Dissenting Shadows: A History of Film Policy and Production in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1933-1997

by

Mark David Turner

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies
University of Toronto

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Abstract

This thesis examines the development of film policy and production in Newfoundland and Labrador between the vote to suspend Representative Government in the Dominion of Newfoundland in 1933 and the establishment of the Newfoundland and Labrador Film Development Corporation in the province of Newfoundland in 1997. Both the Commission of Government, established by Britain in 1934, and the Provincial Government, established upon Canadian Confederation in 1949, attempted to use film to rehabilitate what was widely understood to be abject space, rendered so by its malfunctioning political and economic systems. With the development of these systems under the auspices of the Canadian state, a range of filmmakers began to use the medium to interrogate, challenge, and at times actively contravene both those corrective representations that had come before as well as the modes of governance they espoused.

Part one considers the development of film policy and production on the Island of Newfoundland, the seat of both the Dominion and Provincial Governments. Beginning with a reading of the Commission of Government’s general mandate, this section traces the manners in which that mandate came to bear upon the development of film exhibition policy as it was articulated by the Department of Education and how, in turn, that
exhibition policy came to affect the film production practices by agents of institutional and local culture. It forwards the idea that film was utilized to develop contesting ideas of spatial capability. Part two examines the development of that same policy articulated in Newfoundland and how it came to affect film production practices in Labrador. Historically conceived of as a region meant to benefit Newfoundland, here the primary conflict between the agents of institutional and local culture was not one of spatial capacity but spatial ownership.

What emerges are two distinct yet intimately bound histories of film’s unique ability to represent, rehabilitate, manufacture and reclaim space. They reveal as much about the difficult nature of Newfoundland and Labrador’s relationship to one another as they do the province’s relationship to Canada.
Acknowledgments

The long and indirect path of this writing was made possible by a large number of people. And though I endeavour to acknowledge them all here, I fear this statement represents only a fraction of those that require acknowledging. At the outset then, I acknowledge the assistance of those I fail to name.

Early filmographic research for this project was assisted by the Heather McCallum Scholarship sponsored by the Canadian Association for Theatre Research as well as a Research Grant from the J.R. Smallwood Foundation for Newfoundland and Labrador Studies at the Memorial University of Newfoundland. Both were critical. Later writing and research were respectively assisted by the John MacRory Fellowship and a Research Travel Grant from the School for Graduate Studies at the University of Toronto. Though both proved important, I am particularly grateful for the latter as it provided me with my first opportunity to travel to and research in Labrador.

The idea to conduct this research was sparked and encouraged by a number of artists, archivists and champions of cultural production in my home, St. John’s. Steve Cochrane first exposed me to The Adventure of Faustus Bidgood. Andy Jones gave generously of his time, resources and to repurpose his description of his mentor, Ken Campbell, his “very, very specific and brilliant brain”. Nigel Markham was no less generous. To him I am also indebted for assistance with my own film practice. The board of directors at the Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers Co-operative graciously humoured my various requests for information. I am extremely grateful to former President Jean Smith for her willingness to field my many and varied requests. Jewel Cousens, the former Audio-Visual/Reference Librarian at the A.C. Hunter Library at St.
John’s, pointed me in the direction of a number of films I had originally thought lost. Her work in cataloguing the audiovisual heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador was indispensable. Tom Gordon, former director of Memorial University of Newfoundland’s School of Music has remained a trusted friend and confidant during the latter years of my research and writing. I am thankful for his unwavering support.

I owe a particular debt to the staff at the Archives and Special Collections at the Queen Elizabeth II Library of Memorial University of Newfoundland, an organization that has not only played a critical role in assisting with this work, but has served as something of a second home. Their support, guidance, mentorship and generosity remain unparalleled and I am immensely grateful to Bert Riggs, Linda White, Colleen Quigley and Debbie Edgecombe. I am likewise, grateful for the assistance provided by the staff of the Centre for Newfoundland Studies and in particular, Debbie Andrews and Colleen Field. Given its singular role in my research I should also like to thank Memorial University for its Digital Archives Initiative. Without it, a significant number of primary documents would have remained unavailable to me.

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This work is dedicated to my grandparents: Audrey Edison, Israel Turner, Marie Barker and William Sullivan. It is also dedicated to their choices.
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Introduction

What the camera in fact registers is the vague, unformulated, untheorized, unthought-out world of the dominant ideology. Cinema is one of those languages through which the world communicates itself to itself. They constitute its ideology for they reproduce the world as it is experienced when filtered through the ideology.

– Jean-Luc Comolli and Jean Narboni, “Cinema/Ideology/Criticism”

When Comolli and Narboni published their iconic editorial in *Cahiers du cinéma* in October 1969, they were, by their own admission, writing from a context in which film production and distribution were both components of a highly developed and rigidly codified capitalist system. Not only did this context come to bear heavily upon the ideological taxonomy of film that constitutes the bulk of their editorial, it has also had significant implications for subsequent interpretations and applications of their general theoretical project\(^1\). My point of departure here is a re-imagining and re-purposing of Comolli and Narboni’s fundamental analytical premise towards a rather different end; that is, to discover, register, and trace ideologies that are embedded within filmmaking practices\(^2\) in a context where those practices had traditionally existed not within but *adjacent* to a highly developed system of capital: Newfoundland and Labrador. My basic contentions are, first, that this condition of adjacency would have a profound effect upon those ideologies that the camera came to register; and second, that in time, the camera itself would be complicit in ideological formation. They are the lines of inquiry that structure this study.

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\(^1\) For a succinct account of the genealogies and applications of Comolli and Narboni’s theory until 1984, see Barbara Klinger’s “Cinema/Ideology/Criticism Revisited: The Progressive Genre”.

\(^2\) I use the term “practice,” here, advisedly. The proximate sense of the word “industry,” as Raymond Williams has argued in *Keywords*, has come to refer to a specific manner of institution operating within an advanced system of capital that is simply not present here (1983: 165-168). As both a verb and a noun, however, “practice” respectively suggests a course of development and a delimited field that serves as the object of development.
Unlike France, an indexical cast of the modern capitalist state, Newfoundland and Labrador was a patchwork of social, political and economic systems that defied any degree of uniformity until roughly the moment Comolli and Narboni set pen to paper. To give this patchwork a name is a difficult task; rather it is more appropriate to signify that patchwork by way of a symbolic qualification. Writing on Newfoundland and Labrador’s post-World War II program of accelerated modernization, Stephen Crocker has mobilized Ernst Bloch’s idea of nonsynchronicity as means to identify and describe those social, economic and political tensions that came to affect local perceptions of time. “Not all people exist in the same now,” Bloch begins “Nonsynchronism and the Obligation to Its Dialectics”. “They do so only externally, by virtue of the fact that they may all be seen today. But that does not mean they are living at the same time with others” (22).

Emphasizing the uneven historical development of rural Newfoundland specifically by way of its continued use of the cashless Truck system, Crocker’s analysis isolates the post-World War II period as one of acute nonsynchronicity whose eventual outcome was the repositioning of the present and, accordingly, a cultural inculcation of what he refers to as “parodic nature” (83). Setting aside the phenomenological aspects of Crocker’s argument, his implication of nonsynchronicity as an historical phenomenon resulting from the persistence of a certain form of economic relations is compelling, if, perhaps, stated in a restricted form. To extend his use of the term then, I contend that Newfoundland and Labrador has, since at least the nineteenth century, existed in a state of nonsynchronicity, a condition that owes to its diversity in economic relations, geographies, and ethnicities. Accordingly, the most acute phase of nonsynchronicity does not in fact begin with the post-World War II modernization program but instead with the
commencement of Commission of Government in 1934: a non-democratic system of
government devised by Britain’s Dominions Office meant to rehabilitate Newfoundland
and Labrador’s political and economic systems. The long historical existence of
nonsynchronicity has specific implications for ideological formation. Likewise, the
introduction of film during its most acute phase has specific implications for the
medium’s role in ideological formation.

Suffice it to say, the presence and particular character of this nonsynchronicity
necessitates the tempering of my mode of analysis. To the discussion then, I must
necessarily invite Comolli and Narboni’s muse, Louis Althusser, as well Althusser’s
predecessor, Antonio Gramsci in order to fully determine the range, scope, shape and
materiality of the ideologies at work in this context. And only after inviting Raymond
Williams and Michael Taussig to assist in the reading of these ideologies, in their social
and mimetic contexts respectively, can I hope to complete the cast of critics needed to
begin this analysis.

But before engaging in a more thorough definition of terms, concepts and
methodologies, a few words about the geographies and dates that circumscribe this study
are necessary. To the issue of geography: while Newfoundland and Labrador represents
one provincial entity within the Confederation of Canada, for the purposes of this
analysis, I encourage the reader to ignore, or at the very least, set aside these interrelated
notions. For while it may represent one single province in name, Newfoundland and Labrador constitute two separate landmasses, each with their own ethnographies, cultures, economies and political practices. This distinction is mirrored within this text. Each region constitutes one half of this study. Accordingly, I would also ask the reader to
set aside an idea of Newfoundland and Labrador as a Canadian province. To conceive of these regions as such would have the unfortunate effect of inscribing a federal historical narrative that has, since the time of European contact until 1949, not been shared. Newfoundland and Labrador were not officially linked until 1927. There, in fact, was no provincial entity called Newfoundland and Labrador until 2001. In this latter request I wish to assert that I am in no way attempting to invoke a discourse of regionalism. To make such an invocation in a study of a mimetic art in English Canada is, as I have come to learn, methodologically taboo. Rather, I make this request in the hope that it will invoke quite the opposite idea: to position Newfoundland and Labrador as distinct entities with distinct political histories that have traditionally existed adjacent to the Canadian nation, not as regions within it.

To the issue of dates: rather than bookending this analysis with moments that possess aesthetic, practical or formal significance, I am, instead deferring to representative significance (i.e. political, social and economic significance). My analysis commences at the moment of the most extraordinary representational act in the history of either region: namely, the self-implemented suspension of Direct Rule in 1933 and the commencement of the Commission of Government the following year. In simultaneously removing themselves from the context of international capital and alleviating the burden of self-determination, Newfoundland and Labrador established a set of conditions wherein the very fundamental issue of representation, and the right that authorizes representation, would become its primary ideological conflict. In contrast to other western states where the relationship between capital and political self-determination (its status as state) had been codified certainly since the writings of Gramsci, both state and
capital were arrested in Newfoundland and Labrador. That film was introduced as part of a larger program of modernization during this moment of arrest only serves to complicate matters. It is film’s implementation as a tool – as a mechanism by which to address the suspended Dominion’s nonsynchronicity – that established the tendency to use the medium as a means by which to articulate, promote and regulate identity. Pressed into such a service, film became a much broader mode of representation and, moreover, a site of representational conflict.

I conclude my analysis at the metaphorical end of this conflict with another political act: the 1997 formation of the Newfoundland and Labrador Film Development Corporation, the Provincial Government’s arms-length agency “mandated to promote the development of the indigenous film and video industry in the Province, as well as to promote the Province in national and international film and video markets as a location for film, television, and commercial productions” (Newfoundland and Labrador Film Development Corporation: “Home”). For it is in this moment of political acknowledgment of its economic significance – the moment at which film is legitimized as an industry – that the medium ceased to be able to function as a singular and privileged site for contesting notions of representation and identity. In authorizing and acknowledging the practice as industry, through its official inclusion in the realm of state-sanctioned mode of capital, the relationship between film and ideology would become, for lack of a better descriptor, typical; that is, at least within the context of Comolli and Narboni’s taxonomy. In a sense then, this study is a pre-history of a Newfoundland and Labrador Film industry.
Newfoundland

Newfoundland is the object of the first half of this study: the Island portion of the Canadian province that is Newfoundland and Labrador. Sitting at the mouth of the St. Lawrence River, the primary landmass, along with its approximately 7,000 smaller satellite islands, encompasses some 111,390 km$^2$. First inhabited 9,000 years ago by the Maritime Archaic Indians, Giovanni Caboto’s (John Cabot) 1497 landfall precipitated the development of a seasonal migratory fishery on the Island. This industrial practice would functionally prevent the widespread population for the next two hundred years. Those that did settle along its 9,655 km of coastline organized themselves in small, disconnected, subsistence-based communities commonly referred to as outports. This mode of community organization was necessitated by the practices of the inshore fishery, which required unhampered access to fishing grounds as well as vast amounts of space with which to dry and prepare the catch. What arose was a multiplicity of subsistence based economies whose only common aspect was their shared indebtedness to the Truck system, a mode of barter whereby a fisherman and his family were seasonally supplied with the materials necessary to maintain their fishing operations against the season’s catch. Lasting well into the post-Confederation era, outport Newfoundland has historically existed outside of a cash based economy, a fact that would have a profound impact on the Island’s ability to withstand the Great Depression.

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3 Throughout this study, I will be using the capitalized form of “Island” to refer to Newfoundland.

4 Though the Truck system is widely acknowledged as one of, if not the primary factor in the formation of the Newfoundland state, there have been no attempts to provide a long historical account of this system and its development. Rosemary Ommer’s edited collection, *Merchant Credit and Labour Strategies in Historical Perspective*, is a good place from which to begin.
Granted Responsible Government by the British in 1832 and Dominion status in 1907 along with Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, Newfoundland’s political independence did little to affect its traditional economic and social practices. With the more or less sole reliance upon the fishery as its economic engine – a reliance that would itself ensure the perpetuation of the Truck system – it did not embark upon the same national projects of modernization that were common to most western states in the nineteenth century. Its railway, perhaps the pinnacle, if not sole example of its attempt at modernization, not only incurred an almost unbearable public expense, it was constructed with a technology that made it incompatible with the remainder of North American rail system: the narrow gauge. With a disconnected populace and a singular economic base controlled by a relatively small class of merchants first in England and then at St. John’s, Newfoundland historically existed in a state of nonsynchronicity. As a consequence, when the price of fish collapsed during the Great Depression, the Island was not able to sustain itself. After rioting in the capital city of St. John’s in 1932, the citizens of the Dominion voted to suspend its Representative Government, officially reverting back to the control of the Dominions Office and a British appointed Commission of Government in 1934. In 1948, the citizens of the Dominion voted to join the Canadian Confederation, a decision that took effect on 31 March of the following year. It remains a part of that Confederation to this day.

But as much as Newfoundland stands as a problematic example of state (be it in its Colonial, Dominion, Protectorate, Provincial or other configurations), historically, it exerted a considerable amount of social, economic and political control over Labrador. This tendency was legitimized by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council’s 1927
decision to recognize Labrador as a territory of Newfoundland, extricating it from the possession of Lower Canada after many years of dispute, a decision that would have significant implications for both the production and transmission of conflicting ideologies of representation. Through its possession of Labrador, Newfoundland was granted a colonial right that assisted in supporting its claim as an autonomous Dominion, a right that continues to inform the Province’s aspirations of autonomy (in its multiplicity of forms). But for our more immediate purposes, Newfoundland’s position as the political centre ensured that it was there, and not Labrador, that the initial ideological battles that form the basis of this study were rehearsed. Newfoundland is the epicentre for this analysis; it is the source of the transmission that inevitably decays into a perpetual loop of feedback with Labrador.

Labrador

Historically, the term “Labrador” referred to the entire north-eastern peninsula of the North American that separates Hudson’s Bay from the Gulf of St. Laurence, a designation now believed to have given to the region by Portuguese explorers after lavrador or landowner. What is now commonly known as Labrador is the mainland portion of the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, a landmass that encompasses some 269,073km², an area twice the size of the Island. Labrador is bordered on its west and south by the province of Québec, to the east by the Labrador Sea, and extends to the utmost edge of the North American continent, terminating at the mouth of the Hudson Strait. First inhabited by Paleo-Indians approximately 12,000 years ago, the vast majority of contemporary settlements – many of which date no further back than the eighteenth
century – are along its 7,886 km of coastline. Unlike Newfoundland, where a relatively singular industrial motivation for settlement resulted in the flowering of physically disconnected yet similarly structured communities, the motivations that informed settlement in Labrador were by no means consistent. Accordingly, the manner of their social, economic, and industrial arrangement also varied.

One of the reasons for this is the strong and continued presence of two aboriginal groups in the region. While in Newfoundland patterns of settlement occurred in spite of an aboriginal presence – a tendency that in part precipitated the extinction of the Beothuk people – early settlement in Labrador, to some degree, relied upon functional relations with the Innu and/or Inuit. Though communities on the South Coast of the region now appear decisively European in aspect, initial migratory fishing operations and, accordingly, early settlement was contingent upon positive relations with both groups. This relationship with the Inuit specifically resulted in the formation of a distinct cultural-ethnic group. Originally referred to as “settlers,” there are now approximately 6,000 metis [sic] in a region of southern Labrador they refer to as NunatuKavut. Moravian missionaries from Germany and England, meanwhile, precipitated settlement on the North Coast. Arriving in the mid-eighteenth century to evangelize the Inuit, the Moravians established a series of stations between Cape Harrison in the south to Killinek Island in the north, many of which became formal settlements. Three of those surviving communities, along with two others that began as Hudson Bay Company posts, now constitute the semi-autonomous Inuit-governed region of Labrador known as Nunatsiavut. The Innu, finally, were the last to organize within European-modelled communities during the mid-twentieth century. Much like the Inuit, their settlement came
about as the result of pressure exerted by external forces: the Provincial Government and Catholic Church. Davis Inlet, which has since been relocated to Natuashish, and Sheshatshiu, are the last aboriginal communities to be established in the region.

It is a precarious task to demarcate Labrador as a region. For unlike Newfoundland, a neatly circumscribed landmass whose geography has brought much to bear upon its industry, economy and politics, we cannot tease out the same relationship here. Historically, Labrador has seemingly been in a state of perpetual re/invention. Its “ownership” has been fluid and, at least to the Provincial Government of Québec, remains contested\(^5\); its physical borders appear perpetually mutable; and its inhabitants have been collected into communities whose broader network of relations are determined by the particular sub-region of Labrador they reside within. Yet, as a region that has perpetually been in the political possession of another power – be it Britain, Lower Canada, Québec or Newfoundland – some idea of a Labrador has asserted itself ever since the name was coined. For our purposes then, it is more accurate to think of Labrador as a constantly shifting archipelago rather than a precisely circumscribed geographical entity, one that has been defined in equal parts by those that would claim title to the region as much as the identities of those that are situated within it. That Labrador would come to rehearse those ideological battles waged upon the Island owes as much to its formal affiliation with Newfoundland as it does to its official geographical and political circumscription within the Canadian Confederation. In one sense, the history of Labrador after Confederation is a reckoning of that circumscription. If the liminal

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\(^5\) As late as 2001, the Province of Québec refused to recognize the federally demarcated Labrador border established by the Privy Council in 1927, a position that has been explicitly articulated by its Ministers of Natural Resources and Intergovernmental affairs. Accordingly, maps within the province of Québec offer wildly different accounts of the Labrador border, some rendering it a thin strip of coast running from its northern tip to the Straits of Belle Isle.
status it continued to maintain even after its 1927 granting to Newfoundland had afforded Labrador’s inhabitants with a corresponding degree of anonymity, then Labrador’s entry into the Canadian Confederation would bring its residents rapidly into the interpellative fold. As well shall come to see, Labrador’s response to that movement would take an altogether different course than Newfoundland’s.

Film

Film is the constant in this study; it is the central object that fixes Newfoundland, Labrador and ideology within my constellation of analysis. As such, a few words are necessary to both explain what it is that I am admitting as a film and to situate its particular significance as a medium that embodies ideology. First of all, I am using the terms film and film production in contradistinction to the more refined term of cinema, a word that implies a particular diachrony and tradition in its dual signification of location and art cum industry⁶. While the word cinema has certainly been used quite recently in similar analytical contexts⁷, it bears too much concept for my purpose, suggesting a particular lineage to a capitalist practice of filmmaking that is not present within this context. Newfoundland and Labrador have both undoubtedly been the sites of particular traditions of film production, but it would be an act of revisionism to collectively refer to these traditions as a cinema. Film, on the other hand, does not conjure the same notions. It is decisively synchronous in its aspect, referring at once to material, process, and text⁸.

⁶ Oxford English Dictionary: “cinema n. 1 a theatre where films are shown 2 the production of films as an art or industry”.

For this reason, film, and the related concept, film production, function as much more appropriate signifiers for the particular object of this study. Likewise, it is the comparative richness of its denotation – its ability to signify material, process and text – that renders film as a medium uniquely suited to embody ideology.

For Comolli and Narboni, this richness was not lost. “What is a film?” they ask us early in “Cinema/Ideology/Criticism”:

On the one hand it is a particular product, manufactured within a given system of economic relations, and involving labor (which appears to the capitalist as money) to produce – a condition to which even ‘independent’ filmmakers and the ‘new cinema’ are subject – assembling a certain number of workers for this purpose [...] It becomes transformed into a commodity, possessing exchange value, which is realized by the sale of tickets and contracts, and governed by the laws of the market. On the other hand, as a result of being a material product of the system, it is also an ideological product of the system, which in France means capitalism. (753-4)

For them it is the process by which film is rendered a material object that simultaneously renders it an ideological object; the systems of relations involved result in a doubly manufactured object. But as I have already suggested, we cannot accept their articulation of the process of manufacture wholesale, for unlike France, the production of film in Newfoundland and Labrador occurred within a system that was at the most, only obliquely related to anything resembling a traditional form of capitalism. Rather, films

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8 Oxford English Dictionary: film n. 1 a thin flexible strip of plastic or other material coated with light-sensitive emulsion for exposure in a camera. 2 material in the form of a very thin flexible sheet, a thin layer covering a surface. 3 a story or event recorded by a camera as a series of moving images and shown in a cinema or television”.


produced within Newfoundland and Labrador existed within their own nonsynchronous mode of exchange.

What this mode exactly was is difficult to articulate. In *Film in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1904-1980*, Norman, Gallant and Norman provide a place from which to begin. Concluding their brief historical survey, the trio come to lament that “[w]hat emerges is a picture of an industry that is often very nearly dependent on government funds, government grants, and occasional government contracts” (44). Their final assessment was that, “[a]ll of this relegates the role of film to be defined by a very few. There are hardly enough agencies carrying out diverse programmes to make the film scene in Newfoundland [and, by extension, Labrador] little more than a government sponsored program” (44). Written in 1981, a little over two-thirds of the way through the historical period under examination in this study, their assessment, while lacking some particularity, is an interesting one as it reveals something about the foundations of this mode of exchange. At the moment the trio were writing, the Provincial Government, whose involvement in a local film industry they so bemoaned, was a mere thirty-two years old. Little more than a generation of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians had been raised within it. Moreover, for twenty-three of those years, that Provincial Government was helmed by Joseph R. Smallwood who had rather idiosyncratically determined the manner in which Newfoundland and Labrador would both come to function in the contexts of national and international capitalism⁹. In their particular use of the term, then, government suggests a condition of double infancy; that is, first, infancy in the mode of exchange.

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⁹ See, again, Stephen Crocker’s “Hauled Kicking and Screaming Into Modernity: Non-Synchronicity and Globalization in Post-War Newfoundland” and Gerhard P. Bassler’s *Alfred Valdmanis and the Politics of Survival*. 
governance, and second, infancy in the relationship between this mode of governance and
capitalism, both at the moment of Confederation and the exit of Smallwood. And it is
within this condition of double infancy – under this specialized form of emergent
capitalist democracy – that the practice of filmmaking was introduced, promoted,
supported, and generally maintained.

And here, ultimately, is my specific point of departure from Comolli and
Narboni’s definition of film. For while I can admit that even in this form of emergent
democratic capitalism, it is a product manufactured within a certain economic system,
involving labour, and assembling a number of workers for this purpose; in this context, it
was seldom transformed into a commodity that possessed exchange value governed by
the laws of the market. Films produced in Newfoundland and Labrador, seldom, if ever,
failed to meet the defining criterion of a commodity as it is understood in the context of
capitalism. Written the same year as Norman, Gallant and Norman’s survey, the
Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers Co-operative’s official report to the Federal
Cultural Policy Review Committee confirms the general presence of this mode of
exchange. “[F]ilms made at NIFCO,” the authors suggest, “are not made for commercial
sponsors or for specific markets, but rather as personal expressions of their filmmakers,
to be seen whenever an audience can be found for them. If the films are good enough, the
audience can be found, the theory goes” (3). There is, put simply, very little evidence to
suggest that most films produced during the period of analysis were done so to generate a
significant return on investment, to generate capital from an audience.

This, of course, is not to say that film in either Newfoundland or Labrador was
without an audience. In fact, the situation was quite the opposite. Newfoundland, and to a
lesser extent Labrador, were both able to cultivate and sustain sizable and diverse film audiences through two distinct distribution practices. In larger centres such as the capital, St. John’s, the history of film exhibition is homologous to other North American cities; that is, there is a general progression from exhibition in pre-existing structures to purpose built or adapted structures during the first two decades of the twentieth century. In rural parts of the province, exhibition was largely the responsibility of itinerant projectionists: solitary entrepreneurs who would earn a living by presenting programs of films in church halls, community halls and really any civic space that was available to them. Lasting well into the 1960s, the demise of this practice occurs at roughly the same time as the completion of series of highways on the Island. A centralized network of distributors located at St. John’s supported both exhibition practices.\footnote{The urban practice has been recently been described by Paul S. Moore in “Early Picture Shows at the Fulcrum of Modern and Parochial St. John’s, Newfoundland” while the outport practice is described by Michael Taft in “The Itinerant Movie-Man and his Impact on the Folk Culture of the Outports of Newfoundland”. A fictional account of the latter can also be found in Michael Crummey’s novel, \textit{The Wreckage}. I have also learned through anecdotal evidence that during the Second World War, the Canadian and American Navies facilitated a third, albeit informal system of exhibition. On occasion, ships stationed in outport Newfoundland and coastal Labrador would conduct public screenings onboard the vessels. Local residents were welcome to attend provided they travelled to the boat in their own crafts.}

But with a few exceptions, many of the films produced in Newfoundland and Labrador were not circulated within either of these networks. Rather they were subjected to other less comprehensive modes of distribution limited in both size and scope: a parallel, silent, network of which very little tangible evidence exists. For many of the films I discuss in this study, there is little to no information regarding their distribution or exhibition. This, I believe, is not so much an impediment to the research but itself constitutes a form of evidence, particularly at this early phase of scholarship in this field. First, it suggests that these films were often intentionally created as products not to be consumed in a traditional, capitalist, sense. Commodities inevitably leave some textual
record of their existence, even if this record is for the purposes of a financial audit, a necessary by-product of the circulation of commodity in a system of capital. The total lack of evidence demonstrating distribution and exhibition suggests these texts were created for purposes other than the generation of capital. Second, it suggests that these films were only indirectly engaged with local publics, that the terms of their engagement were somehow mediated. The faint trace of their existence as commodities circulating within a given market – in other words, the general absence of interviews, reviews, criticism – indicates that their circulation was limited, circumscribed, and, above all, precisely focussed. I believe that these networks of distribution and exhibition were traditionally self-constituting, arising from either the act of production in particular, or arising from the agency responsible for production.

Returning, finally, to Comolli and Narboni, then, I can begin to qualify what I am admitting as film in a manner that conforms to the general operative processes the pair lay out in their definition. For while it is apparent that film in the present context does possess the defining criterion of a commodity in a traditional capitalist context – i.e. an object that possesses exchange value governed by the laws of the market – a similar type of operation is nevertheless occurring in that a film’s value is determined by the degree to which it is able to maintain ideological coherency at every level of production, including, of course, its ability to constitute an audience. To this end, I can now forward the following definition of film as it stands in the present context. On the one hand it is a particular product, manufactured within a given system of economic relations and involving labour to produce, assembling a certain number of workers for this purpose. It becomes transformed into a highly specialized commodity, possessing ideological value,
which is realized within a variety of restricted exhibition contexts. On the other hand, as a result of being a specialized product of the system, it is also an ideological product of the system, which in Newfoundland and Labrador is an *emerging* capitalist democracy. I am, ultimately, less concerned with the materiality of film than I am with the processes that lead to its production and exhibition. Here, in addition to its own material, I will be using the word film to refer to video, and to a lesser extent, television.

Ideology (not hegemony)

A few words are also certainly needed to qualify my use of ideology, and as per the subtitle of this section, why I favour this particular term over its potentially more applicable but inherently more problematic relative, hegemony. That ideology is the more precise of the two terms to employ in this analysis owes much to the historical moment being examined: the period of Newfoundland and Labrador history that commences with the voluntary suspension of Representative Government. Ultimately, it is the composition of a society, or more specifically the manner in which its base and superstructure relate to one another, that determines the conditions under which ideology might pass into a hegemony as it is understood in the Marxist-Gramscian tradition.

What underlies hegemony, is, as Raymond Williams reminds us, an incomprehensible totality whose very scope has frequently undermined critical accounts of it. As he suggests in “Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory”, hegemony is not to be understood at the level of mere opinion or manipulation. It is a whole body of practices and expectations: our assignments of energy, our ordinary understanding of man and his world. It is a set of meanings and values
which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming. It thus constitutes a sense of reality for most people in the society, a sense of absolute because experienced reality beyond which it is very difficult for most members of the society to move, in most areas of their lives. But it is not, except in the operation of a moment of abstract analysis, in any sense a static system. On the contrary we can only understand an effective and dominant culture if we understand the real social process on which it depends: I mean the process of incorporation. (43)

It is precisely because of this totalizing aspect, its ability to instantiate itself as a reality, that hegemony disqualifies itself from this discussion. For in the historical moments both preceding and proceeding the suspension of Representative Government, the larger condition of nonsynchronicity would have facilitated such a disconnect between the base and superstructure that the conditions for a hegemony, as affected by a dominant culture, did not exist. Certainly, hegemonies would have existed at a local (i.e. community, sub-regional, perhaps even regional) level – places in which the relationship between base and superstructure might be rehearsed in microcosm – but never to the totalizing extent described by Williams. The processes necessary for a dominant culture to establish and maintain a hegemony in both Newfoundland and Labrador – that is the processes of dissemination and incorporation – were never effectively put into practice. The influence of a dominant class, as much as a dominant class can be said to have existed in either region during the moments of pre- and post- suspension of Representative Government, was heavily circumscribed beyond the capital city.
And yet, in spite of the persistence of nonsynchronicity, by the end of the eighteenth century a class system faintly resembling a Marxist model\textsuperscript{11} was able to develop, a convergence that brings much to bear on the applicability of ideology as a structuring concept in this analytical context. This took the form of three strata of classes: first, the dominant or ruling classes of European descent located at St. John’s and a handful of other appropriately sized communities throughout the Island (they would not establish themselves in Labrador until the completion of the Allied Forces Base at Goose Bay in 1941); second, the Truck-subsistence classes of European descent and mixed European-Aboriginal descent located in the outports and small communities throughout central and southern-coastal Labrador; and third, the barter/solely-subsistence classes of generally aboriginal decent organized in nomadic bands or small, extremely isolated communities located in central or northern-coastal Labrador\textsuperscript{12}. Historically, these classes remained self-contained, cut off not only by virtue of their modes of labour and/or subsistence, but also, importantly, because of poor transportation and communications infrastructure. Until fairly recently, they were not in close enough physical proximity to organize themselves into a hierarchical structure. Yet, by virtue of their stratification as classes – as interrelated, however physically disparate, social/economic groups largely determined by their modes of labour and/or subsistence – there was nothing to impede the

\textsuperscript{11} Obviously, the main point of departure from a traditional Marxist model here is that this particular class structure arose in a colonial context, that is, in a state that whose productive practices required, in part, the displacement, subjugation, and coercion (whether actively, through policy, or passively, through modes of barter) of aboriginal peoples. As per note three, this reveals at least part of the problem in relying upon colonial/post-colonial discourse here. There are, put simply, concurrent moments of colonialism, post-colonialism and re-colonialism occurring within the same state, and potentially, multiple states within the same state (e.g. Nunatsiavut, Nitassinan, and NunatuKavut).

