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“National Responsibility”

A History of Willful Nostalgia in the Canadian Football League

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The Canadian Football League (CFL) has long promoted itself and its championship game, the Grey Cup, as an integral part of Canadian identity and a force for national unity. Different periods of league history offer more or less support for this notion, as public interest in the league has fluctuated greatly over time. The 1970s were a period of relative prosperity for many teams, but by the late-1980s, declining attendance threatened its survival. During this period municipal, regional, and provincial governments rushed to support CFL teams through loans, tax breaks, and rent abatements. Pressed by frustrated taxpayers, politicians justified government support with little more than willful nostalgia for a formerly proud CFL. Three case studies are discussed detailing these events in different markets across the CFL. The nostalgic discourse of league officials, politicians, and journalists is examined.

KEYWORDS: Canadian football, CFL, nostalgia, nationalism, 1980s

The Canadian Football League (CFL) has long promoted itself and its championship game, the Grey Cup, as an integral part of Canadian identity and a force for national unity. For decades, politicians have mirrored this rhetoric from the municipal to the federal order of government, and journalists have both supported and satirized these claims. Such patriotic assertions are well documented, even if the academic literature devoted to CFL

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matters is relatively scant. Different periods of league history offer varying support for the CFL's national relevance, as public interest in the league has fluctuated greatly over time. Historical sociologists John Nauright and Phil White identified the "glory days" of the Ottawa Rough Riders as the period between 1968 to 1976, when attendance was high and Canadian players were visible in both skilled positions and the community.¹ The 1970s represented a decade of league-wide prosperity, although the perceived "glory days" of CFL franchises differ from market to market.² The CFL's cultural prominence during this period was evidenced by the active participation of politicians—from Grey Cup ceremonial kickoffs to promises of protectionist legislation, such as a proposed 1974 bill intended to block the World Football League (WFL) from expanding into Canada.³

The CFL's fortunes declined throughout the 1980s as attendance plummeted and several franchises were reduced to financial insolvency.⁴ Struggling teams appealed to the government for financial aid. From 1986 to 1989, municipal, regional, and provincial governments offered CFL teams—privately and community-owned alike—loans, tax breaks, and rent abatements, often at the taxpayers' expense. In some cases, the influx of public money saved teams from folding; in others, it merely prolonged their inevitable dissolution.⁵ Some taxpayers were unimpressed with what they perceived to be a misuse of public funds, and league executives and politicians were tasked with justifying the expenditure. Arguments that supported government assistance for the CFL during this period routinely employed sociologist Roland Robertson's phrase "willful nostalgia."⁶ It was commonplace for politicians and commentators to first reference the CFL's halcyon past before insisting the league was a national icon, despite the inconvenient truth that its problems resulted largely from the indifference of the ticket-buying public.⁷ The league and its teams leveraged an idyllic representation of its past to secure a future through public assistance.

This study argues the CFL and its teams used willful nostalgia to ensure survival in the mid-to-late 1980s. Willful nostalgia, in the absence of traditional forms of collateral, was peddled to secure life-sustaining grants and loans. This research shows that journalists and politicians propagated these claims and overcame any taxpayer opposition to perceived handouts to professional football teams through persuasive nostalgic rhetoric. Although nostalgia proved an effective tool in securing the needed support, the personal motivation of key actors must also be considered. Many politicians, journalists, and league executives argued publicly for the preservation of a national institution in order to safeguard their private livelihoods.

This study unfolds in two phases. In the first phase, we establish a theoretical basis for the role of nostalgia in the relationship between Canadian national identity and sport. Next, we consider the CFL's decades-long effort to build a reputation as an indispensable Canadian unifier and a reflection of national identity. The CFL's weaving of league and Canadian identity would provide the basis for its later justification of protectionism and public funding, even though characterizations of the CFL as a panacea for the vaguely defined Canadian identity were misplaced. We then briefly discuss the Canadian political context and the state of the CFL's national profile during the mid-to-late 1980s, especially the conditions that made CFL fans, sports journalists, and politicians prone to nostalgia. In the second phase, we detail the appeals of three CFL clubs—Ottawa Rough Riders, Hamilton Tiger-Cats, and Calgary Stampeders—for public funds during the financially

troubled decade of the 1980s, when claims of national unification rang hollow and public expenditure to support the league was justified through willful nostalgia. This manuscript, for the sake of space, limits its analysis to three clubs, one-third of the league. The selected cases demonstrate that, despite political and social climates as diverse as Hamilton, an industrial city in central Canada, and Calgary, the economic hub of the western hinterland, the CFL and its clubs relied on the same nostalgic appeal to a shared Canadian past. The clubs profiled in this study all received public funds and, in each case, justified this funding with nostalgic rhetoric.

WILLFUL NOSTALGIA

The seminal work by sociologist Fred Davis, *Yearning for Yesterday: A Sociology of Nostalgia*, provides the basis for the conceptualization of nostalgia used here. Davis distinguishes between collective and private nostalgia, stating that collective nostalgia “refers to that condition in which the symbolic objects are a highly public, widely shared, and familiar character, those symbolic resources from the past that under proper conditions can trigger wave upon wave of nostalgic feeling in millions of persons at the same time.”⁸ Davis adds that collective nostalgia is highly susceptible to the influence of the mass media. Sociologist Janelle Wilson claims that “collective nostalgia can serve the purpose of forging a national identity, expressing patriotism.”⁹ Nostalgia is routinely identified by scholars as playing a significant role in promoting nationalism. Svetlana Boym conceptualizes a “restorative nostalgia” that “characterizes national and nationalist revivals all over the world, which engage in the antimodern myth-making of history by means of a return to national symbols and myths.”¹⁰ Boym’s term relies heavily on historian Eric Hobsbawm’s work on invented traditions.¹¹

Sociologist Roland Robertson finds evidence for a similar brand of nostalgia in Carol Gluck’s *Japan’s Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period*. Robertson describes the nostalgia of late-Meiji Japan as “highly serviceable” in “consolidating Japan’s ‘national essence.’”¹² He goes on to coin the term “willful nostalgia” by drawing on historian Tom Nairn’s *The Enchanted Glass: Britain and its Monarchy*, in which Nairn describes a “modern, willful kind” of nostalgia.¹³ Neither Robertson nor Nairn formally define the term. Subsequent research, however, has set a precedent for its use, including sociologist Joseph Maguire’s study of the British media’s reaction to Britain’s failures in international sports. Combining these threads, we define willful nostalgia as a collective nostalgia deliberately engendered in a citizenry to strengthen national identity and gain support for ulterior political objectives. In keeping with this definition, we argue that league officials, journalists, and politicians leveraged willful nostalgia to justify public support for the CFL in the mid-to-late 1980s.

