the much-cited exchange between Joan Scott and Linda Gordon in *Signs*, vol. 15, no. 4 (Summer 1990) and "Roundtable on *On the Case*" in "CHR Forum", *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 81, no. 2 (June 2000). See also Mariana Valverde's discussion of Scott's "snobbish" interventions and of what she calls the "non-debate" within Canadian history circles in her "Some Remarks on the Rise and fall of Discourse Analysis", *Histoire sociale/Social History*, vol. 33, no. 65 (May 2000), pp. 59–77.

In the file created on L.J.,⁵⁸ we see several features common to other IIMT case files, including caseworkers' general commitment to a North American bourgeois family ideal. Also evident is the corollary — a tendency to view European newcomers as the product of more deeply patriarchal cultures and thus in need of modernizing along allegedly more companionate and egalitarian North American models. We also see some differences in the responses of the varied social welfare personnel involved, a variation that characterizes many Institute files and reminds us that front-line workers themselves differed with respect to training, sensitivity, and insight. As in the other relevant IIMT files, the entries and enclosed letters in L.J.'s file shed some light on the wife's experience of marital cruelty and also her valiant efforts to defend herself, her brother, and her children. They also beg the question whether the case is about not only the real damage caused by mental illness to both the sick person and his family but also the medicalization of male sexual violence.

When L.J. first entered the IIMT office in the fall of 1957, he was unemployed and registered with the local National Employment Service and so was required to seek work. He was collecting emergency welfare support (mostly food and food vouchers) from the Immigration Department (which also paid his rent) and the Catholic Family Service (CFS). At the Institute, L.J.'s caseworker was Dr. S.F., a refugee doctor without formal training as a social worker or counsellor but capable of speaking East European languages and probably trained (quickly?) on the spot. He found L.J. a dish-washing job.

Like many Institute cases, a job placement request soon unveiled a far more difficult family situation; this one involved charges of mental illness, sexual perversions, and violence. L.J. told his caseworker about his wife's brother, a recently released patient of a Hungarian-speaking psychiatrist at Toronto's Queen Street Mental Hospital, and then accused his wife, who he claimed had been overly keen to see her brother after a six-year separation, of having had "intercourse" with her sibling. Since L.J. already was immersed in the web of social welfare agencies, his IIMT caseworker was able to contact colleagues elsewhere for more details, and he recorded some of the conversations in the file. The CFS female caseworker who had been seeing the couple for several months said Mrs. J. was "much more cooperative" than her husband, who missed appointments and then barged in unannounced demanding attention. Her own sleuthing at the Immigration Department revealed that staff there wanted to "wash their hands" of the husband, who refused work. She also reported that L.J. had taken one, then a second, son away from his wife. She still cooked meals for them; he brought the sons to the front door of her rooming house to collect the food but

58 Again, this is a fictitious name — as are the initials of the man's IIMT caseworker — and some biographical and other details have been eliminated or modified to protect anonymity. The verbatim text from the file, however, is precisely that.

refused to let them go up and see their mother. Mrs. J. also told the CFS caseworker that in Hungary her husband had never held a “steady position” and that she had left him once out of “fear” after he had “threatened her with a knife etc.” The CFS worker had also contacted doctors at Queen Street, who said the brother’s mental illness made intercourse with his sister “unlikely”. Finally, she predicted that the Catholic Children’s Aid Society (CCAS) would “take” the boys as the father was negligent.

Evidently, L.J. eluded or defied the child authorities. Almost a year later, when he returned to the Institute, his caseworker (still likely Dr. S.F.) recorded that he had boasted about quitting his job after reproaching an irresponsible co-worker and now wanted to place his sons in foster care while he found work. Four months later, he accused the Department of Public Welfare of refusing to help him and insisted that the boys could not go to school because they had to earn their keep. Dr. S.F. noted that the boys were underfed and that the father spoke harshly to them. Further entries indicate that L.J. had raped his wife and impregnated her, and that she had given up the baby to the Children’s Aid and left her husband. Various letters in the file also capture the trail of taunts and torments that Mrs. J. had endured at the hands of a man who she and her caseworkers were convinced was mentally ill. Significantly, she tried to empower herself, and her efforts provide a graphic illustration of the tactics of a woman disadvantaged by class, poverty, and language who nevertheless tapped into state resources and institutions in an effort to help her brother and children and herself.