\textsuperscript{12} The Innu communities Sheshatshiu and the now relocated Davis Inlet were not established until 1957 and 1967 respectively. The Inuit of Labrador began to abandon a nomadic lifestyle during the eighteenth century as a result of the Moravian missionaries who had established communities/trading posts at Makkovik, Hopedale, Nain, Zoar, Nutak, Okak, Hebron and Killinek.
production of *ideology* within each of these classes. Regardless of however specialized the mode of capitalism may be in a state, the operation of class formation presupposes the operation ideological production\(^\text{13}\). Thus, in setting out a definition of ideology as it is to be employed in this context, we must, in the first instance, recognize it as a phenomenon that requires the operation of class formation: that it is, above all, a *contingent* phenomenon. And by virtue of this contingency, the particular quality and structure of a given ideology stands in direct relation to the class from which it may be said to have originated.

In more traditional Marxist accounts of ideology and ideological production, and this includes Althusser’s, a similar premise is forwarded but it is generally done so with the further qualifications that (1) within a given class system, a condition of alienated labour has been established; and (2) that this condition of alienated labour is itself inherently negative, resulting directly in false thought or consciousness (or, what could be characterized as the *initial* articulation of a particular ideology). Building upon these premises in “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,” Althusser provides us with the most cogent definition of ideology as it is generally understood/accounted for in Marxist models:

> all ideology represents in its necessarily imaginary distortion not the existing relations of production (and the other relations that derive from them), but above all, the imaginary relationship of individuals to the relations of production and the relations that derive from them. What is represented in ideology is therefore not

\(^{13}\) This follows the Althusserian-Gramscian-Marxist account of the state as being both defined and constituted by Repressive State Apparatuses (RSAs) and Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs). Even in the instance of Newfoundland and Labrador where there were, historically, few RSAs, there were sufficient ISAs (church, family, and to lesser degrees, education and fisheries unions) to ensure the robust production of ideology, and, thereby, ensuring the reproduction of the relations of production (i.e. a class system).
the system of real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relation of those individuals to the real relations in which they live.

(111)

This particular formation has been instrumental in subsequent accounts of ideologies and their development throughout history, that is, ideology’s ability to manoeuvre from its embodiment as false consciousness to revolutionary system of ideas\textsuperscript{14}. But within the given context, we cannot accept these qualifications for the very basic fact that the vast majority of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, that is, those that would have belonged to either the Truck-subsistence or barter/solely-subsistence classes, were \textit{not} alienated from their labour. Neither, for that matter, were their labour practices industrialized, nor were the locations of their labour industrialized spaces. The historical moment in which these classes were repositioned and, in turn, alienated from their labour is precisely the moment under analysis. It is, therefore, more accurate to speak of three \textit{modes} of ideology in the moments immediately preceding and proceeding the suspension of Representative Government.

First, there is the dominant or ruling ideology (again, \textit{not} a hegemony) whose formation is virtually analogous with traditional Marxist accounts. Its physical location of formation in an industrialized space, amongst alienated modes of labour, with a full range of operating Institutional State Apparatuses (ISAs) and Repressive State Apparatuses (RSAs) ensured that its initial formation was itself false consciousness. What is more, its

\textsuperscript{14} See Raymond Williams discussion of ideology in \textit{Keywords}. While Williams does not explicitly account for a manoeuvre from ideology’s existence as false consciousness to revolutionary system of ideas, such a shift seems plausible in historically longer (after Benjamin’s epochs of the same style) ideologies, particularly when read against Williams’ accounts of Marx-Engels’ and Lenin’s understanding of the operations of ideology.
complete abstraction and removal from the base ensured that its epoch as false consciousness would prove to be particularly long.

Second, there is the ideology of the Truck-subsistence classes which, in its initial formation would have likely have been a multiplicity of ideologies. The process of ideological normativization was subsequently brought about through developments in transportation and communication infrastructure. In Newfoundland this was not fully realized until the mid-1960s with the completion of the highway network. In Labrador, these developments would come much later and to a much lesser extent. Its physical location of formation was a non-industrialized space, its labour practices were non-industrialized, and with the exception of the church, family and to a lesser extent, the educational ISAs, no other State Apparatuses (be they Ideological or Repressive), were operating. Given its locations of practice, its contact with a limited range of ISAs and its limited ability to reproduce itself in the context of communication technologies, this mode of ideology, historically, remained relatively static.

Third, there is the provisional mode of ideology as it arose amongst the barter/solely-subsistence classes. The social formations that constituted this class were largely organized according to ethnic groups (i.e. Innu, Inuit, metis) that were, by and large, ambivalent towards one another\(^{15}\). Taken together with the extreme physical isolation of these social formations, the complete absence of RSAs, and the ethnically/culturally-specific manners in which these classes interacted with family and

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\(^{15}\) It should be noted that since the commencement of a process of politicization that began in Labrador during the early 1970s, there is a widespread tendency to elide this historical tendency towards ambivalence, a necessary expedient in the effort to instantiate Labrador as a region that is culturally and socially both internally coherent \textit{and} distinct from Newfoundland. Much work remains to be done examining the processes by which Labrador has come to interpret and instantiate itself since the early 1970s.
religious ISAs, the conditions that would allow for the formation of an internally coherent ideology amongst these classes were not present. Such coherency was not achieved until the 1970s with the widespread introduction of communication technologies throughout Labrador. At the moment in which this study commences it would be more accurate to characterize this particular phenomenon as proto-ideology.

Finally, we must also acknowledge ideology’s existence in two inter-related, yet entirely distinct modes: that is, synchronic and diachronic. Even in approaching our definition through an account of the operations of ideological production\textsuperscript{16}, it is obvious that, at least within the present analytical context, it is not possible to distil the term into component parts of a single mode. It is, at its most basic level, a \textit{contingent} process whose operations are themselves \textit{contingent} upon other determining \textit{elements}. In its synchronic mode then, ideology is a phenomenon that is contingent upon the operation of class formation. As Althusser bluntly reminds us, it is, following Marx’s assessment of metaphysics, a phenomenon that has \textit{no history}. But in its diachronic mode, what Althusser would identify as the phenomena of different ideologies, there is a wide range of formations ranging from the proto-ideology of the barter/solely-subsistence classes (homologous systems of thought as facilitated by similar modes of labour, community formation and interaction with ISAs), to the rigid ideology of the ruling classes (structuring systems of thought rooted in a condition of alienated labour). The particularities of these ideological formations can only be understood through a close examination of the class in which they originate.

\textsuperscript{16} For reasons that I believe are obvious, there is a tendency in Marxist accounts of the structure and operation of ideology to frequently employ the term ideology in such accounting. Rather than approach the issue through the identification and analysis of its constituent features then (i.e. through processes by which using the term in its account is inevitable), it seems appropriate to acknowledge its protean nature and proceed inwards from the limits of ideology’s operations.
Methodology

Newfoundland, Labrador, film, ideology. As the four basic objects of my analysis, my understandings of them implicate a methodological position, one that is clearly rooted in materialism. But this position, such as I am actively developing it, has been equally informed by two much larger questions that have troubled me personally, questions that, by virtue of their breadth, necessitate a narrowing of this materialist position into one rooted more precisely in historical materialism. First, what conditions ultimately led Newfoundland and Labrador to voluntarily reject its right to direct self-rule? It is, we are often reminded, a choice that has few other precedents in all of recorded history. Second, what were the affects of this decision upon society in Newfoundland and Labrador, that is, a North American albeit non-Canadian society? A direct answer to these questions is implausible. But by considering these questions from within a range of precisely circumscribed contexts – in this instance through an account of the introduction and development of a specific media – we can, in a very limited way, begin to tease out limited answers. This study stands as one component of a possible range of writings that would stand in contradistinction to those generalized histories of Newfoundland and Labrador that, by virtue of their totalizing aspirations, tend to address these questions purely from the perspective of economic determinism. I understand my methodology, on the one hand, as proceeding from the objects of this study – from its four constitutive materials – and on the other hand, from my very personal desire to tease out answers to these questions. In order to more fully transition from the implication of methodological position to an articulation of methodological process then, I shall proceed by formulating
a set of questions that follow from my two formative lines of inquiry, leading towards the specific objects under consideration here.

Question one: why, and above all, how is it significant that the Commission of Government came to use film as an educational tool and to what ends was it used as such?

An answer to this question must first be approached through readings of public policy, inasmuch as that is possible within this particular context. The Commission was not renowned for its record keeping. For my purposes, that foundational – and indeed central – piece of policy is the *Newfoundland Royal Commission Report* of 1933, more commonly referred to as the *Amulree Report*, after the Commission’s chair and the Report’s credited author, William Mackenzie, First Baron Amulree. A condition of British financial aid to Newfoundland in the wake of the Great Depression, the Royal Commission was charged with assessing Newfoundland’s civil and political societies in order to determine the causes of its economic and political collapse and, accordingly, to provide recommendations for the general rehabilitation of the Island. The Report’s central recommendation was that a temporary suspension of Representative Government and the reinstatement of direct rule by Britain would be the best way to “promote the rehabilitation of the Island on sound principles” (223). Its author reasoned that that the country should be given a rest from party politics for a period of years, and we have no hesitation in saying that, in the circumstances now prevailing in Newfoundland, the proposal that a system of “Government by Commission” should be established for a limited period affords the best means of enabling the Island to make a speedy and effective recovery from its present difficulties. (223)
It would, of course, never awake from that rest.

What is compelling about this passage is that it outlines, in a very rudimentary form, two interpretive tendencies that the Commission of Government would come to practice throughout its tenure, specific instances of, as per Althusser, ideological interpellation. First, the means of addressing *any* issues in civil and political society are beyond the people themselves; the only manner by which its residents could come to learn “sound principles” of governance would be through a form of benevolent dictatorship. Second, as implied both by the use of the capital “I” in “Island” and the absence of the word “Labrador,” this region was a lesser partner in the union. Labrador, it was suggested, should be held “until sufficient wealth had been created in the Island to enable the people of Newfoundland themselves to develop the dependency and reap the benefit of its great resources” (184). Setting aside the second for the moment, it is necessary to acknowledge and examine the pedagogical implications of the first of these interpellative tendencies as it would have an immediate and profound effect upon the historical moment in question, and would, accordingly, have implications for filmmaking practice.

Charged with promoting the “rehabilitation of the Island on sound principles,” the *raison d’être* of Commission of Government was, broadly speaking, to re/educate Newfoundland civil society with the understanding that this would in turn result in a functioning, sovereign, political society. It bears emphasizing that the solution to Newfoundland’s problems was, first and foremost, someone else’s matter. Only through the external establishment of a rehabilitative scheme could Newfoundland begin to address its problems. Such systemic violence ensured that the various re/education
programs that were introduced by the Commission of Government performed a very specific ideological operation, interpellating its subjects as simultaneously developing (as per the traditional ideological operation of education) and profoundly unable (as per the necessity of establishing such an educational scheme in the first place)\(^{17}\). Yet, the degree to which this manner of interpellation occurred within any given educational practice stood in direct relation to the democratization of that practice. Taking a wide view on what constituted an educational apparatus, the Commission’s rehabilitative efforts were not merely directed towards the restructuring of grade school curriculum, but also towards the promotion and development of adult education (which, during the Commission, focused heavily upon the fishery and agriculture), and the widespread introduction of communications media such as radio and print. The rather public existence of the latter two media – in other words, the degree to which they were shaped by a public discourse – offset their ability to interpellate their subjects along these lines. Tools of rehabilitation though they may be, radio and print provided Newfoundlanders with the means to be in more direct and frequent contact with one another as well as allowing them access to information that was otherwise unavailable to or consciously withheld from them\(^{18}\).

But unlike its mechanically reproduced cousins radio and print media, film was not immediately pressed into the service of this new educational apparatus; nor, indeed, did it

\(^{17}\) Descriptions of this particular phenomenon has been approached through the language of metaphysics by commentators such as F.L. Jackson and Cyril Poole who both account for it within discussions of a “Newfoundland soul”. Positivist commentators, meanwhile, tend to avoid it. While interpellation provides an appropriate concept through which to characterize this process in this particular context, a great deal more work needs to be done on the role and significance of education in Newfoundland and Labrador society from the Commission of Government to the present.

\(^{18}\) In his *Voice of Newfoundland: A Social History of the Broadcasting Corporation of Newfoundland, 1939-1949*, Jeff Webb provides the example of the market price of fish, which, prior to the advent of print media and radio, would have been generally unknown to fishing families (17).
appear initially to be a concern of the Commission. Given the specific problems the Commission was seeking to address, film was particularly ill-suited to assist at either end of the interpellative scale given first, the comparative expense of film production (it will be remembered the Commission addressing a range of issues that stemmed from an economic collapse); second, its inability to immediately represent what it depicts after its recording (in comparison to the immediacy of representation with radio or the short turnaround time of print media); and third, the indirect means by which film engages its audience (again, unlike radio and print media wherein audiences are provided with a space to respond to content). So while it enjoyed a lively local existence as a commercial media dominated by foreign commercial interests, film remained outside of the purview of the Commission of Government for the better part of its first decade. When it finally appears in policy statements from 1941, its envisioned applications fall decisively at the narrower end of an interpellative scale: as a medium that should assist in the delivery of grade school and continuing education curriculums. According to the Department of Education’s *Annual Reports* from 1940 and 1941, “film, with the radio, will become one of the most important educational agencies striving to bring school and world into immediate contact (1941: 25; 1942: 28)”. As the Commission of Government initially understood it within the context of a local rehabilitation effort, film was to be was a meditative tool, not a means of rehabilitation unto itself.

And yet, in spite of this very specialized function the Commission had laid out for film in local contexts, between 1937 and 1940, it engaged the American outdoorsman, author and filmmaker, Lee Wulff (1905-1991) to create eight short tourism films for
foreign markets\textsuperscript{19}. Profiling Newfoundland’s abundant hunting and fishing resources, these films would be the first ever produced by the Commission of Government. At first glance, there is nothing strange about this. It is, after all, common practice for a state to deploy media towards a variety of discursive ends. But something lingers in this act; it only comes into clear view when we consider James Overton’s critique of Newfoundland’s representational practices in the discourse of tourism. In hiring Lee Wulff to make these films, the Commission had engaged a subject with uncommon paratextuality. By 1937 he was already internationally renowned as a master outdoorsman. Twice he had broken world records in fishing for blue fin tuna and was the first publically celebrated sport hunter to kill both a stag caribou and a bull moose with a bow and arrow (Wade N. pag.). Wulff’s accomplishments provided a legitimacy to his films that goes well beyond that of the \textit{auteur}. Here was someone otherwise expertly engaged with the practices he was representing, a configuration that would, accordingly, implicate the locations of those practices as being ideal for the purposes of that practice. For non-local audiences, Newfoundland was represented as thoroughly undomesticated space, a promotional trend that, as Overton contends, is complicit in the modern invention of an imagined Newfoundland national identity (17). On the one hand then, the Commission had developed a local policy for film exhibition that would situate the media exclusively within the realm of the educational ISA. Drawing upon non-local productions that it believed would bring the school and world into immediate contact, film exhibition was intended for supplementary and mediative purposes. On the other hand, the Commission had, in its film production, sought to represent Newfoundland as precisely the underdeveloped backwater that it had been tasked with rehabilitating, a cast that had

\textsuperscript{19} A complete filmography of Wulff’s output can be found in Appendix 3.2.
specific value within the discourse of tourism and even greater value under the direction of Lee Wulff. Film, it seems, was a tool for two very different construction projects.

Question two: what conditions ultimately facilitated the development of a local, non-governmental filmmaking practice?

Government-sponsored film production in Newfoundland commenced in 1937 or 1938. But with the exception of a range of work that more accurately belongs to a home-movie tradition, the production of local, non-governmental films for local, non-governmental audiences would not begin in earnest until 1968 with the formation of the Memorial University of Newfoundland Extension Service Film Unit, and find singular footing in 1975 with the establishment of the Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers Co-Operative (NIFCO): both organizations arose out of a larger process of social restructuring attendant with Canadian Confederation in 1949. A response to this question must needs account for that process of social restructuring as facilitated by the rapid introduction of an entirely new political society, the passage from British protectorate to Canadian province.

After sixteen years of rule, the Commission of Government had done little to alter either the social organization or modes of production within Newfoundland and Labrador. While the advent of World War II and the establishment of American military bases at St. John’s, Argentia, Stephenville and Goose Bay had done much to restore the local economy, this restoration was entirely contingent upon the presence of a foreign military industry, and as became evident after the closure of the first three of these bases and the downsizing of the fourth, was entirely non-sustainable. Moreover, local integration into a cash-based economy was, by and large, hybridized. Rather than relying
exclusively upon wages to support themselves, many Newfoundlanders continued subsistence and Truck practices. Wages, when they were earned, facilitated the perpetuation of these other modes of production. The Commission of Government had certainly done its part in introducing Newfoundland and Labrador to capitalism as a mode of production; it was simply unable to convince either region to actually adopt it.

But if the Commission had, whether intentionally or not, facilitated the perpetuation of a hybrid form of capitalism-Truck/subsistence (the initial phase of this emerging capitalist democracy), Canadian Confederation would ensure that both Newfoundland and Labrador actively, and abruptly, began to both adopt and integrate into its capitalist mode of production (the second, and still active phase of its emerging capitalist democracy). This transition could only have been abrupt. Facilitating this operation in the absence of democracy, the Commission of Government was, by virtue of its structure, unable to demonstrate any particular and immediate connection between civic life and mode(s) of production in its larger rehabilitative project. This, of course, is not to say that the Commission did not attempt to emphasize this connection more generally, but in suspending democracy – the rehearsal of self-representation – the Commission’s demonstration of this connection remained entirely abstract and immaterial. Upon joining the Canadian Confederation in 1949, then, neither Newfoundland nor Labrador was effectively prepared for the introduction of a developed political apparatus and political society that had already successfully integrated itself into

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20 This was less the case in Labrador. As a purpose-built base and community Goose Bay and Happy Valley required a greater number of Labradorians move a greater distance for the purposes of engaging in wage labour, in many cases facilitating a total break with any kind of subsistence production.
a capitalist mode of production, a political apparatus that, at the time, understood progress as paramount and modernization as its primary mode of execution\textsuperscript{21}.

Dispersed, as was necessitated by traditional modes of production, the first major operation of the newly installed political apparatus was to centralize the populations of Newfoundland and Labrador: to bring them into appropriate physical contexts for the purposes of subjecting them to state-sponsored modernization initiatives\textsuperscript{22}. During the Centralization (1954-1965) and Resettlement Programs (1965-1975) (both are now colloquially summarily referred to as Resettlement), approximately 27,500 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians were relocated from their homes (20% of the population of the province in 1975)\textsuperscript{23} and 300 communities in both regions abandoned outright (Bursey N. pag.). As state-conceived and state-sponsored initiatives, local populations had little to no ability to influence or mediate the primary operation of either initiative: to remove Newfoundlanders and Labradorians from otherwise physically inaccessible or what were deemed to be undevelopable communities and states of subsistence labour to communities that were either currently or slated to be fully integrated into the practice of capitalism through the establishment of new industries and the modernization of older ones (i.e. the fishery). Resettlement was democratic inasmuch as a community was unable to relocate unless it had reached a consensus. But other than indicating its willingness to do so, the community had no ability to affect the

\textsuperscript{21} Refer, again, to Crocker here for an account of what he refers to as a process “colonial modernization” in Newfoundland and Labrador.

\textsuperscript{22} In The Art of Not Being Governed, James C. Scott has argued that in the formation of Zomia, centralization – that is, the integration of a population within a state’s infrastructure – is a necessary precondition for a state’s ability to exercise control over its population. Centralization authorizes the state’s ability to interpellate its citizens as subjects.

\textsuperscript{23} This figure is based on Statistics Canada’s 1975 population estimate for Newfoundland and Labrador of 556,496 people.
particularities of the operation itself: a precondition necessitated by both the introduction of the Canadian political apparatus and the more general lack of rehearsal of self-representation.

It is difficult to overstate the impact of Resettlement on Newfoundland and Labrador society/ies. Much more than facilitating the rapid abandonment of traditional modes of production and the introduction of what were comparatively modern services and amenities, Resettlement necessitated concentrations of population in new civic spaces. It brought a greater number of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians into immediate physical proximity with each other, allowing them to witness, experience, negotiate and above all, actively produce a shared culture. Culture, as I am admitting it for the purposes of this analysis, is a representative medium that arose as a response to a range of other organizational structures and practices embedded within particular social, political, historical and economic conditions. Prior to the advent of Resettlement, local cultures, such as they may be said to have existed in the absence of other organizational structures (excepting, as we have already established, the religious, family and educational ISAs), do not bear the earmarks of what I am admitting to be culture. Rather, they were, more accurately, forms of social practice informed in equal measure by the relations of production and their reproduction, folk customs imported by the colonizing population (song, story, dance, etc.), as well as the existing ISAs. As much as it relied

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24 Due to the critical and material baggage of the concept of “culture,” I am approaching it obliquely. My intention is to reveal its component features through a consideration of the material at hand, to come to a particular understanding of culture as it operates in this specific context. For the time being, it will suffice to acknowledge culture as a response, or, as Raymond Williams suggests, two general responses: “first, the recognition of the practical separation of certain moral and intellectual activities from the driven impetus of a new kind of society; second, the emphasis of these activities, as a court of human appeal, to be set over the processes of practical social judgment and yet to offer itself as a mitigating and rallying alternative” (1982: 17). It is worth noting that, for Williams, one of the primary structures to which culture is responding is democracy.
upon a range of local social practices, actual cultural production in Newfoundland and Labrador – that is, the establishment of local culture as a representative medium in response to a range of new social, political and economic organizational practices – would require the mediating and structuring influences of the communities receiving those displaced by Resettlement, of communities that, by virtue of their selection as appropriate sites for modernization and hence relocation, were already functioning as locations for an emerging middle class. Local culture’s function as a response is predicated upon a very basic act of recognition. In this instance, it is the recognition that there exists a particular set of practices that are rooted in social, political and economic structures other than those that are currently being rehearsed. It is a response that, while certainly a product of this historical moment, is also perpetually looking backward for its substance, an operation that would only serve to further entrench culture’s function as response once both the new and modernized traditional modes of economic production categorically failed.

On the one hand then, local culture, as it is operating in this specific context, is responsible for quite effectively publicizing the decline of rural Newfoundland and Labrador, of articulating its problems along social and economic lines and demonstrating the importance of its revival. It is responding to its own substance; that is, it is actively recognizing that the range of social practices upon which it is predicated, as well as the particular modes of organization from which these practices arise, are in a general state of decay. As the basic substance of culture these social practices must necessarily be revived and preserved as they are precisely what authorizes culture’s ability to function as a representative medium: what might be characterized as the historical assertion of local
culture. Containing the vast majority of the province’s population, and accordingly, the vast majority of the population affected by Resettlement, this process of articulation and recognition first occurred in Newfoundland, resulting in the establishment of range of non-governmental (and, in time, governmental) initiatives tasked with supporting the survival of rural Newfoundland. For the purposes of this discussion, the most significant, yet least analysed of these initiatives, is the Extension Service of Memorial University of Newfoundland, the only of these initiatives to extensively use film in the delivery of its programs. Established in 1959, the mandate for Extension Service was to simultaneously provide continuing education and facilitate what it referred to as community development through the placement of community development workers in rural communities throughout the province. Upon partnering with the National Film Board of Canada in 1967 to produce the *Newfoundland Project* (a series of 27 films that are now more often referred to by way of their methodology, the Fogo Process), film production would become a primary mode for the realization of its mandate by way of Extension Service’s new Film Unit. As we shall come to see, this would have specific implications for the mobilization and manufacture of local culture in Labrador.

On the other hand, though, as much as local culture worked toward ensuring the preservation of its constitutive materials, both the locations of its production and the movements of population that facilitated its production ensured that, as they arose, the particular forms of cultural production were organized along according to the logic of capital: that they diversify themselves along the lines of art-products. The proliferation of commercial art endeavours in music, theatre, visual art, poetry and prose in Newfoundland would reach its apotheosis a generation after Confederation as a range of
artists working with these constitutive materials established national and international reputations, a development that led Sandra Gwyn to her renowned, if not problematic characterization of the epoch as the Newfoundland Renaissance. That film was not among these initial art-products is not surprising. Requiring a concentration of both persons with specialized technical knowledge and significant financial resources, film production at the local level was necessarily contingent upon the maturation of the new forms of social organization and economic production. And while those artistic practices described by Gwyn in 1976 had been in a state of development since the early 1960s, local film production became a local concern in 1975 with the establishment of the Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers Cooperative (NIFCO). Relying, in its initial years, upon support from the National Film Board of Canada, the Film Unit of the Memorial University of Newfoundland Extension Service and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, NIFCO began its existence as a facilitative organization, horizontally integrated into a local film community. Even now, the Co-op “works with other artists and arts groups and institutions to encourage the development of indigenous cultural expression” and “co-operates with other groups and institutions to encourage the development of film as an art and a cultural industry in Newfoundland and Labrador” (“Home”). NIFCO embodies the contradictory processes that led to the manufacture of a local culture in Newfoundland. It seeks to assist in the development of local cultural expression yet it could not exist in the absence of those processes that brought the constitutive material of culture in the first place.

25 As we have seen above, this word also appears in the Newfoundland and Labrador Film Development Corporation’s mandate. It is worth noting that there is a general tendency to use this word in Newfoundland specifically when referring to its European settlers, a tendency that is neither mirrored in Labrador nor in Canada where it is actively discouraged.
The production of culture – again, its production as a representative medium in response to a range of other organizational structures and practices – and the unique quality of its production in this particular context not only serves as one of the fundamental objects of this study, it simultaneously serves to structure it. Divided into two larger components – Newfoundland and Labrador – the historical narrative of each component is further divided according to filmmaking practice in local culture and filmmaking practice in what I am referring to as institutional culture, a representative medium whose formation was a superstructural response to the economic and political crises that commenced in 1933. Its primary objective was political, economic and, ultimately social rehabilitation; its primary method was to interpellate the population as developing yet profoundly unable. Institutional culture refers to the sum total of the organized response towards the Amulree Report’s central injunction; it is reification of this injunction as representative policy.

Question three: how did both government and non-government-sponsored locally produced film come to assist in the reproduction of a particular ideology of progress in Labrador?

Contingent as it was upon the maturation of new forms of social organization and economic production attendant with Resettlement, all film production in Newfoundland and Labrador, whether it be government or non-government-sponsored, inevitably functions as a rehearsal of a more general ideology of progress.\textsuperscript{26} The particular character

\textsuperscript{26} Granting both its general imprecision and complexity, “progress” serves as the appropriate word here as it, more than its related terms modernity and development, is the word most frequently used by the newly established Provincial Government to describe the initiatives attendant with Resettlement, a tendency best exemplified in the Provincial Government’s series of propagandistic films Newfoundland Progress Reports. The \textit{Oxford English Dictionary} defines progress as “1 forward or onward movement towards a destination. 2 development towards a better, more complete, or more modern condition”. See also Raymond Williams’ consideration of “progressive” in \textit{Keywords}. 
of this ideology is entirely determined by the operations of the cultural groups engaged in its production. If both institutional and local cultures are meant to function as responses, progress, in its more general sense, is certainly the desired outcome of such responses. Yet, in spite of their functional opposition to one another, the ideologies of progress realized by both cultural formations converge in the practice of filmmaking in Labrador. It is an operation facilitated by an organization that would, by virtue of its structure, serve to assist both cultural formations: the Extension Service of Memorial University of Newfoundland, and not, it should be noted, its Film Unit more specifically. In developing a response to this question, then, we must proceed from a consideration of Extension Service’s operations in Labrador and the manner in which they both engaged with and mobilized groups throughout the region. For the Extension Service, film production was a means to affect progress – it was not necessarily an end in itself – a tendency that would bring much to bear upon the aesthetic lineage of film production in Labrador as well as the ideology it assisted in reproducing more generally.

That Extension Service would come to serve such a catalyzing function in Labrador more generally owes much to the relative indifference exhibited towards the region by both the Commission of Government and the Provincial Government. Conceiving of Labrador as a storehouse of resources to be exploited by the people of Newfoundland, the Commission initiated a tendency that would remain constant through the formation of an institutional culture and up until the present day. Progress, as it was to be realized in Labrador, was primarily for the benefit of Newfoundlanders. The degree to which the Commission’s various initiatives would affect Labradorians was limited by this primary function. Without the congealing influence of Resettlement and its attendant
modernization initiatives, the formation of cultural groups in Labrador was an entirely localized phenomenon, occurring generally along ethnic (Innu, Inuit, metis) and sub-regional lines (North Coast, Central, South Coast, Straits). As much as these cultural groups arose in response to an oppressive institutional culture, their ability to respond was, at the outset, circumscribed by the locations of their formation. Unlike Newfoundland, these locations were decisively non-urban and the modes of production within them were decisively non-capitalist. The various practices of these local cultural formations were thus incommensurate with the practices of an institutional culture that, while constitutive of these local cultures, sought to displace them through its efforts to affect progress. With its specific emphasis on community development, the Extension Service, an organization rooted in the formation of local culture in Newfoundland, was uniquely situated to assist in the development of local cultural groups throughout Labrador and would bring them into more a more focussed dialogue with institutional culture by way of a particular emphasis on new communications technologies.

Certainly, by the time the Extension Service dispatched community development workers to Nain and Cartwright in 1967, the organization was already beginning to understand the operations of its Film Unit as being instrumental to the more general delivery of its programs. If the Newfoundland Project had demonstrated the effectiveness of communications technologies in enabling the residents of a group of communities that were slated to be resettled to re-approach their modes of production as well as the attendant civic political apparatus, then Labrador, a region wherein most communities were still practicing pre-capitalist modes of production and where none of the local
modernization initiatives were to benefit a local population\textsuperscript{27}, would certainly stand to benefit from the introduction of similar technologies. Thus, in 1968, Tony Williamson (1935-2004), the community development worker stationed at Cartwright, began the groundwork for a series of films examining a range of social issues in ten communities on Labrador’s South Coast: the first films to be produced in Labrador about local subjects. Beginning by screening the 27 films of the \textit{Newfoundland Project} in the designated Labrador communities, Williamson, with the assistance of Extension Service’s Film Unit, set upon producing a series of 13 films, now collectively referred to as \textit{Labrador Film Project 1969}. As the first sub-regionally mobilizing initiative in Labrador – these films focussed upon the South Coast specifically – \textit{Labrador Film Project 1969} had much the same effect as the Newfoundland Project in that they functioned as a catalyst for a specific form of progress. Residents from the region would, via film, publicly identify a range of perceived impediments to progress and posit possible solutions to these impediments. The production of media would itself function as a synecdoche for the production a cultural (institutional v. local) discourse. The tendency towards this manner of media production more generally would remain a consistent feature of Extension Service’s operations in Labrador, a tendency that would continue through the removal of Extension Service from the region and the formal establishment of the Labrador Institute of Northern Studies (now the Labrador Institute of Memorial University) with its own, albeit significantly smaller, media-producing unit.