Recent populist movements are replete with willful nostalgia, in which an idealized national past is contrasted with a dystopian future to implement extreme political agendas. This contemporary expression of willful nostalgia is reminiscent of developments during Robertson’s era of focus—the early twentieth century. Robertson details the proliferation of willful nostalgia during the period of 1880 to the mid-1920s, in which major European powers produced opulent national symbols, monuments, and ceremonials to foment patriotic fervor.¹⁴ Davis, too, notes the prominent role of nostalgia in promoting patriotic

sentiment, and Maguire links the indifferent currents of globalization to the rise of willful nostalgia in Britain.¹⁵ Considering that Canadian sport historian Bruce Kidd endorses Americanization as a more appropriate term than globalization in the Canadian context,¹⁶ willful nostalgia in Canada may represent a response to American influence on Canadian mass culture. In CFL circles, willful nostalgia gained prominence when Canadians seemingly abandoned a domestic product in favor of one produced in the United States (that is, the NFL).¹⁷

CANADIAN INSTITUTION OR RESPONSIBILITY?

Scholars who study the expression of Canadian national identity through sport find evidence for sociologist Stuart Hall's claim that identity is "a structured representation that achieves its positive only through the narrow eye of the negative."¹⁸ Sport sociologist Steven Jackson, for example, stresses that a citizenry tends to define itself through differences with other nations "through the use of stereotypes, symbols, and practices (including sport) that supposedly embody a sense of cultural uniqueness."¹⁹ Writing about the infamous 1988 Wayne Gretzky trade, Jackson discusses long-held fears within Canada that economic domination will lead inevitably to cultural domination. He identifies instances—such as Pierre Trudeau's 1969 Task Force on Sport—where sport is billed as a key component of cultural resistance and national unity.²⁰ Sport historian Craig Greenham recognizes the nationalistic tendencies of Canadian sports reporters when discussing the Grey Cup, Canada's "anti-Super Bowl," with particular emphasis on the pronounced anti-American aspect of Canadian nationalism.²¹ For its defenders, the CFL was emblematic of that cultural resistance.

Gridiron football, the only major professional sport (hockey, baseball, basketball, and football) in North America that has separate Canadian and American leagues, represents a natural front of opposition.²² Indeed, nationalism scholar Anthony D. Smith's definition of national identity can be applied to Canadian football. Smith argues that "common myths and historical memories" and "a common, mass public culture" represent two fundamental features of national identity.²³ The CFL may reasonably be said to contribute to both and, as a sport played exclusively in Canada, also supports Hobsbawm's assertion that "the rise of sport provided new expressions of nationalism through the choice or invention of nationally specific sports."²⁴ Just as writers have argued that Canadians are prone to constructing a collective identity out of difference to the United States, so too do they tie the value of the CFL to those few rules that differentiate it from the American game.²⁵ Writers routinely suggest that loss of the CFL would result in a less-unique Canada, that is, a more American Canada. Journalist Trent Fayne of *The Globe and Mail* discussed the gravitational pull of American culture on the Canadian public while applauding the uniqueness of the CFL in reference to the NFL:

Of course, nowadays it's fashionable to put down the CFL and blindly applaud the game south of here played by behemoths on postage-stamp fields. What so many people won't consider is that the rules and the field's dimensions accord Canada a unique game that puts different demands on its players. Gaudaur [then commissioner of the CFL], like anybody else who thinks about it, has always been aware that Canadians are awed by the affluence (and baloney) of the United States, in football as in everything else.²⁶

The CFL's long-standing claim to be an enduring Canadian institution has prompted scholars to study the CFL's efforts to frame itself as an important part of Canadian identity. In his thesis, Michael Cantelon illustrates how the CFL attempted to achieve this end through marketing slogans, such as "The Canadian Football League: Radically Canadian," and formal addresses, such as then-CFL commissioner John Tory's brief to the Sub-Committee on the Study of Sport in Canada.²⁷ Throughout this brief, Tory consistently represented the CFL as a Canadian institution and stressed its uniquely Canadian heritage.²⁸ Even CFL historian Frank Cosentino identifies resistance to the progressive Americanization of the Canadian game as a central theme to his comprehensive league history *A Passing Game: A History of the CFL*.

The Canadian federal government's response to rumors of WFL cross-border expansion in the early 1970s illustrates government buy-in to the CFL's claim that it promotes Canadian identity. The WFL, an unknown entity in many respects, announced its intention to begin play in 1974. The league's proposal included a Toronto franchise to be named the Northmen, which would vie for market share with Toronto's long-established CFL team, the Argonauts. In 1972, Canada's minister of health and welfare, John Munro, articulated federal government policy against the cross-border expansion of any football league, Canadian or American.²⁹ His successor, Marc Lalonde, likewise vowed to undermine the Northmen bid, willing, in his words, to escalate "all the way to legislation or administrative action."³⁰ Lalonde introduced "An Act respecting Canadian Professional Football," which stipulated that "no person owning or operating a football team with a foreign league shall require or permit that team to play football in Canada."³¹ Lalonde defended government intervention as "the only way to preserve the Grey Cup as a Canadian tradition," before claiming that "the continued prosperity of the CFL is important to Canada."³² Christie Blatchford, writing for *The Globe and Mail*, summarized the government's position in a column in which she satirically borrowed Lalonde's phrasing to label the CFL a "national responsibility":

The real biggie, in the Governments' [*sic*] view, is that the CFL is Canadian (read good), its brand of football is Canadian, and that the WFL is American (read bad). Like his predecessor—John Munro—Big Marc doesn't want to see the identity of Canadian football eroded by the United States. Give 'em an inch and they'll take four downs. . . . The strongest anti-WFL argument, though, is that Canadian football is more than a game. "It's not just another form of entertainment," Big Marc said scornfully. "It is your game, part of your lives." That's the sort of stuff that stirs the blood.³³

Although rampant in 1974, nationalistic arguments were not limited to the Northmen standoff.³⁴ Later in the 1970s, then CFL commissioner Jake Gaudaur prescribed the CFL as a remedy for pervasive inferiority in Canadian nationalistic discourse:

