Interdisciplinary compromises give way in transdisciplinary experimentation to new efforts to creatively grasp hypercomplex objects like the socio-economic effects of new information technologies in an era of planetary computerization. Transdisciplinarity announces the need to assemble methods adequate to the challenges posed by such objects, and in the process devises working relationships across and beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries. Rather than valorizing the spaces between disciplines, which is a form of enforced marginalization or, at best, the occasion to engage with ambivalence (Genosko 1998, 183-86), transdisciplinary thought is not a creature of the middle but undisciplinable to the extent that it organizes itself around the problem of how to build a micro-institution through the creation of a technological infrastructure adequate to its undertakings. Eschewing transcendent or given solutions, for example, in general pedagogies (Genosko 2003a, 135), transdisciplinary activity simultaneously gives shape to institutional microspaces and their interdependent assemblages as they are worked out in pages, meetings, projects, data, and cash flows. Such an institution is actualized through technological matters; typically, such matters are paper artifacts like journals or books, which today are more commonly web-based e-journals and
listservs. Journals have a good deal to teach us about transdisciplinary experimentation.

A journal can be the site in and around which the rituals of a microinstitution are enacted, where standing in the group is established, labour divided, access and control mediated, a public imagined and engaged. Technology is the site of a microinstitution's auto-production and the engendering of certain kinds of subjectivities, geared toward a constrained self-management through continual creation, by a segmented collective, not unlike an editorial board, with designated powers, roles, and responsibilities with varying degrees of stability, and distance from a journal's editorial and production team (the book reviews editor as opposed to the subscriber). The technologies involved in journal production have changed significantly since the 1980s as computerization dematerializes the once collective process based on craft knowledge.

A collectively produced journal engenders microinstitutional substance and is not merely a product managed at arm's length; a microinstitution is the product of a group's quasi-collective self-elaboration. There are provisos contained in the “quasi-” attached to this use of “collective,” since while it does valorize the metabolic and affective communion of group life in its privileged haunts, and all the ways that affect is generated, it does not always require this condition because the assemblage is less empirically demanding and replaces the group with the fluidity and relative consistencies of components irreducible to actual persons in one place at one time in face-to-face relations.

Such microinstitutions do not exist apart from self-constituting activities, both failures and successes. They are not somehow products alienated from the group's auto-production. Of course, it is possible to be alienated from the products of one's collective labour if the editor or director is especially difficult; yet this very difficulty provides another kind of traction. Much interesting reflection exists on the failures of transdisciplinary projects, although much of it concerns inadequate integrations (failed wholenesses like splitting of groups, reversion to unidisciplinary methods) and the tendency to view such projects as luxuries “appropriate only in affluent times” (Somerville 2000, 104).

These reflections on collective autoproduction and the formation of
microinsitutions, including well-formed substances and less well-formed activities that leave little or no trace, give to technologies a central role in an interpretive strategy that sees in journal print runs, editorial assemblages, off-centre centres, summer institutes, groups that splinter from professional bodies, and conferences, all of which are resources for the investigation of the processes of transdisciplinary institutionalization. Technology is here a substantially formed intermedium that encodes a microinstitution’s legacy and is the site and occasion for passages through its spaces, even if such movements include at both poles cognitive and geographic locations. Perhaps simply because they survive as concrete resources, publications (proceedings, event posters, cfps, internal communications, notes in personal archives, and interviews with surviving members) are indispensable for thinking about transdisciplinarity in practice.

The question of transdisciplinarity mutually imbricates technology and microinstitutional auto-formation. One of the claims advanced in the “quest of transdisciplinarity” by Armand and Michèle Mattelart (1992) in Rethinking Media Theory firmly places the endeavour within a French university space and in relation to a journal under the rubric of the study of mass communication. I want to begin with this example not because it is exemplary, but in order to generate several critical points of view on transdisciplinary practices. I will then turn to a contrasting example of a non-university, and still French, research assemblage created by Félix Guattari in the late 1960s and how it was modified by a changing political and research policy landscape, while still clinging to a vestige of transdisciplinarity after losing its capacity to generate and support its original microinstitution.