\textsuperscript{27} During their establishment, the three sites of modernization in Labrador – Labrador City, Churchill Falls, and Goose Bay – were closed communities. Respectively, only people the employ of the Iron Ore Company of Canada, the Churchill Falls (Labrador) Corporation or the Canadian Armed Forces, respectively, were allowed to live in these communities. This remains the case with Churchill Falls. When Inuit from Nutak and Hebron (the only two communities to be resettled in Labrador under either Resettlement scheme) they were evacuated to purpose built ghettos in communities that were not designated growth centres as evacuees were on the Island.
For the local cultures of Labrador, film production was not initially a discrete artistic practice; it was a mode of communication that more accurately belonged to a cluster of communicative practices that were introduced to many parts of the region by an organization whose agenda was the facilitation of community development, or, more specifically, of community progress as necessitated by the new social, political and economic organizational practices. Widely introduced to the region by the Extension Service of Memorial University of Newfoundland and the Labrador Institute of Northern Studies, both organizations perpetuated the tendency to approach the production of film as the production of this specific form discourse, a tendency that would ensure localized reproductions of this particular ideology.

Paths taken, ignored, and made indirect

As the first comprehensive study of film in Newfoundland and Labrador, writing was complicated as much by the process of demarcating a set of representative film texts as it was the range of theory that this set of texts incriminated. The influence of my own lines of inquiry notwithstanding, I understand the theoretical apparatus that structures this work to be necessarily idiosyncratic: it is an apparatus that remains as much in a state of becoming as the field of inquiry itself. Some qualifications are needed.

First, this study implicates film in a complex process of spatial production that is only obliquely developed. It is a decision that is entirely intentional. Given the epistemological concerns of contemporary social geography, a more direct focus on the subject of spatial production would relegate the practice of film production to a constituent element of a project that would necessarily need to address a range of material
representational customs. Here, I am concerned with spatial production to the degree that it might be reasonably said to be a product of film policy and practice; that is, as one tool amongst a range used to fashion post-Confederation Newfoundland and Labrador as a social, political and economic entity. Part of my insistence for such an instrumental reading owes, of course, to the dearth of research on the contemporary spatial production of the province. Excepting Robert Mellin’s *Newfoundland Modern*, a survey of architectural trends on the Island from 1949 and James Overton’s *Making a World of Difference*, which approaches the subject of contemporary cultural formation on the Island by way of the discourse of tourism, to date there are no other authors that approach spatial production in Newfoundland as process. There are no studies that address the issue of spatial production in Labrador whatsoever. A considerable amount of research remains to be conducted. This, likewise, has implications for my account of the Extension Service of Memorial University of Newfoundland within this study, an organization that can be said to have had as much impact upon organizational practices imbricated within the process of contemporary spatial production. The disarray of extant qualitative data either regarding or produced by the organization and the absence of secondary literature on their operations necessitates that any comments on their function within these larger processes are restricted. It likewise makes for restricted language at times, particularly in my account of the function of the organization within Lloyd and Thomas’ model of culture and the state in chapter two. But as much as my insistence upon such an instrumental approach has been informed by issues of absence, it is equally as informed by the fact that here the varied connections between film and space is nascent. The issue
of spatial construction is a by-product of policy and it is the latter that serves as one of the direct objects of this study.

Second, and closely related to the issue of spatial production, is the issue of representative function that is an ongoing concern throughout this work. It is an idea for which I am indebted to Michael Taussig, however, I fully concede it is an idea that stems from an aberrant reading of *Mimesis and Alterity*. His account of the ontological peculiarities of the mimetic faculty within the colonizer/colonized binary ultimately proved less important than what such an approach revealed about the *functions* of mimesis within these contexts. Reading *Mimesis and Alterity* for function as opposed to process, it occurred to me that both film practice and the policy that informed its creation were material rehearsals of fractured ideas of representation, rendered as much by the suspension of democracy in 1933. My idea here was less to analyze these phenomena within the context of a colonizer/colonized framework as much as it was to situate them within an ontological path beginning with Direct Rule and ending with Federal Governance. I remain unconvinced that it is a path that correlates to a progression from colonizer to colonized, however, I do concede that it is a path that encompasses similar configurations of those agencies. I acknowledge my debt to post-colonialism even if it is a discourse I am attempting to elide.

Thirdly, and what problematizes the idea of space and its production even further in this context, is that these ideas of representation were remarkably non-uniform throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. The effects of the suspension of democracy were less immediate as they were structural: the full weight of that event would not be felt by Newfoundland and Labrador’s various sovereignties until after the federally
imposed moratorium on the Northern Cod fishery in 1992. There is, accordingly, a correlation between the process of spatial production and construction of an efficacious hegemony. These projects are mutually constitutive. For this reason, the production of this hegemony, like the production of space, serves as an indirect object of this study. It is also for this reason that I have opted to anchor this study in a working model of class-rooted ideologies and consider their development by way of what I believe to be broad-based representational positions: institutional culture and local culture. As there are no precedents for this manner of analysis outside of an Island-specific tradition of collective performance creation, my attempt to translate that tradition into some manner of theoretical model remains provisional. Given the status of scholarship, it seems necessary to me to first identify ways in which we can begin to discuss how ideology has historically been produced in Newfoundland and Labrador before addressing the issue of hegemony directly. It remains to be seen how hegemony might be discussed without evoking a discourse of Anglo-Canadian regionalism.

Inevitably, this makes for a theoretical apparatus that is in equal parts emerging, fastidious and anachronistic. It is a modest materialism, for which I nevertheless hope that, with further research into this under-served area of study, there can be broader applicability.

Limitations

Finally it is necessary to admit the limitations of this study; that is, acknowledge both those objects of analysis that are, for one reason or another, excluded from my analysis, and the provisional quality of some of those objects that I am admitting. For as
much as it is shaped by my formative lines of inquiry and the methodological process that proceeds from them, this study is equally determined by what remains unavailable, a more general condition that circumscribes any examination of film in Newfoundland and Labrador

It will come as no surprise that there is a dearth of secondary critical sources on the subject of Newfoundland and Labrador film. If it may indeed be said to be a field of study, it is a little more than thirty years old. The first piece of writing on any aspect of film in Newfoundland and Labrador was authored by Michael Taft of Memorial University of Newfoundland’s Department of Folklore. His 1976 article “The Itinerant Movie-Man and his Impact on the Folk Culture of the Outports of Newfoundland,” provides a cursory overview of itinerant movie-man practices in outport Newfoundland, placing less emphasis on the particularities of how their practices came affect local folk culture. Research for the article was based on a series of interviews Taft and colleague Amanda Dargan conducted with seven residents from a representative selection of outports. Available through the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive, these interviews provide a much more comprehensive depiction of the various functions of the itinerant movie-man (MUNFLA accession number 74-221).

The first attempt at providing a comprehensive survey of film production in the province was sponsored by the Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers Co-Operative. Published in 1981, Agnes Norman, Gervase Gallant, and Derek Norman’s *Film in

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This condition of unavailability ultimately led me to pursue this object of study as a practical matter rather than a purely theoretical one. Engaged as a film archivist-producer at the Labrador Institute of Memorial University at Happy Valley-Goose Bay between January 2010 and July 2011, my work introduced me to a range of primary and secondary sources that were otherwise unaccounted for and entirely inaccessible. For a detailed account of my work there, see “The Tyranny of Absence: One Account of Archival Practice at the Fringe of the State”.

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Newfoundland and Labrador 1904-1980 provides a brief summary of the various filmmakers and film production companies active throughout the province during this seventy-four year period. Placing, for reasons that are otherwise obvious, a particular emphasis upon Newfoundland, the brevity of the monograph prevents it from functioning much more than a reference guide; however, in this regard, their text provides an excellent overview of the gaps in knowledge. At the time of this writing, Derek Norman is in the process of revising and expanding the original monograph.

More recently, Noreen Golfman has been engaged in the writing of historical surveys of Newfoundland film. Her 2002 article, “Imagining Region: A Survey of Newfoundland Film,” published in Jerry White’s edited collection, North of Everything: English-Canadian Cinema Since 1980, provides a reasonably detailed account of film production in the province between 1980 and 2000. Her article in Darrell Varga’s edited collection Rain/Drizzle/Fog: Film and Television in Atlantic Canada from 2008, “Documenting the Seal Fishery: A Short History of Newfoundland Film,” provides a cursive summary of films produced in Newfoundland that specifically address the seal hunt. What is significant about Golfman’s work is that it, along with Derek Norman’s approaches its object as a discrete field of study – via the category of Newfoundland and Labrador film – as opposed to other organizational procedures. As a board member of the Newfoundland and Labrador Film Development Corporation and as chair of the St. John’s International Women’s Film Festival, Golfman is certainly vested in the establishment of a discrete film and video industry in the province, a disposition that is mirrored by her critical approach. Golfman has also authored a range of shorter articles
on various aspects of film production in the province for the magazine *Newfoundland Quarterly*.

By far, the greatest volume of literature on the subject of Newfoundland and Labrador film is that body of writing devoted to the *Newfoundland Project* and its attendant Fogo Process. That the *Newfoundland Project* has been given such singular critical attention arises from its perceived success at achieving its extra-filmic objectives: facilitating the negotiation and reconfiguration of local modes of production and the attendant civic political apparatus. For scholars of Canadian film history, this set of films is singular within the work of the National Film Board of Canada and its Challenge for Change/Société Nouvelle initiative. It is from this perspective that Jerry White has written on the subject of Fogo in “Guys with Brylcreem Discussing Fish Processing: Form, Community, and Politics in the NFB’s Newfoundland Project,” part of Darrell Varga’s *Rain/Drizzle/Fog*, in “The Winds of Fogo,” an essay in White’s edited collection *The Cinema of Canada* from 2006, and in two chapters of White’s 2011 monograph *The Radio Eye: Cinema in the North Atlantic, 1958-1988*. For scholars of participatory video, the *Newfoundland Project* serves as a master text that is the basis for Susan Newhook’s 2008 M.A. thesis, “The Grandchildren of Fogo: The Fogo Island Films and the Cultural Revolution in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1967-1977” as well as her 2009 article for *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies*, “The Godfathers of Fogo: Donald Snowden, Fred Earle and the Roots of the Fogo Island Films, 1964-1967” and her 2010 article for *Acadiensis*, “Six Degrees of Film, Social, and Cultural History: The Fogo Island Film Project of 1967 and the “Newfoundland Renaissance.” For sociologists such as Stephen Crocker, in his 2008 article “Filmmaking and the Politics of Remoteness: The Genesis of
the Fogo Process on Fogo Island, Newfoundland,” the Newfoundland Project serves as a unique instance of the politicization of media wherein one of the tools of colonial modernization is used to combat the process itself. This, of course says nothing of its wider popularity within the discipline of development studies, or it account from within the Extension Service of Memorial University²⁹. Yet, in spite of this popularity, virtually no attention has been paid to either the implementation of the Fogo Process in Labrador, or, even more peculiarly, of its extensive reapplication by Extension Services on Fogo Island in 1988, issues which I shall address here in detail. I have included bibliography of un-consulted secondary sources in Appendix 2.

It is also necessary to emphasize the relative absence of primary textual (that is, non-filmic) sources, particularly those generated by the Commission of Government and the Smallwood Administration during the initial years of Provincial Government. The Legislative Library of the Newfoundland and Labrador House of Assembly – the official archive of the House of Assembly – contains no government-generated documents regarding the production of film. Those sources I have been able to identify were located at either the Centre for Newfoundland Studies at the Memorial University of Newfoundland and the Provincial Resource Library (A.C. Hunter Library) at St. John’s. These documents are generally descriptive or taxonomic in nature. No repository contains any material outlining exhibition schemes or documents containing evidence of exhibition more generally. Not only do these limitations suggest the relevancy of a materialist approach towards those materials that are available, it also necessitates that,

²⁹ See, in particular, Memorial University of Newfoundland Extension Service’s promotional pamphlets, Fogo Process in Communication: A Reflection on the Use of Film and Video-Tape in Community Development, Fogo Process in Communication: A Reflection on the Use of Film as an Inter-Community Communication and Sandra Gwynn’s Cinema As Catalyst: Film, Video-Tape and Social Change. All are available via the Centre for Newfoundland Studies at Memorial University of Newfoundland.
for the purposes of this analysis, I exclude a consideration of audiences and exhibition conditions.

Lastly, it is necessary acknowledge the precarious nature of what I am admitting as primary filmic sources. At the time of this writing, there are five potential organizations from which we are able to draw upon primary material: (1) the Film and Video Collection of the Labrador Institute of Memorial University, a repository for films produced in Labrador with a particularly high volume of films produced by the Extension Service of Memorial University of Newfoundland; (2) the film collection at the Provincial Resource Library, containing mostly National Film Board of Canada productions on the province; (3) the Digital Archives Initiative of Memorial University of Newfoundland, which contains the greatest number of Extension Service and other Memorial University produced items; (4) the Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers Co-Operative at St. John’s, which does not have a publicly accessible archive; and (5) The Rooms (the Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador), the single largest repository of film in the province whose collection has been officially closed to the public since 2005. Of these five organizations, my inability to widely access the Rooms’ collection has had a significant impact on this study. They are the only known repository for films by Lee Wulff, Atlantic Films (a provincially sponsored production house under the Smallwood Administration), Greenpark Productions (hired by the Commission of Government in its final years to create two films), early NIFCO productions, and an unknown number of films produced in the Dominion of Newfoundland (pre-1933). As I have only been able to access representative titles by these individuals and production companies, my commentary on these texts and their location within my analysis is
precisely nuanced, adjusting for the fact that I am unable to view them within a wider ideological or aesthetic context. In attempting to provide a longer detailed historical account of film production in Newfoundland and Labrador than has previously been written, my analysis must necessarily both work around and account for these gaps, a technique that materialism seems best positioned to offer.
Part One: Newfoundland

Chapter One

Institutional Culture: Film Production in Newfoundland, 1933-1967

In my opinion, the most reasonable and concrete thing that can be said about the ethical State, the cultural State, is this: every State is ethical in as much as one of its important functions is to raise the great mass of the population to a particular cultural and moral level, a level (or type) which corresponds to the needs of the productive forces of development, and hence to the interests of the ruling class.

– Antonio Gramsci, “The State”

For fifteen years […], six commissioners, taking their orders directly from a distant, often indifferent and tightfisted Whitehall, administered the country’s affairs down to the last detail. Neither answerable to the people nor inclined to consult them, they carried out caretaker measures aimed primarily at maintaining efficiency and economy. As nothing but interim managers and career civil servants, they came and went and changed about, seeking only order and solvency, without being required to concern themselves with the ultimate aims and fate of Newfoundland. Beyond being simply aloof to local aspirations and comment, some were even arrogantly and vocally sceptical of the validity or relevance of Newfoundland public opinion and simply went their own way. They severally served their time and passed on to other assignments.

– F.L. Jackson, Newfoundland in Canada: A People in Search of a Polity

Though it remained a Dominion in name, under the Commission of Government, Newfoundland was by no means an ethical state. Gramsci’s deceptively simple formulation implicates citizenship in the state as a process of dialectical forces. On the one hand the state is responsible for ensuring its citizens are culturally and morally educated in a manner corresponding to the productive forces; on the other hand, the individual citizen possesses some modicum of agency and is able to, in some manner, however prescribed, participate in the ongoing process of acculturation. As heavy handed and subjective as it is, Jackson’s description of the Commission and its operations suggest precisely the degree to which either of those forces could be mobilized during its tenure. No longer was there a direct relationship between base and superstructure: the arrest of the state was total. To put it another way, under the Commission of Government, the Dominion of Newfoundland existed as an unethical state.
But what made this condition all the more difficult to reconcile is that it was, in a fashion, self-implemented. Newfoundland’s elected representative had, after all, voted to dissolve parliament and revert back to the control of the Dominions Office. What in other contexts could be described as an act of colonialism is here something else, made distinct by the fact the surrender of Direct Rule was voluntary. Jackson, with his characteristic bombast, goes on to reveal something about the character of this unethical state: “[t]he alleged barbarity of Newfoundland society and the incapacity of the people for self-government tended to become accepted as unquestioned premises by the incoming commissioners who fell somewhat into the role of imperial governors given the task of imposing some semblance of British civility upon a race of colonial savages” (1984: 16). What is important in his formulation is not the language itself but rather the construction. As a result of the self-directed decision to suspend Direct Rule, the recognition of barbarity and incapacity would serve as the prompt for the formation of a governmental disposition. In the absence of those dialectical forces that shape the ethical state, it is this tendency of recognition that gives the state its character.

This formation is important for two reasons. First, it ensured that policy creation and implementation was aleatoric. With no clear mandate other than to provide the population with a rest from representative politics, governmental disposition alone would guide policy. It is a tendency all but set out by the *Amulree Report*:

In view of these witnesses, the desideratum was not merely that the country should be freed for the time being from the prospect of a general election, and from the demoralising influences of party politics, but that, in order that people might be trained anew to a spirit of self-reliance and independence, the existing
Legislative machine should be temporarily suspended and the Government of the country placed for a period of years in the hands of a “Commission”. Such a “Commission” would be presided over by His Excellency the Governor, and would be able to remodel the administration and to shape its policy without regard to the political considerations which no elected Government could afford to ignore. (196)

The author’s use of the double negative in the final clause reveals much. Policy creation and implementation was to be left to the political common sense of the governors who were, in theory, endowed with governmental acumen. This brief statement is, in effect, the central policy of the Commission.

Second, the establishment of the unethical state resulted in what I have already referred to as an institutional culture: a representative medium whose formation was a superstructural response to this more general crisis of representation. Though it certainly began with the Commission of Government, institutional culture was by no means restricted to it. Its affects can be detected across a range of representative bodies active through the process of Canadian Confederation and up until the end of the moment of acute nonsynchronicity brought upon by Smallwood’s Resettlement and modernization initiatives. That it was not restricted to the Commission owes much to the persistence, proliferation and ultimately reification of the Commission’s more general interpretive tendency in a number of Newfoundland and Canadian institutional contexts. Up until the end of Smallwood’s tenure, the institutional narrative of Newfoundland, and accordingly the governmental cum institutional interpellative tendency, was to situate it as developing yet profoundly unable.
It is within this context that film – both as an object of policy and an object of production – becomes an active concern for a number of governmentally affiliated institutions with a direct or vested interest in Newfoundland. At the outset, however, there is little discernable connection between either. For its part, film policy only seems to have been the concern of the educational ISA; its sole task was to aid the Commission’s rehabilitative project. Film production, meanwhile, was purposed towards two disparate ends: first, to position Newfoundland as a hinterland in need of rehabilitation, and second, to represent Newfoundland’s rehabilitation project to local and, in heavily mediated ways, non-local audiences. Given the haphazard relationship between policy and production here as well as the complexity of their respective developments, I am approaching them individually in the hope that this procedure will reveal something of the randomness of this institutional culture.

Policy: film as rehabilitative medium

As exhaustive as he is, the author of the Amulree Report makes very few specific remarks on the subject of education in Newfoundland. It is “unnecessary for us to discuss the subject in detail in this report,” he suggests by way of conclusion, “since arrangements have already been made by the Government for an educationalist of repute and experience to visit Newfoundland and advise upon the present training given in the schools” (206). It remains unknown if such an educationalist made it or not. The imminent arrival of the unnamed specialist did not, however, prevent the author from implicating the education system in the formation of such overreaching incapacity. “Shrewd and suspicious in their business dealings,” he opines,
the people exhibit a child-like simplicity when confronted with matters outside their own immediate horizon. This simplicity political candidates have not been slow to exploit. There is no system of compulsory education, but the majority have received an elementary education in the schools, provided, with the aid of a State subsidy, by the various Churches. Illiteracy, which at the beginning of the century was a serious menace, has now been reduced to small proportions. Notwithstanding these efforts by the Churches, the people have remained unprogressive. (77-8)

So ingrained was this incapacity that not even a modestly developed system of education could combat it. Despite the best efforts of the church and the educational ISA, it seems that space itself had conspired to undermine the enlightening effects of education. For the population, materiality (“their own immediate horizon”) had obfuscated their relationship to the realm of organized representation both in the form of education (of which little sense could apparently be made) and politics (which, accordingly, could only be an exploitative forum). It is, without doubt, a bizarre conception, but it is one that proceeds logically out of the recognition of Jackson’s so-called barbarity. Here, after all, was a British Dominion that had faltered. Certainly there was some extraordinary reason for the formation of such conditions. Space, it seems, had undermined civility. And more to the point, space had rendered the educational project ineffective. Whatever form rehabilitation was to take, it was imperative that it addressed the issue of space.

It seems that this issue of space lay at the core of the Department of Education’s first articulation of film policy in its 1941 Annual Report. Otherwise unmotivated – film is never explicitly mentioned in any of the Department’s reports until this date – its
wording is noticeably theoretical, an approach that to owes as much to the Commission’s interpellative tendency as it does to its material resources. The 1941 *Annual Report* also indicates that, at that moment, the Department of Education had but two film projectors in its possession (1941: 25). But in spite of these restrictions, its author maintains that:

The influence of the film in the field of Education will in time be very great. It will fit into a system which opens the doors of the classroom to the world of actuality outside. There will come a time when teachers will become primarily intermediaries between their pupils and the big world outside the school. When that time comes the film, with the radio, will become one of the most important educational agencies striving to bring school and world into immediate contact. (1941: 25).

To put it in the language of the author of the *Amulree Report*, here, film is conceived of as a medium that will introduce the population to matters well outside of their own immediate horizon. Its value as a media is conceived of in both practical and spatial terms: it is an organ that facilitates contact. And yet, contact, it seems, is precisely where its function ends. There is no comment on either the quality or direction of that contact. It is simply enough that film, within the context of the educational ISA, is facilitating the introduction of *other*, presumably non-barbaric space. Here, film is pressed into the service of a system that Raymond Williams would later, and along very different lines, describe as permanent education: a public pedagogy facilitated by mass communications¹ (1970: 15).

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¹ To quote Williams at greater length, what permanent education “valuably stresses is the educational force (*éducation* as distinct from *enseignement*) of our whole social and cultural experience. It is therefore concerned, not only with continuing education, of a formal or informal kind, but with what the whole environment, its institutions and relationships, actively and profoundly teaches. […] For who can doubt,
The Newfoundland Film Board

The idea that film could indeed function as part of such a program of permanent education was by no means restricted to the Department of Education. In fact, the main impetus to press film into this type of service did not come from the Commission of Government at all, but rather from a group of concerned citizens – many with governmental affiliations – who were developing similar plans to be executed by a privately administered organization. Ultimately absorbed by the Commission and reconfigured as two separate organizations, the policies of the short-lived Newfoundland Film Board are a direct outcome of the proliferation of institutional culture.

Captain Chesley William Carter first developed the idea for some manner of Newfoundland-wide educational film service. Beginning his working life as a Supervisor in the Commission of Government’s Department of Education, in 1941 Carter accepted the position of Education Officer with the Canadian Legion Educational Services, a branch of the Canadian Armed Forces charged with providing continuing education for soldiers. Working for the CLES in Newfoundland, Canada and Europe, he had come to rely heavily upon a range of educational audiovisual materials produced by Canada’s National Film Board. As James Arthur Cochrane, the first Director of the Newfoundland Film Board suggests in his brief account of the organization’s formation, Carter was so inspired by his successes with these materials that he set upon the creation of an educational film distribution service in Newfoundland (15). In 1943 Carter convened a series of meetings at St. John’s to explore the feasibility of such a service. Its attendees looking at television or newspapers, or reading the women’s magazines, that here, centrally, is teaching and teaching financed and distributed in a much larger way than is formal education?” (1970: 14).
included Dr. Albert George Hatcher, then president of Memorial University College; Israel James Samson, then Secretary of the Department of Education and Governor at Memorial University College; Derek Marshall, then owner of the St. John’s based Motion Picture Supplies company; Pastor Jesse Toope, Anglican minister and Girl Guide Commissioner; R.E. Tanner, headmaster of Bishop Feild College; and James Arthur Cochrane who was also serving as the Director of Civil Re-establishment for the Commission of Government. These personnel would serve as the inaugural board for the yet to be named service.

In spite of the board’s various affiliations with Commission of Government, at the outset this unnamed service was, for reasons altogether unclear, conceived of as a private initiative. The initial plan, according to Cochrane, was to invite schools from across the Island to become members of the service by way of a fee payment (15). There was certainly a precedent for such an arrangement: in 1926 the Newfoundland Government had, with the assistance of the Carnegie Corporation, established a travelling library system that had also required membership fees. But the maintenance of that system had also required a degree of government subsidy. And quite unlike books, which required no specialized knowledge for their use, film required both equipment and trained personnel. No doubt stemming from the realization that such a service required a range of additional supports, in 1943 the group sought assistance from the Department of Education in establishing the service. Harry Anderson Winter, the Commissioner for Home Affairs and Education favoured the service and recommended the Department of Education’s support.
Despite Winter’s recommendation, however, the Commission would withhold actual support for the service until representatives from the National Film Board of Canada had made a case for its necessity. As Frank Furey suggests in his entry on the Newfoundland Film Board in the *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland*, the decision to establish some manner of film board as a branch of the Commission of Government was only acted upon after a meeting with one W. Greene of the NFB in 1943. It was in a 1944 meeting that one Mrs. Baird had made the specific recommendation to create some manner of film board patterned upon the Canadian organization and horizontally integrated into the Departments of Education, Public Health and Welfare, and Natural Resources. It was a recommendation that came with the offer of material assistance from the NFB in the form of two projector and forty films (N. pag.). With something resembling a mandate for the Newfoundland Film Board in place, the original board voted to suspend its operations, replaced by a Commission appointed committee including Derek Marshall; Harry Winter; Dr. George Alain Frecker, Secretary for Education; Dr. Hugh Llewellyn Keenleyside, a member of the Canadian Department of External Affairs; and Cochrane, again, as Director. The task of setting up the service was designated to Derek Marshall.

There is, of course, no extant written mandate for the Newfoundland Film Board. As a component of the Commission of Government, it was equally as susceptible to its lax policy of record keeping as any other department. We can, however, begin to sketch out the broad strokes of its *practical* mandate by looking closely first at the process of its formation as a branch of government and second at the few ideas committed to paper by J.A. Cochrane concerning the character of its operations. To the former: the
Newfoundland Film Board began its existence as an educational initiative that was completely circumscribed by available resources. Not only did those resources limit its supposed primary activity – film exhibition – it completely prevented the activity of film production. This, accordingly, complicates Furey’s assertion that the Newfoundland Film Board was to be patterned on the Canadian service. With the NFB’s mandated emphasis on production, to what end was such a patterning even possible? It seems that in this context, it was in the “national interest” to exclusively distribute films meant to assist in the general project of rehabilitation. That it would be, as per J.A. Cochrane’s assertion, “horizontally integrated” with three other departments has very little practical meaning save for the fact that the departments he identifies would have had particular input on those films selected for distribution and exhibition. To again borrow the language of Canada’s *National Film Act*, it is a film policy is designed to interpret spaces other than Newfoundland to Newfoundlanagers. There is little functional difference between the Newfoundland Film Board’s policy and the Department of Education’s: film is one component of a largely undirected system of permanent education.

Writing on the formation of the Newfoundland Film Board in the *Newfoundland Government Bulletin* – one of the few organs through which the Commission of Government publicized its various activities – J.A. Cochrane provides further structure to the organization’s practical mandate. “As its general policy,” he reports, “the Board suggested the principle that its function was not to provide entertainment and amusement but rather education in the widest sense of the term, especially in the sense of cultural, economic, and health matters, and to attain this end it would co-operate with all Government Departments” (15). Here, it seems, film is directed towards the purpose of
realizing specific aspects of the permanent education initiative; or more specifically, towards the realizing the aims of government departments. To this end, he continues:

The Board recognized that the service offered to schools would differ from that provided to adults. In the schools the programmes would be correlated with the curriculum as far as possible and also provide a background of general information which would reinforce school subjects especially, but not exclusively in geography, science, nature study and health. All films to be shown in school have the approval of the Department of Education. In the programmes for adults, besides showing films of general interest, the Board would naturally assist Government policy in agriculture, health, for example in the tuberculosis campaign, co-operation and fisheries. (15)

The first half of Cochrane’s policy statement is straightforward enough though it certainly falls short of the utopian idea of film as a liminal organ laid out by the Department of Education. Film, within the context of school curriculum, is meant to be a visual aid. But it is the second half of his statement that appears puzzling: that film is meant to, in his words, “assist Government policy” as developed and implemented by a number of departments. His suggestion is built upon the supposition that these departments were indeed developing something resembling coherent policy, if they were developing policy at all. How film might be able to assist in that endeavour is unclear, pressed as it was into the rehearsal and imitation of false policy.

Undaunted by the inherent contradictions of its mandate, the Newfoundland Film Board officially commenced its operations in September 1944 with an annual operating budget of $50,000. In this first year the five projectionists that made up its staff were
charged with exhibiting film on the eastern portion of the Island only, a restriction, Cochrane suggests, made necessary by the availability of electrical power (15). The exhibition circuit was divided into five districts: (1) the southeastern shore of the Avalon Peninsula; (2) the Burin Peninsula; (3) Conception Bay North; (4) the Cape Shore (the southwestern shore of the Avalon Peninsula); (5) the northern Avalon Peninsula. To these, a sixth floating exhibition context was added: agricultural exhibitions. As one of the few actual policies the Commission had come to develop, its Land Settlement Scheme was deemed to be of particular significance, intended, as it was, to remove people from the fishing industry and establish them as self-sufficient famers\(^2\). With the purchase of two generators in 1945, the Board was able to expand its operations to westerly points on the Island but even then it was, according to Cochrane, limited to servicing those communities that were accessible by way of the Newfoundland Railway (15) (Fig. 1). In his profile of the service for the *Atlantic Guardian* in May of that same year, Ted Meaney would conclude that “[t]he majority of Newfoundlanders are totally unspoiled where movies are concerned”. But, he optimistically points out, “minds are still open to first impressions and the Film Board is making sure these impressions are constructive” (10). It would seem that in spite of the Board’s best intentions, its initial efforts, especially in rural Newfoundland, were ultimately limited.

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\(^2\) By 1944, however, the Land Settlement Scheme had proven to be a failure (Higgins N. pag. Stockwood N. pag.). Film exhibition on agricultural subjects, like the agricultural exhibitions themselves, was entirely tokenistic.
Fig. 1. Newfoundland Railway mainline and branch lines since 1883

If the difficulties attendant with space had once again worked to undermine the operations of a branch of the educational ISA, the Film Board’s practical approach to the delivery of its mandate would have equally deleterious effects. Divided into three separate services, the Board clearly favoured operating in urban environments. The first and most infrequent of its programs was to be a Rural Film Service for isolated communities maintained by four travelling projectionists. Its intention was to allow people in distantly removed outport communities the opportunity to view at least one exhibition program a year. Given the infrequency of the service and its lack of direct connection to any of the Department of Education’s initiatives, the Rural Film Service was, for all intents and purposes, ornamental. Second was a Rural Film Service Regional Concentrated to be offered in up to four medium sized centres with a number of outports
in relative proximity. Given in conjunction with the Department of Education’s Adult Education Service, materials presented in the minimum ten programs per season were selected for their specific relevance to the respective region. Accordingly, each screening was to be offered in conjunction with a discussion group. Third was an Urban Film Service: a free of charge, fixed schedule series of educational films maintained by two projectionist-facilitators. In addition to conducting the screenings, these facilitators were also responsible for generally promoting the visual education initiative, training representatives from town councils and community organizations in the use of projection equipment and assisting these personnel in developing and maintaining their own audiovisual libraries.