On the legal front, Mrs. J. first took her CFS caseworker’s advice — to file a complaint against the husband at Toronto family court — and, when the caseworker could not accompany her, she went alone. The subsequent court hearing proved disastrous, however, as no witnesses showed up and the judge, predictably, dispensed the most common advice given to women in such predicaments: return to her husband and work things out. Significantly, Mrs. J. refused to do so. The court action also meant that her caseworkers learned yet more grim details about her husband’s violent past and her difficult plight. Dr. S.F.’s entries indicate that he now knew about the beatings and knife threats in Hungary and other disturbing details: L.J. had served time in Hungary for rape and for issuing murder threats. Dr. S.F. also referred to Mrs. J.’s forced confession, at knife point and after a beating, about sex with her brother, and to the rape — all of which “overwhelmed” her and provoked her to leave her husband again. Clearly, Dr. S.F. believed the woman and, unlike family court, he came to support her desire to be rid of a deranged and violent man, though he never explicitly advocated divorce.

The file indicates that, subsequent to the first court hearing, Mrs. J. courageously defied her husband and tried to care for her boys. One entry in the winter of 1958 reads: “[she] took Xmas parcel from institute and left it for the Mr and boys — he destroyed it in rage.” When, a month later, she ignored a letter from her husband’s lawyer “requesting” she “return to him” and to the “responsibilities of wife and mother”, L.J. tried to kill her but

failed because a male tenant in her rooming-house intervened. In response, she again took her husband to court. This time, he was convicted of marital abuse, ordered to stay away from his wife, and jailed, albeit briefly. Upon release, he continued to taunt her and keep her sons away; again the family court advised immediate “reconciliation with her husband” while it deferred a decision for the children until proper procedures were followed.⁵⁹ A month later, when Mrs. J. went to the courthouse enquiring about her children’s fate, she was told (perhaps by sympathetic staff) that her best bet might simply be to steal them back.

Not all of Mrs. J.’s caseworkers were equally sympathetic, but she enlisted the aid of more supportive ones to pressure those seemingly less interested in her. For example, she told Dr. S.F. at the IIMT, now also her caseworker, that her CCAS caseworker had failed to appear for a scheduled appointment despite her having waited for two hours. She kept IIMT staff up to date about CCAS matters and about secret meetings with her children. She asked Dr. S.F.’s help as she was “afraid” her sons might “grow up for the worse”. The IIMT staff did offer Mrs. J. support, but, alas, the paper trail ends without telling us what happened to her and the boys, save for the information that by the summer of 1959 (the date of the file’s final entry), when her husband again returned to the IIMT looking for work, she was still alive.

Mrs. J. also wielded a second weapon, contacting medical staff at Queen Street Mental Hospital. Enclosed with her letter to her brother’s doctor was one her husband had sent her, threatening to kill her, their sons, and the “others” who had helped her — her brother, “the Chinese”, the Hungarian tenant, and the one judge who “took her side”. He boasts about having “kidnapped” the sons and having convinced the “stupid” doctors to “put” her brother in a mental hospital.⁶⁰ It ends with more misogynist attacks: “I will cut your neck anyway ... you can be sure everybody will know what you are before I hang you ... you dirty person ... everybody’s prostitute ... you mattress for all the judges and police ... you garbage can [and] prostitute.”⁶¹

I cannot determine whether Mrs. J. actually wrote, dictated, or simply approved her lengthy letter to her brother’s Queen Street psychiatrist, but it graphically conveys her predicament and also her determination, despite

59 Such as dispatching caseworkers to observe the family and home, draw up case histories, and recommend appropriate action. On these and related procedures, see various essays in Iacovetta and Mitchinson, eds., *On the Case*.