Further, I want to report on some of the work I have done on Canadian journals, specifically Arthur and Marilouise Kroker’s Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory (CJPST), and the “Canadian” content, if you will, or better, crossovers from Paul Piccone’s political theory journal Telos. These two examples will provide more detailed looks into the life of editorial assemblages and the significance of the Telos editorial diaspora for the invention of Canadian microspaces of transdisciplinary experimentation.
CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF MASS COMMUNICATIONS

In *Rethinking Media Theory*, the Mattelarts focus on the foundational work of Georges Friedmann in the creation of the Centre d’études des communications de masse (Centre for the Study of Mass Communications) at the École pratique des hautes études in 1960 and describe his “resolutely trans-disciplinary perspective” (Mattelart and Mattelart 1992, 20). An unsigned editorial statement about the founding of the centre, published in 1961 in the first issue of its journal, *Communications*, explains that Friedmann saw the “organic” link between technology and mass culture as the object of the centre, and reflected on the inadequacy of the term “mass communications.” Moreover, the centre would not “choose its doctrine in an a priori fashion: we hope that its work will serve to define things and not words” (21). The Mattelarts end the quotation at this point, but if one reads a little further in the editorial note, the role of the journal becomes clear: “and it is precisely to this effort of real elucidation that the Centre will dedicate an annual publication of which this is the first issue” (Editors of *Communications* 1961, 1). The centre and its journal are born through questions about contemporary massification, the socio-semiological effects of which will be worked out in the journal’s pages. The journal is characterized by a remarkable modesty, a hesitancy about its objects and methods which makes it impossible “to pretend to an immediate theory of its [contingent] object,” and thus it will be shaped by the critical cognizance of the limits and the originality of the task at hand. This is all the more remarkable given the competing master discourses of semiology, wielded by Roland Barthes, and a sociology of the present (whose object would be “events”), by Edgar Morin.

Two points are worth noting. Guattari picks up on this attitudinal positioning in a report that he co-wrote in 1992 for UNESCO on transdisciplinary research: the adoption of a humble attitude in the face of the complexity of the fields under consideration; and a willingness to sacrifice something, that is, to suffer “amputations” or put in “parentheses” the certainties of specialist knowledge and established ways of working (Guattari and Vilar 1992, 9). The centre’s very existence is a kind of response, think the Mattelarts, to American-style content analysis popularized by Bernard Berelson in the early 1950s in the nascent area of
communications research, which spread from analysis of text to audio-visual materials, Friedmann’s main concern according to one of his colleagues, Violette Morin (Mattelart and Mattelart 1992, 21). One is reminded of similar motivations of differentiation cited by Stuart Hall: behaviourist assumptions (cause and effect) that ignore the character of the televisual sign and the dimensionality of visual messages. These criticisms are thought to be direct rejoinders to the emphasis of “Leicester School” mass communications researchers who treat the communicative process as transparent, misread signification, apolitically analyze the medium, and present an un-nuanced view of the audience (Hall 1994, 261). However, even these kinds of adjustments could not mask the fact that the centre was chained until its reorientation in 1974 to “universal themes,” ahistorical questioning, and aneconomic theories—rhetoric, semiology, theories of texts, psychoanalysis, and leisure and consumption—with only an occasional glance at actual changes in communications technologies like cable television and computerization, which the Mattelarts correctly diagnose as an indifference to encoding pragmatics (1992, 23–24).