Of all the services it offered, only its Rural Film Service Regional seems to reflect Cochrane’s stated aims for the Board. With little or no connection to either the Department of Education curriculum or inferred departmental policy, the Rural Film Service was nothing more than a government-sanctioned version of the work already being done by independent itinerant projectionist. Likewise, the Urban Film Service, while certainly novel in its attempt to organize and aid local audiovisual education groups, contravened the government-centred distribution scheme envisioned by Cochrane. Here, the power of selection would – if the initiative were successful – lay with the local audiovisual education group, prefiguring the work of the Memorial University of Newfoundland Extension Service Community Learning Centres by some thirty years. In the fall of 1945, the Commission of Government decided to act upon the

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3 The information presented in this paragraph is drawn from Frank C. Furey’s entry on the Newfoundland Film Board in the *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland*. As one of the few accounts of the Board’s formation and operations – along with Cochrane’s article “Newfoundland Film Board” and Ted Meaney’s “Pictures for the People” – Furey’s account is certainly the most detailed but he does not list any of his sources.
Board’s organization incoherency. In the spirit of inconsistency, Humphrey T. Walwyn, the Chair of the Commission approached Harry Winter, the Commissioner for Home Affairs and Education to establish an advisory committee responsible for administering the Board composed of departmental representatives and under the directorship of the Secretary of Education. By the beginning of 1946, the Newfoundland Film Board ceased to exist as a discrete entity within the Commission of Government. Its practical mandate would become the domain of two separate services both maintained by the Department of Education: a standalone Rural Film Service, administered directly by the Secretary of Education, and a newly formed Division of Adult and Visual Education under the directorship of Chesley Carter, the original architect for the Newfoundland Film Board.

As brief as its existence was, the film exhibition policy practiced by the Newfoundland Film Board – by way of its stated objectives and practical operations – would have a lasting effect upon film policy subsequently developed by the Department of Education under both the Commission and Provincial Governments. Shaped by the non-existent policies of government departments, individual proclivities and available material resources, if there is a unifying idea within the jumble of motivations that underlay the Newfoundland Film Board’s work it is that film has an inherent value as a means to combat the condition of nonsynchronicity, that there is a certain corrective force in the spectacle of its exhibiting modernizing or modernized spaces. It is, to be certain, a hypothesis that would serve as the basis for all government-sponsored film exhibition initiatives in Newfoundland until Smallwood’s departure from politics in 1972: i.e. the end of the acute moment of nonsynchronicity.
The Division of Adult and Visual Education, the Rural Film Service and after

Both the Rural Film Service and the Division of Adult and Visual Education would directly inherit aspects of their predecessor’s mandate. The Rural Film Service remained fundamentally unchanged from the service as it was offered under the Newfoundland Film Board with the exception of its realignment under the directorship of the Secretary of Education. The Division of Adult and Visual Education, meanwhile, was essentially a combination of the Board’s Rural Film Service Regional Concentrated and the Urban Film Service under the auspices of a newly appointed Director, also working within the Department of Education. The immediate difference between these organizations and their predecessor was the clarity of their respective mandates. For the Division of Adult and Visual Education in particular, the difference is striking. “The people of Newfoundland constitute the Island’s greatest asset,” asserts the Division’s Field Workers Manual. “The primary objective of the Adult Education Service including Visual Education is, therefore, to assist in the general reconstruction of Newfoundland” (5). What had only been implied by the practical operations of the Newfoundland Film Board is, here, directly stated.

But as much as the Division of Adult and Visual Education’s mandate authorized that nascent policy first set out by the Department of Education in 1941, in its attempt to establish its place within the larger permanent education project, the Division would also lay out new directions for film within that project. Oscillating between sweeping social aspirations and specific departmental functions, the nineteen points that make up the Division’s “General” and “Specific” objectives (reproduced as Appendix 2), press film into the service of an enlightenment project (point f) intended to improve analytical
faculties (point c), individual capacity (point h), technical competency (point g), and ultimately raise Newfoundlander’s awareness of their role in the state (point b). The Division would achieve this by encouraging the development of local visual education initiatives (point i), by maintaining a centralized audiovisual library (point k), and through its own exhibitions, help Newfoundlander understand their own difficulties “by showing them how other countries solved similar problems, and what measures are being taken or may be applied in Newfoundland” (5: point d). The final point, though already policy, still commands attention as it directs the Division’s project. Enlightenment, and its operations, lay elsewhere; film was to bring that enlightenment within proximity. It is worth pointing out that as late as 1950, the Division’s Teacher’s Manual For 16mm Classroom Films catalogue would list only twelve films on Newfoundland subjects.

In practical terms, this policy made for outwardly peculiar programs that were still largely left to the discretion of the projectionist. In his 1948 profile of the service for the Atlantic Guardian, Jessie Mifflin, a Supervisor of Visual Aids in the Division of Audio and Visual Education outlines a typical adult event: “[t]he program will consists of a Health film (perhaps our own Newfoundland film The Silent Menace, starring Dr. McGrath), probably one on Co-operation or Agriculture, a travel film, very likely one of the Lee Wulff Newfoundland films which are so popular, and always a cartoon or sing-song to amuse the audience” (21). Reserving comment on the pedagogical outcome of the program, he goes on to opine that “[t]he show is greatly enjoyed, not only while it is in progress, but in retrospect as for the next few days it supersedes as a subject of progress, but in retrospect as for the next few days it supersedes as a subject of

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4 These are Atlantic Crossroads (NFB), Scenic Newfoundland (Lee Wulff), Wulff Scenic (likely an incorrect transcription of a Lee Wulff title), Sentinel of the Atlantic (likely Newfoundland: Sentinel of the Atlantic, NFB), Caribou, Fishing in Newfoundland (Lee Wulff), Salmon Fishing (Lee Wulff), Sea Sport (Lee Wulff), Sea Trout (Lee Wulff), Vacation in Nfld. and Labrador, Trout and Tuna (the latter two pieces are excerpts from Lee Wulff’s Fishing in Newfoundland).
conversation politics and the price of fish, motor-boats and the minister’s wife!” (22) If anything, Mifflin’s appraisal of this typical screening suggests its effects were opposite the Division’s intentions, supplanting, as it did, discussions of the very things that it was intended to stimulate: politics, motor boats, and the price of fish. There was, it seems, a gulf between film policy and its practical reception (interpellative effect) by way of exhibition: nonsynchronicity endured⁵. Undismayed, the Provincial Government would, under the auspices of its modernization initiative, press film exhibition even more directly into the service of an enlightenment project. Film would yet have the opportunity to achieve its goal.

Film production by the Commission of Government

If the Commission had come to develop something resembling a coherent film exhibition policy through the Newfoundland Film Board and the Division of Adult and Visual Education, film production policy was another issue altogether. As the domain of no specific department, film production would never serve as the object of any government policy; rather, it was an activity conducted on an as-needed basis. This, I believe, did not prevent the formation of certain tendencies in film production governed by the Commission’s interpellative principle. It simply meant that those tendencies – un-articulated policies – would coalesce along other, largely departmental, lines.

The first branch of the Commission to engage in film production was the Newfoundland Tourist Development Board. Established in the mid-1930s as a division of

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⁵ While he seems to make no distinction between independent itinerant projectionist and those in the employ of the Commission of Government, Michael Taft’s discussion of the manners in which these projectionists came to affect outport communities forwards the idea that any effects were restricted to custom, particularly stories, language and games.
the Department of Natural Resources, the Board’s mandate was to broadly promote the
tourism industry. But as James Overton points out, its alignment under the Department of
Natural Resources inclined the Board to conceive of a tourism industry designed to
attract outdoor enthusiasts specifically. To that end, there was a logical partnership
between the Department of Natural Resources and its ancillary organization. The pair
worked to set aside game preserves, create a national park, construct cabins, and develop
anti-poaching regulations (Overton 23-24). Newfoundland was to be officially packaged
as an outdoor enthusiasts paradise. However, the crown jewel in the Tourist Development
Board’s campaign was their secondment of the American outdoorsman, author, and
filmmaker, Lee Wulff as its official spokesman. Between 1938 and 1940, Wulff would
produce eight films on hunting and fishing subjects ⁶ and in 1940 alone would give
twenty-three lecture-picture shows across the United States aimed at attracting outdoor
enthusiasts (Overton 24). In Wulff, the Board had mobilized an uncommon broker, going
well beyond that of the auteur. Wulff’s reputation had been established in no small part
by way of his accomplishments in fishing tuna in Newfoundland waters. Here was, in the
fullest sense of the word, the champion of the cause that he was promoting. Though the
Commission understood it to be fundamentally injurious to those that lived there,
Newfoundland space was, by way of the Tourist Development Board, rendered
imminently exploitable to those looking to engage in leisurely pursuits ⁷. Wulff was both
master and agent of that space.

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⁶ None of these films are extant. They comprise the first eight titles listed in Appendix 4.2.

⁷ Already by 1927, the Newfoundland Tourist and Publicity Association had come to use film for
promotional purposes. Premiering at the Nickel Theatre at St. John’s on 2 August, We’re in the Movies
Now was a short travelogue about partridge hunting in Newfoundland. According to the review published
in The Evening Telegram 5 August 1927: “[t]he Newfoundland scenic provided an unique attraction, as
What makes the case of Lee Wulff so unusual – what fixes him as a singular force in the historical development of film production in Newfoundland – is the unprecedented length of his relationship with Newfoundland governments. After his initial engagement with the Tourist Development Board, Wulff would go on to produce at least an additional thirty-one films for Newfoundland-based non-profit corporations, the Commission of Government and various branches of the Provincial Government on subjects ranging from tuberculosis, industrial development, local song as well as the more familiar fare of hunting, fishing, and tourism in general in both Newfoundland and Labrador. Even at the time of this writing, his films are widely regarded throughout Newfoundland, a tendency that, as we have already seen, Jessie Mifflin identified as early as 1948 (21). As of 1950, eight of the twelve films available from the Division of Adult and Visual Education on Newfoundland subjects were Wulff productions. Though the many of his films are unavailable (all known titles are reproduced as Appendix 4.2), those titles that are extant are remarkably uniform in style. Voices of god narrate the actions of their respective characters, whether they are fishing, hunting, or travelling the Island by trailer. Seldom, if ever, do we hear his characters speak. His camera is almost invariably mounted – even, remarkably, in films on hunting and fishing subjects – and tends to frame its subjects – both animal and human – in medium shots. For Wulff, *mise en scène* is ultimately less important than the various operations within it, whether he is photographing a moose in its natural habitat or a family vacationing on a beach in central Newfoundland. Even his establishing shots are grounded in action of some kind. And though his sound designs tend to downplay all excepting the most critical of diegetic noises, his richly orchestrated
soundtracks are what ultimately structure his characters’ journeys through the *mise en scène*. Wulff’s Newfoundland films demonstrate an unwavering if not mediated respect towards their subjects. On the one hand then, though it may have proceeded from the recognition of Wulff’s extra-filmic agency, his continued popularity with successive Newfoundland governments is rooted in his uncommon ability to represent undeveloped Newfoundland space as capable space with tangible material value. On the other hand, his continued popularity with local audiences can be understood by way of the Commission’s corrective film exhibition policy that endeavoured to offset what it had believed to be, for local audiences, *incapable* space. Though the interpretive contexts were different, the readings would be the same.

Of all the films Wulff produced in Newfoundland prior to Confederation, only one is extant: his 1946 short for the Newfoundland Tuberculosis Association, *The Silent Menace*. Devised as an educational piece about the causes, symptoms and treatments of and for tuberculosis, the film was funded through the Tuberculosis Association’s 1944 and 1945 Christmas Seals campaigns and distributed across the Island by way of both the Newfoundland Film Board and the Division of Adult and Visual Education. Even before its release, *The Silent Menace* had gained widespread notoriety, a function of both Wulff’s involvement and its mobilization of local talent and resources. Writing in the November 1945 edition of *The Atlantic Guardian*, Ted Meaney considered it to be the first of its kind: “[a]n All-Newfoundland movie in technicolor, directed and acted by Newfoundlanders for local audiences” (23). What distinguished *The Silent Menace* from Wulff’s earlier work was context. This was, as Meaney suggests, the first locally produced film actually intended for local audiences. That Wulff was involved in its
production all but ensured the film’s widespread popularity. As we have already seen, by 1948 Jesse Mifflin had identified the film as being part of a typical Division of Adult and Visual Education Program, and by 1949, *The Northern Light*, the Tuberculosis Association’s official newsletter, would proclaim that the “film has been shown in almost every settlement in the Island” (15). Here, it would seem that the film’s content was nowhere near as important as its context.

It is, at first glance, an unremarkable film. The scenario, written by Dr. James McGrath, Assistant Director of the Department of Health and Welfare, is, in distinction to those authored by Wulff, noticeably stiff and lumbering. Devised as more of an illustrated lecture than a film *per se*, the piece is anchored in McGrath’s continuous script, ostensibly delivered from behind his office desk. Each scene is meant to accompany McGrath’s script rather than the other way around, a technique that becomes immediately repetitive. At the top of the film, McGrath provides a tediously long inventory of occupations, industries and events that have claimed the lives of Newfoundlanders, working up to the inevitable climax that their combined death toll would still not exceed that of the lives claimed by tuberculosis (Fig. 2). Taking up three and a half minutes of the twenty-minute film, this exceedingly long overture establishes the manner of what is to come. It is a film that decisively proceeds by way of telling rather than by showing.
Fig. 2. *The Silent Menace*. Neither the fishery, forestry, mining, fire, misadventure in the woods, traffic accidents, war, nor even the death toll of these things combined equals the number of lives claimed by tuberculosis in Newfoundland, says Dr. McGrath.

Yet, read within the context of a corrective film exhibition policy, *The Silent Menace* is, in spite of its laboured form, unmistakably democratic, both with regards to the scope of its representation and the assumption it makes about those it represents. It was, as production assistant Ella Manuel contends in her account of the filming in *The Atlantic Guardian*, their “aim to use authentic scenes and local actors, and with the two, produce a film which was not only educational but beautiful as well” (10). Filming on location from Corner Brook on the west coast to St. John’s on the east coast, *The Silent Menace* was, for its time, certainly the most geographically comprehensive representation of the Island, even if those locations remain unacknowledged in the film itself. But more to the point, those representations are rendered without implicit judgment. Here, the educative project does not follow from an indictment of local space but rather an account of local space that positions it as generative and capable of – at least – assisting in the
fight against tuberculosis. Devoting the final third of the film to methods for treating the
disease at home, and, in particular, within the context of outport Newfoundland,
McGrath’s final assessment is that though it is second best to hospital care,
convalescence can indeed be meaningfully aided by way of pre-existing local capacity, if
it is properly mobilized. The Silent Menace is by no means a veneration of local space,
but neither does it seek to completely admonish it. Here, space is capable of something.

No doubt bolstered by Wulff’s work for the Newfoundland Tourist Board and the
Newfoundland Tuberculosis Association, in 1946 the Commission of Government
approached the London based Greenpark Productions (a member of the Film Producers
Guild) to produce what would become the last two films it would finance. Humphrey
Swingler’s lost Island Story (also known as The Frasers of Cabot Cove) was, according
to Derek Norman’s entry on filmmaking in the Encyclopedia of Newfoundland, intended
to serve as a general interest piece for foreign markets and “planned to combine facts
about Newfoundland with drama using local actors” (N. pag.). A love story set in the
fictional Cabot’s Cove, Island Story was primarily filmed at King’s Cove, Bonavista Bay,
with additional footage taken at Corner Brook, Deer Lake, Gander, Bell Island, St.
John’s, and, randomly, Montreal. Norman judiciously suggests that the piece “fell short
of expectations,” and after a private screening in November 1949 for members of the cast
and the newly established Provincial Government, was likely never distributed. And
while Peter Plaskitt’s educational short Handling of Salted Codfish (1948) is extant,
nothing is known about its distribution or exhibition: it neither appears in the Division of
Audio and Visual Education’s 1950 16mm Film Library Catalogue, nor, it seems, is there
mention of it any local press. Prepared for the Newfoundland Fisheries Board, the film
tracks two fishing crews from Bay Bulls on the southern Avalon Peninsula: one engaged in the right way to catch, clean and cure codfish, the other the wrong way. “The export of poor quality salt cod is bad for the country’s trade and the fisherman’s own pocket,” the narrator warns us. “But we can provide a more marketable product by improved handling and curing.” So begins the object lesson.

As the first in a very long succession of local productions that take the practices of the fishing industry as their subject, *Handling of Salted Codfish* is remarkable as much for the lateness of its arrival as it is for the precision of its construction. While unmistakably a process-oriented educational film, George Still’s photography gives the piece a remarkable life. Here, mundane tasks are remarkably well composed. Even a moment as tedious as chastising a fisherman for the continued use of a prong in transferring the fish from boat to stage is precisely constructed: the fisherman, framed in a medium shot, is cast in a long shadow, reinforcing the narrator’s assessment of the misinformed operation. He contrasts with the glimmering sea, the source of his livelihood (still 1, Fig. 3). Even Still’s camera work during those long passages devoted to splitting and gutting cod is singular in the detail it registers (stills 2 and 3, Fig. 3). Atomizing the work of both groups of fishermen, Still’s camera divorces action from context. Where a great many later films, by way of their emphasis on the contexts of labour, tend to elide such focus in favour of working human subjects, here there is a cold clarity. The fishermen are but agents of the *mise en scène*; the real subject is the particulars of their labour.
Fig. 3: *Handling of Salted Codfish*. The fisherman and the particulars of his labour.

Though relatively small in number, those films ordered by the Commission of Government mark the beginnings of certain production tendencies that would become further refined under the auspices of the Provincial Government. Tourism, unsurprisingly, would remain a primary concern. Its mode of representation – that is, Newfoundland as untamed but imminently exploitable space – would be fundamentally unchanged. Even now, the tenaciousness of that mode is evident in the Provincial Government’s *Find Yourself* campaign that renders Newfoundland and Labrador as regions fundamentally untouched by North American modernization. But what appears to have been an emerging concern with the mobilization of local capacity – with directing existing resources towards the meaningful and focussed exploitation of local resources – is transplanted with a pre-fabricated narrative of modernization, shaped by its primary agent, Joey Smallwood. As non-existent as the Commission’s film production policies were, their film production practices seemed to co-exist in characteristic discord with their film exhibition policy. It is both a curious and consequential legacy.

The Provincial Government: towards a unified film policy

Upon Confederation with Canada on 31 March 1949, film exhibition policy and film production practice would come into closer proximity. As disconnected as the pair
was under the Commission of Government, Smallwood’s Liberal majority had, under the banner of modernization, provided a mechanism for their coalescence. What made this possible was Smallwood’s emphasis on ends rather than means exclusively. If the Commission of Government had established themselves as caretakers with no direct mandate beyond that interpellative tendency that had proceeded out of the Amulree Report, Smallwood’s Liberals had a clear directive to, in his oft quoted but seldom cited phrase, “drag Newfoundland kicking and screaming into the twentieth century”

As a delegate to the Newfoundland National Convention between 1946 and 1948 – an elected body of local representatives mandated to discuss and make recommendations on forms of government to supplant the Commission – Smallwood had argued vigorously for the Canadian Confederation cause along lines that proceeded directly out of the Amulree Report. In the speech that followed his 28 October 1946 resolution to the Convention to explore terms of union with Canada, he reasoned that when compared with the mainland of North America, we are fifty years, in some things a hundred years, behind the times. We live more poorly, more shabbily, more meanly. Our life is more a struggle. Our struggle is tougher, more naked, more hopeless. In the North American family, Newfoundland bears the reputation of having the lowest standards of life, of being the least progressive and advanced, of the whole family. (163)

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8 Recently, Susan Newhook has provided textual support for the supposedly spoken phrase: a footnote in Patrick O’Flaherty’s *The Rock Observed: Studies in the Literature of Newfoundland*. “Smallwood acknowledges having applied this common tag to Newfoundland” O’Flaherty insists, “and many writers attribute it to him” (Newhook 2010: 60, O’Flaherty 162).
For Smallwood, Newfoundland is as much a state displaced from time as it is from space. The *Amulree Report* and the Commission of Government, it would seem, only got it half right. The solution, he continues, is clear: “Confederation I will support it if it means a lower cost of living for our people. Confederation I will support it if it means a higher standard of life for our people. Confederation I will support it if it means strength, stability, and security for Newfoundland” (169). Confederation with Canada did not simply represent a solution to the Island’s political limbo; for Smallwood, it was a means towards an end goal of modernization, a mechanism through which the general standard of living in Newfoundland could be raised to meet that of the majority of the North American mainland. Like the Commission of Government that came before it, Confederation is conceived of as a general rehabilitative project.

In practical terms, that meant very little change for film exhibition policy. The *Terms of Union* ensured that the basic structure of the Department of Education, along with its Division of Adult and Visual Education – the place from which film exhibition policy emanated – remained fundamentally unaltered. Under the banner of Smallwood’s modernization project, there was of course, no reason to alter its substance. What appears to have changed, at least at the outset, is the precision of its application. Writing in *The Twillingate Sun* in 1952, Frank Kennedy, a Supervisor with the Division of Adult and Visual Education would spell out his Division’s new focus in what reads to be nothing less than a realist manifesto in the vein of Siegfried Kracauer. Beginning his argument in

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9 Term 17: “In and for the Province of Newfoundland the Legislature shall have exclusive authority to make laws in relation to education, but the Legislature will not have authority to make laws prejudicially affecting any right or privilege with respect to denominational schools, common (amalgamated) schools, or denominational colleges, that any class or classes of persons have by law in Newfoundland at the date of Union, and out of public funds of the Province of Newfoundland provided for education” (Government of Canada N. pag.)
an historical account of the recent propagandistic uses of film throughout Europe and Russia, Kennedy positions film as a tool for mass, social education *par excellence*. He expands:

Quite simply, then, the effectiveness of the moving picture is inherent in the nature of the medium itself, that is, pictures in motion. It is the magic of motion that commands and sustains attention. Motion, too, adds continuity of action in time and space to the picture and brings them to life. Fundamentally, therefore, the business of the motion picture in education is to concentrate intelligent observation on a series of pictures projected on a screen.

For Kennedy, film’s capacity as a tool for social education can be attributed to its singular ability to represent causality by way of mass spectacle. And within the context of education, this mass spectacle has the ability to perform one or a combination of three functions: to show what something looks like, to show how something works, and to show how something happens. In performing these three functions, the motion picture has a flexibility that is greater and more powerful than is the vision of any one man, for it has at its disposal all the powers of the telescope and the microscope to manipulate time.

(4)

What had begun to coalesce under the Commission of Government as an instrumental exhibition policy now, under the Provincial Government, would find its final deterministic form.

But Kennedy’s manifesto also reveals a more substantial difference in the means and ends of exhibition policy itself. Where the Commission had devised policy to
introduce and rehearse functioning spaces to Newfoundlanders in the hopes of facilitating enlightenment more generally, the Provincial Government would elide the issue of space and favour the atomization of materiality and causality: i.e. the showing, specifically, of what something looks like, how something works, or something happens. It is a narrowing of focus that proceeds out of the practice of modernization as a mode of governance. Canadian Confederation had provided Smallwood with the material resources to conduct such a project; rehabilitation was no longer an activity that needed to be facilitated along wholly abstract, represented lines. Within the context of an active, local modernization project, film, as Kennedy attests, was a tool that could tangibly assist in that project in precisely focused ways.

Increased access to material resources had also brought about two other substantial developments that would, in time, aid in the coalescence of an integrated film policy. First, it had allowed the Division of Adult and Visual Education to significantly increase its exhibition reach. An un-credited article published in the same edition of The Twillingate Sun as Kennedy’s manifesto, “Increased Interest in Film Council,” outlines the difference in exhibition activities before and after Confederation. Prior to 1949 there were but three independent film groups facilitated by the Division in Newfoundland. Between 1949 and 1952, however, that number had risen to twenty, fourteen of which were operating in Newfoundland and six in Labrador. Between 1951 and 1952 there had been a 117% increase in the number of exhibition programs given by the Division and independent film groups and a 116% increase in the overall number of people in attendance at those screenings. The Division’s work, the article suggests, was aided by an otherwise unknown supplementary film distribution service maintained by the Federal
Department of Fisheries as well as the National Film Board of Canada, whose exhibition policies, during the first years of Confederation, were directly aligned with the Provincial Department of Education. Second, increased access to resources had provided Smallwood with the means to establish his own film production bureau. Founded in 1952 by Latvian émigré Albert Jekste, Atlantic Films and Electronics was both a consequence of Smallwood’s modernization initiative and the state-sanctioned interpreter of that initiative until roughly 1966, producing not only the technically precise, initiative specific films Kennedy had called for, but also films that celebrated Smallwood’s modernization initiatives more generally and, of course, films that promoted the Island as a tourist destination. Under Smallwood an integrated film policy would be the product of the same forces that had resulted in the bifurcation of exhibition policy and production practice under the Commission. What had facilitated their coalescence here was the practice of modernization; or, in other words, by way of a wide reaching and programmatic attempt to directly address the Island’s condition of nonsynchronicity.

The National Film Board of Canada abides

As we have seen, the NFB had been engaged in assisting with the development and implementation of film exhibition policy in Newfoundland since 1944, first, explicitly with the Newfoundland Film Board, and second, implicitly with the Division of Adult and Visual Education. When the NFB opened its office in St. John’s on 20 June 1949, its exhibition mandate would remain, accordingly, unaltered. Already the Newfoundland Film Board and the Division of Adult and Visual Education had implemented aspects of the NFB’s exhibition policy into their own mandates, such as
maintaining a film distribution service and promoting the development of community-run exhibition groups. Now that the NFB had officially arrived in Newfoundland it was able to bolster those services already in place. The seemingly natural connection between the NFB and the Department of Education had led the latter to physically house the former, providing both office and storage space. Their exhibition and distribution work would be intertwined until well into the 1970s.

Production, however, was another matter. Ostensibly, Newfoundland’s role in World War II first attracted the NFB’s interest. The fourth instalment of its *Workers at War* series included a profile of the construction of the allied air force base at Goose Bay in Labrador (1944). In 1945, Tom Daly’s *Atlantic Crossroads* would serve as the NFB’s first major profile of the Dominion. Produced as part of the *Canada Carries on Series*, Daly’s film proceeds from a consideration of the Island’s strategic importance during the War but quickly transitions into a rumination on the reasons for its lack of industrial development. The war, of course, had provided Newfoundland with some means to address its undeveloped state but the transition would remain incomplete. In language that the Commission of Government would have applauded, Daly’s narrator concludes that “[n]ature has seen to it that only by a fully developed economy can Newfoundland raise her standard of living. For more than any other country she must rely on trading rights with big and powerful nations: with Britain, responsible for her government; with the United States who has leased her bases; and with Canada, her chief source of imports and her closest neighbour”. Again, the problem of space is apparent.

For Daly, however, it is not entirely barbaric space. On the contrary, the film seems to be developing an idea of innate spatial capacity, suggested by his title, *Atlantic*
Crossroads, as well as its rather unsubtle title sequence in which an animated boat and plane drag the words Atlantic and Crossroads respectively across the screen (stills 1 and 2, Fig. 4). There is inherent value in the space as way station and, critically, as a bridgehead to North America, an idea he reinforces with a unique cartographic shot of the continent’s west to east axis aligned north to south. Newfoundland is the eastern fortification that finds its natural geological counterpart in the Rocky Mountains (still 3, Fig. 4). The Island’s problem, as Daly envisions it, is simply one of spatial utilization. Having organized itself into outports – a configuration he acknowledges to be a result of the inshore fishery – Newfoundland functionally rendered itself an archipelago: its inhabitants remained divorced from each other as well as the Island’s geographical centre (stills 4 through 6, Fig. 3). The capacity was always there, Daly implies; it simply wasn’t being used towards the right ends and those ends had only revealed themselves to Newfoundlander as a result of World War II. If there was any doubt about his thesis, Daly unequivocally drives it home by keeping his camera in perpetual motion, alternating between point of view shots from plane and a boat. From these perspectives, his camera not only registers the transportation technologies themselves but also, importantly, the land, imbuing it with a dynamism that finds its visual juxtaposition in the form of the long shot of a bay and stage head that concludes his archipelago analogy (still 6, Fig. 3). Proper perspective is, of course, necessary to assign spatial value.10

10 Read within the context of the subsequent events in Newfoundland’s political history, Atlantic Crossroads has the aspect of a statement of Canadian manifest destiny, one that proceeds not by way of an exceptional narrative of the Canadian state but by way of geographical proximity, economic connection, and use-value of its eastern neighbour. As none of the four remaining films by the NFB about Newfoundland prior to 1949 are available, it is impossible to argue for the consistency of such representation. It is, however, within this spirit that Michael Jones came to use footage from Atlantic Crossroads as both citation and intertext for his 1992 revisionist narrative film Secret Nation, presenting Newfoundland’s entry into Confederation as the end result of a Canadian and British conspiracy.
After 1949 there would be a more direct relationship between the NFB’s output and government policy as determined by Smallwood’s modernization project. Between 1951 and 1957, almost every film produced by the NFB would profile an aspect of the modernization initiative, many of which would be devoted to the development of the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region (discussed at greater length below). There is, accordingly, a remarkable similarity to the narrative structure of these films. Beginning by situating Newfoundland as a space economically defined by the inshore fishery, the historical events of 1933 through 1949 are elided or simply omitted, allowing for a quick arrival at the industrialized present. In distinction to the telescoped past, this present is situated as the solution to the problem of the fishery. Moreover, it is a present that is the singular domain of vocal technical experts. Fishermen are seldom, if ever, granted the right to speak in these films and even when they are, by way of their involvement in a modernized fishing industry, their speech is mediated or, in the instance of Grant McLean’s *High Tide in Newfoundland* (1955), completely erased, overdubbed by voice
actors with subtler, understandable, accents. When they are heard, their voices are purposed towards the singing of folk songs or recitations, brief performance interludes in pieces whose primary subject is the integration of Newfoundland into the industrialized Canadian state. Or in the case of Thomas Farley’s *The Tenth Frontier* (1956) they literally point the film’s host, Norman Kihl, towards the locations where modernization is taking place.