If there ever was a Canadian institution worth preserving, it is the CFL. It is the only pro sport in Canada that has achieved national stature. It is the only event, the Grey Cup, in Canada which must be covered on three television networks. . . . We have to understand that we live next door to the greatest nation in the world. We will probably always be in a cultural shadow but I believe in football, we have been able to have our cake and eat it too.³⁵

Several authors have challenged the CFL's well-documented nationalist self-promotion, including much of Gaudaur's discourse, on normative grounds as well. Two days after the 1988 Grey Cup, *The Ottawa Citizen* reprinted a 1967 piece by Canadian writer Mordecai Richler that dryly conveys the maleness and racial homogeneity of Grey Cup celebrations.³⁶ Kidd also addresses tensions that exist within Canada, arguing that women, francophones, western and Atlantic Canadians, and Indigenous peoples may rightly view nationalistic rhetoric in sport as mere justification for their continued marginalization.³⁷ Whatever version of national identity the mid-to-late 1980s CFL is said to represent or bolster, it can only be an incomplete one. This study seeks only to prove that such claims were made, not to comment on their validity.

NOSTALGIA IN THE BROADER CANADIAN AND CFL CONTEXTS

Canada's political climate and the CFL's financial context in the mid-to-late 1980s either, in the extreme view, enhanced Canadians' susceptibility to nostalgia or, at a minimum, provided the cultural ammunition with which key actors bolstered their nostalgic appeals for public funding. Nauright and White, in their study of the public's nostalgic response to the folding of the Ottawa Rough Riders in 1996, noted that Canadian media tied the resulting wave of nostalgia to a broader, national nostalgia for a pre-FTA Canadian past. They incorporated nostalgia for the CFL and the Grey Cup into a wider discourse "in which 'Canada' is actively constructed and remembered as 'Canadian' and where American influences in particular are minimized."³⁸ In Nauright and White's view, "the longing for some Canada of the past before the Americans and their culture seemed to be everywhere is part of the process of coping with greater integration between the two societies."³⁹ In the mid-to-late 1980s, Canadians from diverse backgrounds deliberated on the issue of free trade with the United States. Historian Laurier Lapierre assembled a volume titled *If You Love This Country*, which includes responses from Canadian intellectuals who shared an ardent opposition to the Canada–United States FTA signed in 1988. The following quotation from playwright Rick Salutin is emblematic of both the spirit of the collection and much public sentiment at the time—sceptical, patriotic, and nostalgic:

And as writers—what are we supposed to write our books about, and play our plays and sing our songs—when there is no distinctive Canadian society left; when our country has been absorbed into the glittering American marketplace. . . . What is the point of being a writer or artist in Canada, when Canada is no longer distinctive and in control of its destiny?⁴⁰

Smith makes the compelling argument that, because the values and demands of the intelligentsia are most easily satisfied in a territorial nation, this group is likely to be ardent nationalists.⁴¹ Smith's assertion may help explain both the content of Lapierre's volume and the motivation for politicians and journalists to leverage nostalgia and preserve the CFL, something they believed to be an important piece of Canadian identity. In the mid-to-late 1980s, the CFL's financial realities forecast impending disaster and stimulated a nostalgic response.

Although this study focuses on the plight of three teams—the Ottawa Rough Riders, Hamilton Tiger-Cats, and Calgary Stampeders—financial difficulties were common

across the CFL. Sharp declines in television ratings throughout 1986 hobbled the CFL's negotiating position and made it unable to renew its favorable television deal. The league was instead forced to launch its own television network, the Canadian Football Network (CFN), which introduced uncertainty to a previously dependable revenue stream. Gate receipts, the league's major source of revenue, dwindled in most markets, and a 1986 Angus Reid poll showed that public opinion of the CFL had soured, with 70 percent of respondents opposing "any form of government funding to keep the league alive."⁴² For these and other reasons, each of the league's nine franchises lost money in 1987.⁴³ Widely divergent debt loads and ownership structures meant that financial difficulties, although experienced league-wide and mitigated by a comprehensive revenue-sharing agreement, exerted disproportionate impacts and demanded unique responses across markets. Relevant actors in the three focus cases of this study responded with willful nostalgia.

Davis's book *Yearning for Yesterday* provides the theoretical basis for why the CFL's dire finances helped engender nostalgic sentiment in its teams' fanbases. Davis contends that nostalgia represents the "search for continuity amid threats of discontinuity" in the lifespan.⁴⁴ Within this framework, nostalgia is experienced during moments of great upheaval or rapid change that threaten a person or community's sense of self. By conjuring a mythologized past—positive in tone and sharply contrasted with present circumstances—a continuous identity can be reconstructed in the face of discontinuity. Considering sociologist Walter Schafer's assertion that fans identify with a sports team because it "represents an extension of their own sense of self," it requires no great leap to view the impending loss of a beloved football team as a discontinuity capable of engendering a strong nostalgic reaction in that team's fan base.⁴⁵ Davis's perspective can be further interpreted in culture scholar Stuart Tannock's terminology. Tannock refers to three necessary components of nostalgic rhetoric: prelapsarian (the golden age), the lapse (the fall), and postlapsarian (the tarnished present).⁴⁶ This phrasing helps compartmentalize junctures of discontinuity and is clearly present in commentary surrounding struggling CFL teams in the 1980s. In this case, the prelapsarian period is represented by Nauright and White's 1970s "golden age" of supposed glory; the lapse is represented by eroding attendance and viewership in the early 1980s; and the postlapsarian period is represented by the late 1980s, a time of turmoil in which fans compared the past with the present, noted the perceived superiority of the past, and experienced nostalgia for what was lost.