My question concerns the character of the centre itself. Each issue of Communications contains an activities report of the centre, which showed the fragmented yearly results. The positions of participants, other than directors of studies, are rarely noted at this point in the centre’s history. The seminars directed by leading figures at the École pratique are listed and described (listing those who lectured in them), research projects, attendance and participation at colloquia, conferences and learned societies, principal publications, media appearances, and so on—in short, a fairly typical academic annual report including all and sundry. This lack of coordination and paper participation beyond the journal itself was eventually manifested in 1972–73 by a change in name to the Centre for Transdisciplinary Studies (announced in 1974 in the twenty-first issue of Communications) and the division into three dominant streams according to the interests of the co-directors (Sociologie [Morin], Anthropologie [Friedmann], Sémiologie [Barthes]). So, the move to transdisciplinarity betrayed the transdisciplinary goals of 1960 for the sake of specialist multiplicity. The explanation of the name change outlined three tasks: assemble researchers from varied disciplines; give priority to research that engages multiple methods, languages, and practices; deploy transdisciplinary...
work in an attempt to bring to light new objects of research (Editors of *Communications* 1974, 213). From 1973 to 1977, under the tri-directorship of the second incarnation of the centre, as the École pratique became the École des hautes études en sciences sociales, *Communications* came under the sway of the masters of structuralism (the consanguinity of Todorov, Kristeva, Metz, Genette; following Barthes’s self-exile from structure and elevation to the Collège de France). The challenge of the original hyper-complex object, mass communications, receded into the background. The deaths of Friedmann in 1978 and Barthes in 1980 would rob the centre of its early champions. Like many such centres, the animating spirit of its founder would be invoked. “Ah! The remarkable courage of his telephone calls, so full of reasons and resonance, before 8 o’clock in the morning,” wrote Violette Morin of Friedmann, the philosopher (1978, 2).

By 1979 the buzzword had become “diversification,” but not for its own sake; rather, diversification is not “dispersion” but “the occasion for theoretical and epistemological communications by and for the Centre” (Editors of *Communications* 1979, 211). At the end of the 1970s, the centre’s annual reports were partitioned by area of specialist contribution—bio-anthropo-sociology; contemporary sociology; politics; cinema; literary semiology; socio-semiotics of discourse. The streams signified the diversity of undertakings, yet seemed more noun-like than verb-like, and became less and less object-focused and more and more dependent on the journal to hold the intellectual project between its covers, rather than allowing its loose leaves to scatter. At this point all members of the centre are listed by name, position, school, and often role in the case of technicians and administrators.

Transdisciplinarity confronts its institutional substances at every turn. Commonly, it is in the form of a journal that the question of the “working example” is raised, but equally pertinent is the academic “centre” and its institutional dependencies (the Centre for Transdisciplinary Studies would be thoroughly integrated with the Centre national de la recherche scientifique [CNRS], especially as Edgar Morin rose in its ranks), the degree of consensuality at play, personality clashes, funding challenges, real administrative support, and so on. For every director who believes they have to keep their centre—citing Margaret Somerville (2002, 102) with regard to McGill’s Centre for Medicine, Ethics and Law—from succumbing
to the devil of dangerousness and/or falling into the deep blue sea of flakiness, there is another director who does not have togetherness as a goal, who chooses dissensus over consensus and can tolerate the proliferation of singularities without a transcendent unity. However, this too can be a kind of terror.

STUDY CENTRE FOR RESEARCH INTO INSTITUTIONAL FORMATION

I now want to turn to a different kind of example in a non-academic setting. The journal is a choice matter formed by editorial assemblages seeking to collectively realize their microinstitutional ambitions in concrete projects and in the process create new worlds of reference, fabricate and share affects in the manner of artists, and summon a readership and participants yet to come. The journal Recherches catalyzed the collective self-production of the microinstitution Study Centre for Research into Institutional Formation, Centre d’études de recherches sur le fonctionnement des institutions (CERFI), which brought together an incredible array of psychiatrists, architects, town planners, philosophers, filmmakers, and educators of all stripes and statuses. CERFI may be described as a freelance research group that managed to solidify a core membership in affective communion around the production of collective objects, primarily funded research projects leading to special topics journal issues. It was created by Guattari in 1967 and replaced the two-year-old predecessor organization that began by publishing Recherches at the psychiatric Clinique de La Borde. CERFI also enjoyed a community of experiences through the work of many of its members at La Borde as stagiaires, or trainees. Its natural milieu was psychiatry. CERFI was an extra-academic assemblage that was funded by the civil research contracts under the budget of the Ministry of Research. It provided salaries to its members and financed its projects. These were not individual contracts, as François Fourquet recalls, but covered the entire group of twenty core members for four or five years (2007, 2, 4). Eventually it was edged out by professional academic bodies as budgets shrank, governments changed, and research became more university-focused. To put
it bluntly, centres like Friedmann’s got the money and CERFI did not. This began to occur around 1975. Eventually, the state’s strategy was to integrate or co-opt some of the core CERFI researchers, a move that failed, whereas with the groups at the École des hautes études this was very successful in building a stable of preferred applicants.