The conspicuous exception to this trend is Allan Wargon’s *Encounter at Trinity* (1957), a profile of the short-lived “fur fishing” initiative at Trinity Bay, which was an offshoot of the Provincial Government’s centralized mink farming industry established in 1954. Playing up the seemingly random combination of elements that constitute the industry, Wargon begins his film with poetic obscurity. “It began with the wind,” the narrator muses over a montage of the community of Dildo. “On August 28th, 1956, the wind was westerly. Trinity Bay was placid, calm. But the wind was westerly”. Cutting between shots of a couple shopping in downtown Montreal, a mink farmer, a herd of horses, the camera finally settles upon a young boy, again at Dildo, walking towards the shore line where he discovers a beached pilot whale: the motivation for the first, equally obscure lines of dialogue between the boy and an older man who teases that the boy landed the whale with a squid jigger. For Wargon, obscurity here is narrative strategy. Even when the protagonist of the film is introduced in the form of a central Canadian tourist looking to photograph the fishery, he is encouraged to visit Dildo in order to take pictures of the enigmatic fur fishing industry. The industrial practice is never explained in any degree of detail until half way through the film when the unnamed tourist meets fellow mainlander, George MacNeil.
On the one hand, Wargon’s strategy is a narrative cast of what he sees as a local trickster tradition. “This wouldn’t be a gag you like to play on mainlanders, would it?” the unnamed tourist responds to the invitation to come and photograph the fur fishing operation. He is visibly uncertain as to his status in this environment, disinclined to believe the half-explanations he is given by local agents. En route to Dildo, his host stops the car because he apparently spots a loon. “I’ll give you the Newfoundland recipe,” says the host, stone-faced. “You put the loon in a pot, you add two beach rocks, you boil until the beach rocks are soft, then you throw away the loon and eat the beach rocks”. Under explained and purposively misleading, local perspective is, from the point of view of the mainlander, at best a half-truth. But on the other hand, it is a strategy that works to contextualize the remarkable violence of the film’s climax. Learning, finally, that fur fishing is in fact the process of feeding pilot whale meat to farmed mink in order to manipulate the colour of the mink’s fur, the mainland tourist witnesses the whale harvest first hand. Every able bodied man in Dildo scrambles for the event. The tourist and his host observe and comment from the shore as a flotilla of dorys herd the pilot whales away from open water and feverishly harpoon them until the beach is littered with carcasses (Fig. 4). Here, the idyll of the jovial, half-cocked Newfoundlander is intended to mediate this brutality. Rather than representing the harvest as a long-standing historical tradition – the host makes a passing claim to it being as much – Wargon renders it as an act rooted in nominal perspective: the work of the Newfoundlander. The strategy is unsuccessful. The idyll and the violence it seeks to mediate are entirely incommensurate.
After *Encounter at Trinity*, there would be an immediate and definitive shift in the focus of the NFB’s Newfoundland films. The celebration of Smallwood’s modernization was over; the business of the Board returned to normal. Of the half dozen films produced on the Island between *Encounter at Trinity* and the *Newfoundland Project* (1967), five were devoted to either history or natural history subjects. The remaining film, Rex Tasker’s *The Baymen* (1965), is a measured study on the effects of Smallwood’s modernization project on outport Newfoundland, content with merely registering change rather than commenting on the quality of change directly. Newfoundland, it would seem, had become a naturalized member of the Canadian Confederation, an idea that, within the context of the NFB, would not be interrogated further until the commencement of Challenge for Change/Société Nouvelle.
Atlantic Films (and Electronics)

For Smallwood, however, the scope and manner of the NFB’s engagement in Newfoundland was insufficient. Though the Provincial Government and the Board had, by way of historical precedent, come to work closely with one another in the distribution and exhibition of films, the means of film production ultimately remained outside of Newfoundland. What was needed was a local production agency, one that was as equally invested in the general process of modernization as it was in the interpretation of that project.

In 1950, Smallwood appointed himself Minister of Economic Development, a position that enabled him to directly oversee the establishment of a series of New Industries, the first battalion of the modernization program. Conceived along with his Director General of Economic Development, the shadowy Latvian economist Alfred Valdmanis, the New Industries were intended to serve as a "petit" industrial revolution for Newfoundland, a forced introduction of a range of processing and manufacturing operations meant to diversify the Island’s economy. Between 1950 and 1957, fourteen industries ranging from cement factories to knitting mills were established – largely by Valdmanis’ European associates – with interest free or non-repayable loans from the Provincial Government. The plan, unsurprisingly, was a categorical failure: six of these industries had shuttered by 1960 and the vast majority had closed by 1980. Amongst these New Industries was Atlantic Films and Electronics, the first film production agency to operate in Newfoundland, established at St. John’s in 1952 by fellow Latvian expatriate Albert Jekste.
Prior to the Soviet occupation of Latvia in 1940, Jekste had worked variously in the Latvian film industry as a broadcaster, film producer, project advisor with the government owned electrical products manufacturer, Valsts Elektrotehniskā Fabrika, and as the head of Riga Film Studio where he had been, as he states in the introduction to his anti-communist documentary, *My Latvia* (1954), “responsible for all photography for the free Latvian Government”. Escaping to Germany in 1944 along with members of his Riga Film Studio unit, Jekste established production studios at Hamburg, where, by way of Valdmanis, he met Smallwood in 1950. As Valdmanis biographer Gerhard P. Bassler has suggested, it was there in Jekste’s Hamburg studio that Smallwood “immediately recognized the potential significance of this film unit for his development strategy,” believing that “they would have an important role to play by producing documentary films for the government, demonstrating the success of [his] economic policies” (1986: 114). Smallwood furnished a relatively modest $20,000.00 loan to set up this new industry and on 8 May 1952, Atlantic Films and Electronics was incorporated: an amalgamation of Jekste’s Hamburg based Riga Film Studio unit and Derek Marshall’s St. John’s-based Motion Picture Supply Company. Marshall would serve as the head of Atlantic Films and Electronics until 1954, followed Jekste until 1967.

Outwardly, the company was a private enterprise; it offered three services to the public. Atlantic Films was set up as a separate film production division under Jekste’s direction, specializing in “Educational, Instrumental and Documentary sound films” (Advertisement N. pag.); an electronics division was responsible for design and installation public address systems and radio services and an audiovisual sales division was responsible for the sale of projectors, screens, generators and range of projection
accessories. All were housed at their purpose built facilities at 22 Prescott Street at St. John’s. However, the company’s primary, sustaining work was to be for the Provincial Government. Citing an original agreement between the pair in AFE’s 1956-1957 annual report, Jekste suggests that work was to proceed along two lines: “The Production of informational, educational and documentary Films,” and “Development, installations and services of various types of electronic equipment” (2). Directed to the attention of Smallwood, Jekste’s report was intended primarily to remind the Premier of the arrangement as no government orders for either service were placed between 1956 and 1957; a trend reflected in the company’s diminished profit (3). Certainly by the time of the report, Smallwood’s enthusiasm for the company had waned: between 1956 and 1964 Atlantic Films would produce a paltry nine films for the Provincial Government; from its establishment in 1952 and 1955 it had produced at least twenty-six11. Atlantic Films and Electronics ceased advertising their production service in local periodicals by the beginning of 1965 and in 1967 Jekste moved the production wing – Atlantic Films – to Montreal. Atlantic Films and Electronics shuttered in 1982, survived, for a few years, by the Musical Clock which had taken up AFE’s sales and service divisions.

During the little more than a decade of its tenure as a film production bureau for the Provincial Government, Atlantic Films’ output was noticeably singular. While the few instructional films it produced such as Danish Seining (1953), a profile of the dragnet fishing technique as practiced by Danish sailors, and the compellingly titled Cable Laying (1954), were in line with Frank Kennedy’s idea of instrumental filmmaking, the vast majority of the company’s productions were devoted to interpreting Smallwood’s

11 Appendix 4.3 is a filmography of Atlantic Films’ known output in Newfoundland and Labrador.
modernization initiatives to general audiences in the form of travelogues, promotional films and industry-oriented documentaries. In practice, Atlantic Films made little distinction between these genres; their primary concern was to disseminate the narrative of Newfoundland’s development. Of the handful of extant films, this concern with modernization finds its most singular formal consequences in the travelogues *Old City With a Young Heart* and *You Are Welcome*, both released in 1953. The former, intended, it seems, as a profile of St. John’s, simply betrays its genre. After taking us through the streets of what is revealed to be a thoroughly updated St. John’s, the puckish narrator, pleased by the apparent improvements, changes gears, and begins to tour the Island’s updated primary and postsecondary education institutions, health care facilities and sites of new industry. For the potential tourist, these sites possess little to no relevance; very few local attractions – particularly those with historical significance – are represented. The film is a wolf in sheep’s clothes. It is an abstraction of a travelogue intended for local audiences, a voyeuristic celebration of development. *You Are Welcome*, for its part, is true to the form. Quite unlike *Old City With a Young Heart*, it restricts its focus to activities and locations that appear to be the traditional domains of the tourist. What reveals the film as a vehicle for the narrative of modernization is the manner of its representation. Visiting the Island separately, a young man and a young woman are brought together by the machinations of their anthropomorphized suitcases; the luggage had come to meet on the plane ride from an indeterminate place on the mainland. Thus resolved, the four travel across the Island together by car, enjoying a combination of modern amenities, historic sites and leisurely activities from St. John’s to Corner Brook. It is a forecasted representation of how tourists might come to vacation on the Island, a
demonstration of how development can render the traditional as leisure and the passage through space a commonplace event. By the film’s release in 1953, there were, of course, few roads to drive upon between communities. For reasons apparent, these would be the only travelogues produced by Atlantic Films.

By far, the company’s most voluminous output was in the mode of industry and project-oriented documentaries. The few that are extant are marked by their brash triumphalism. Later films such as Happy Union (1958), an account of development in Newfoundland since Confederation, and Confederation Building (1962), an overview of the construction of the new Provincial Government facilities both culminate with what are functionally throne speeches by Smallwood. Directly addressing the camera he explains to us, respectively, the real meaning of Confederation and the real achievement that is the Confederation Building, just in case the preceding representations were unclear (Fig. 6). Other than the voice of god, Smallwood is the only person to speak in these films, lest the narrative of development become muddled.

![Fig. 6. Happy Union and Confederation Building. Throne speeches.](image)

These later films, however, pale in comparison to the storied Newfoundland Progress Reports, the first pieces Atlantic Films made for the Provincial Government. Released annually between 1951 and 1954, each of the four newsreel-styled films is
unabashedly propagandistic, intended to properly interpret the narrative of development to local audiences. In *Volume 1*, that interpretation proceeds by way of historical manoeuvre. Over a series of exterior shots of the Colonial Building, then the seat of government, the voice of god compresses the events of distant and recent history into a terse prelude meant to situate the precise structure of the present. From indeterminate calamity the ordered Province has arisen, signified by its guard, its appropriately costumed Lieutenant Governor and the absolute symbol of provincial sovereignty, the ceremonial mace (Fig. 7). Cut to the interior of the House of Assembly. Again, the voice of god labours over the details of ceremony we are witnessing: the procession of the delegates, the motion of allegiance to the Crown – a motion we are reminded by the narrator, that possesses particular local significance – and the commencement of the business of the House, the real subject of the film. Pausing on the business of the new government, the film transitions into an overview of those new developments the government has committed to undertake. “The work of these men helps to bring closer to realization the dream of every Newfoundlander: that their province may soon have a new prosperity and their people a greater share of the good things in life,” the voice of god asserts. The new historical order is offered as the will of the people. *Volume 1* takes pains to demonstrate the connection between the voting public, the Provincial Government and the modernization effort.
Subsequent instalments were, however, completely free of such concerns. From the opening notes of *Volume 2*’s score there is a decided shift in energy. Over a shot of the ocean crashing upon the shore, a flourish of brass heralds a title sequence rendered as newspaper headlines: “Tannery Starts Production Soon,” “Predicts Bright Future For Machine Plant,” “Birch Mill Output to be Stepped Up,” “First Cement Goes to Ontario”. Now, apparently, dynamically integrated into a system of North American capital, a spirited voice of god dives immediately into profiles of Smallwood’s New Industries. Here, there is no need for even passing reference to pre-industrialized history. This is, to borrow the phrase from Michael Taussig, a “really made up” history, constructed with the apparent virtues of modernization: speed, technology and above all, proximity. Free from the burden of context, these *Progress Reports* make their case through the singular representation of industrial process. The material consequences of industry – their effects upon lived existence – only serve as cadential fodder for the voice of god. The camera’s sole concern, as Stephen Crocker has pointed out, is the fetishization of the machine (86). From *Volume 2* onwards civilians are only represented to the extent that they are automatons of industry. On occasion civilians are even omitted, as is the case with the profile of the Atlantic Gypsum plant in Corner Brook, which is represented as an entirely self-automated operation (Fig. 8). What matters only is the detailed representation of
mechanical operation: the machines that are ultimately responsible for the manufacture of this new historical epoch.

Fig. 8. *Newfoundland Progress Report, Volume 2*. The unpeopled Atlantic Gypsum Plant.

The heritage of institutional culture

Though the relationship between Atlantic Films and the Provincial Government ended in 1966 with *Potato Wart and Its Control in Newfoundland*, the latter’s lack of enthusiasm for the former had little effect on its belief in the particular value of film for the purposes of promoting the tourism industry. At the same time as their relationship was ending, the Government once again sought the services of Lee Wulff. Between the submission of AFE’s fateful 1957 business report and Smallwood’s overthrow in 1972, Wulff would produce no less than twenty-seven travelogues for the Provincial Government on subjects ranging from the traditional fare of hunting and fishing to sailing and even caravanning. In 1970, he would even produce *Newfoundland Builds* for the Department of Economic Development, one of the few informational films to be commissioned by Smallwood’s government after they had parted ways with AFE. Of course, by the beginning of the 1960s the first of Smallwood’s New Industries had begun to shutter; the new history that Atlantic Films had laid out was revealing itself to be fiction. There was, it seems, little attempt made to mediate that narrative.
Complicating the matter further was the procedural rejoinder to the faltering project of modernization. Resettlement, which had began as an official program in 1954, contravened the narrative that modernization had offered. Space, modernization contended, was being rehabilitated; the embedded barbarity the Commission of Government had registered was now tamed by way of Smallwood’s industrialization project. Resettlement, meanwhile, reinforced the Commission’s narrative. Here were spaces literally beyond rehabilitation; the only recourse was to physically evacuate them. For the vast number of films that the Provincial Government had produced about its modernization efforts, none were devoted to its Resettlement programs. To do so would have revealed the spatial boundaries of modernization, and, accordingly, the limitations of the government’s divine abilities. For all of Smallwood’s initial enthusiasm for film, at the end of his tenure as Premier very little had changed with respect to its distribution, exhibition, or production. Space had remained the primary subject of all three activities, but now the problems of and solutions to that space had been complicated to the point of obscurity.
By the end of Newfoundland’s epoch of institutional culture, the vast majority of its residents had been integrated into those contemporary civil and political societies attendant with Confederation. Smallwood’s oft-spoken objective of dragging “Newfoundland kicking and screaming into the twentieth century” had been realized. By his own exasperated tally, his tenure as the province’s first Premier had brought “[m]ore roads, more schools, more hospitals, more houses, more municipalities, more parks, more recreation centres, more music, more drama, more libraries, more books published, more industries, more travel – more of them all – than we achieved in all those 452 years before Confederation. More, better, greater” (45). We might forgive him for excluding film here. The medium was otherwise indisposed.

What Smallwood’s inventory interestingly, if not ironically rehearses in microcosm is a particular process of social and accordingly cultural mobilization. The resulting formations would not only take him to task for this very legacy, they would also come to employ film as a medium through which to critique and at times blatantly counteract his government’s policies. More roads had meant more connectivity; more connectivity had meant greater opportunities for education; more education had provided a local population with an apparatus with which to critique the Smallwood government; critique would often come in the form of artistic expression; and that artistic expression would be informed by local social practice, what we have already defined as the constitutive material of culture. What Smallwood neglects to mention is that this
inventory is predicated upon the realization of few communities. Resettlement had made his entire project possible; without it, modernization would have been untenable.

As a result, we can quite accurately identify Smallwood as one of the major architects of a local Newfoundland culture; that is, as a representative medium that arises as an organized response to developments within civil and political societies. The twin programs of Resettlement and modernization had created the conditions necessary for this culture to form. Through the concentration of population, the shift in labour practices, the modernization of civic space, and the rapid introduction of new civil and political societies, the vast majority of Newfoundland’s population had become fixed in a set of social, economic and political systems that were inherently at odds with each other. As distinct as these new systems may have been they would provide the means with which to recognize, understand, and ultimately lament the passage of those earlier systems. The civil and political societies ushered in by Smallwood may not have precipitated their own self-destruction but they did facilitate a critical response and reaction predicated upon the recognition of this passage.

A defining aspect of this culture, the particular character of this recognition necessitates that we depart slightly from Raymond William’s general model as outlined above. For while Williams understands culture in its iterative sense as a set of responses that recognize and emphasize a practical distinction between a new social impetus and particular moral and intellectual activities, the culture we are considering here engages in a third distinct operation: an attempted reconciliation between that new social impetus and particular moral and intellectual activities; or more specifically, between that social impetus that had led to the voluntary abandonment of Representative Government and
those moral and intellectual traditions that sought to interrogate that impetus. This singular and complex operation would direct local culture to look backward for its constitutive material – towards what I have already identified as social practice – the very same practice that gave rise to the social impetus being interrogated. Setting aside the implicit ideological paradox embedded in this operation, the act of looking backward would also lead to the more general recognition that this constitutive material was in a rapid state of decay. Local culture, such as it would emerge, would work to both safeguard and promote these social practices.

During the moment of its formation, those social practices that would serve as the basis for this local culture were adapted and purposed almost exclusively towards the practice of non-mechanically reproduced forms of artistic expression. On the one hand we can understand this as a function of local culture’s historical imperative. Those forms of artistic expression that constituted the first wave of Sandra Gwyn’s Newfoundland Renaissance – music, writing, visual arts and theatre – all had some manner of perceived historical precedent. The idea of their continued tradition was as important as the historical location of the social practices that informed them. But on the other hand we can also understand their initial practice as one of utility. Those new civic spaces that had resulted from the Resettlement and modernization initiatives were barely a generation

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1 In the years following the formation of this local culture the operation of reconciliation has often given way to its homologue, nostalgia; a phenomenon rightly if not imprecisely taken to task by cultural critics (in particular James Overton and to a lesser extent F.L. Jackson). Reconciliation is often misread as nostalgia, an analytical misstep that is specific to superstructural critiques of Newfoundland culture. Focussing their attentions exclusively on the rather long history of superstructural appropriation of local social practice for the purposes of generating capital (i.e. promoting tourism), these critics came to articulate a teleological model of cultural formation wherein it is the business of local culture to sell the past. It is imperative that we not only recognize the distinction between reconciliation and nostalgia but also their locations in the historical development of local culture.
old, their attendant social and economic systems relatively new. The conditions necessary
to sustain film production had just come into being.

In one sense then we can understand the commencement of local film production
(that is, film production in the service of a local culture) as being based upon the
maturation of not only those social and economic systems attendant with Confederation,
but also of that first wave of non-mechanically reproducible art forms that constituted a
local culture. We have already considered the former issue at some length; suffice it to
add here that the maturation of these systems in rural Newfoundland was largely
facilitated by the work of the Memorial University of Newfoundland Extension Service.
At the same time the Extension Service would also assist in the maturation of the latter,
contributing both directly and indirectly to the proliferation and development of these art
forms and working to facilitate their status as the constitutive media of local culture. As
we shall now see, its rather peculiar ability to facilitate both manners of development
would ensure that the Extension Service would play a coordinating role in an emerging
practice of local film production.

Representation as organized response

At its core, what the Extension Service had managed to do was install itself as an
apparatus responsible for the facilitation and maintenance of certain aspects of state and
civil society via a mandate that sought to engage the base and, if necessary, the
superstructure as well. By contrast Smallwood’s programs had functioned in precisely the
opposite manner: conceived as superstructural operations, the manners in which they
would come to engage the base paid little regard to any organizing logic(s) within the
base that may have existed. Those objectives that shaped the Resettlement and modernization initiatives, when they were articulated, appear as nothing more than state-sponsored correctives to what was interpreted to be a distorted and dysfunctional base. In the historical moment immediately following Confederation, the Extension Service would prove to be the only organization capable of performing such a representative function; the Provincial Government – still a new entity – was ill-suited towards the task.

That this bears upon the present discussion of film production owes much to the broader ideas of representation developed through the various projects undertaken by the Extension Service. It would be entirely incorrect to suggest that such ideas were ever developed through the articulation of an organized policy or any other manner of direct and coherent address. Its singularly hybrid composition as an organization would ensure that mandate, such as it may have existed, was embodied through a broad praxis that sought facilitate the development of localized modes of social and economic organization as well as localized modes of media production. The synthesis of these modes of praxis would in fact commence well before the period under examination. Between 1962 and 1977 the Extension Service produced the television show *Decks Awash*, the first local audiovisual media that sought to profile, engage with, and ultimately assist fishermen in both their labour and organizational practices. Though it is often overlooked in favour of the subsequent National Film Board of Canada co-produced *Newfoundland Project*, the *Decks Awash* initiative is not only Newfoundland’s first experiment in participatory media, it is more accurately the first mobilization of a highly nuanced conception of representation, one informed in equal parts by media, labour, and social practice (which is to say culture as we have defined it).
My thinking on the particular function of the Extension Service here proceeds equally from Marx’s characterization of the French peasantry in his *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon* as it does from David Lloyd and Paul Thomas’ reading of that characterization. In Marx’s famous assertion that “they cannot represent one another, they must themselves be represented, (98)” Lloyd and Thomas detect the foundations of a much broader theory of representation, one that places culture at the centre of a pedagogy of representation that, by way of a range of metonymical operations, seeks to instruct both base and superstructure and provide them with a shared idea of representational practice in the form of politics\(^2\). Though Lloyd and Thomas are ultimately unsuccessful in their attempt to fully articulate this process – their model affected by their inability to pin down a firm concept of representation – the idea of culture as a facilitator of a certain practice of representation is a compelling one. What is missing from their consideration of representation, and what we are precisely presented with in the institution of the Extension Service, is a material conduit with which to shape ideas of how one thing may stand or perhaps more accurately speak for another. This uniquely positioned organization is the very thing that facilitates a range of metonymical operations into a specialized form of representational practice.

The reason why the Extension Service so conveniently fits within their model is because as an organization it was engaged in *practically* facilitating a number of modes of representation, both social-economic and aesthetic. Had the unit operated via some other means (i.e. non-praxis), or had it been limited to the service of facilitating only one mode of representation (social-economic or aesthetic), it would have fallen short of the

\(^2\) See David Lloyd and Paul Thomas “Culture and Society or Culture and the State?” in *Culture and the State*. 
full range of operations needed to realize Lloyd and Thomas’ model. Though additional research on the precise function of the Extension Service within both the University that maintained it and the society it sought to serve remains to be undertaken, it will suffice for my purposes to admit it as an institution whose practice of facilitating various modes of representation with the economic base would mobilize and shape a broad idea of representation as an organized social response. That the Extension Service would also be the first locally rooted organization to be able to engage in the activity of film production would only cement this significance. Both its approach towards filmmaking and the films it would come to produce would have a significant impact on the development of all film production during the epoch under consideration.

In more direct terms, the Extension Service may best be understood as an organization responsible for coordinating a range of film production practices, each arising out of or tailored to a local impetus. Though we have yet to learn about its trajectory as an organization more broadly, what we do know of its trajectory as a film producing organization suggests its pivotal role in the proliferation of production practices. The Decks Awash series, the first of its audiovisual experiments, arose out of the Extension Service’s general mandate for community animation. This confluence between media and social impetus dovetailed with the developing mandate of the NFB, particularly through its embodiment in Challenge for Change/Société Nouvelle. The jointly produced Newfoundland Project (1967) would secure films role in the Extension Service’s delivery of its programming; the project itself would serve as the impetus for a

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3 At the time of this writing, Jeff Webb, Associate Professor of History at the Memorial University of Newfoundland is engaged in two projects that will ultimately assist in interpreting the larger function of the Extension Service in the mobilization of Newfoundland culture. The first is an intellectual history of the Memorial University of Newfoundland; the second is a shorter study on the Extension Service.
dedicated Media Unit within the Service that would engage in similar types of production. The NFB had established a presence in Newfoundland well before Confederation but the *Newfoundland Project* had represented a conceptual shift for that organization: its immediately subsequent productions in Newfoundland would pay markedly more attention to local subjects than the organization had previously.

Some seven years after the *Newfoundland Project*, a different branch of the Extension Service, its Arts Section, received a grant from the Canada Council to establish a Film Advisory Centre and related Filmmaker in Residence Program. Perceived as ill suited towards the establishment and maintenance of such programs, both the Extension Service and a provisional Filmmakers Association petitioned the Canada Council to re-assess the grant, an action that would ultimately see the provisional association receive $7,000.00 of the original $17,500.00 awarded to the Extension Service. Along with the diverted funding, the Association would receive material assistance from the National Film Board of Canada as well as material and production assistance from the Extension Service’s Media Unit. Branding itself as the Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers Cooperative (NIFCO), this new organization would be the first to engage in the production of non-documentary film. It would also give birth to a range of other private production companies, each of which would depend upon the material infrastructure established and developed under the auspices of NIFCO⁴.

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⁴ The course of events leading to the establishment of NIFCO that are described here are based upon the account provided in a document authored by NIFCO, “History of Organization to Co-op Status,” which is reproduced as Appendix 3. As there seems to be some discrepancy between the various written accounts of the establishment of the organization, I am deferring to the internally authored account of the formation of this organization.
Rather than making a case for the centrality of the Extension Service in the historical development of film production in Newfoundland in terms wholly rooted in the *Newfoundland Project*, the impetus for this chapter proceeds from my desire to critically rescue the institution from this specific project and to more accurately account for the institution itself as something that gave structure to the practice of film production more generally during the epoch under consideration. In the interest of asserting its central position during this epoch, my discussion of the Extension Service, and of the *Newfoundland Project* itself, necessarily falls between that of the National Film Board of Canada and the Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers Co-operative.

The NFB revisits more, better, greater

If the National Film Board of Canada’s output during the epoch of institutional culture had been initially sympathetic towards and ultimately uninterested in Smallwood and his idea of more, better, greater, neither he nor his project would enjoy such deferential treatment after his exit from politics in 1972. Julian Biggs’ 1970 biopic, *A Little Fellow From Gambo – The Joey Smallwood Story*, would be his swan song. Afterwards, the man and his program would serve as the objects of intense if not nuanced scrutiny.

As one of the central characters of Michael Rubbo’s *Waiting for Fidel* (1974), Smallwood travels to Cuba along with formal political opponent and prominent Newfoundland broadcaster Geoff Stirling for the purposes of supposedly conducting an extended interview with Fidel Castro that will, we are informed during the course of the film, be sold to major American television networks. Smallwood is to be the interviewer,
Stirling the financier, and Rubbo the filmmaker. Like the Beckett play from which the film derives its title, Fidel, following the lead of Godot, never does appear; the dramatic action is that which occurs during the course of the waiting. Ostensibly, none of this is to the liking of Mr. Stirling who consistently and colourfully expresses his frustration on camera to Rubbo and anyone else that might be willing to listen. Smallwood, meanwhile, passes his time by developing picayune questions for the interview that never occurs.

“Prime minister, you’re a doctor, doctor Fidel Castro: doctor of what?” he begins, to which he immediately rejoins, “and was the doctorate conferred on you honoris causa?”

What makes this film significant for local audiences is Smallwood is represented as being made to wait. If *A Little Fellow From Gambo* was a reaffirmation of Smallwood’s political power – embodied in no small part through the representation his triumphant defeat of John Crosbie for the leadership of Newfoundland’s Liberal party – Rubbo’s film works to precisely the opposite end. The action of *Waiting for Fidel* climaxes when Smallwood receives word that the interview with Castro is a go only to realize that he has no appropriate attire for the purpose. His solution is to borrow a suit from one of Rubbo’s crew. The effort is, of course, for naught; the meeting never materializes. The sartorial comedy of errors is immediately followed with a scene of Smallwood, in costume, relaying to the production team why the interview fell through (Fig. 1). That Smallwood would be so ill prepared for his purpose smacks of incommensurability. As a character in political society, he had taken pains to codify himself as the very embodiment of dynamism, the prophet of modernization. He is not only unable to gain an audience with the very person whose participation motivated the production, he *appears* comfortable with that fact, unperturbed by his ineffectiveness. It
is a document that only seems plausible at the end of Smallwood’s political career, dubious as the representation of his authority is here\(^5\).

Fig 1. *Waiting For Fidel*. Vladimir prepares to meet Godot.

For local audiences, this idea would have been reinforced by way of the general conditions of exhibition. For a great number of Newfoundlanders, long outtakes and passages from this film are known but not in the form of a discrete text called *Waiting For Fidel*. Rather, footage was frequently exhibited on Stirling’s television station, CJON (Newfoundland Television) late at night or on weekends. Generally this footage is of extended discussions between Stirling and Smallwood on subjects that would have been too esoteric for inclusion in the film, ranging from Stirling’s spirituality to the covert operations of the Central Intelligence Agency. Though not uncommon within the context of the network’s idiosyncratic programming mandate, the singular lack of context for this footage only serves to acutely demonstrate Smallwood’s ineffectiveness. Sitting shirtless on (what in this particular exhibition context remains) an unidentified beach and waxing philosophical about New Age spirituality with his former political rival, these outtakes

\(^5\) Rubbo’s overtly constructivist approach in this film has served as the object for a number of critical including. See in particular Jeannette Sloniowski’s “Performing the Master Narratives: Michael Rubbo’s *Waiting for Fidel*” (*Candid Eyes: Essays on Canadian Documentary*) and Bill Nichols’ *Blurred Boundaries: Questions of Meaning in Contemporary Culture*. 
leave us to wonder about the status of Smallwood’s self-defined revolutionary ideals, and moreover, of his attitude toward those ideals and their ultimate outcomes.

In practical terms what both iterations of *Waiting For Fidel* represent is the decisive end of the NFB’s celebration of those industries attendant with Smallwood’s modernization project and an increased focus on local subjects that were affected by that modernization project. The shift is not without broader institutional precedence. Challenge for Change/Société Nouvelle would result in an institution-wide re-evaluation of what constituted appropriate film subjects. And with the establishment of the NFB’s Atlantic Centre at Halifax in 1973, the process of decentralization brought about by the CFC/SN Project was given further structure. Filmmakers within the new federally manufactured placeholder of East Coast (that is, the Maritimes + Newfoundland and Labrador) were given greater freedom to explore local subjects within that context. This institutional realignment would dovetail with the aims of an emerging local Newfoundland culture. In the wake of *Waiting for Fidel*, both social practice and its corollary, artistic practice, would serve as the basis NFB productions.

The 1975 joint biopic *The Brothers Byrne* embodies this shift. Focussing on Pat and Joe Byrne, educators, musicians, and former residents of the resettled community of Paradise in Placentia Bay, William Gough’s film stands as the first produced by the NFB that would directly address Smallwood’s Resettlement program in wholly negative, albeit tentative, terms. There is an uncertainty to the structure: using the brothers’ song “The Government Game” – a lament for those affected by Resettlement and modernization – as a *leitmotif*, the film chronicles the brothers’ careers in their adopted home of St. John’s while at the same time captures one of their many apparent pilgrimages to their home.
During the course of their lengthy voyage by open boat, the pair call upon a number of outports, speaking, eating and performing with the few families that remain. When they finally arrive at Paradise, nothing remains. Their cursory tour of the community reveals that the house they were born in has been completely levelled by the elements and that, in an ultimate synecdoche of abandonment, the Stations of the Cross at the church have been destroyed. The unpeopling of their community is complete (Fig. 2).

But if this final image embodies the Byrnes’ perceived spiritual death of outport Newfoundland, the structure of the film provides a nagging counterpoint to this idea. Realized as a road movie, the film provides little space for commentary on the status of the Resettlement and modernization initiatives outside of this specific journey. We can quite literally see the effects of these initiatives as the brothers move from Newfoundland’s largest city, St. John’s, to the town of Placentia, a designated growth centre, to South East Bight, a resettled community in which a few families have chosen to remain, and then on to the abandoned Paradise; theirs is a journey from sanctioned to unsanctioned space. But Gough tends to only include commentary recorded during the course of the brothers’ travels, not commentary generated in a static interview environment. The result is marked ambivalence. Though both Byrnes understand themselves as products of a society that was effectively unsanctioned, they recognize that their respective stations in their adopted home would be untenable in a Paradise that endured Resettlement and modernization. Theirs is a position of neither nor; their recourse to artistic practice in the form of folk song provides a space in which they are able to reconcile themselves to such ambivalence. Over the final shot of the film – one
that sees the brothers walking towards a graveyard in the distance – the final verse of “The Government Game” plays:

And when my soul leaves me for the heavens above,
Take me back to Great Paradise, the place that I love,
And there on my tombstone, right next to my name,
Just say I died playing the government game.