THE CASE STUDIES

In 1986, the Ottawa Rough Riders, Hamilton Tiger-Cats, and Calgary Stampeders were in danger of folding. The Stampeders frantically organized the "Save our Stamps" campaign; the Tiger-Cats faced protracted disputes between ownership and municipal government;⁴⁷ and in Ottawa, twenty-seven prominent businesspeople scrounged the necessary funds to assume ownership of the Rough Riders as a nonprofit limited partnership.⁴⁸ As acknowledged by Nauright and White, "teams, like many other things, often appear to be taken for granted until they come under serious threat of bankruptcy or relocation. It is then that a wave of nostalgic identity appears to envelop the community who then does all it can to 'save the team' in order to prevent a significant loss of local identity."⁴⁹

The Ottawa Rough Riders

In 1986, then-owner Allan Waters began to shop the Rough Riders after he announced losses of \$13 million (all figures in Canadian currency) since he purchased the team less than a decade before. With Waters absorbing the losses, a twenty-seven-member limited partnership assumed ownership for \$1. As the team moved toward a nonprofit designation, optics associated with government support for the team improved markedly. Later reports suggested Jim Durrell, mayor of Ottawa, 1985–1991, was the first to envision a community-owned model and had personally courted Ottawa businesspeople willing to support the project.⁵⁰ Before the start of the 1987 season, Ottawa City Council approved a rent reduction at Lansdowne Park, the team's stadium, from \$300,000 to \$150,000 per year. It also voted to grant the team a benefits package totaling approximately \$240,000 per year for a three-year term.⁵¹ Some journalists drew attention to the troubling symmetry between the Rough Riders' benefits package and City Council's simultaneous decision to slash \$243,000 in grants to 113 cultural and service groups.⁵² Despite reduced rental costs, several media reports claimed the Rough Riders owed back rent for 1987 and 1988. "We're not saying that we won't pay the rent," team president Hap Nicholds said, according to the *Ottawa Citizen*. "We're just asking the city to be a little patient."⁵³

This sort of negative press did little to cloud the success of the 1988 Grey Cup, hosted by Ottawa, which received positive attention in the media. The league's championship game stimulated Ottawa's economy by an estimated \$25 million (a figure circulated by Durrell), but any money that went into the local economy did little to improve the Rough Riders' bottom line.⁵⁴ Events intensified in 1989, with Ottawa City Council tabling a proposal that granted the team a subsidy worth \$614,687—a sum comprised of frozen back rent, stadium costs, and forfeited revenues from parking, concessions, and private boxes.⁵⁵ Taxpayer response was overwhelmingly negative, and aldermen received "a barrage of calls" attempting to dissuade them from approving the proposal.⁵⁶ Regardless, Ottawa City Council voted in favor of the bailout, and the Rough Riders, undeterred by public outcry, continued to seek a \$500,000 loan from the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Council.⁵⁷ In a crowded Metcalfe Community Centre, Regional Council narrowly supported the interest-free loan, voting 16–14 in favor after an "emotional 3-1/2-hour debate."⁵⁸

During this period, arguments that called for support of the Rough Riders predictably relied on nostalgia, and an absence of economic reasoning was notable. Following a common template, CFL executives, politicians, and journalists justified the Regional Council's support of the Rough Riders by describing a nostalgic vision of the CFL as a long-standing Canadian institution. Prior to the vote, Durrell chided his opposition when he said, "I can't imagine anybody standing up with a sense of pride and saying their vote brought down a 100-year-old institution. . . . With the debt erased I feel very comfortable we can structure a proper . . . loan of some sort, and we'll get our money back as well."⁵⁹ Al Bouwers, then mayor of Osgoode, rebutted this logic: "If the deal were any good, the banks would give them the money."⁶⁰

The executive report in the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton (RMOC) minutes contains summaries of the key arguments made by various presenters in defense of the loan, as well as those opposed.⁶¹ Joanne Pollack, then general manager of the Rough Riders, gave a lengthy presentation in which she stressed her belief "in preserving the past," stating

that “there is no finer historical institution in the city than the Ottawa Rough Riders.” Bill Baker, then-CFL president, lamented that “the CFL suffers from the fact that Canadians compare themselves to the NFL; it is unfortunate to note that there are some people who want to see the CFL fold.” The report also included a letter addressed to the Regional Council written by Sheila Murray, a concerned citizen. Murray first presented a glowing image of a “prelapsarian” CFL, before advocating a return to its humble Canadian origins and, in doing so, neatly aligning the league with core components of Smith’s definition of national identity:

A community, as well as a country, needs symbols, myths, institutions, heroes and heroines which embody commonly held values. Team sports, such as football, provide the opportunities for Canadian youth to become heroes, embellish myths, create symbols, and engage in institution building. We need to support the Rough Riders for these reasons.⁶²

Stephen Brunt, columnist for *The Globe and Mail*, acknowledged the inflated rhetoric on both sides of the debate: “The most histrionic opponent of the deal, alderman Tim Kehoe, waved a pair of newly purchased season’s tickets and talked about long-dead uncles who once played for the club before he attempted to drive a nail into its coffin.”⁶³ Brunt then quoted alderman George Kelly, whose statements clearly associated the Rough Riders with his own nebulous sense of national identity. Kelly proudly justified his vote, stating, “I have been told by some people that this will cost me an election. Well, I’ll stand up tomorrow and if I lose an election, it’s because of my Canadian beliefs.”⁶⁴ Brunt himself neither explicitly endorsed nor opposed the loan. Instead, he offered a sober evaluation of the political stakes by identifying a possible motivation for aldermen to vote in the CFL’s favor: the political consequences of allowing a CFL team to fold could be dire. The misguided investment of a relatively minor sum of public money was not a particularly memorable offense, but the public would not easily forget or forgive the decision to condemn the Rough Riders to failure.

Throughout the mid-to-late 1980s, as Ottawa municipal governments repeatedly aided the Rough Riders, journalists who supported the bailouts voiced their justification in passages containing willful nostalgia. The 1988 Grey Cup promoted this brand of nostalgic discourse, as exemplified by an Eddie MacCabe piece in *The Ottawa Citizen*:

Men like Prime Ministers Pearson and Diefenbaker saw the league as a unifying force in the country. . . . But, times change. Nothing is forever. This week’s football party in Ottawa [the Grey Cup], which Mayor Jim Durrell and committee chairman Ron Stewart have set up as one grand community festival, will serve to remind us again of what once was[,] . . . make some noise. Because we’re in danger of losing something that has been worthwhile for a long, long time. Now is the time we have to decide, is it still?⁶⁵

Even journalists opposed to government aid for the CFL acknowledged how prominently nostalgia factored into the discussion, as Lloyd McLachlan wrote for the *Windsor Star*:

The CFL used to be a source of pride in this country. It came equipped with a raw instinct for survival, a game refreshingly distinct from its more polished American cousin. No more. Today, that instinct mirrors the mentality of the unshaven bum

leaning against a wall, sacrificing self-respect in search of the next quarter from some soft-hearted sucker. . . . An argument in favor of propping up the league is to preserve something important to the national psyche. What are we preserving? Memories?⁶⁶

Willful nostalgia in Ottawa, as in other CFL markets, relied on nationalistic rhetoric and national symbols. Although funding was sought principally from local governments, the stakes, as framed by CFL executives, journalists, and politicians, were of national scope. One of Baker's key points presented before the RMOC was that "it is not only the Rough Riders that are at stake, it is the entire CFL."⁶⁷ This and similar claims highlighted the urgency of supporting the Rough Riders as, according to Baker, losing the team meant losing the league meant diminishing Canadian identity. Similar logic featured prominently in both the Hamilton and Calgary cases.