The lack of funding—the failure of what Anne Querrien called “a ministerial godsend”—became an issue for CERFI and caused internal strife and protective restructuring (1999, 35). Eventually, by the end of the 1970s, CERFI turned its back on the radicals who had prepared its most notorious issue, Recherches number 12, “Trois milliards de pervers: Grande encyclopédie des homosexualités” (1973), and the blending of affective and political dimensions imploded (Dosse 2007, 34–35).

In the early 1970s, CERFI legitimated its outsider status through the participation of leading intellectuals in its research groups; thus, Foucault was research director of the Généalogie de équipements collectives stream, which resulted in a number of mid-1970s issues of Recherches on a variety of topics ranging from architecture, psychiatric hospital planning, safeguarding vernacular languages, and power. This was a period during which CERFI had as its hypercomplex object of study the State, which it approached without constructing a “homogeneous doctrine” (Fourquet 2007, 2). CERFI also collaborated with other independent groups, notably Guy Hocquenghem’s FHAR (Front homosexuel d’action révolutionnaire), which opened up pathways for the explorations of its members, and invited other groups to occupy its space. Although Guattari sometimes makes light of his many criminal and other charges (Guattari and Rolnick 2008, 380), he never ceased mentioning the “Three Billion Perverts” issue and his fine of six hundred francs for affronting public decency (Guattari 1996, 192). Indeed, it is an irreplaceable discussion point for anyone interested in the history of CERFI (Mozère 2004).

It was 1973 and CERFI was at its “zenith”—flush with cash, full of the success of Anti-Oedipus, published the previous year, flirting with the prospects of communal life in the Parisian suburbs (buying a house and starting a commune), drawing the brightest-burning intellectual stars into its orbit, not merely in its pages but in its living, editorial auto-productions (Dosse 2007, 319–24). Then issue number 12 appeared. By the late 1970s, CERFI had changed fundamentally under a variety of pressures, and
Guattari began to distance himself at the moment when CERFI took off in the direction of professional publishing (developing the “Encres” series of books, re-editing Trois milliards de pervers, joining forces with Editions 10/18 to reprint issues of Recherches as stand-alone books, abandoning under pressure from new members an older set of radical causes), finally ceding his directorship in 1981 (Dosse 2007, 332–35).

Publishing machines, like all machines, break down yet continue to function in failing to integrate their parts. This is merely one dimension of their process of microinstitutional production. Parts of broken-down machines may be cobbled together to produce wonderful devices, as Rube Goldberg demonstrated in his comic drawings.

It was the institutional task of CERFI to ameliorate its situation by engaging not only the expressive desires of FHAR but also those of the MLF (Mouvement de libération des femmes); in fact, CERFI put at Hocquenghem’s disposal its infrastructural resources and the assistance of Querrien. Overall, CERFI managed to interrupt its state cash flow in the process, but as a flow itself connected with other entities like the FHAR and MLF and GIP (Groupe information prison, in which Foucault was active), from which post-1973 CERFI professional editor and publisher Florence Pétry came, eventually tapped a new energy source through three syntheses: connecting with book publishing, and disjunctively subdividing into specialty and regional groups (music, film; CERFI Southeast); introducing difference in connective repetitions (the burden of serials publishing) by means of renewal and breakage (learning how to distribute itself and its products); and finally, conjunctively extruding a collective subjectivity about which histories may be written: “So that’s what it was?” (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 18).