60 The letter says “and L. and L.” and might refer to the sons or other Hungarian tenants in his wife’s rooming-house. There is no other reference to the Chinese man, but perhaps he too once intervened on Mrs. J.’s behalf.

61 In the file is also a letter that L.J. had sent to a Hungarian couple in his wife’s rooming house, in which he accuses the man of being “secret police” and claims to have impregnated the man’s own wife. Another letter — from the landlord swearing that Mrs. J. and L.N. “occupied separate rooms” — was no doubt solicited from him to discredit L.J.’s accusations.

persistent cruelty, to get out of a horrendous situation.⁶² The letter explains the court fiascos, says the police and others agreed that the husband was “not normal”, and insists he “requires treatment”. He once beat up the Hungarian neighbour who had helped her and, ironically, accused the neighbour of being “a spy”. She writes that her husband had admitted to feeling “not normal”, adding, cryptically, that he had “a paper” from a mental hospital that “lawfully protects him from all responsibility”. Noting the irony that “such a bad and foolish man can be free from all responsibilities”, she begs the doctor to “please take my husband and examine him to see if he is a mental case”. In Hungary, she adds, he had been just as sadistic and “he has continued this cruelty with me”. Significantly, the letter also explains that Mrs. J. was now beyond reconciliation, noting the futility of earlier promises to “make peace” with her husband and “take him back” once her brother was released. Mrs. J. concludes with her own Cold War morality tale. Asking the doctor to “save us” from a “confused and foolish” man, she expresses the hope that “[i]n a free country we can have a life with my little family”.

It was just such gruesome detail that helps to explain why a handful of confidential case files on evidently deranged and certainly abusive men had such a powerful impact on psyche-based experts and front-line social workers, reinforcing a tendency among Canadian gatekeepers to pathologize the European male and by extension essentialize European women as victims. Yet, with some significant exceptions, the experts who intervened in such cases nonetheless usually advised women to return to their husbands (as the family court so advised Mrs. J.), to get psychiatric help for their husbands, and in other ways to work towards modernizing marital dynamics. Only after persistent torment did some experts (in Mrs. J.’s case, her IIMT case-worker Dr. S.F.) come to make the woman’s escape from a demented and brutal man the priority.⁶³

Conclusion

In tackling the role that negotiating gender identities and gender relations played in postwar immigration and Canadian nation-building in the Cold War, I have highlighted issues of sexuality in the 1950s and 1960s and the psychiatric labels that both professionals and popular commentators commonly used to discuss such matters. The alarmist and damaging discourses that demonized foreign men as paranoids, psychotics, and sexual predators, as well as over-reporting of ethnic male crime or violence in the media, raised the already high stakes involved in any analysis of male violence. This evidence demands that we scrutinize both the destructive moral and

62 The copy in the file is in English, but since the brother’s psychiatrist was Hungarian-speaking the original might well have been written in Hungarian.

63 See also my first treatment of this topic based on a much smaller data base (320) of Institute files in “Making ‘New Canadians’: Social Workers, Women, and the Reshaping of Immigrant Families”, in Iacovetta and Valverde, eds., *Gender Conflicts*.

mental branding of male newcomers and grapple seriously with the truly tormented lives of women like Mrs. J. and the mentally anguished. Given the popularity of psychiatric approaches in the postwar decades, it is not surprising that an exploration of the discourses of sexual morality became intertwined with complex questions related to mental health and psychiatric definitions and interventions. In trying to consider both the real problems and pain that people endured and how such matters were taken up by others, I hope, too, that this preliminary excavation has conveyed a sense of the tremendous challenges involved and also the slipperiness of the evidence with which scholars interested in such subjects must work. My research also invites various comparisons, especially with the United States, where, alas, the social and gender history of post-1945 immigrants and refugees is slim,⁶⁴ and with WWI and early post-WWI era medical opinion on immigrants (particularly regarding sexuality but also the medicalizing of Communism and reds as mental and moral contaminants)⁶⁵ — to mention a few examples. For the postwar years, it also suggests the need to scrutinize more carefully the kind of liberal bourgeois assumptions held by middle-class lay observers like Katz, who placed great faith in the capacity of experts boasting up-to-date knowledge and technologies to fix people and who evidently viewed the medicalizing of male violence and other sexual transgressions as necessarily more progressive than criminalizing it. As suggested by the recent and continuing research in women's and gay/lesbian history in 1950s North America and the revelations about CIA-funded brainwashing experiments conducted on mental hospital patients by leading Canadian psychiatrists, such assumptions could prove to be not only naive, but indeed dangerous to the health and safety of the already anguished and marginalized.⁶⁶