The Hamilton Tiger-Cats

During the same period, similar debates took place in other struggling CFL markets. In 1988, Harold Ballard, unpopular owner of the Hamilton Tiger-Cats from 1978 to 1989, called on the City of Hamilton to forgive \$300,000 in back rent and thenceforth slash the annual rate to just \$1. After City Council, led by Mayor Bob Morrow, refused to meet his demands, Ballard threatened to relocate the team and shipped the Ticats' playing equipment to a storage depot in Toronto.⁶⁸ The City of Hamilton retaliated by changing the locks on the municipally owned and operated stadium.⁶⁹ Joseph Hall, journalist for the *Toronto Star*, captured public reaction to Ballard's threats in an article titled "Hamilton Has Spoken: Don't Let Ticats Go . . .," a compilation of citizen interviews in which fans freely aired nostalgic reveries about personal experiences with the team.⁷⁰ Negotiations over the ensuing months resulted in the sale of the Tiger-Cats from Ballard to prominent Hamilton businessman David Braley in early 1989. After hours of late-night debate, Hamilton City Council voted in favor of a contract designed to facilitate the sale. Included was the stipulation that Ballard sell the scoreboard and concession equipment to the City of Hamilton as a "donation" of \$700,000 in return for a tax receipt for the full amount. In addition, the city would provide incoming ownership with full rights to the stadium, as well as its concessions and advertising space, for the annual sum of \$1—a courtesy previously denied Ballard. The city also granted the Tiger-Cats \$300,000 per year to supplement the team's marketing budget. These terms were carried with an 11–5 vote.⁷¹ Citing the Municipal Act, an Ontario law that prevents cities from providing financial aid to commercial enterprises, the City of Hamilton's solicitor, Phil Hooker, said of the agreement that "the illegalities are sufficiently clear that a ratepayer might bring an action personally against an alderman who voted in favor of this resolution." Hooker then refused to participate in the implementation of the agreement.⁷²

Ultimately, Hooker's abstention did little to slow the sale, which went forward as planned. Brunt, for one, considered the deal laudable, a position he defended in *The Globe and Mail*:

When Ballard fled at the end of last season, Braley . . . took over the club only after winning a heap of concessions from the local council, not unlike Ottawa's sweet-heart deal. . . . He has advertised, he has sought to expose his product to as many

folks as possible and once people have bought a ticket, he's tried not to disappoint them. But now let's put that into CFL terms, where marketing in recent years has normally been based on either nostalgia, cultural nationalism, civic pride, or threats that without support a club would fold.⁷³

Of the three CFL marketing crutches identified by Brunt, two—nostalgia and cultural nationalism—clearly support the central claim of this study. That Brunt finds evidence of nostalgia and nationalism in CFL marketing, a public communication where the league carefully constructs its brand, speaks to the deliberate aspect of willful nostalgia. Without granting CFL marketing staff undue foresight, the deliberate association of league brand and Canadian identity proved invaluable in later years when nostalgia assumed the dominant thrust of league messaging.

Other commentators suggested that Hamilton City Council should have accommodated Ballard's demands long before the sale took place. Alongside lengthy descriptions of the uniqueness of the Canadian game, David Shoalts wrote in *The Globe and Mail*,

[P]ulling your club's equipment from its stadium over a rent dispute on that day [the Grey Cup] was the act of a lout. But the city of Hamilton must also share the embarrassment. . . . If Hamiltonians expect Ballard to continue financing the team, the least they can do is ease the burden a little with a better rent deal. . . . Despite our professional ennui, this game works. And it's ours. We will be diminished as Canadians if we let it slip away.⁷⁴

Others called for greater government largesse. Writing for *The Financial Post*, McGill University economics professor William Watson penned an opinion piece under the headline "CFL as Deserving of Subsidy as Anyone Else."⁷⁵ After presenting star players of a past era as mythologized heroes, Watson's argument made extensive use of willful nostalgia and anti-American sentiment:

There are two reasons why even a rabid marketer might think we should subsidize the Grey Cup and (because you can't have a championship game without a league) the CFL. One is that, like national defence, another activity whose benefits people generally can't be excluded from enjoying, the Grey Cup is a classic example of a technically "public" good. . . . The other reason for a subsidy is that the Grey Cup is a classic part of Canadian culture, with Canadian culture defined—broadly, as it should be—as anything we understand that the Americans don't. . . . We were Canada before we had the Grey Cup, and no doubt we'd still be Canada after it is gone, but we'd be a different and less distinct Canada.⁷⁶

The Calgary Stampeders

To the chagrin of Ralph Klein, mayor of Calgary from 1980 to 1989, governments in Alberta proved less supportive of the CFL than those in the Ontario examples provided. With debts in excess of \$1 million and unable to meet its payroll, the Stampeders approached Calgary City Council with a request for \$2.5 million in indirect grants—comprised of \$500,000 in annual rent abatements over a five-year term.⁷⁷ The City Council voted the motion down by a margin of 7–6 after nearly five hours of debate. Calgary aldermen had evidently acceded to the demands of their constituents, as local politicians claimed to be bombarded with "virulently negative" calls that opposed the proposal.⁷⁸ Klein likened

the result to "giving up on a great tradition" and added that "Calgary started football in Canada.^[79] This team is an institution and to let that institution go down this way . . . it's almost enough to make you want to cry."⁸⁰ Then-CFL commissioner Doug Mitchell suggested that, should the Stampeders fold, the entire league would collapse.⁸¹ Mitchell's claim is central to understanding how the CFL claimed national relevance in debates with largely municipal consequences. If the loss of the Stampeders meant the loss of the CFL, then Calgary aldermen had denied support to the Stampeders and, by extension, the Grey Cup and an independent and unified Canada as well.