Fig. 2. *The Brothers Byrne*. From left to right: their childhood home, the abandoned Stations of the Cross and the inexorable march.

Such structural ambivalence is also palpable in Tony Ianzelo and Andy Thomson’s 1976 documentary *Blackwood*, the Academy Award-nominated profile of the Newfoundland printmaker David Blackwood. Quite unlike *The Brothers Byrne*, Ianzelo and Thomson locate this ambivalence in the juxtaposition of Blackwood’s craft and its source material: the physical and human geography of Wesleyville on the northeast coast of Newfoundland. Blackwood the subject restricts his commentary to the technical aspects of printmaking while Gordon Pinsent, the narrator, reads un-credited first-person accounts of the events that serve as Blackwood’s material. All of this is supplemented by footage of Blackwood’s prints and newly produced footage from Wesleyville meant to give a visual foundation for his images. The sublime character of Blackwood’s work notwithstanding, the film comes to embody ambivalence by ways of its manner of
compartmentalization. Blackwood the artist is only ever photographed at work in his dimly lit studio, perceptibly some distance away from the spaces that constitute his idea of Wesleyville. He is codified as a scribe of distant memories from a distant place, not as an artist working in situ (Fig. 3).

Fig. 3. Blackwood. From left to right: the artist in his studio, the staged source material, and the final product.

What it is that these early documentaries from the epoch of local culture have in common is an impetus to re-imagine a contemporary Newfoundland reality, one that existed as much in contradistinction from preceding epoch as it is informed by it. Waiting for Fidel had deflated the architect of that reality, The Brothers Byrne and Blackwood would serve as case studies for the ends of that architecture. Within the context of the NFB, however, this is short-lived movement, concluding in 1982 with William MacGillivray’s The Author of These Words: Harold Horwood. A fitting cadence, MacGillivray’s film is constructed upon a series of interviews with the author, labour organizer, and ex-Smallwood cabinet minister turned ardent Smallwood critic. Horwood’s ambivalence is direct: his personal narrative is characterized by its unease – with his status as a politician, as an intellectual, and as a public figure – a condition mirrored in his performance for the camera. He is, at all times hesitant, clearly weary of how he weaves the events of his life into the spoken word. It is a tendency painfully
exemplified during a brief discussion with Smallwood about his dissension. Horwood is never able match Smallwood’s scolding gaze: his aspect is of one receiving punishment (Fig. 4). The final moments of the film reinforce this extreme unease. “Does the term Renaissance man seem appropriate?” MacGillivray asks. “Yes, I’ve always thought of myself as a Leonardo DaVinci,” Horwood responds over a long shot of his exiled homestead in the Nova Scotia’s Annapolis Valley. This is the remuneration Horwood’s lifelong commitment to Newfoundland: displacement.

Fig. 4. The Author of These Words. The master scolds his rebellious pupil; the latter deflects.

During this little movement the NFB had also engaged in a range of its more traditional activities, particularly the creation of film on subjects of apparent national significance. In addition to its piece in the on-going Canada Vignette series, the NFB also produced films on the national park at Gros Morne, John Cabot, the Beothuk, and Leifr Eiríksson, Viking Visitors to North America (1979), which continues to be exhibited at the interpretation centre at the National Historic Site at L’Anse aux Meadows. Yet the single most frequent subject of the NFB’s productions would be the fishery. The Newfoundland Project would give the tally its initial numbers: the joint NFB-MUN Extension project would see the production of 27 films in total. But more than providing volume, the Newfoundland Project established a tendency towards promoting a type of
social reconciliation, a corollary of that reconciliation sought after by the contemporaneous generation of artists. The fishery was the emblem of Newfoundland: it was understood to be the reason for its settlement, the reason for its collapse (in the drastic reduction of the price of fish attendant with the Great Depression), and had survived both modernization and Resettlement. In this historical moment, one that allowed for such reconciliation initiatives, the semiotic force of the fishery asserted itself. If the fishery could endure, there was some hope for the new social, political, and economic systems.

In the years following the Newfoundland Project, the NFB produced a number of films that took the fishery and outport life as their subjects: the industry and the society were understood to be homologous if not mutually constitutive. The first exclusively NFB produced film to explore either subject after the Newfoundland Project was Beverly Shaffer’s Julie O’Brien (1981), part of the Children of Canada series. Loosely structured around a “school assignment to write an essay about the old times in Newfoundland, how they have changed, how they are still remembered” (“Our Collection” N. pag.), the film centres upon eleven-year old O’Brien and the apparent continuity of life in Tors Cove, a small community on the Southern Shore of the Avalon Peninsula. In Projecting Canada: Government Policy and Documentary Film at the National Film Board, Zoë Druick suggests the film, like the remainder in the series, is constructed on a principle of typicality: it operates by collapsing “regional identity into the figure of a typical child, who innocently explains his or her cultural identity for the benefit of an outsider” (161). The process Druick detects here bears equal relevance to our discussion. For as much as the film may have worked to normativize a regional identity in a national context, locally
it would also have normativized an idea of social perpetuation. Julie’s life appears to straddle the old and the new: she helps her family with collecting firewood by horse-drawn sled, runs the family wash through a hand wringer, and makes breakfast for her younger siblings, all tasks that ought to have been rendered anachronistic by way of modernization and Resettlement. Julie’s apparent ease with these chores – indeed her evident pride in performing them – suggests some degree of perpetuation of certain social practices. Like the films of *Newfoundland Project*, *Julie O’Brien* demonstrates the possibility of blending, that there is not only a need to continue certain customs within these new systems, these new systems may ultimately be informed and shaped by those customs. There is the implication of a new form of social agency.

In the fourteen-year span between the *Newfoundland Project* and *Julie O’Brien*, the work of constructing such social agency largely lay within the domain of the Memorial University of Newfoundland Extension Service. If Low’s films had offered a novel public forum through which to negotiate the role of historical social practice within a new reality, Don Snowden, the Director of the Extension Service and Fred Earle, the local fieldworker at Fogo provided the necessary framework for that forum. The *Newfoundland Project* was by no means their first audiovisual foray in rural Newfoundland, but it remains their most impactful, giving rise to a certain rhetoric of outport social agency that was defined by the struggle to locate custom within the modern. In practical terms, this would often mean re-imagining the fishery in a newly industrialized setting, a tendency that would lead to the proliferation of a type of film within the Extension Service that is sometimes disparagingly referred to as the “angry fisherman film”. That the tendency arose is not surprising: the structure of MUN
Extension and its reliance upon community fieldworkers and in-house film producers pre-empted the critical distance that Low and his crew would have been able to maintain. But even more than this, the proliferation of this rhetoric would have implication for NFB films that endeavoured to focus upon similar subjects. Even Mort Ransen’s *Bayo* (1984), one of the few narrative films ever produced in Newfoundland by the NFB, seems to rehearse the basic dilemma that was first captured by Low’s *Billy Crane Moves Away*: is it simply better for the outport subject to relocate and embrace all that is modern or to remain and attempt to balance custom with the modern?

This legacy comes heavily to bear on Mary Jane Gomes and Emil Kolompar’s *Finest Kind Petty Harbour Newfoundland* (1987), which appears as a mono-textual redux of the *Newfoundland Project*. Here, a number of people from the Petty Harbour fish plant discuss their efforts at modernizing their facilities, the cooperative work they have undertaken to ensure the continuation of their mode of labour as well as the life of their community, and what appears to be the death of the inshore fishery. Twenty years out from the *Newfoundland Project*, Gomes and Kolompar’s subjects demonstrate the degree to which fishermen and plant workers have come to organize themselves within these new political and economic systems. Their cooperative is attempting to find the markets for their product, it is looking to attract other fishermen to process their catch at their onshore facilities, it is liaising with Provincial and Federal Governments for subsidies and support. These subjects have seemingly integrated themselves into these new systems to an extraordinary degree yet the entire project remains tenuous. As Tom Best, Chairman of the Petty Harbour Fishermen’s Committee suggests in the final moments, the power that would ultimately allow for the success of their cooperative is not theirs:
“we’re keeping this unit together by ourselves, for ourselves. If this gets off the ground, finest kind. And it will. This is the last piece of land and we’re going to stay here. This is what we’re going to do. This is what we want to do”.

As we now know, *Finest Kind Petty Harbour* would be the last film by the NFB that would focus on an active Newfoundland fishery. Five years after its release, the Federal Government imposed a moratorium on the North Atlantic cod fishery, putting a definitive end to both the inshore and offshore forms of the industry. The NFB’s response was notably underwhelming: only Nigel Markham’s *Taking Stock* (1994) and Debbie McGee’s *An Untidy Package* (1997) would address the aftermath of the moratorium, a hasty cadence to an otherwise expansive body of work. Both films are admirable for the scope of their focus. Shot around the announcement of the moratorium in July of 1992, Markham’s film is nothing less than a systematic examination of the full range of factors that led to the depletion of the cod stocks. Anchoring the piece with interviews from key figures in the industry – Pearce Burry, an inshore fisherman, Bill Cox, a trawler captain; Cabot Martin, President of the Newfoundland Inshore Fishermen’s Association; and Vic Young, the president of Fisheries Products International – Markham aims for a comprehensive post-mortem of the industry. The outcome suggests that the blame is to be shared, if unequally, between fishermen, private industry, and provincial and federal forms of government: communication, or the lack thereof between these agencies, is the real perpetrator. McGee’s film, meanwhile, examines the fallout of the moratorium amongst a representative group of women from outport Newfoundland, emphasizing the inability of the government’s financial aid programs – Northern Cod Adjustment and Rehabilitation Program (NCARP) and The Atlantic Groundfish Strategy (TAGS) – to
actually assist those affected by the moratorium. Her film does not endeavour to address the same questions as Markham’s but it arrives at a similar conclusion: lack of effective communication is, once again, the perpetrator.

It is tempting to draw a correlation between this apparent communication breakdown and the short shrift the NFB would give to this historic subject. After all, it was a project they co-sponsored that provided what was widely believed to be an effective model of communication for, among other things, fisheries management. That two post-mortems of the industry arrived at similar conclusions – mismanagement by way of poor communication – would suggest that the Newfoundland Project had been a categorical failure and something necessarily tucked under the rug. After all, how could an organization that had a hand in developing a model of communications for this industry rightly come to suggest that the failure could be in part blamed on the very model of communication they helped develop? What in fact did happen was something more along the lines of institutional repositioning. As we have already seen, there was a curious gap in films about the fishery from the Newfoundland Project until Bayo (1984); the bulk of the NFB’s production on the subject in the intervening years occurring in conjunction with MUN Extension. The Fogo Process, the communicative model developed during the Newfoundland Project, would come to be the defining practice of the latter organization, one that would end along with the organization when its doors were also shuttered in 1991. Meanwhile, the NFB would seek to engage other social issues in the province, particularly women’s rights in the work of Debbie McGee and Gerry Rogers. The task of representing the fishery had simply passed, as did the model of communications attendant with it.
If the NFB had worked to usher in this epoch of performance culture with analyses and experiments in both social and aesthetic form, its course through that epoch would see it arrive at a place of comparative conservatism. The inquest into “more, better, greater” established the conditions for Newfoundland to become more accurately represented by and within the NFB’s codes, a Canadian province that could now be interpreted to and by the rest of Canada. Its long-term partner, MUN Extension, would attempt to continue the novel work of social animation, a subject to which we now turn our attentions.

The local facilitation of representative practices

Established in 1959 under the directorship of John Colman, the Memorial University of Newfoundland Extension Service represented what, at the time, would prove to be a novel experiment in the practice of community outreach. Much more than a continuing education division, the Service was meant to broadly promote all forms of community development, with particular emphasis on outport Newfoundland. Exceedingly broad by present-day standards, the Extension Service’s mandate was a singular product of both the personnel responsible for its creation as well as the communities it sought to serve. Smallwood himself had famously, if perhaps apocryphally, asserted that he would rather have a small university with a large Extension Service than a large university with a small Extension Service: a secondary mechanism meant to assist in the projects of Resettlement and modernization. At the outset of the organization, both projects were in their infancy; Smallwood had reasoned that the expanding university was well positioned to integrate itself into that work. As Jeff Webb
and Terry Bishop-Stirling have pointed out more recently, Colman, for his part, believed that the success of such a service “would have to be both tailored to local conditions and experimental” (45). The pair cite his correspondence to Smallwood: “[t]here must be no hesitation in trying new projects, or in abandoning activities which have manifestly failed. That there will be failures and setbacks is evident to anyone familiar with the problems of organizing extension activities anywhere, quite apart from the special difficulties which arise in Newfoundland” (45). And then there were the communities themselves, transitioning from historical forms of social, economic and political practices into new ones, some of the “special difficulties” to which Colman refers. The net result of these influences would be the organization’s adoption of a de facto mandate to practically facilitate a number of modes of representative practice. Its primary innovation was that it made little practical distinction between social and aesthetic forms of representation, a practice that has made the accounting of its film production, in particular, a difficult task.

The difficulty of that task, at the outset, is compounded by the want for information concerning the Extension Service’s first foray into film production, the *Decks Awash* television series, a documentary program devoted to the current state of the fishery. First airing on the CJON network in January of 1962, the Extension Service would continue to produce thirteen-week seasons of half-hour episodes until 1977 when, as Catherine Horan suggests in her entry on *Decks Awash* in the *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland*, it was discontinued due to the appearance of a similar manner of program on the local Canadian Broadcasting Corporation affiliate. Supplemented by a periodical of the same name, the textual incarnation of *Decks Awash* is more widely known.

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6 Though Horan does not identify it, it seems likely the program to which she is referring is *Land & Sea*, which began airing in 1977.
throughout the province than its audiovisual counterpart. A testament to the journal’s popularity, its circulation ended in 1993, two years after the closure of the Extension Service itself.

What is apparent from the earliest existing materials⁷ is that the first incarnation of this initiative – that is, the program in tandem with the periodical – was something of a prototype for the *Newfoundland Project*. The coordinating principle for both projects is strikingly similar. Excerpted from the editorial in the November 1964 edition of the periodical:

> We should like to repeat here what was said in our first newsletter of last year, namely, that, “one of the, ways in which the “Deck Awash” [sic] series may be of practical assistance is to inform you of what other fishermen are thinking and doing. Most of us whether we are fishermen or not, can learn something from other people. We realize, of course, that the same piece of information is not likely to meet, in every detail, the exact need of every one of a number of fishermen. We are also sure that every fisherman who is putting thought into his job will welcome suggestions from other fishermen who are “making good” and we will be anxious to get as much information as possible about every phase of the fishery”. (2)

At the core of both initiatives is the *belief* in the value of a system of information exchange that proceeds horizontally rather than vertically. Fishermen are themselves the best arbiters of what information is ultimately valuable to their livelihoods, not government or industry.

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⁷ Presently, no copies of the periodical prior to 1964 are extant; for the program, nothing prior to 1966 is extant.
Where the *Decks Awash* initiative critically differed from the *Newfoundland Project* was in its centralized mode of production and distribution. While the latter would come to be celebrated precisely because of its local-ness, its products originating at the point of the community and proceeding outwards, the former was defined by its reliance on traditional news gathering practices that determined content and distribution via a single point at some physical remove: St. John’s. That the Extension Service would come to rely on such a model owed as much to the technical limitations of its production capabilities as it did to certain editorial limitations that arose out of its dual-media format.

To the former: those early episodes quite clearly appear to be the work of amateur production staff working within limited means. Episodes tended to be produced in one long take, camera work was almost exclusively conducted with the use of mounts, and all graphic work, including titles, was integrated diegetically rather than in post-production (Fig. 5). To the latter: its rendering as periodical and televised series created a tendency to examine a limited set of subjects that would lend themselves to rendering in both media. Meant, at the outset, to provide textual summaries of episode content, the periodical would necessitate that its audiovisual counterpart was relying heavily on subjects that could be represented by way of process analysis, not subjects shaped exclusively by discourse. The earliest editions of the periodical read as distillations of lecture notes; the earliest episodes of the series appear, unsurprisingly, to be lectures given in-studio by scientists as well as government and industry representatives (see, again, Fig. 5). The result is that quite unlike its various successors, the *Decks Awash*

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8 There are more general questions here regarding which production staff, what facilities they were using, and where it is that they received their training. The earliest evidence of any Extension Service staff receiving formal training and equipment comes from 1968 when a number of personnel received training at NFB facilities in Montreal in the wake of the *Newfoundland Project*. (*Fogo Process in Communication* c. 1971, 9; Starblanket 38; Lee 30).
initiative is defined by its formal conservatism. Its revolutionary aspect is disguised by its outwardly conventional format.

Fig. 5: Decks Awash. Alan Pinhorn lectures on the life history of cod in this 1966 episode.

What it was that Decks Awash had managed to do, a task that both periodical and series continued to perform after their separation some time between 1965 and 1968⁹, was develop a new set of customs and attitudes around and towards communication about the fishery. As conventional as it may now appear, those earliest episodes represent the first attempts to place government and industry representatives in as direct visual contact as possible with a labour force that, depending upon their location, would have known such agents only by way of radio and union newsletters. This was the first time one half of the industry could quite literally see the other half. At the same time, the series’ reliance upon government and industry personnel also worked to establish a certain communicative responsibility. The comparative anonymity of print and radio had permitted superstructure to base communications to be a functionally elective task. In this emerging network of visual communications, one that sought to, among other things, represent fishermen to fishermen, it was imperative that government and industry were also represented in order to mitigate what could otherwise have turned out to be a one-

⁹ There are no extant periodicals for 1966 and 1967.
sided representation. Of course the Provincial Government had a vested interest in participating in this manner of exchange: the series represented an organ through which it could inform the base about the various modernization initiatives for the fishery. But perhaps even more critically, the participation of government in this exchange ensured that such a debate was not exclusively taking place within the base, something that had occurred at the turn of the twentieth century, facilitated by the newspaper of the once thriving Fisherman’s Protective Union, *The Advocate*. *Decks Awash* not only provided a necessary forum for all relevant parties to engage in a process of information sharing, its visual construction allowed for a particular refinement of the discourse that arose out of the process of information sharing, a refinement that would, in time, come to be more rooted in its media than it would be in the exchange of actual information.

With the appointment of Donald Snowden as the Director of the Extension Service in 1964, the community media practice that began under Colman would transition into its more critically celebrated form. Prior to this appointment, Snowden, a trained journalist, had worked as the Director for Saskatchewan’s provincial bureau of tourism and as an economic development agent for what at that time was known as the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Under his direction, the Extension Service’s mandate to facilitate community development remained functionally the same but what Snowden brought with him was an increased awareness of a range of federal partnership and granting programs. Not only would he serve as the architect for the multi-year partnership between the Extension Service and the NFB, he was also the central force behind its long-term relationship with the Donner Canadian Foundation, the
primary source of the Extension Service’s funding for a number of film and video projects.

The early years of Snowden’s tenure as Director of the Extension Service were defined by his singular ability to build and maintain relationships that allowed for the work of community animation to continue uninhibited. Only recently have scholars come to emphasize and account for what can more accurately be referred to as his talent for disinterested facilitation, something that has made the historical accounting of his position in the development of the *Newfoundland Project* and its attendant Fogo Process an awkward task. Snowden has been, at times, mythologized as the author of the process, particularly by the Don Snowden Program for Development Communication at the University of Guelph, and at others, particularly in older critical accounts of the NFB, he is relegated to the status of Colin Low’s assistant. More recently, Susan Newhook has conducted a valuable interrogation of both narratives\(^\text{10}\), but for the purposes of our consideration, her observations on Snowden’s role in facilitating the *Newfoundland Project* specifically help to provide a framework through which we can understand the development of community-rooted film production practice at the Extension Service.

First, as Newhook, Webb and Stirling all point out, upon assuming the Directorship, Snowden did not interrupt the practice of deploying field workers throughout outport Newfoundland to help facilitate any and all forms of community development (Newhook 181-2; Webb and Stirling 46). This was an important feature of the service as Colman had envisioned it and one that only seems to have expanded under Snowden’s directorship. By 1969 there were a total of eight fieldworkers active

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throughout the province, five of which were located in communities on the Island:
Stephenville, Port au Choix, Corner Brook, the Burin Peninsula, and critically, at
Lewisporte, the site of Fred Earle’s appointment. Servicing a number of communities
on Newfoundland’s northeast coast, Earle was a native of and field worker for Fogo
Island. Both his initial accomplishments as a field worker at Fogo, particularly with its
Improvement Committee, and the presence of his physical person are now frequently
cited as necessary preconditions for the success of the Newfoundland Project. In the first
instance we must recognize that the seeds of this communicative practice were decisively
both non-filmic and non-centralized. Rather, its formation seems to have been
coordinated by way of a local agent charged with the impossibly broad tasks of assisting
with community organization and community development.

Second, as Newhook has revealed, Snowden’s ability to engage the NFB
specifically seems to have been something of a happy accident that occurred only
because of his knowledge of federal programs. Citing an unpublished master’s thesis by
Wendy Quarry on the Fogo Process, Newhook records that upon reading the Economic
Council of Canada’s 1965 Report on Poverty in Canada, an incensed Snowden
communicated with R.A.J. Phillips, member of the Privy Council and director of “The
War on Poverty Program in Canada,” about creating a series of films on poverty in
Newfoundland. Though Phillips did not respond to Snowden’s written communication,
Quarry suggests that Phillips took the broader idea of a series of film on poverty in
Canada to the NFB and that it was NFB producer John Kemeny who had contacted
Snowden about the possibility of creating a film in Newfoundland under the auspices of

11 In Labrador, fieldworkers were located at Labrador City, Churchill Falls, and Cartwright.
Challenge for Change/Société Nouvelle. Kemeny had specifically recommended Colin Low direct the project. Snowden, in turn, would introduce Low to a number of suitable communities and it was ultimately Low that made the final selection of Fogo (Newhook 178). In the second instance then, we must also recognize that the impetus to realize a community animation project by way of the medium of film did not lay solely with the domain of Extension Service. The degree to which the Extension Service possessed either relevant personnel or equipment to facilitate such an initiative without assistance is questionable. The NFB offered the practical means with which to facilitate the

*Newfoundland Project.*

Restricting his manoeuvres to the level of superstructure, Snowden was successful in facilitating an extensive communications project that not only seemed to originate from but also was decisively successful at mobilizing members of the base. The Extension Service had served as a mediator between Fogo Island and the NFB, ensuring the activities of the latter’s federally mandated Challenge for Change/Société Nouvelle program were being directed towards a very particular local need. For their part, the residents of Fogo were, with the assistance of the Extension Service, able to shape a response to that need with those means that the NFB had to offer. Though it may seem subtle, this accomplishment is, in fact, quite profound, particularly when considered against what Janine Marchessault has perceptively argued as “the ahistorical conflation of new communication technologies with democratic participation” (144) that arose out of the general Challenge for Change/Société Nouvelle program. No doubt one of the reasons for its significant critical attention, the *Newfoundland Project* represents a singular instance where the mandates of its coordinating organizations had been realized. It did,
indeed, “work,” for two specific reasons. The first is the project’s historical positioning. It was, quite simply, the first time a locally rooted media project such as this had been undertaken in Newfoundland; it was the precedent that would give rise to the technological determinism that Marchessault detects. Second, and owing a great deal to Snowden’s administrative acumen, the distinction between NFB’s and the Extension Service’s mandates allowed each organization to more fully focus upon their assigned objectives, respectively, film production and community development. The second point requires further elaboration, as it is a distinction that the Extension Service was unable to fully maintain in later community film projects.

What is immediately apparent with the original twenty-seven films of the Newfoundland Project is that they are the work of not only an experienced, but also a talented film crew, an observation that serves as the basis of Jerry White’s thorough aesthetic redemption of the project in The Radio Eye. By 1967, Colin Low’s reputation as a director had been firmly established, particularly by way of his recent installation In the Labyrinth for the Montreal Expo, saying nothing of his extensive work as a producer and animator. For their parts, photographer Robert Humble had been working with the NFB since 1951, editor Dennis Sawyer since 1955, and producer John Kemeny since 1959, each with extensive production credits by the time the Newfoundland Project commenced. At the level of the individual film, this combined experience would ensure that even the most loquacious of the talking heads were still visually engaging. Thoughts on Fogo and Norway stands out here: a sixteen-minute discussion between Fred Earle and Cato Wadel, at that time an assistant professor of sociology at the Memorial University of Newfoundland, on the relationship between fishing practices in the two
areas. Material that would in subsequent Extension Service productions serve as the basis for a decisively un-engaging visual experience is rendered here with unexpected vitality. Though we understand the subjects to be speaking at the rear of a fishing stage, mid-way through Wadel’s accounting of the incommensurabilities between Fogo and Norway’s respective practices of the fishing industry we discover the pair are, in fact, supporting themselves on a beached longliner that is also doubling as a child’s playground (still 1, Fig. 6). The timing of this reveal is critical. Had Low disclosed this information off the top, this decisive metaphor for loss and change would seem heavy handed and amateurish. Its precise integration into the diegesis suggests that the visual materials are proceeding along a distinct but parallel course with the audible materials; the sum total of represented material withholds its symbolic commentary until its literal commentary has established its course. Low’s achievement lays in the manufacture of affect. Humble’s cinematography also plays a critical role here, particularly in his ability to frame his subjects. Consistently avoiding any kind of establishing shot, Humble alludes to those objects that compose the *mise en scène*: Earle and Wadel are only ever seen interacting with the edges of these objects (see in particular still 1, Fig. 6). We know where it is that these men are but we are only ever provided with the briefest sketch of that environment, a strategy that is given meaning by the comparative nature of their discussion. What lies beyond the edges of the frame could begin to construct either location, and accordingly either set of circumstances. Humble’s achievement lays in the allusion to and tension between possible realities.
At the level of the project, this combined experience would result in an overall coherence and methodological legibility, both qualities lacking in subsequent Extension Service media projects. These differences can be plotted along two lines. First, at a very basic level, The Newfoundland Project included a prefatory film for non-local audiences, Introduction to Fogo Island (1968), situating its physical location, its demography, its infrastructure, its culture, its industry and those issues which the film project sought to address; a practice that would only be repeated with the Labrador Film Project 1969 film Introduction to Labrador (1970). Though Introduction to Fogo Island is formally quite dissimilar to the remainder of the films – it is notable as the only film to use a voice of god – its presence as a component of the project provides much-needed context for the remaining twenty-six films. And while a number of those films would certainly remain legible in and of themselves, the profundity of Two Cabinet Ministers (1968) in which Eric Jones, the Member of the House of Assembly for Fogo Island, and John Crosbie, then Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing discuss the Provincial Government’s role in aiding development on Fogo would be completely lost. Even the oft-discussed Billy Crane Moves Away is given more meaning when we understand local attitudes towards
the idea of relocation. *Introduction to Fogo* is quite literally the overture; the themes it presents are developed in the remaining movements.

Second, the *Newfoundland Project* endeavoured to represent, in microcosm, an aggregate of social practice, not simply grievances regarding and possible solutions to perceived issues arising out of a specific industrial practice. Films such as *A Wedding and Party*, *Jim Decker’s Party*, and *The Children of Fogo Island* have no direct connection with the talking-head pieces save for the fact that their inclusion in the project works to establish an idea of social continuity that persists in the face of what we know to be a decisive moment in Fogo’s existence. In contradistinction to *Introduction to Fogo Island*, or, for that matter, the remaining process-oriented pieces, these films assert their broader function in wholly non-explicatory terms. We never come to understand the purpose of any of these pieces through the words of their subjects; rather it is the significance of their images – marriage, celebration, youth – that implicate them as representations with a certain generative capacity. They are, of course, all documents of some manner of social renewal and affirmation, a quality that is only enhanced by their keen reliance of the aesthetics of *cinema vérité* as opposed to the convention of direct-address. That they are rendered as *representations* and not interlocutions suggests their methodological function within the larger project: they are spaces in which the more general effort to affect community-rooted development can be evaluated in terms of social reproduction and affirmation. In his thoughtful aesthetic analysis of these films, Jerry White frequently falls back on the words “intimacy” and “connection” to describe their affect. They are words that do equally as well to describe their function within the larger project: these
pieces provide us with a decisively intimate understanding of the initiative and the singular connection between these films.

Lauded by both the Extension Service and the NFB as an unqualified success, the *Newfoundland Project* had encouraged the pair to engage in an on-going partnership in order to promote what would, at least according to the Extension Service, come to be known as the “Fogo Process”\(^\text{12}\). A shorthand for community development through the use of film and/or video production, the Extension Service would only later come to suggest certain conditions for its practice in a 1972 document titled *Fogo Process in Communication: A Reflection on the Use of Film and Video-Tape in Community Development* (not to be confused with their 1971 brochure, *Fogo Process in Communication: A Reflection on the Use of Film as an Inter-Community Communication*). Mandatory components included (1) the presence of a trusted community development worker as the interviewer for the films or videos; (2) a sensitive production crew that are aware of both the community and the communicative process they are facilitating; (3) the absolute trust of the on-camera subjects; (4) the ability to share these documents with those responsible for regional policy; (5) the realization that these documents are “subsidiary to the purpose they serve and that the process deals with community action and not film making [sic]”; and (6) the effective and sensitive distribution of these documents (1972: 5). Cobbled together some five years and at least

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\(^{12}\) The etymology of this term remains uncertain. The first written instance I can confirm comes from a 1970 project proposal authored by the Extension Service titled “A Three Year Development Oriented Media Project for the Connaigre Peninsula on the South Coast of Newfoundland” which states: “[t]he project will expand the “Fogo Process” concept by exploring further the use of video-tape in which all stages are completed by the local people who have been unexposed previously to this or similar medium, and where precise organization is established to allow this (see “the Fogo Process”)” (2). Unfortunately, no heading for the “Fogo Process” exists in the document and the project was never developed. What is interesting here is that the author of the report suggests the process utilizes video tape specifically and not film.
an additional four projects after what might more accurately be described as the convergence of the Fogo Process, this entirely instrumental articulation of what arose before, during and, importantly, after the Newfoundland Project would limit the process’ ability to serve as a catalyst for change. Though it is clear that historical positioning was a contributing factor – the turn towards instrumentality and technological determinism may very well have been inexorable as the awareness of similar projects spread by way of the CFC/SN initiative – the process’ calcification was also certainly facilitated by the Extension Service’s dogmatic insistence that the films were themselves secondary to their use-value. This tendency is quite evident in at least two of four subsequent NFB-Extension Service co-productions about the Newfoundland Project: the George Stoney produced The Specialists at Memorial Discuss the Fogo Films (1969), quite literally the filmed proceedings of a Newfoundland Project post-mortem at the Memorial University of Newfoundland, and Roger Hart’s A Memo From Fogo (1972), the sole, broadly-focused follow up to Low’s films. Both pieces are clearly concerned with the maximum conveyance of information rather than any formal nuance or subtlety, though in fairness to these filmmakers, they were tasked with assessing the affects of discourse rather than actively engaging in it. Unsurprisingly, what these films register is qualified admiration for the Newfoundland Project; its paradigmatic distillation of local experiences and attitudes was cited as the project’s defining strength and its defining weakness.