The patterns exhibited by Canadian experts who dealt with immigrant family crises included issuing assessments of European male violence as though it were primarily a symptom of an individual man's mental illness, personality disorder, or cultural and sexual perversion. This pattern begs another question worth more study: did the tendency among post-1945 psyche-based or oriented professionals to individualize problems that had wider and deeper roots (such as patriarchy) relieve them of the burden of addressing the larger problem of patriarchal privileges and structures that make all women vulnerable to mistreatment (though the form and degree vary across time, place, and culture) and of the responsibility for struggling to produce a more progressive agenda for social change? After all, left-wing

64 For post-1945 United States, Rachel Buff's work on "Gendered Citizenship" (manuscript in progress) is an exception.

65 To raise one question, did the post-1945 discourse here of sexual predator differ significantly from the anti-immigration discourse associated with the eugenics movement, where the focus was reproduction? See, for example, Angus McLaren, *Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1885–1945* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1990); Roberts, *Whence They Came*.

66 Collins, *In the Sleep Room*, references in n. 16 and elsewhere.

social workers were courageously trying to do just that.⁶⁷ The experts examined here never appear to question why evidently mentally or emotionally distraught men frequently resorted to violence against women — why, that is, they appeared to have internalized a patriarchal ideology that, notwithstanding national and cultural differences, basically sanctioned men's rule over women world-wide. As in other arenas, the psychiatric turn in social service work produced socially conservative results, perhaps all the more so when it involved Canadian experts encountering Old World foreigners.⁶⁸ By displacing the problem of patriarchy and male violence onto the male other, at least some Canadian gatekeepers evidently found their folk devil and a rationale for treatment (modernize European marriages and families) that also allowed them to sidestep the damage done to women everywhere in the name of male privilege, moral order, and the family.

Finally, I return to the tension at the heart of this essay and what it suggests not only about the value of being “on the case” but about its risks. The possibility of historical revelation, through rare case files, of normally hidden social attitudes and practices has to be balanced against the possibility of exaggerating their significance. I had to resist the temptation to reveal all the sordid details in the L.J. case or risk succumbing to the voyeuristic tendencies that, despite his good intentions, marred Katz's piece of investigative journalism. Through a contextual analysis of Katz's magazine article, researcher Elgie's assessments, and the IIMT's case file on L.J. and his wife, I also tried to underscore how important it is to remain sensitive to the inevitable balance of judgements required when we interpret divergent kinds of sources.

67 Alas, the literature on left-wing social workers such as Doris Wilensky (whose husband was Communist Party of Canada luminary Joe Salzberg) and Betsy Tousel (a critic of the psychiatric turn in social work) is slim, but there is useful material in Gale Wills, *A Marriage of Convenience: Business and Social Work in Toronto, 1918–1957* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995) and James Struthers, *The Limits of Affluence: Welfare in Ontario, 1920–1970* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994).

68 I am not suggesting that Canadian experts never acknowledged that dominant majority Canadian men were ever violent or ill, but rather that those working primarily with minorities tended to focus on insular explanations that emphasized poor adjustment and backward cultures. On post-1945 psychiatric approaches, social welfare work, and moral regulation, see, for example, Gordon, *Heroes of Their Own Lives*; Regina Kunzell, “Pulp Fiction and Problem Girls: Reading and Rewriting Single Pregnancy in the Postwar United States”, *American Historical Review*, vol. 100 (December 1995); John Graham, “A History of the Toronto School of Social Work” (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1995); Iacovetta, “Gossip, Contest and Power”; and essays on nurses and social workers in Shorter, ed., *TPH History*.