Despite these inflated stakes, Klein failed to engender support at the local level. Nevertheless, he pushed an appeal to then-Alberta premier Don Getty, former quarterback for the Edmonton Eskimos, with whom he found sympathy for the Stampeders' cause.⁸² Getty promised a \$1 million loan guarantee, funded by the provincial purse, on the condition that the City of Calgary matched the loan. As they grasped for justification, politicians, team officials, and journalists resorted to willful nostalgia. Don Braid of *The Calgary Herald* situated these developments within a broader national nostalgia inspired by the impending FTA with the United States. His comments were reminiscent of those highlighted in Nau-right and White's study on the Rough Riders. Braid believed the late 1980s CFL no longer served as a national unifier, but he staunchly expressed hope the league would survive, if only due to nostalgia for an independent Canada. Braid did not bemoan the impending loss of the CFL but what that loss could mean to national identity.

And when Getty, himself an ardent free trader, said the Stamps were part of Canadian culture, horse-laugh echoed through Stampede city. Getty was describing the past not the present. Football today is a bloodless money game. It no longer has the power to symbolize rivalries between regions or even cities. . . . I'm not much of a football fan but I hope the Stamps live on, if only as a sign that people haven't given entirely up on this country.⁸³

The ideas expressed in Braid's quotation indicate buy-in to the CFL's preferred narrative: the loss of any one team would irreparably damage Canadian culture. There were, of course, many other factors that influenced Calgary City Council's decision, including a sceptical view of national unification, ongoing expenditures to host the 1988 Winter Olympics,⁸⁴ and fears that public funding would indirectly benefit the team's proposed private buyers in violation of Alberta's Municipal Act, similar to the Ontario law that the Tiger-Cats brazenly flouted.⁸⁵ Although these facts were widely reported, they went unacknowledged by opinion writers who supported the loans. For example, an editorial in *The Globe and Mail* commented on negative public sentiment before resorting to thin nostalgia in rebuttal:

Public reaction in Alberta to proposed municipal and provincial financial support for the Stampeders has been largely negative. . . . Corporate support in Calgary has been weak. Fan support has not been overwhelming. How then will the Stampeders survive? . . . The CFL has been a pleasurable part of the Canadian landscape for generations, with the Grey Cup one of our only truly national festivals. Though it waxes and wanes, it is well worth preserving.⁸⁶

Ultimately, through the injection of provincial funds, among other fundraising efforts, the Stampeders reversed its fortunes.

CONCLUSION

The CFL is a domestic professional sports league struggling to maintain relevance in an American-dominated continent. This reality makes its case distinct but does not prevent it from attaining broader significance. Professional sports teams around the world benefit from public funding, whether through favorable rental deals, stadium upgrades, or other concessions. In the United States, NFL teams often threaten relocation to pursue greater profit potential in other cities.⁸⁷ The limited number of viable markets in Canada prevents the CFL from engaging in a similar tactic. Instead, the CFL has traditionally bargained with its own financial instability to exact public funds. Rather than threatening to relocate, the CFL can only warn of its own collapse. CFL executives, sports reporters, and relevant politicians employed willful nostalgia to save the league through public funding in the 1986–89 period. Willful nostalgia may be employed by similar actors in other professional sports contexts.

Numerous actors in the 1986–89 period prioritized the past over the present in their defense of the CFL. Key politicians, such as Getty, Klein, Morrow, and Durrell, pushed for and won support for their respective CFL franchises. Each were personally motivated to do so, whether acting as a former player, lifelong fan, or politician seeking to avoid a tarnished political legacy. In the late 1980s, the CFL's circumstances lent little credence to claims of national unification, and it necessarily relied on nostalgia to justify public funding. Many journalists were stricken by the same nostalgic impulse—perhaps to save their livelihoods as beat reporters for the clubs they covered. These journalists conflated the loss of the CFL with a loss of Canadian identity, typically attributed to insidious Americanization. The following Brunt quotation precisely illustrates this response:

The people who pant over Super Bowls, who believe that sophistication is measured by super-slo-mo replays and Disney-made halftime shows, will think this [the CFL] mawkish and think it hokum. And if it is some day no more, if like passenger trains Canadian-rules football is deemed unnecessary because it is underappreciated, they will shed no tears. A part of themselves will have disappeared in the process, but it may be that only old men and women will notice.⁸⁸

Repeatedly during the late 1980s, CFL teams received government assistance that ensured their continued survival (the BC Lions also benefitted from provincial loans during this period). In previous decades, the CFL proudly labeled itself a Canadian institution, and many politicians and journalists echoed these claims. That half the players on the field and most football operations personnel were American had seemingly little effect on the perception of the league as a key component of national identity. The CFL promoted the Grey Cup as a symbol of unity across regional divides, as if the league's championship game alone justified its continued existence and the public money used to prop it up. Following a steady decline throughout the 1980s, financial struggles in numerous CFL markets instilled in fans the tangible sense that their team might fold. This uncertainty represented a discontinuity of identity in CFL fan bases, which provoked strong nostalgic reactions. Struck by the same reflexive response and scrambling to ensure a future for the league, team executives and key politicians resorted to willfully nostalgic discourse that conjured a bygone era in which the CFL could more easily be associated with Canadian national

identity. Various orders of government found ways to support their respective CFL franchises through public funding, despite significant opposition. Unable to envision a clear path forward, the CFL of 1986 to 1989 narrowly purchased a future by selling a nostalgic representation of the past.



NOTES

1. John Nauright and Phil White, "Mediated Nostalgia, Community and Nation: The Canadian Football League in Crisis and the Demise of the Ottawa Rough Riders 1986–1996," *Sport History Review* 33.2 (2002): 121–37. The CFL's protectionist ratio system preserves Canadian jobs by restricting the number of internationals (read, Americans) permitted on each team. This number has fluctuated over time—as has its terminology—but approximately 50 percent of roster spots have typically been reserved for Canadian citizens. The stigmatization of Canadian collegiate football programs has resulted in CFL teams primarily drafting Canadians for positions on the offensive line and special teams, while signing Americans to fill more glamorous roles. During the period (and earlier) identified by Nauright and White, the Ottawa Rough Riders were an exception to this trend, with Canadian players like quarterback Russ Jackson and tight-end Tony Gabriel leading a string of Grey Cup contending teams.

2. Frank Cosentino, *A Passing Game: A History of the CFL* (Winnipeg: Bain & Cox, 1995). Chapters 1–6 are relevant to the 1970s. For specific examples therein, see page 31 for "thriving" player salaries and attendance figures in 1971 and page 118 for league revenues in 1977 that ensured "the league was solid financially"—rare praise in CFL terms.