EDITORIAL ASSEMBLAGES AND CROSS-BORDER ACADEMIC TRAFFIC

My study of Canadian cultural theory in historical and theoretical context focuses on two examples. These are primarily publishing projects with relevance to the development of Canadian intellectual life in the humanities and social sciences, specifically in the broad field of cultural theory,
encompassing critical, postmodern, and transdisciplinary social and political thought. The examples that interest me belong to the 1970s and 1980s: first, the late Paul Piccone’s political theory journal *Telos*; second, Arthur Kroker’s *Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory*; and third would be, if space permitted, the first cultural studies magazine in Canada, *Border/lines*, closely associated with the late Ioan Davies.

Even the salutary, but now dated, efforts of draft-dodging sociologist Ray Morrow to analyze the “relative absence of overt obstacles to novel research orientations” for critical social thought in Canada in the 1970s (1985, 715), presupposing university environments and the conservatism of the major presses, leaves only a weak idea of what a Canadian critical theory would look like. I am proposing something different. The micropolitical textures of my examples show us the significance not of names but of matters—artifacts and events and fields of reference—emerging through collective self-invention not amenable to capture by empirical sociology or through the reward systems of our tri-council funding agency, as well as the importance of maintaining a flexible relationship to dominant institutional formations while engaging in microinstitutional experimentation and provocation. Such microinstitutions are not closed in on themselves like hedgehogs. Rather, they consist in a transversal matrix, a mobile intersection of detachable heterogeneous components achieving a certain stability with realized projects but whose consistency is always in process.

I sense a certain nationalist grumbling: isn’t *Telos* an American journal, and who reads it today, anyway? It was an ostensibly American philosophy journal founded in 1968 at SUNY-Buffalo by Piccone and, despite the youthful posturing against copyright, brushing away the cobwebs of Anglo-American philosophy departments, and its notorious internal brawling, became the destination of choice for scholars of Western Marxism and European thought—introducing many of us to luminaries like Negri, Baudrillard, and the rest. A swerve occurred in the mid-1980s that saw the journal tarry with New Right politics in Europe and later in Canada, advocating a clearly xenophobic brand of populist federalism with one foot firmly planted in the work of Carl Schmidt and the other in Jeffersonian meditations on the organicity of communities and their right
to mind their own affairs. Piccone even flirted with the ideologues of the Reform Party.

Many Canadas circulated through Telos. Waterloo is, in fact, the cradle of Canadian Telos. The first annual Telos conference was held at the University of Waterloo in 1970. The conference displayed all of the warts and bristles of Telosian events to come; it was uneasy about where it was—in but not of Canada and anxious about this context. There was not one session on the new Marxism in Canada in a conference largely organized by local undergraduate students (including Ian Angus and Cyril Levitt), attended by graduate students still trying to make sense of Canadian nationalism (like Andrew Wernick), and many others with close ties to various strands of the student movement whose fatal fracturing was only underlined at the conference. The classic dramaturgy of Telos was established there as activists belittled cop-out academics and the latter tossed recriminations against mindless activists. Henceforth all the rehearsals of this divide went more or less according to plan.