But even before these evaluative films would come to affect ideas about an instrumental application the Fogo Process from the level of content upwards, events at

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13 The two remaining films are The Winds of Fogo (1969) and When I Go ... That's It! (1972). Jerry White suggests that the former, directed by Low, is the conclusion of the Newfoundland Project though the NFB’s online database contains no listing for the film (2006: 78). The latter, credited to Low, George Stoney, Ron Alexander, and Dennis Sawyer, is a follow-up with Billy Crane who had relocated to Brampton, ON.
the organizational level ensured that the process of repositioning was, chiefly, a downwardly moving phenomenon. In the wake of the Newfoundland Project, both organizations had sought to perpetuate the then un-named methodology. For the Extension Service in particular, that would mean establishing a permanent Film Unit as a part of its Community Development Division. And in the spring of 1968, with financial assistance form the Canadian Donner Foundation, producer-manager Harvey Best, utilization officer-editor Paul MacLeod, cameraman-director Nels Squires, cameraman-editor Joe Harvey, and sound-recordist-editor Randy Coffin – the first iteration of this exclusively tasked production crew – were sent to NFB facilities at Montreal to receive six weeks of formal training along with members of what would become the NFB’s Indian Film Crew. It bears emphasizing that the Community Development Division Film Unit (CDDFU) was not otherwise engaged in media production for the Extension Service with, for example, the on-going Decks Awash series, other Extension film and video productions, or even Memorial’s Educational Television Service which existed from 1967-1986. The CDDFU’s mandate, at least for the initial years of its existence, was, in tandem with Extension Service field workers, to facilitate projects in the manner of the Newfoundland Project. Immediately after the Film Unit had received its training then, the Extension Service partnered with the NFB to conduct a month-long workshop at Memorial University on the “Role of Film in Community Development”. Its purpose, according to both versions of Fogo Process in Communication, was to introduce delegates from Canada and the United States to this new communicative process. But a surviving copy of the workshop itinerary amongst the archival papers of then-Extension Service field worker, Tony Williamson, suggests its function was equally to provide the
necessary training for field workers and CDDFU personnel to work towards the realization of their new, shared, mandate. Along with technical training in film production by Colin Low – presumably for the benefit of field workers – the workshop included seminars on film and society, the role of mass communications in community development, film organization and finance, distribution techniques, and even field screenings of the *Newfoundland Project* films in Calvert, a small community on the Southern Shore of the Avalon Peninsula. This would be one of the great ironies of the development of the Fogo Process. In spite of their stated secondary use as films, Extension Service personnel made it a point to screen the Fogo films at the outset of subsequent projects. The centrepiece of the entire workshop, however, was a new filming project to be based in a community that, on the itinerary, remains unnamed. As we now know, the actual location would be two communities at the terminus of the Southern Shore: Trepassey, a designated growth centre in the Provincial Government’s Resettlement initiative, and St. Shott’s, a much smaller yet comparatively more organized community some 30km to the southwest. Trepassey, with its population of approximately 1000 would not incorporate until 1969 while St. Shott’s, with its population of less than 300, would incorporate in 1963. Presumably these communities were selected for their proximity to St. John’s as well as the unique contrasts they afforded. Historically linked by a shared coastline, parish, and to some extent, population (St. Shott’s was settled permanently by residents of Trepassey), the *apparent* unevenness of their respective efforts at community development made the pair fertile testing ground.

Very little information about the *Trepassey and St. Shott’s Training Project* remains. Of the thirteen titles listed in the *Extension Service, Memorial University of
Newfoundland Media Catalogue, only two title survives. Likewise, in the secondary literature produced by the Extension Service on the development of the Fogo Process, the Trepassey and St. Shott’s films are consistently characterised as “locations for practical training”. No particulars about the project or their films are provided, nor for that matter, are the specific aims of the training project. What is evident from the descriptions in the Media Catalogue is that the project endeavoured to cover a significant amount of ground and included films on topics such as poultry farming (Poultry Farmer – Trepassey and Poultry Farming – Trepassey), the denominational school system (Youth on Religion – St. Shott’s), the cooperative movement (Co-operation and the Future), issues surrounding relocation to a growth centre (The Bennett Family – Trepassey) in addition to the obligatory films on the particular practice of and issues with the fishing industry (Captain Cheaters on Draggers, Mr. and Mrs. Fitzpatrick, and St. Shott’s – Trepassey). There is even a gesture towards cultural practice with St. Shott’s Concert. From outward appearances, the project seems to have been rooted in a similar idea of exploring and interpreting a social reality to those that live within it, but it is important to remember that these pieces are the first cautious efforts by Extension Services personnel to reveal and implement their idea of what the Fogo Process is.

One of the surviving films, Captain Cheaters on Draggers\textsuperscript{14}, provides additional context, both methodological and formal. In the opening moments, one voice amongst the audibly large number of interviewers informs Captain Cheater that the theme for the filming project is “growing pains” and that the production crew are placing specific

\textsuperscript{14} Cheaters is likely an incorrect transmission of Cheater, a rare surname specific to the eastern half of the Island, though the subject of the film identifies himself as an English immigrant. There is no extant biographical information.
emphasis on the difficulties Trepassey has been presented with by its sudden
development and what that means for the future. It is a theme consistent with the ethos of
the *Newfoundland Project* yet it is curious that it would be presented to rather than
developed by the residents of communities that are to serve as subjects for the initiative.
Even more striking, though, are the visible differences. While the films of the
*Newfoundland Project* tended to situate an on interlocutor, however briefly, on-screen –
more often than not this was field worker Fred Earle – no such figure is present here.
Captain Cheater addresses interlocutors that remain behind the camera; their presence is
instantiated as much by their off-screen voices as it is the singular reliance on the
camera’s point of view perspective. In effect, Captain Cheater is addressing the audience
directly rather than what we would otherwise register as the trusted agent in the form of a
field worker. The arrangement of supplementary visual information is likewise as
precarious. There is no establishing material, be it in the form of interiors or exteriors; the
film abruptly picks up with one of unregistered interviewers explaining the theme for the
project. Only at the six-minute mark are we presented with something resembling an
establishing sequence: an otherwise unmotivated montage of fish being off-loaded from a
trawler and processed at what we can only assume is the Trepassey fish plant (stills 2 and
3, Fig. 5). Another equally unmotivated sequence of exterior shots of Trepassey itself
occupies the last minute of the film: a coda that would seem to be more logical as a
prelude. Though it is unknown if such methodological and formal divergences were
common amongst the remaining films in this series, *Captain Cheaters* is indicative of
certain tendencies that would come to be pronounced in subsequent CDDFU productions.
Despite its formulation as, primarily, a training initiative, the work conducted during the
course of “Role of Film in Community Development” seminar would serve to
normativize the methodological conventions, and, accordingly, the formal conventions of
Fogo-styled projects.

Fig. 7: Captain Cheaters on Draggers. Towards a new idea of a linear Fogo-style film.

No doubt eager to put their Film Unit to work, in July 1968, one month after the
“Role of Film in Community Development” workshop, the Extension Service set upon a
new multi-year project on the Northern Peninsula. Once again with financial assistance
from the Canadian Donner Foundation and, production support from the NFB\textsuperscript{15}, the
Extension Service embarked upon the expansive \textit{Port au Choix Community Development
Project}. The Extension Service’s \textit{Media Catalogue} records 31 individual films produced
for the project between 1968 and 1969, only a handful of which are extant. Like
Trepassey, Port au Choix was designated as a growth centre during the Resettlement
initiative and was experiencing a similar range of issues. Quite unlike Trepassey,
however, Port au Choix lay at a considerable remove from the seat of government at St.
John’s: almost 900km. Historically, its physical proximity had made access to
government services a difficult task, a condition that remained fundamentally unchanged
even with its government sanctioned designation as a growth centre. As early as 1967, the

\textsuperscript{15} Though many of the surviving films record that they were produced “in co-operation with” the NFB,
one of these films are recorded in the NFB’s online database.
Extension Service had dispatched field worker, George Billard, to the community in order to assist in the business of local development and organization. And in April of that year, with Billard and the Extension Service’s assistance, representatives from a number of communities throughout the western Northern Peninsula gathered at Brig Bay for a regional development conference (itself the subject of an Extension Service film), resulting in the establishment of the Northern Regional Development Association (NRDA). Charged with the uniting “the settlements of the region into one group to try to overcome some of the social and economic needs of the communities” (*Decks Awash* 1968: 4), the Film Unit was meant to assist the NRDA in its efforts, and according to a later account by Tony Williamson, to place specific attention on economic development, resettlement, and youth issues (1991: 275).

The similarities with the *Newfoundland Project* are apparent. Like the NFB crew, here, the Film Unit was meant to serve as a meditative agent between the Extension Service, the NRDA, the local population and the Provincial Government. But at the outset, the critical difference here – one that would come to further affect form and methodology – was one of duration. The *Port au Choix Community Development Project* was not to be conducted within a limited window but to be on-going. Even as late as 1976 in the final printing of *Fogo Process in Communication*, its author re-asserts the same claim made in the 1971 edition that it remains “somewhat premature to assess the Port au Choix project at this time, since little follow-up has been possible” (6). And while the Extension Service’s *Media Catalogue* records that 31 films for the project were produced between 1968 and 1969, it also records a number of subsequent productions in the area that may very well have been considered part of the larger project by the Film Unit. This
open-ended commitment to Port au Choix necessarily came to affect the linearity of the project. The absence of limitations upon its duration meant that first, it was never be approached as a coherent set of themes at its outset, and second, that the subsequent imposition of such coherency upon the entire project would be impossible. At no point in the project is there a film to explain or summarize its various aims or accomplishments; they stand as a set of texts whose legibility is intimately tied to the very localized conditions that led to their creation.

The result is that at the level of the individual text there is a wide variance in legibility. *Olga Spence: The Past – The Present – The Future* (1969), one of the more celebrated films within Extension Service literature, is carried almost exclusively by the charisma of its subject. In it, Spence, a former postmistress and long-time resident of Port au Choix, converses freely about her life in the community, the changes she has witnessed, and about the violent death of her youngest son in an accident at the local fish plant. A gifted orator, her candour and eloquence not only serve to focus the film, they also cloak some of its weaker formal characteristics. As Spence recounts her personal narrative to the un-credited interviewer (who, it should be noted, makes a brief appearance on-screen in the opening moments), the camera operator, in an approach inspired by the vérité aesthetics of *Billy Crane Moves Away* and *Thoughts on Fogo and Norway*, attempts to render her speech more dynamic with snap zooms, variable angles, and exploration of the mise en scène. The cinematography ultimately falls short of Robert Humble’s: the framing tends to be loose and imprecise, the snap zooms seem to miss their intended targets, and the close-ups of objects in the mise en scène often appear unmotivated or simply out of place (stills 1 and 2, Fig. 8). The editing is likewise
precarious with frequent unmotivated cutaways to shots of what we can only assume to be members of Spence’s family (still 3, Fig. 8) and, like Captain Cheaters, there is an extended coda of exterior shots. Both cameraman and editor are clearly attempting to provide formal subtext to what Spence is saying but their deferential efforts are shadowed by their respective abilities. The strength of the film derives singularly from Spence’s voice.

Fig. 8: Olga Spence: The Past – The Present – The Future. Formal imprecision.

The Move (1968), an equally celebrated film within the Extension Service from the Port au Choix Project, as well derives its coherence and strength from its subject rather than its formal construction. A document of the Rumboldt family’s relocation from New Ferolle to Port au Choix, the film is uncommon in its thorough depiction of the process of relocating a house by sea. Beginning with a series of extreme long shots of the Rumboldt family house being towed by a fleet of longliners that are linked together by imposing fade-through-black dissolves, a seldom-heard voice of god provides us with context for what we are watching (Fig. 9). This, we are told, is the result of the “scheme” of Resettlement, a word often used by dissenters of the program, decisively selected for its polysemy and here, winkingly enunciated by the narrator. As the house nears the

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16 Further to the distinction between reconciliation and nostalgia outlined above, imagery of this activity has been decisively pressed into the service of the latter operation, particularly in the form of tourist bric-a-brac. That such imagery would come to be used for these purposes requires fresh analysis. In the case of The Move, its formal precariousness actively prevents the film from being used towards such ends.
shore, the voice of god gives way to a non-synchronous interview with Fintan Rumboldt who describes what this manner of relocation entails and the family’s reasons for undertaking it. Chronicling the landing, the overland towing and ultimately, the resting place of the family home at Port au Choix, Rumboldt’s disembodied voice gives way to the embodied Rumboldt family who, finally, provide their impressions about the new location of the family home. There is, quite clearly, an attempt at some manner of objectivity in this film. What in the hands of Low and the *Newfoundland Project* crew would no doubt have been rendered with some degree of affect is here detached and disinterested. Its heavy reliance on long and medium shots gives *The Move* more the look of a Lumière *actualité* than a precisely honed *vérité*. Nels Squires’ cinematography systematically avoids anything resembling a point of view shot; we are meant, instead, to bear witness to the operation rather than identify with any of its personnel. It is a distinction that unfortunately works against the impact of the film as a document of this activity: the strength of the visual composition is not up to the task it has been assigned.

![Fig. 9: *The Move*. The opening sequence, at a distance.](image)

As to the material outcomes of the *Port au Choix Project*, these largely remain unrecorded. Passing reference is made in the final printing of *Fogo Process in Communication* (though the passage if lifted verbatim from the 1972 version of the document:}
One rather dramatic example of the film’s effects was the swift governmental response to residents’ criticism of government’s lack of consultation with local people on the location of a breakwater soon to be installed. A chartered plane carrying government officials flew to Port au Choix and corrected their neglect by soliciting the advice of knowledgeable local people in the area. The breakwater was relocated to the satisfaction of the community. (1972: 6)

A markedly singular outcome for a project with such a significant output, the enduring brevity of the Extension Service’s account of project outcomes suggests its impacts were ultimately limited; or, in a best-case scenario, they were entirely localized. The blatant instrumentality of these films suggests that their various affects upon the locations of their production – if there were indeed any – would be implicit, restricted to the communicative practices and conventions within the area. The Port au Choix Project would be the last large-scale Fogo-inspired film project conducted on the Island.

Off the Island, however, the Fogo Process flourished. In 1969, the Extension Service and the NFB partnered to conduct no less than three Fogo-inspired projects in the United States with the financial and logistical support of the Office of Economic Opportunity, an agency created under Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society initiative. The first at Farmersville, California, intended to create a dialogue between migrant Mexican-American farm workers and their predominantly Anglo-American managers, and the second, at Hartford, Connecticut, intended to create dialogue between polarized classes, have since been characterized as failures. In her unpublished doctoral dissertation on these applications of the Fogo Process, Judith Shapiro reveals something of the contextual difference between the Newfoundland and American applications in her
assertion that “the difficulties faced by the implementers of community action in Farmersville and Hartford were related partly to their inability to cope with different individual and group interpretations of “community action,” and partly to the fact that the attitudes of the American implementers toward social action and change were less well-defined than those of their Canadian counterparts” (4-5). Meanwhile, a third broadly focussed community animation project originating at Noorvik, Alaska, flourished, and would subsequently come to be known as the Skyriver Process. Effective applications of the Fogo Process, it would seem, required locations in which the establishment of common notions about the idea of community action existed prior to the arrival of the agents of development, or, perhaps more accurately, a location in which such ideas could coalesce in spite of the particular beliefs held by those agents of development: in other words, an isolated setting that remained relatively untouched by audiovisual media. In Newfoundland, that was becomingly increasingly unavailable and no doubt for Don Snowden, would be one of the reasons why the national and international application of the Fogo Process were given increased focus up until his death in 1984.

Certainly, in the wake of the Port au Choix Project, the idea of what constituted a Fogo Process in Newfoundland had changed significantly. The Extension Service’s widespread introduction of VTR technology by way of its under-accounted for Community Learning Centre project had placed the means of audiovisual production squarely in the hands of rural communities. Accordingly, its related video library service

17 The name of this process is recorded by its self-identified creator, Timothy Kennedy, and is the subject of his 2008 monograph, Where the Rivers Meet the Sky: A Collaborative Approach to Community Development.

18 Recently republished in Challenge for Change: Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada, Peter K. Wiesner’s essay “Media for the People: The Canadian Experiments with Film and Video in Community Development” provides a comprehensive inventory of Fogo Process projects outside of Newfoundland and Labrador.
would ensure that those same communities would have access to its wide-ranging video collection that included both Extension Service productions and those by a range of other organizations. Access to production equipment and increased, if not biased, audiovisual literacy had altered the idea of what constituted a relevant audiovisual communications project. When the Extension Service Film Unit did engage in production, it would be for the purposes of participating in development conferences rather than attempting to serve as the catalyst for them. The films from such initiatives at Lord’s Cove on the Burin Peninsula (c.1970) and Harbour Grace in Conception Bay (1972) are lost. At the same time, George Lee records that the Film Unit had been re-assigned to the Decks Awash series, a move that, he contends, resulted in irreparable damage to the Extension Service’s overall approach towards community development (1980: 2). “It meant that fieldworkers did not see the use of media, film, or video as a priority,” he asserts. “New fieldworkers, being hired at the time, were not trained in the use media, and communications generally, as a component of community development, was not seen as important” (1980: 3-4). Together, these shifts had led to a wholly critical assessment of the Film Unit by a Film Advisory Committee established in March 1978 whose membership included Don Snowden, Colin Low, and Tony Williamson. Charged with examining 16mm film production and distribution practices within the Extension Service, the final report of the Film Advisory Committee abruptly concluded that the “Film Unit in the Extension Service is in disarray and in recent years has suffered from lack of professional direction, leadership, sense of purpose, and accountability. Some important features of its mandate, such as distribution, have been neglected” (3). Furthermore, a change to the mandate of the Film Unit was needed. In language resoundingly similar to
the Canadian *Film Act*, the group “recommended that the mandate of the Film Unit be to produce and distribute films designed to interpret and benefit Newfoundland and Labrador” (4). Now entirely divorced from the Community Development Division of the Extension Service, the idea of adhering to a Fogo Process was entirely vestigial and accordingly relegated to the realm of ideology. Very little of the Film Unit’s remaining work bears any practical similarities to the *Newfoundland Project* and its immediate successors.

Under its new mandate, the work of the Film Unit would take the form of what might be considered more traditional approaches towards community animation and organization. Rather than position itself as a meditative agency, the Film Unit would instead, not unlike the first incarnation of *Decks Awash*, adopt a decisively unidirectional approach. Even by the time the Film Advisory Committee issued its report in May 1978, the Film Unit had already begun to shift in that direction. Its untitled series of film about uranium mining from 1977 – a direct reaction to the proposed development of a uranium mine near Makkovik, Labrador – consisted almost exclusively of interviews conducted by local folk singer Anita Best with scientists about the dangers of such a development. The only footage from Makkovik comes in the form of a handful of pre-recorded questions from residents presumably taken with the VTR equipment at the local Community Learning Centre. As much as Makkovik may have served as the subject for the project, it remains markedly under represented. The Film Unit’s first official project conducted under its new mandate would run between 1979 to 1981: an untitled project devoted to recent developments in oil exploration off of the Grand Banks. Partnering with the NFB Atlantic Centre, the Film Unit would produce at least 24 films on subjects
ranging from the process of underwater oil speculation, careers in the oil extraction industry, and the effects of oil pollution. Particular emphasis was placed upon the development of the oil extraction industry in the North Sea and the effects of that industry between the Shetland Islands to the west and Norway to the east. Conspicuously absent from the titles recorded in the Extension Service’s *Media Catalogue* are films exploring local responses to such proposed development. Like the uranium project that came before it, the idea here was to simply provide information to a local population, not to engage that population in shaping a discourse that would, ideally, respond to a focussed set of concerns informed by that discourse.

Though the precise date is uncertain, at some point after the oil and gas project, the Film Unit ceased to exist as a discrete production and distribution unit within the Extension Service. The organization’s *Media Catalogue* records its final productions having occurred in 1982, but the *MUN Gazette*, the official newspaper of the Memorial University of Newfoundland, advertised a screening of “Memorial University of Newfoundland Extension Service Film Unit” work as late as 1991. And while original Film Unit personnel were engaged in the production of the film in question – *The Last Chinese Laundry* (1987) – the final credits of the film list the School of Continuing Studies and the Extension Service as its producers. The Extension Service had never been particularly concerned with standardized nomenclature – a tendency evident in the manifold renderings of its name – but the absence of any accompanying documentation about the fate of the Film Unit makes the question of its status between 1982 and the shuttering of the Extension Service in 1991 an open one. It is worth emphasizing that the Film Unit is strikingly absent from what would be the Extension Service’s final media
project: its extensive, albeit problematic 1987 re-visitation to Fogo Island. Conducted by personnel from MUN’s Division of Educational Technology (which itself seems to have been attached to its School of Continuing Education) and one field worker from the Extension Service based at Gander, this re-visitation bears very little resemblance to its predecessor.

Conceived of, according to the final project report, as a “co-operative education project,” this supposed reiteration of the Fogo Process sought less to facilitate communication towards local ends as much as it attempted to clarify the operations of the co-op that was established in 1967. With assistance from the Extension Service field worker, the co-op’s Education Committee identified eleven subjects that would serve as the focus for the project:

1. The role and responsibilities of the Board, management, and the general membership.
2. The history of the co-op.
3. Co-operative principles and structures.
4. Market conditions.
5. The need for better fish quality.
6. The need for higher productivity.
7. Principles and procedures of membership.
8. The co-op’s hiring practices.
9. Problems of the co-op.
10. The advantages of the co-op over other forms of enterprise.
11. The co-op’s accounting process. (*The Fogo Process Revisited* 4)
Such surgical precision would render the project as a *maintenance* initiative rather than a discursive one. But what is even more striking is its emphasis on effects and not causes. If the *Newfoundland Project* had endeavoured to provide something of a social context for its discourse in the form of *A Wedding and Party* or *The Children of Fogo*, no such effort would be made here. Its focus would be relegated exclusively to the details of industrial practice, a characteristic that would also have a profound effect on form.

Internally reasoning that the issues the project sought to address were the consequence of public apathy, it was decided that the “best approach” would be to realize the project as a community television initiative, something the Extension Service had already implemented in other regions of the Island (*The Fogo Process Revisited* 5). Drawing upon films from the *Newfoundland Project*, remaining materials were made up of new pre-recorded interviews with Fogo residents, and, on occasion live material, all of which would serve as the basis for broadcast material on rotating community access channels.

The Extension Service crew were unable to broadcast to all of Fogo Island simultaneously; their solution was to travel to a different community every evening for local broadcasts. Live programming was included only in broadcasts from Fogo’s larger centres. Unsurprisingly, extant footage produced for the project reveals a litany of tightly framed talking heads, a tendency that had become *de rigeur* with the untitled uranium and oil projects (Fig. 10). The object of the camera is here, finally, reduced to the conveyance of information.
Fig. 10: Fogo Island Co-op: Wolfgang Uebel, General Manager. The opening three shots.

Though the Extension Service would deem the project a “smashing success” in their final report (10) – an achievement I do not argue within their stated objectives – the Fogo redux stands as the logical end of two processes that began immediately after the end of the Newfoundland Project. First, it is the product of a process of subtraction by articulation whose responsibility lay with the Extension Service, and, to some extent, with the NFB. In its attempt to pin-down what is was that constituted the Fogo Process in its internally generated literature, the Extension Service consistently neglected to account for the fact that whatever the Fogo Process was, its formation resulted from a *convergence* of local interests that was, only after the fact, given form through a series of precisely crafted films that were shaped by those local interests. Virtually all descriptions of the Fogo Process generated by the Extension Service place singular emphasis on the various agents involved in realizing the *Newfoundland Project*, but very little on the context that allowed for their convergence. Granting that such an account was no doubt difficult by virtue of historical proximity, its absence would endow the Fogo Process with a remarkably protean aspect. Most media production by the Extension Service could be deemed as adhering to the Fogo Process if its focus was community development. Second, the peculiar cast of the Fogo redux owes much to the related emergence of
technological determinism. Itself the product of the Extension Service’s instrumental approach towards the use of media in both Newfoundland and Labrador, by the time of the Fogo redux 1987, the idea that film could be a medium for social change held little local currency. Film, it was reasoned by the Extension Service, could not even mobilize an apathetic public and, for the purposes of this project, was abandoned in favour of a decisively more passive broadcast model that required minimal personal investment. Elective participation was reduced to the actions of turning on a television set or phoning a live call-in panel, neither of which required physical public presence. As the Extension Service’s last initiative to invoke the Fogo Process – and the last large scale communications project it would ever undertake – the Fogo redux reveals the logical ends of both processes: the atomization of social action. At the end of its existence, the Extension Service had arrived at a wholly passive practice of media production.

The co-operative movement advances

And yet, the Extension Service’s decidedly un-revolutionary shift in the use of media reveals something about the changing status of the film text in Newfoundland. Despite its repeated insistence that its films were always secondary to the purposes that they served, the Extension Service consistently screened its work at the outset of all subsequent community development projects, favouring the films of the *Newfoundland Project*. This continued, albeit unacknowledged practice not only reveals much about the Extension Service’s belief in their mimetic force – that is, the capacity of these films to generate similar patterns of behaviour – it also suggests that they were indeed successful at asserting such force. Films about community development would beget films about
community development, *ad infinitum*, even passing through a point where film production could no longer rely on a physical public presence. This process is, quite obviously, what propels the rise of technological determinism, but equally important are its effects upon the status of film as a particular type of instrument, both an embodiment of and an incitement to social action. Whether it had set out to or not, the Extension Service introduced the idea that a film text could have a broader political function, completely divorced from the conditions and circumstances of its material production. By the time of the Fogo redux in 1987, it would seem that this function was all that remained. The effects of film had been relegated to the realm of ideology.

At the same time that the Extension Service was embarking upon its post-*Newfoundland Project* initiatives, at St. John’s, a group of amateur filmmakers began making what would be the earliest independently produced non-documentary films on the Island. As members of the first generation of Newfoundlanders with access to relatively affordable production equipment, these filmmakers were accordingly the first to create a body of work exclusive of an organization with a specific production mandate. Michael Jones, the son of an itinerant projectionist and brother of stage and screen actors Andy Jones and Cathy Jones, would begin his work while he was still engaged as a secondary and post-secondary teacher. *The Bullies* (1972) was produced with his Grade 10 English Class at Brother Rice High School, and *Grand Larceny* (1974) with students at a local trades college (Sullivan 1986: 8). John Doyle, then a student at what was at that time the Ryerson Polytechnic Institute at Toronto, had started producing experimental shorts in 1971 with *Scream Cream Puff* and *Too Hard to Touch*. The written accounts of these pieces suggest few similarities. Jones’ shorts, created in collaboration with his students,
emphasized local context while Doyle’s, apparently conceived individually, are clearly indebted to *avant garde* traditions. As the first steps towards what would ultimately coalesce as the artist-run Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers Co-operative (NIFCO), the community that developed by way of these productions was less concerned with establishing a shared aesthetic sensibility as it was in creating a practical means with which to facilitate individual expression. As NIFCO would later state in its 1981 submission to the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, “films made at NIFCO are not made for commercial sponsors or for specific markets, but rather as personal expressions of their filmmakers, to be seen whenever an audience can be found for them. If the films are good enough, the audience can be found, the theory goes” (3). Such an instrumental approach towards film production is strikingly familiar, even if it is not rooted in the language of community development.

The first formal steps towards the formation of NIFCO occurred during the Extension Service-sponsored *Newfoundland Conference of the Arts* in 1974. According to its internally authored *History of Organization to Co-op Status* (a document that hangs in the NIFCO’s main stairwell, reproduced as Appendix 3), on 23 February, during the election of a representative to a provisional arts council that was then being formed, a discussion was held concerning the necessity for some manner of filmmakers association. Present at this meeting were NIFCO founding board members, Bill Doyle, Mike Jones

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19 Joan Sullivan provides brief accounts of all four films in “Film by NIFCO: A Camera-Eye View of Contemporary Newfoundland,” her 1986 article for the now defunct St. John’s based periodical *Arts in Formation*.

20 The account of NIFCO’s formation provided here is based on this document as well as the account provided in Norman, Gallant, and Norman’s *Film in Newfoundland and Labrador 1904-1980*. They are the only known descriptions of the formation of the co-op.
and Derek Norman; Charles Callanan and Paul MacLeod from the Extension Service; Garfield Fizzard and Grace Penney from the Memorial University of Newfoundland; Rex Tasker from the NFB Atlantic Studio; Howard Campbell, the local NFB representative based at Pleasantville; Sandra Gathercole of the now defunct Toronto Film Co-op; and Penni Jacques of the Canada Council who had informed the group that her organization would make seed money available for a filmmakers organization in Newfoundland. The catalyst for further action, however, was the news in the fall of 1974 that the Extension Service’s Visual and Performing Arts Section had received a $17,500.00 grant from the Canada Council to establish a Film Advisory Centre and Filmmaker in Residence program. Concerned that the grant money in fact constituted the seed money that Jacques discussed with the informal group in February, the filmmakers present at the earlier meeting, with numbers freshly bolstered, resolved to lobby the Canada Council to reassess the direction of the grant. After a series of meetings on 11 and 12 November with Chuck Lapp, a founding member of the newly minted Atlantic Filmmakers Cooperative (AFCOOP) at Halifax, and members of the Extension Service Film Unit, the Newfoundland filmmakers resolved to approach Jacque and the Extension Service’s Visual and Performing Arts Section to express their dissatisfaction which led to the reassessment of the grant. On 17 February 1975, a provisional filmmakers association was established which submitted an application to the Canada Council to receive a portion of the re-assessed funds. With the continued assistance of Lapp and AFCOOP as well as Newfoundland Co-operative Services, the provisional association authored a constitution that would lead to the establishment of the Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers Co-operative on 18 June 1975. Its original board of directors would include
the three filmmakers from the February 1974 meeting – Bill Doyle, Mike Jones, and Derek Norman – as well as Anne MacLeod and David Pope.

With few resources of their own, NIFCO began its existence dependent upon the assistance of other organizations. The Extension Service’s Film Unit had provided free access to equipment and personnel, the National Film Board of Canada Atlantic Centre at Halifax provided free overflow film stock, and the local Canadian Broadcasting Corporation affiliate provided free colour processing for a period of one year. The local NFB offices at Pleasantville had even provided the organization a physical home, free of charge, where it would remain until the purchase of its current residence at 40 Kings Road in 1981. Horizontally integrated into what at that time was a developing local community of film producers, NIFCO sought to mobilize the full range of available resources to a number of ends beyond production activity including training, criticism, exhibition and even distribution. In this sense, its function within the film community was not unlike the Extension Service throughout Newfoundland and Labrador in that it conceived of itself as a facilitative body. The critical difference, however, was its singular location at St. John’s. Where the Extension Service had managed to establish a presence throughout both regions of the province with its field workers, Community Learning Centres, a mobile Film Unit, and Decks Awash – to name a few mechanisms – NIFCO was geographically bound by its lack of available resources, a condition noted in its History of Organization to Co-op Status. It was and remains, despite its stated objective to keep Newfoundland’s cultural distinctness from disappearing21, and even despite its

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21 This assertion is repeated verbatim in NIFCO’s internal reporting for 1976 and 1977: “[i]n Newfoundland we feel strongly that our cultural environment is unique in Canada and is potentially the ground for some interesting growths. We should emphasize that we are determined to keep this...
name, a decisively St. John’s-rooted organization. It is a geographical condition that would bring much to bear upon its activities and output.