3. Dick Beddoes, "Munro Fights Americanization of CFL, Even Considers Appeal to US Congress," *The Globe and Mail* [Toronto], 20 November 1972.

4. The CFL perennially draws an average of over 20,000 fans per game, but the total has fluctuated greatly depending on the decade and the ambivalence of the league's big market fanbases. In 1977, for example, average attendance was 31,303 across seventy-two games, with the Montreal Alouettes (a big-market franchise) hosting two of the three best-attended CFL games of all time. Just ten years later, average attendance league-wide dropped to 25,990, and the Alouettes folded after averaging just over 10,000 fans per game in 1986. The CFL does not publish exhaustive attendance statistics; however, external databases have assumed the responsibility. stats.cfl.ca is a useful resource.

5. While the Hamilton Tiger-Cats and Calgary Stampeders, two teams profiled in this study, survived the late 1980s unscathed, the Ottawa Rough Riders were mishandled by successive owners until folding in 1996.

6. Roland Robertson, "After Nostalgia," in *Theories of Modernity and Postmodernity*, ed. Bryan S. Turner, 45–61 (London: Sage Publications, 1990).

7. CFL has always been a gate-driven league, in terms of its financial outlook, particularly in the past. The league created a short-lived broadcast entity of its own in the 1980s when its traditional broadcasting partner refused to meet the league's terms. Only in recent years with its new relationship with The Sports Network (TSN) has the CFL acquired a lucrative broadcast arrangement. In 2019, TSN agreed to a six-year deal with the CFL that pays the league approximately \$50M (CDN) a season. By comparison, the *Chicago Tribune* states the NFL collects approximately \$5B (USD) each season from its broadcasting relationships; see Scott Soshnick and Eben Novy-Williams, "The NFL Nears \$25 Billion Revenue Goal Ahead of Super Bowl," *Chicago Tribune*, 28 January 2019, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/sports/ct-spt-nfl-revenue-super-bowl-20190128-story.html> [accessed 23 September 2020].

8. Fred Davis, *Yearning for Yesterday: A Sociology of Nostalgia* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1979), 122–23.

9. Janelle Wilson, *Nostalgia: Sanctuary of Meaning* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2005), 31.

10. Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), 41.

11. Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
12. Roland Robertson, "After Nostalgia," in *Theories of Modernity and Postmodernity* (London: Sage Publications, 1990): 45–61.
13. Tom Nairn, *The Enchanted Glass: Britain and its Monarchy* (London: Verso Books, 1988), 348.
14. Robertson, "After Nostalgia," 46.
15. Joseph Maguire, "Sport, Identity Politics, and Globalization: Diminishing Contrasts and Increasing Varieties," *Sociology of Sport Journal* 11.4 (1994): 398–427.
16. Bruce Kidd, "How Do We Find Our Own Voices in the 'New World Order'? A Commentary on Americanization," *Sociology of Sport Journal* 8.2 (1991): 180.
17. Whether Canadians had abandoned the CFL for the NFL, this perception was and continues to be perpetuated by Canadian media who cite growing NFL and particularly Super Bowl television ratings in Canada as a sign of the NFL's ascendancy. For a deeper discussion, see Craig G. Greenham, "'Super Bore': The Canadian Media and the Grey Cup–Super Bowl Comparison," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 34.1–2 (2017): 65–80.
18. Stuart Hall, "The Local and the Global: Globalization and Ethnicity," in *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation, and Postcolonial Perspectives*, ed. Anne McClintock, 173–87 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 174.
19. Steven Jackson, "Gretzky, Crisis, and Canadian Identity in 1988: Rearticulating the Americanization of Culture Debate," *Sociology of Sport Journal* 11.4 (1994): 428–46.
20. For a notable example of American influence causing a crisis in Canadian national identity, see George Grant's *Lament for a Nation: The Defeat of Canadian Nationalism*, new ed. (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1997).
21. Greenham, "'Super Bore.'"
22. Pierre Trudeau evidently thought as much, taking part in numerous ceremonial kickoffs at the Grey Cup before sitting in attendance next to prominent political opposition—the act itself an expression of national unity, however contrived.
23. Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991), 14.
24. Eric J. Hobsbawm, "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870–1914," in *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 300.
25. Major points of difference between Canadian and American football include the number of downs to advance the ball ten yards, the size of the field, and the number of players on the field at one time. For an exhaustive discussion of differences in the evolution of the Canadian game, consult Frank Cosentino, *Canadian Football: The Grey Cup Years* (Toronto: Musson Book Company, 1969). As well, readers interested in a brief but comprehensive history of the CFL should consult Craig Greenham's "Canadian Football," in *Touchdown: An American Obsession*, ed. Gerald R. Gems and Gertrud Pfister (Great Barrington, MA: Berkshire, 2019), 237–51.
26. Trent Fayne, "Grey Cup Tradition Dies Hard," *The Globe and Mail* [Toronto], 28 November 1986.
27. Formed in 1997 and dubbed the Mills Committee after its chair, Dennis Mills, the subcommittee was tasked with examining the economic and cultural importance of sport in Canada.
28. Michael Cantelon, "The Canadian Football League: Radically Canadian?" (PhD diss., University of Ottawa, 2001), <http://dx.doi.org/10.20381/ruor-14827> [accessed 23 September 2020].
29. Cosentino, *A Passing Game*, 56.
30. Christie Blatchford, "National Responsibility: Lalonde Insists Government to Keep Northmen out," *The Globe and Mail*, 27 February 1974.
31. Parliament, House of Commons, "An Act Respecting Canadian Professional Football," Bill C-22, 29th Parliament, 2nd Session, 1974 (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services Canada—Publishing, 1974). First Reading, April 10, 1974.
32. Jim Vipond, "Sanctions Threatened: CFL Move into US Blocked by Munro," *The Globe and Mail*, 2 November 1972.