It would not be until a few years later that Telos situated itself in Canada through the emergence of the Toronto Telos Group (TTG), the model for the many editorial assemblages that defined the journal throughout the 1970s. This is a microinstitutional style that is completely original. Toronto Telos was also the longest standing of the editorial groups, appearing for the first time on the masthead in the winter issue of 1974–75 and henceforth for most of the remainder of the decade until winter 1978–79, and for the final time three issues later in the fall of the same year. But even then, while no longer constituted as the TTG and listed as such, its distinctive matter—the Short Journal Reviews—continued under the direction of coordinating editor John Fekete, with the assistance of many “former” TTG members, for several more years until Fall 1981 before petering out. Over the course of some twenty-five issues, Toronto Telos members, with material contributed by the Kansas and Carbondale groups, provided a staple of the journal’s back pages. Unlike other long-standing groups such as St. Louis Telos, members of the Toronto contingent had a regular presence in the pages of the journal and occupied key positions on the production staff and editorial associate posts. During a year spent in Toronto on a teaching contract (1974–75), Piccone himself was listed as a
member of the Toronto group for three issues, testimony to his attachment to the city and the affective dimensions of the group of young scholars (he put to work his two assistants, Brian Singer and Janet Lum, not on his courses, but on his journal). During this period (and for some years later), the journal was produced in St. Louis, and members of the production team, composed mostly of graduate students in sociology and political science at University of Toronto and the Social and Political Thought Program at York University, would make the long drive to St. Louis with Piccone to produce it. The energy, enthusiasm, and collective sense of the project’s urgency that marked these junkets should not be underplayed. Some of the former members of the TTG are still in Toronto (Singer and Steve Levine at York; Lum at Ryerson; Wodek Szemberg at TV Ontario) or nearby (John Fekete and Andrew Wernick at Trent). Other former members have become well-known, even notorious, figures in political theory and intellectual history in the UK and the United States (John Keane at Westminster; Richard Wolin at CUNY, respectively). Toronto was not the only Canadian Telos editorial grouping. In the Summer 1980 issue (Telos 44), the second Canadian Telos group appeared in Montreal, built around Eileen Manion, Mary Papke, and Charles Levin (whose translation of Baudrillard’s For A Critique was published by Telos Press), but it was short-lived, lasting for only four issues until Spring 1981 (Telos 47).

It is important to note that the practice of reviewing journals in Telos only appeared with the constitution of Toronto Telos. Singer underlined this point in response to questions about the model for this practice, which he did not provide, but nevertheless reflected: “It didn’t really happen until there was a Telos group constituted.” The practice was produced by the group and allowed for the group’s reproduction: “We were looking for things that would help the group cohere. There was a certain amount of enthusiasm” (Genosko 2001b). The Short Journal Reviews displayed from the outset an extraordinary international and multilingual outlook, covering publications in Italian, French, German, and Hungarian, among others. By the Fall 1975 issue the TTG had a mailing address at York. In 1976–77, John Fekete would appear as the editor of the Short Journal Reviews. This is also the moment when Telos groups proliferate, in the US at least, after the Toronto model.
What made the Toronto Group successful was the close proximity of graduate students with compatible particularities who all managed to get along. Piccone’s explanation of the groups is a fascinating piece of sociological speculation that situates investment of energy and talent in networks of friendship and focused projects. After graduation, “they spread all over the place” (Genosko and Gandesha 2005, 166) and, among those who became professors, most gave up the life of a political journal on the edge of academe.

What made the formation of Toronto Telos possible in Piccone’s memory was, at least on the surface, the pre-existing social and affective infrastructure among a richly talented pool of graduate students, the manageable neighbourhoods of the once-affordable, pre-gentrified downtown, and the fact that the group had a specific task to perform, that is, the production of the transdisciplinary Short Journal Reviews, which reflected the reading, interests, and language skills of each of the members. Indeed, it was not uncommon for TTG members to have only publications in Telos when they found their first academic posts. Toronto permitted experimentation with microinstitutions in which extra-academic assemblages could be, to borrow a term suggested by John Fekete, self-instituting (Genosko 2003b) yet retreat into subsidized university spaces when necessary. York’s then fledgling Social and Political Thought Program provided either a roof or a floor for an otherwise unprotected project, depending on whom you talked to.

The TTG was a completely original formation, and its specific task directed its autoproduction and the kind of opportunities for subjectification it afforded and institutional matters it formed. The formation of institutional matters is sensitive to the technologies of production that marked the pre-computerized era of journal publishing. As Fekete reflected some thirty years after the fact, he is still struck by the “cogent creativity of the enterprise.” It is remarkable that the Toronto group cohered in ways that only the St Louis group approximated, but for different reasons. Yet the transversality of Telos editorial assemblages was restricted by Piccone’s ownership of the journal, not to mention the high-handedness of his politics. Although he was willing to experiment with ways of heightening the journal’s transversality—its internal flows and potential for
communication and collaboration through intensely participatory events like annual conferences, book publishing, internal communiqués, and blendings of junior and senior academics—these strategies bumped up against his own inflexible authority, examples of which would be the summary removal of Charles Levin from the editorial collective after the Baudrillard translation of 1981 (discussed in Genosko 2004a); and his “Tony Soprano approach to editing” (Genosko 2001a).

In order to better appreciate the transversal matrix of microinstitutions of Canadian cultural theory, some consideration needs to be given to the mobility of bodies in the form of what I call the Telos diaspora. This flow of personnel is evident in the passages of former Telosians; many members of the Toronto group moved, in fact, from Piccone’s project to the CJPST. The drift began toward the “Canadian Telos” as early as 1977 when Ben Agger (briefly a TTG member in 1974–75 but not well-treated by Piccone, and later a CJPST reviews editor) and Ray Morrow (a stalwart of TTG for most of the 1970s and long-standing CJPST editorial board member, who began his career at the University of Manitoba), who joined the CJPST in Winnipeg as review editor and advisory committee member respectively. The transits are notable: John Fekete (as a visitor to Montreal), Russell Jacoby (his Canadian years in Vancouver date from the early to mid-1980s), and John Keane as a “name” editorial correspondent, and contributing board members Andrew Wernick, Charles Levin, and Eileen Manion from the MTG. Kroker underlines that while he was a reader of Telos, his journal had no relationship with it—a not wholly convincing claim. For Kroker, Telos was a European journal, while CJPST was fundamentally a Canadian journal, both in its intellectuality and its self-presentation of Canadian thought to the outside world (Genosko 2004b).

Yet the two journals were also critical projects, and for Kroker what this meant was that European theoretical traditions needed to be “rubbed against the facticity of our historical and political situation.” The commonality of critical orientation and background did not entail canonical thought, as issue after issue of the CJPST restlessly explored emerging ideas in postmodern thought, feminism, male hysteria, dependency theory, psychoanalysis, and Hollywood. Can the same be said of Telos? While the diversity of Telos is also remarkable, especially the multinational and multi-disciplinary commitments within the context of Western
Marxism and the ingenuities of its rejection, efforts to integrate feminist thought were piecemeal at best; this was one of the reasons Mark Poster gave for leaving the journal (Genosko 2004). To be sure, reviews of important books in feminist theory were certainly published and debates initiated in a regular succession in the early 1980s through the efforts of former MTG members Manion and Mary Papke. But these were mostly confined to reviews and not lead articles, and engagement with feminist theory eventually disappeared from Telos’s pages. As well, despite the quality of contributors in cultural and communicational theory (Poster, Stuart Ewen, Martin Jay), this work was downplayed, with the exception of Christopher Lasch’s writing on narcissism.

Telos’s Canadian orientations and episodes facilitated its self-institution and the auto-unfolding of its editorial assemblages; the most compelling example of this autoproduction is in the activities of the Toronto Telos Group. Moreover, the transversal matrix of critical journal projects involves not so much the actual transport of key personnel across borders as an opening of pathways of communication, as individuals coming into their own seek avenues for subjectification in which they can find the means, as Fekete put it, to “express their own developing sense of the world or political commitment” in intellectual exercises, such as the Short Journal Reviews, undertaking translations, and getting involved in the related tangle of practices in journal publishing in or on the margins of academic professional life.