33. Christie Blatchford, "The Winter of Football," *The Globe and Mail*, 22 February 1974.
34. Bullied by the federal government, the Northmen withdrew to the United States. The WFL folded within two seasons and Lalonde's Canadian football bill never passed.
35. Quoted in Cosentino, "A Passing Game," 149.
36. Mordecai Richler, "Grey-Cup Ville 1967," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 29 November 1988.
37. Bruce Kidd, "How Do We Find Our Voices?"
38. Nauright and White, "Meditated Nostalgia," 126.
39. Nauright and White, "Meditated Nostalgia," 126.
40. Quoted in Laurier LaPierre, *If You Love This Country: Facts and Feelings on Free Trade* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987), 209.
41. Smith, *National Identity*, 121.
42. Cosentino, "A Passing Game," 244.
43. Lyndon Little, "League Still Has Other Troubled Franchises," *The Vancouver Sun*, 25 June 1987.
44. Davis, *Yearning for Yesterday*, 35.
45. Walter Schafer, "Some Social Sources and Consequences of Interscholastic Athletics: The Case of Participation and Delinquency," *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 4.1 (1969): 68.
46. Stuart Tannock, "Nostalgia Critique," *Cultural Studies* 9.3 (1995): 453–64.
47. "Stampede's Reclamation Project Alive and Well," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 5 September 1986.
48. "Waters Hands Rough Riders Over to a Non-Profit Group," *The Montreal Gazette*, 4 December 1986.
49. Nauright and White, "Mediated Nostalgia," 127.
50. James Davidson, "Ex-Rider Picks Up the Ball," *The Globe and Mail*, 30 December 1986.
51. "120 Years of Football: Glory, Failure Equal Parts of Riders' History," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 7 November 1996.
52. "Ups and Down,," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 2 February 1987.
53. Randy Boswell, "Riders Can't Meet Park Bill," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 11 October 1988.
54. Lynn McAuley, "Ticats Slink into the Night," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 1 December 1988.
55. Ron Eade and Ken Warren, "Committees Back Riders \$614,000 Bailout," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 27 July 1989.
56. Jack Aubry, "The Beleaguered Ottawa Rough Riders Squeaked Out . . .," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 3 August 1989.
57. The Ottawa-Carleton Regional Council was a collection of regional governments and municipalities in the greater Ottawa area that held its last election in 1997 before merging with the City of Ottawa.
58. Tom Casey, Ken Warren, and Charles Rusnell, "Region Joins Rough Riders Bailout," *The Ottawa Citizen* 10 August 1989.
59. Ron Eade, "What Does the Riders' Future Hold? Proposals Supported by Durrell," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 18 July 1989.
60. Osgoode Township was a small independent township in Carleton County before it was incorporated into the City of Ottawa in 2001; James Christie, "The Rough Riders Stave Off Collapse by Two Votes," *The Globe and Mail*, 10 August 1989.
61. Ottawa-Carleton Regional Municipality, "Minutes, Executive Report," City of Ottawa Archives, 9 August 1989, 5287–5318.
62. Ottawa-Carleton Regional Municipality, "Minutes, Executive Report," 5297.
63. Stephen Brunt, "Rough Riders Win Financial Aid, Stave Off League Death Rattle," *The Globe and Mail*, 3 August 1989.
64. Brunt, "Rough Riders Win Financial Aid."

65. MacCabe, "CFL Must Return . . .," 1988.
66. Lloyd McLachlan, "Time for CFL to Stand Alone," *The Windsor Star*, 12 August 1989.
67. OCRM Minutes, 5291.
68. "Tiger-Cats Pack Bags, Leave Hamilton," *The Globe and Mail*, 28 November 1988.
69. "Stadium Changes Locks on Ballard," *The Vancouver Sun*, 29 November 1989.
70. Joseph Hall, "Hamilton Has Spoken: Don't Let Ticats Go, Traditional Black and Gold Uniforms Have Become Part of The City's Fabric," *The Toronto Star*, 29 November 1989.
71. Minutes, City of Hamilton, 14 February 1989, 236–39.
72. "Tiger-Cats Sale Illegal, City Council Report Says," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 23 February 1989.
73. Stephen Brunt, "Grandstanding Owner Makes Ticats a Presence in Hamilton," *The Globe and Mail*, 22 August 1989.
74. David Shoalts, "Grey Cup Reinforced Reasons to Save CFL," *The Globe and Mail*, 29 November 1988.
75. Watson's headline refers to similar protectionist legislation for the arts, such as the Canadian content requirements established by the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission in 1971. These requirements ensure that a minimum percentage of content aired by Canadian radio and television broadcasters is at least partially produced, written, or presented by a Canadian.
76. William Watson, "CFL as Deserving of Subsidy as Anyone Else," *The Financial Post*, 25 November 1988.
77. Kevin Cox, "Death Knell Is Sounded for Stamps,," *The Globe and Mail*, 21 January 1986.
78. "Third Down in Calgary," *The Globe and Mail*, 31 January 1986.
79. Klein's comment about Calgary "starting" football in Canada is misguided but instructive. He is likely referencing the 1948 Grey Cup, when many rowdy Calgary Stampeders' fans traveled to Toronto to watch their team play the Argonauts. This championship game gave rise to several lasting traditions and cemented the Grey Cup's east/west rivalry. To suggest that these events "started" football in Canada is misleading at best; however, it does illustrate a nostalgic vision of a past-CFL.
80. Kevin Cox, "Calgary Mayor's Furious over Council's Stand," *The Globe and Mail*, 22 January 1986.
81. Philip King, "Commissioner Reacts to Decision: Mitchell Fears Domino Effect," *The Globe and Mail*, 21 January 1986.
82. "Stampeders Thrown Rich Financial Lifeline," *The Montreal Gazette*, 13 January 1986.
83. Don Braid, "Demise of Stampeders Would Be Canada's Loss," *The Montreal Gazette* (via wire service), 21 January 1986.
84. Harry H. Hiller, "The Urban Transformation of a Landmark Event: The 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics," *Urban Affairs Quarterly* 26.1 (1990): 118–37. The impact of the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics may have been limited, as, according to Hiller, the vast majority of Calgarians felt that the benefits of hosting outweighed the costs. In addition, a \$35 million profit was claimed, and major construction projects, such as the McMahon Stadium expansion, were funded by higher orders of government, limiting the risk to local taxpayers.
85. Philip King, "Stampeders Vow to Fight for Survival," *The Globe and Mail*, 22 January 1986.
86. "Third Down in Calgary."
87. David D. Schein, James D. Phillips, and Caroline Rider, "American Cities Held Hostage: Public Stadiums and Pro Sports Franchises," *Richmond Public Interest Law Review* 20.1 (2017): 87.
88. Stephen Brunt, "Grey Cup Has Become an Element of Our Culture," *The Globe and Mail*, 21 November 1989.