What is most remarkable about the CJPST is the diversity of institutional matters made available through, for example, the “Theory Workshops” it sponsored during the 1980s at the Learned Societies that ran parallel to the large, national professional-association-sponsored meeting, and the pamphlets it published under the rubric of “CultureTexts.” This experiment in pamphleteering was short-lived but grew out of the contact between Kroker and former TTG member Kermit Hummel (active in Toronto between 1976 and 1978), who was then an academic editor at St. Martin’s Press in New York. Certainly, quite unlike Telos, CJPST made space available for artists and designers, and the print medium itself was explored to the breaking point as production changed and the journal went online under a new guise, regardless of what one believes about the continuity of CJPST and Ctheory.org.
The physical production of the *CJPST* was made possible in the first instance by a grant from the Bronfman Family Foundation that helped it through the trial period, before it became eligible for federal funding through the Canada Council and SSHRC. *Telos* did not enjoy this level of subsidization. But like *Telos*, *CJPST* was produced by a couple, with several new spouses in the case of Piccone. The partnership involved in acquiring craft knowledge, and the physical labour of production, together with the demands of the review process and editorial tasks, in addition to distribution, accounting, and negotiating with the press, strains more than just backs and eyes. By placing the couple, the private and domestic, at the heart of production, a myriad of additional stratifications may become visible and complexify interactions within editorial assemblages, changing the consistency of the project. Couple issues, financial strain (especially in Canada with the introduction of the *gst*), the physicality of production and the hand-mailing of issues, right down to the briefcases of heavy manuscripts that editors regularly dragged around, all bear upon what I am calling microinstitutional autoproduction.

**CONCLUSION**

My Cerfi example recounts the inglorious breakdowns and evolutionary strands along the way in creating a microinstitution around the journal *Recherches*. This example stands in rather stark contrast with the extended life that *Communications* would enjoy through the beneficence of the French National Centre for Scientific Research. As the CNRS came to control a large portion of the annual research budgets of a number of ministries, Guattari fulminated against the “CNRSization of research” in France (Guattari 1980, 156), by which he meant state-sponsored “social science” research brokered by providing training, directed grants, sponsoring labs, and so on. Under the CNRS, interdisciplinary research is heavily encouraged, especially in the area of information-communication-knowledge. Today, the CNRS funds the Edgar Morin Centre within the Institute for the Anthropology of Contemporary Societies in the École des hautes études, a transdisciplinary research space for training graduate students that supersedes Freidmann’s centre. And it still publishes *Communications*. Around
1980, a “rescue” of Recherches was attempted by Lion Murard and Patrick Zylberman, who severed all ties with what they considered to be the navel-gazing radicalism of the old CERFI and recommended the erasure of the microinstitution altogether, including Guattari. By 1981 neither CERFI nor Guattari was in the picture (Dosse 2007, 334–35). Nonetheless the journal soldiered on for some time without generating the glowing constellations of its original microinstitution commitments. This does not mean that it no longer exuded any microinstitutional matters whatsoever. Rather, a well-formed substance like an ongoing journal is an archive of such a moment of change and scattering of personnel, and its newly constituted board, contributors, and revised inter-institutional publishing relations are reshaped in and through contractions and new delineations. Journals outlive their editors in some respects.

The problem is that such a project loses its living, organic relation to its microinstitutional commitments and becomes more like a product disembedded from the vision of transdisciplinarity that gave it shape and guided it. Changes in funding, political change at the level of the state and in terms of a retrenchment against the excesses of the soixante-huitards by the “new philosophers,” the inevitable diasporic wanderings of members, and professionalization within publishing culture reshaped the project. Obviously, microinstitutional matter is still generated by writing histories of and reflecting on the lessons of CERFI, and studying the destinies of Telos and CJPSST on the web. But the loss of a living collective project which found expression through the journal format, the very technology that served as the “common good” (Histoire du CERFI, 3), is irreplaceable. Still, the survival of microinstitutional spaces organized non-collectively around state-directed knowledge mobilization and great (wo)men or the survivors of academic political battles (like Morin, not to mention Kroker), also underscores the poverty of victory when the terms are set elsewhere—autoproduction becoming reproduction without dialogue—and which turns transdisciplinarity into the rhetorics and practices internal to the entrepreneurial research university. What this brief study of journals suggests is that transdisciplinarity has a tendency to work itself out betwixt and between journal publishing on the margins of academe, or at least in its interstices, while relying upon the conviviality of an intellectual community that can only hold together for a short time, and that the research
arms of government, which enjoy playing favourites, and are peculiar to national traditions (France and Canada), produce ambivalent results.

WORKS CITED


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