What is evident from its earliest internal reporting is that the organization placed most of its emphasis in four areas: (1) production activity; (2) training, specifically by providing the means for first time filmmakers to engage in training productions; (3) equipment acquisition; and (4) industry communication: in other words, activities it could adequately facilitate by way of locally available resources. In practical terms then, NIFCO, very early on, came to situate itself as a production co-op above all else, a revised mandate explicitly confirmed in the very same reporting (1977: 12; 1976: N. pag.). And with no mechanisms through which it could engage and discourse with the remainder of the province – for instance, unlike those of the Extension Service – the fledgling co-op would be shaped exclusively by its immediate habitat. NIFCO’s earliest output is a testament to its singular position in St. John’s and, moreover, its relationship with downtown St. John’s. As early as 1975, Film East, a short-lived production company owned by John Doyle had used NIFCO facilities to produce You Know You’re Downtown, a short film produced for inclusion the Mummers Troupe’s East End Story, itself a theatre for community development piece. Subsequent shorts include the ensemble produced training documentary, The St. John’s Film (1976), Michael Jones’ Morning (1977), an ode to the barren streets of early morning downtown St. John’s; Justin Hall’s On Rooftops (1980), also an ode to the barren geography of the roofs of downtown St. John’s; and John Doyle’s Extraordinary Visitor (1982), in which a resurrected John the Baptist visits the city of his namesake. Michael Jones would also go
differentness from disappearing, determined to provide filmmakers with the chance to develop their own styles of working […]” (1977: 12; 1976: N. pag.).
on to produce the short *St. John’s Day* (1983) a high-speed rendering of the festivities that marked the occasion of that film’s title, and with Jim Maunder, would produce *The Hotel*, a time-lapse piece chronicling the destruction and rebuilding of the Hotel Newfoundland. By 1985, enough film about the city had been produced for the Education Television Centre at the Memorial University of Newfoundland to devote an entire episode of its *And Now For Something Completely NIFCO* series to this body of film.

But beyond their emphasis on recognizable content, many of the early NIFCO films are also emphatically products of the organization’s location within a St. John’s arts community. Both tendencies are evident in Michael Jones’ *Dolly Cake* (1975). Produced with the members of CODCO – who had existed up until this point as a theatre company – the film oscillates between two seemingly inter-related worlds. First, there is world of the presumed narrative. Over a sepia slate, a voice of god begins to narrate two intertitles that subsequently appear:

**Intertitle 1**: A Film For Children

**Intertitle 2**: In the summer of 19--, in

the Independent State of

N--, the great philosopher

Shamrayev, with his

bride Masha, and the

student Konstantin, take

tea on an estate in the

region of A--.

The servant Borkin attends.
It is not quite the cast of Chekov’s *The Seagull* but it is likewise not the summer of 1975 in the independent state of Newfoundland in the region of Avalon. In costumes that only allude to nineteenth century Russia, the players sit at a table for tea. Second, we are introduced to the world of the presumed present. A camera slowly climbs a flight of stairs in what is quite visibly a downtown St. John’s row house to reveal an apartment full of people stirring after a night of heavy drinking. Dolly, the title character, is the first to rise, and begins to make breakfast for Frank, her nagging boyfriend. Both narratives proceed with little apparent connection until the Andy Jones of the present world begins to talk about his “idea for a romantic horror story for children,” recounting the events of the concurrent narrative. The moment of recognition seems to trigger the unhinging of both worlds. Rummaging in the woods, Borkin discovers a vampire who murders Shamrayev and Konstantin, taking Masha and the servant as prisoners. In Dolly’s world, each of the awakening revellers join the chorus that serve as her tormentors, culminating in her failed attempt to exit the apartment. In the final shot of the film, an off camera voice – presumably that of Michael Jones – instructs Diane Olsen (Dolly) to keep saying Frank’s name, a direction she is unable to follow without breaking character to laugh at her pained inflection. There is a precariousness to both form and content here that owes much to the presence of CODCO as co-producers. But at the same time *Dolly Cake* is also entirely emblematic of an ideological *cum* aesthetic concern taken up by a broader St. John’s arts community active during Gwyn’s Newfoundland Renaissance: the subjective interrogation of contemporary Newfoundland reality as it is perceived from within the capital city. It is a concern underwritten by a localized confluence of recognitions regarding the physical and ideological location of the city within Newfoundland at the
end of Smallwood’s course towards “more, better, greater”. Moreover, it is a concern would find distinct expressions in those films produced by members of the co-op.

With *Dolly Cake*, the act of interrogation is rendered as a celebration of constructionism. Here, no reality is privileged. Though Dolly’s seems to outwardly conform to what we would assume to be a contemporaneous reality, its status as such is betrayed by the causality it shares with the world of *The Seagull*. Andy Jones’ idea for a romantic horror story for children brings about the arrival of the murdering vampire, which, in turn, seems to trigger Dolly’s tormentors. Though they do not share a diegesis, we come to understand that these worlds are mutually constitutive, a theory ultimately confirmed in the film’s final moments. As the unnamed vampire of *The Seagull* marches off with the paralyzed Masha, we hear a non-diegetic cue of a dish breaking, alerting us to the reappearance of the narrator. Over the vampire, Masha and Borkin’s exit, the narrator muses: “I have prepared a series of lectures, specifically for young people, avoiding wherever possible, the academic conceptualization, so commonly misrepresented, to immature minds”. His comments seem to warn us against interpreting the film’s coda – Diane Olsen’s echoing of “Frank” – but her performance betrays the polysemy of the word she is repeating and its import. In a grand self-referential gesture, the coda provides us with the directness the film has consistently avoided: breaking character in a moment that seems to belong to neither reality – it is also notably removed from Dolly’s diegesis – Olsen, through her insistence of frank-ness, confirms their interconnectedness. As we know from text and *mise en scène*, both realities are distinctly rooted in Newfoundland – *The Seagull*’s a politically independent Newfoundland and Dolly’s, quite visibly, Confederate St. John’s – but neither is privileged, or, more to the
point, autonomous. The claustrophobic and unnecessarily antagonistic recognizable reality owes much to the random and absurd stories told by those that populate it. There is a direct relationship between current material circumstance and narrative largesse.

A similar concern is evident, albeit in a markedly different formal cast, in John Doyle’s Extraordinary Visitor. Realized as a something of a compound allegory, the film pits representation – St. John the Baptist – against the thing he is meant to represent – St. John’s, the city. Beginning with the 1917 appearance of Our Lady of Fátima, Doyle’s piece proceeds from a re-imagining of her controversial “third secret,” committed to script and unopened by the Vatican until 2000. Reading from the sealed letter, a latter day Pope learns that the fate of the world lies in Newfoundland’s departure from an unspecified Confederation. In response, he immediately dispatches John the Baptist to the capital city, in order to learn more about the Island and about this so-called Confederation. Arriving at the city, the idealistic John is almost immediately waylaid by Rick, an ardent anti-confederate, and Marietta, his antagonistic partner. As the trio calls upon fast food restaurants and bars, Rick regales John about the various injustices visited upon Newfoundland by Confederation, a narrative that Marietta insistently protests. Baffled by his experiences with the couple, John retires to a hotel only to be visited and ultimately seduced by Marietta. The film ends with the Vatican’s receipt of John’s final report: a single Mae West, which the Pope promptly eats.

Serving as the source material for his 1998 feature of the same name, the 1982 short is distinctive for its ambivalence towards the capital city and its place within a broader Newfoundland society. Though Newfoundland’s redemption from Canadian Confederation serves as the key to humanity’s salvation, neither the Catholic Church, the
ISA that was widely believed to have been a supporter of a return to Representative Government in 1949, nor the politically idealistic residents of St. John’s as embodied in Rick, ultimately do anything. Their will towards action is mediated and deflated by the opiate of junk food. With the fate of humanity hanging, in the final shot we see and hear the Pope attentively reading the ingredients of a Mae West. But the stakes of inaction are most acutely felt with John the Baptist. His measured idealism and overt gullibility ultimately prevent him from completing his charge. Placated by rhetoric, fast food, alcohol, and, finally, sex, he is unable to deliver on his drunken promise to free Newfoundland from Confederation. In the end all he can muster up is a single Mae West. The trappings of a modern Canadian society have undermined his divine endowments; the representation is consumed by the represented.\(^2\)

In William MacGillivray’s first feature length narrative film, *Stations* (1983), the act of interrogation becomes an entirely subjective exercise. Through a series of flashbacks, we learn that the protagonist, Tom, a successful journalist, has recently suffered the loss of an old friend, Harry, to suicide. After a forced leave of absence from work, Tom is given the assignment of producing a documentary on the Canadian identity that he is to film during the course of a “coast to coast” train trip from Vancouver, BC to Halifax, NS. The absence of Newfoundland in that configuration remains something of an inside joke on the Island, and one that has particular consequences here. As Tom travels across the country and interviews subjects for this film, he becomes increasingly withdrawn and ruminative. He and Harry, we discover, had attended seminary school

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\(^2\) There is a remarkable similarity here to Denys Arcand’s 1981 documentary *Le Confort et l’Indifférence*, an examination of Quebec’s failed 1980 referendum for political sovereignty. Though both directors seem to arrive at the same causes of inaction, Arcand externalizes his analysis by way of the writings and historical character of Niccolò Machiavelli.
together, a pretext Tom had used to conduct a hostile interview with Harry some time ago, precipitating his suicide. Once arriving at Halifax, Tom resolves to continue travelling on to his home in Newfoundland, a decision that has potentially career-ending consequences. Though it remains unnamed in the film, his final destination is St. John’s where his ruminations come to a head. Tom becomes noticeably revitalized during his stay at the city, a course that is given its final expression in his reconciliation with his estranged father. Visibly disappointed with what he has become by living on the opposite side of Canadian mainland – a condition, it is implied, that played some part in his blatant disregard for Harry’s fragile mental state – Tom’s reversal only begins upon his arrival at St. John’s, not, as we might otherwise think, on the Island itself: that leg of the journey is given noticeably little screen time. The closer he gets, the more pointed his awareness becomes. “I’ve been doing what they say for a long time,” he confesses to a fellow passenger as they travel through eastern Nova Scotia. “Well that’s the rule in Canada,” the passenger responds. “Stay in line.” For Tom, St. John’s is the alternative to such an ordered existence, the final station on the course of his spiritual resurrection and the metaphysical antithesis of John Doyle’s St. John’s in Extraordinary Visitor.

Certainly, the most complete expression of this interrogative tendency is Michael and Andy Jones’ feature, The Adventure of Faustus Bidgood (1986). Less a film and more a signifier of an entire epoch of film production – Andy Jones began writing what would be one of many versions of the script in 1977 – it is difficult to overstate the central position Faustus occupies in the historical development of film production in Newfoundland. The work of some 400 people, each paid in the form of shares, Faustus utilized every available resource in St. John’s as well as the resources of the NFB
Atlantic Studio at Halifax, and the main NFB offices at Montreal. In his review of the film for *Cinema Canada*, Peter Wintonick declared, without hyperbole, that “[i]t is a film which is impossible to describe” (21), a position I do not disagree with. It is rather, a film that can only be approached. And for the purposes of this analysis, I am only approaching it towards very specific ends.

As the work of the same core team responsible for *Dolly Cake* (CODCO and Michael Jones), *Faustus* is outwardly similar to its predecessor. Two main narrative threads drive the film, both of which take place during a single day, 21 June, of an unspecified year. The first is that of Faustus Bidgood, a mentally fragile petty official in a corrupt Provincial Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the errand boy for Fred Bonia-Coombs, the Director of Special Curriculum Development. Coombs is plotting to ensure that his program for Total Education, devoted to teaching the workings of the all-encompassing “Grid,” becomes standardized curriculum in the province, something he believes only to be possible with the assistance of the child-murdering and annoyingly charismatic Minister of Education, Eddie Peddle. Blackmailing Faustus with the promise of re-committing him to a mental institution, Faustus becomes the agent of Bonia-Coombs’ blackmail plot against Peddle to ensure the cabinet accepts Total Education. Faustus is tormented by the task, which he attempts to reconcile with his imaginary friend, Bogue. Meanwhile, the Poet Premier has gone missing, an apparently frequent occurrence which has again necessitated the opening of a call centre devoted to finding the missing leader. The second narrative follows President Faustus Peebles Bidgood, the unlikely leader of a revolution that, one year previous, overthrew the sitting Provincial Government and established Newfoundland and Labrador as an independent
Republic. Now on the day of his departure as interim president, an occasion marked by both ceremony and reflection (the latter, particularly in the form of a commemorative biopic of the outgoing president) Faustus is struggling with the decision whether to resign as he promised or not. Bogue’s counterpart, Vasily Bogdanovitch Shagoff, aids Faustus in his deliberations, encouraging the new president to fulfil his promise to the people that he will resign, paving the way for an elected government. Though it is by no means a consistent feature, characters in one reality, such as Bogue and Vasily, are given counterparts in the other reality. Here, unlike Dolly Cake, there is a more direct form of competition between these worlds. The timid Faustus fantasizes of being president Faustus while president Faustus dreams of being the timid Faustus.

In a 2003 interview with author Lisa Moore for the periodical Brick, Andy Jones offered an impossibly abridged reading of the film. “This,” he states bluntly, “is a film about education”. Immediately aware of the directness of this statement, Jones offers a characteristic qualification: “I didn’t intend it to be that, but when I look back I realize that’s what this is about. Our education back then, the 1950s, was medieval, and then the renaissance happened. It’s about Newfoundland politics too, which is so absurd you absolutely have to write about it” (36). Such a reading, of course, requires further qualification. Speaking almost thirty years after the he had begun writing The Adventures of Faustus Bidgood (note the –s in Adventures), the screenplay that was subsequently adapted into The Adventure of Faustus Bidgood, Jones’ comments disclose a hesitancy to interpret. His solution is to suggest that his motivations for writing and the actual subjects of the text are not necessarily cotermious: that the formation of subjects arose, perhaps, from some other processes inaccessible to him. But if Jones is reluctant to commit to an
authoritative interpretation, the threads he suggests that serve as the film’s foundation—education and politics—provide a good place from which to begin a reading. Both systems coordinate the realities that make up this film.

For the timid Faustus, reality is defined by the impositions of politics and education. The Provincial Government is transparently corrupt. Seemingly indifferent to another in a long line of disappearances of the premier, a Newfoundland public agreeably engages with the “Find the Poet Premier” call centre. Meanwhile, the Minister of Education is murdering children under the moniker of Uncle Henny Penny, a famous character from a local children’s educational television program, and the Director of Special Curriculum Development is scheming to have his Total Education program become standardized curriculum. Government is merely a vehicle these men are using towards their own idiosyncratic ends; the only apparent mechanism for elective participation in its practice is the familiar format of the call-in show. But the indictment of education here is even more damning. Two of these characters are the representative agents of a government-controlled educational system: one murders the very people the system serves while the other seeks to impose an order that goes far beyond that of the present, medieval, denominational system. Total Education and its singular focus on the workings of Grid Reality represents nothing less than complete atomization of human life, a teleological curriculum meant to ensure humanity is, in the words of Fred Bonia-Coombs, “always under the right square at the right time”. Grid Reality is the timid Faustus’ reality. And in spite of the crises of personality and conscience that propel him, it is a reality that leads him inexorably to the wrong square at the wrong time. Grid Reality is immutable. For President Faustus, however, reality is defined by transcendence
of these systems. Beginning with the overthrow of the very same Premier, Jonathan Moon, this reality is constructed upon a re-imagining of the Provincial Government as an autonomous republic, “subject,” as President Faustus tells us after the bloodless coup, “to the will of the people”. Here, the entire project of representative government is subject to what we are led to believe to be democratic revision, an idea embodied in Faustus’ commitment to step down after a period of one year in order to make way for a duly elected leader. Conspicuously absent from this reality is education, either in the form of a coercive system or its representative agents. There is, quite evidently, a relationship between a society’s capacity for political reinvention and renewal and the scope of a regulatory educational system, but the nature of the relationship remains unclear. We are led to believe that both narratives proceed from one, original, meekly mannered Faustus, which accordingly implies that, at the outset, both narratives share broken political and educational systems, and possibly, even Grid Reality. What distinguishes these two realities is Faustus’ individual capacity: meek Faustus is unable to transcend social structure while President Faustus, by way of a very passive choice to join the revolution, becomes endowed with agency.

If, as Andy Jones suggests, *Faustus* is indeed about politics and education, then it is about them to the extent that these systems are being interrogated for their complicity in the construction of contemporary Newfoundland reality, a reality that appears to be as arbitrarily made up by the agents of these coercive systems as much as it is by the material outcomes of the systems themselves. It is an analytical project that owes much to “more, better, greater,” and the self-awareness it had wrought. Smallwood’s Newfoundland may have been “really made up”, but for a generation of
Newfoundlanders that grew up under “more, better, greater,” that made-up-ness would be compounded. If their reality had indeed been newly constructed, what would that mean for the construction of personal or political agency, or, accordingly, of the formation of personal or political desires? Were these not merely constructions derived entirely from what may very well be false consciousness? *Faustus* by no means attempts to answer these questions; rather it seems to re-ask them in manifold ways, extending the line of questioning to its absolute and fractured limit, always revelling in its own process of construction.

In the wake of *Faustus*, there would be a discernible shift in films produced by NIFCO members, not only in their approach towards production, but also in their approach towards form and content. *Faustus*, of course, did not offer a sustainable production model. Spanning ten years, engaging 400 people, and mobilizing resources from St. John’s to Montreal, its scope was, necessarily, singular. But the process of mobilizing those resources had a significant secondary outcome. As Noreen Golfman suggests in her 2002 survey of film production in Newfoundland from *Faustus* onward, the film’s release served as “a symbolic event that helped focus on the creation of a *bona fide* film industry itself” (49). *Faustus* had confirmed that large-scale film production in Newfoundland, by way of NIFCO, was indeed possible: here was the symbolic legitimization of the co-op’s production-centred mandate. But at the same time, by its release in 1986, NIFCO members had also come to produce somewhere in the vicinity of fifty films. *Faustus* may very well have signalled the metaphorical arrival of a local film industry, but in the eleven years of its existence, NIFCO had, through its remaining output, already asserted its status as a local production agency: the only one consistently
engaged in non-documentary production. An idea of industry had already begun to coalesce along other lines.

The arrival of this local film industry appears to have had a profound effect upon the manner of film produced by co-op members. If the co-op’s early films were in part defined by their willingness to experiment – early internal documents had maintained the importance of providing “filmmakers with the chance to develop their own styles of working” (1977: 12) – between 1986 and 1997 there is a decisive movement towards linearity more generally. Faustus would be the last feature length film produced by co-op members overtly indebted to avant garde traditions, but even short film – a preferred domain for formal experimentation – would become noticeably direct. The reasons for this shift are unclear and difficult to account for at either a textual level as few of the films produced around 1986 are available, or, for that matter, at an institutional level, as none of the organization’s internal reporting from this period is available. I would, however, offer two hypotheses. First, at a very basic level, the turn towards linearity can be attributed to the regulatory effects of an emerging local industry. NIFCO was, after all, the focal point of that industry. Production at the Extension Service and the NFB was circumscribed by their respective mandates; NIFCO came to serve the default agency for everything else. Second, this turn is the product of a new generation of filmmakers less concerned with formal experimentation and more taken with an idea of local social justice. Faustus represented the absolute ends of a constructionist approach. And though this new generation was no less taken with the same ideological cum aesthetic concern that had coalesced during NIFCO’s initial years, there was a clear need to reconfigure the relationship between those two components that made up that concern. Their solution
was to leave the inherent incommensurabilities that made up their reality behind and
instead favour linear articulations of local circumstances.

This rather drastic shift is evident in the next two feature films by co-op member
Ken Pittman: *Finding Mary March* (1988), an historically rooted drama about personal
and cultural identity, and *No Apologies* (1990), a domestic drama centring upon the death
of the patriarch of a rural Newfoundland family. Though both films endeavour to
represent contemporary circumstances – respectively, the reclamation of aboriginal
identity and the liquidation of rural Newfoundland – there are marked differences in how
these films come to represent those circumstances. For its part, *Finding Mary March*
approaches its subject with a measure of complexity. Each of its principle characters is
actively searching for identity in the wake of loss. For Ted and Bernadette that loss
comes in the form of a wife and mother respectively; for Nancy, a visiting
photojournalist, it is in the form of an absent Indian father that she barely knew. Here, the
subject is approached obliquely. The device that brings these characters together is a
shared journey though aboriginal space; only as their motivations for undertaking that
journey are revealed do we come to understand the particular implications of
identification. But in *No Apologies* – the title of which no doubt owes something to
Smallwood’s 1967 manifesto which served as his articulation of “more, better, greater”,
*No Apology From Me* – the representation of local circumstances takes on a decidedly
singular aspect. As the central characters gather at the family home to await their father’s
death, they inhabit and move through devastated space. Bell Island, the setting for the
film, is rendered as a post-industrial landscape: the boarded up houses and barren streets
only serve as a prelude for the scenic reveal of the recently shuttered iron ore mine, the
industry that had sustained Bell Island’s population. The already harsh geometry of the mining complex is rendered menacing in the early winter light. At home, though the family attempts to maintain their spirits, all devices of communication confirm a broader pattern of death. The television heralds the closure of the railway, the contraction of the fishery, and the rise of welfare. The telephone not only confirms that Peter, the father, is one of a number of men afflicted with a terminal condition brought about by working at the mine, it also delivers the news that Peter’s own brother considers the place so wretched, he cannot even bring himself to make the journey from New England for his brother’s last days. Even the typewriter, the means by which the eldest brother, Matthew, makes his living, is only capable of reproducing script he had written years before. Every aspect of this reality appears hell-bent on confirming its annihilation, a pattern confirmed as Mark, the prodigal son, sets fire to the family’s boat that has been beached in front of the family home for years. This final act is meant to serve as the decisive metaphor for Newfoundland’s metaphysical death, but its authority as such is undermined by the superficiality of the message that precedes it. There are no causes in this film, only effects. And though its tautological construction seems to have been meant to draw our attention to the inexorability of this death – that it is the direct result of forces beyond any form of local control – the overwhelming emphasis on the literality of those effects renders the technique, and the resulting narrative, absurd.

For all the difficulties of its construction, No Apologies is, in one sense, a logical St. John’s-rooted response to a shifting local reality defined by industrial, and accordingly economic, contraction. By its release in 1988, the Newfoundland Railway had indeed been dismantled and the fishery was indeed declining (only to be shuttered
completely within four more years). Moreover, out-migration – even from designated
growth centres – had increased and the discourse around social assistance and its role and
scope in outport Newfoundland had taken on an entirely negative aspect\(^\text{23}\). From the
vantage point of St. John’s, the end game of “more, better, greater” was the total
liquidation of outport Newfoundland. If Pittman’s film was meant to be a more general
reaction to this process, Mike Jones’, *Secret Nation* (1992) would place the blame
squarely on the very thing that set out the course of “more, better, greater”: Canadian
Confederation. Set, it seems, in a later moment of the same reality occupied by the timid
Faustus Bidgood – this is itself an act of textual revisionism that suggests which reality in
fact conquered in the former film – *Secret Nation* is remarkable for its decisively non-
constructionist approach. Returning home to St. John’s to finish her doctoral dissertation
on the events surrounding Newfoundland’s entry into Canadian Confederation, Frieda
Vokey uncovers evidence that the 1948 referendum was rigged, a conspiracy perpetrated
by the Canadian and British governments. Set against the same backdrop of provincial
political corruption as *Faustus* (the current troubled Premier Valentine Aylward is the
successor to the Poet Premier Jonathan Moon), *Secret Nation* overtly confirms what *No
Apologies* fails to actively register: that Newfoundland’s present circumstances are a
direct function of Confederation and the manner in which it entered into that
Confederation. Frieda’s journey throughout the film merely seeks to confirm what is
already alluded to in her opening scene. After explaining to her committee what she is

\(^{23}\) This final point requires additional study. As a common subject throughout the Extension Service’s work
– beginning with *Billy Crane Moves Away*, and even likely earlier – social assistance would become a
necessary component of the fishing industry after Confederation as the means by which fishery workers
could support themselves throughout the off-seasons. The general progression of this (filmed) discourse is
that though necessary under the federal system, social assistance was emasculating and that its persistence
had resulted in social corrosion, particularly in outport Newfoundland.
attempting to do in her dissertation – analyze Newfoundland’s self-rejection as a state – one member flatly replies: “Is this some kind of Newfie joke?” Even academic discourse with the Canadian other, it would seem, is a non-starter.

But as much as the film deploys such relatively crude cultural binaries as a strategy to instantiate a distinct Newfoundland reality within a Canadian context, that strategy is also assisted by an otherwise unacknowledged procedure of self-examination. The primary agents behind Newfoundland’s entry into Confederation may have been England and Canada but Newfoundlanders were no less complicit in that conspiracy. In a revealing scene midway through the film, Frieda is given an audience with a dying Joey Smallwood. Able to utter only wordless syllables, Parkinson, the Premier’s British handler, “translates” for him, moulding his babblings into coherent prose. As Frieda’s line of inquiry becomes more direct – she accuses Smallwood of forcing Confederation upon Newfoundland to current disastrous effect – the Premier becomes visibly shaken and is unable to continue. Parkinson instructs Frieda to leave. As she exits, a voiceover of one of Smallwood’s speeches from the Newfoundland National Convention fades in: “all of you, all three together – blind deaf and dumb, not to understand what Confederation means, between now and the referendum”. The words of the once prodigious orator are thrown directly back at him. Not only is he unable to defend himself from Frieda’s criticisms, the contextually implied counter-reading of his very own assessment of Confederation strikes a deathblow (Fig. 11). It is a scene with precise local resonance.

Here, Frieda is performing an exorcism of, to borrow Jeff Webb’s term, “Smallwoodian orthodoxy” (1992: 170), reversing Smallwood’s bullying rhetorical tactics back upon the

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24 In their respective discussion of the film both John Fitzgerald and Noreen Golfman make much of Quebec cultural identity as an intertext here (Fitzgerald 111; Golfman 52).
Premier himself. But at, the same time, it is a scene that reveals local complicity. While it may very well have been a bill of goods sold by the Premier, Smallwoodian orthodoxy, in its broadest historical, political, and social sense, required local buyers: the transaction itself is underwritten by the acceptance of – or perhaps more accurately, the non-reaction towards – rhetoric. That Frieda’s effigial attack takes the same cast as Smallwood’s contract suggests a more fundamental failure in local discourse: that as much as Newfoundland’s political course may have been the product of local collusion in this conspiracy, it was also facilitated by our own inability to meaningfully speak and listen.

Fig. 11: Secret Nation. Exorcising Smallwoodian orthodoxy.

The indictment of the local also finds direct expression in the people that inhabit this reality. True to its cast as a political intrigue, the intentions of virtually all of these characters remain obscure or uncertain, from the otherwise removed but perpetually skulking Premier Aylward, to Lester, Frieda’s proximate but overwhelmingly cantankerous father. Both, we come discover, are directly involved in the plot: Aylward, to our surprise, is attempting to assist Frieda while her father is attempting to conceal his direct involvement in the conspiracy. Characters not directly involved in the plot such as Frieda’s mother, Oona, her brother, Chris, and her momentary love interest, Dan, are respectively agents of hostility, apathy, and self-interest: all dispositions that allowed for the installation and maintenance of Smallwoodian orthodoxy. Even Frieda, as we know, is also complicit here. Her quest for the truth is underwritten by her naïveté towards what
the actual outcomes of revealing that truth might be. The final result is strangely unsettling. After confronting Lester, her father, on his involvement in the conspiracy we cut to a family dinner, ostensibly held in honour of Frieda’s successful completion of her dissertation. Lester proceeds to ask everyone at the dinner table: “are you happy? Are you happy,” finally assessing, “well, here we are, one big not so unhappy family”. His appraisal triggers a montage: first, the camera reveals Frieda’s completed dissertation and a copy of a letter that provides the irrefutable evidence that the referendum results were indeed fabricated; second, we see British officials burning the textual evidence of that conspiracy; third, we see that one of the surviving local conspirators has shot himself; fourth, and finally, we see Dan reviewing a series of invoices, again confirming the conspiracy. The montage serves as an ironic commentary on Lester’s metaphorical description of circumstances in the wake of this revelation but it leaves us wondering to exactly what end this revelation will be received. A substantial reckoning, it seems, is unlikely. Lester’s comments pertain as much to Newfoundland’s continued place in Canada as much as it does a continued local community in the wake of this disclosure.

The other, legitimate, industry arrives

Though it was created without the direct use of NIFCO facilities, the final feature length film to be produced by NIFCO members prior to 1997 is Andrée Pelletier’s Anchor Zone (1994). A dystopian science fiction film set in post-apocalypse St. John’s, the piece directly reverses the world order established in No Apologies. Here, the capitol city has been corrupted to a point beyond repair. Its harbour – the symbolic centre and the very reason for its settlement – has been made toxic. Even continued exposure to
daylight, we are told (though some issues with continuity might suggest otherwise) is potentially deadly. Though Wondracorp has used these issues as a pretext to assume the city’s management, these disasters are in fact the doings of the evil corporation itself. Their management has resulted in a two-tiered social system: civilized society squarely falls within their domain while a class of truants, thieves and street gangs operate outside of their jurisdiction. Here, the economic and social disintegration located by Pittman’s film in outport Newfoundland is wrought upon the capital city. The outports exist freely outside of both Wondracorp’s jurisdiction and environmental atrocities. It is, to be certain, a dreadful film – its execution hampered as much by its chosen genre as much as it as by issues surrounding financing and personnel – but these failures reveal, by way of conclusion, something about the altered practice of film production at the end of this epoch.

As Adam Clarke has suggested in his brief oral history of the film, “A Tale of Future Passed,” published in the St. John’s based publication The Scope, the film was meant to serve as a “kick-start” to local cinema. Though it commanded the same relatively modest production budget as No Apologies – $1,300,000.00 – Anchor Zone certainly seems to have been intended as a vehicle to demonstrate a wide range of available local talent and, perhaps even more to the point, production concept. The young local cast notwithstanding, the film’s soundtrack also emphasizes local bands. The work of Hardship Post, Bung, and Liz Band – all St. John’s based acts – figures prominently throughout the film. Red Ochre Productions had even intended to release an official soundtrack (Clarke N. pag.). But the real innovation here lay with the production concept. As the first science fiction film to be undertaken by local producers – a genre, as virtually
all of Clarke’s informants reveal, was entirely incommensurate with the constraints of its
budget – *Anchor Zone* was constructed first as text meant to be circulated within a much
broader system of capital and second as a text with specific commercial or ideological
relevance to Newfoundland. For all of its shortcomings, it may very well be the first
purposive genre film produced on the Island.

What is was that *Anchor Zone* had attempted to do – a manoeuvre with disastrous
aesthetic consequences – was position itself as a mechanism through which a developing
local film industry could communicate, and to some degree, integrate with an established
national industry. In other words, it had attempted to position itself as what might be best
described in Canada as a regional film, a tendency that would become more common in
local feature length productions after the formation of the Newfoundland and Labrador
Film Development Corporation.
Newfoundland should in any case hold Labrador until sufficient wealth had been created in the Island to enable the people of Newfoundland themselves to develop the dependency and reap the benefit of its great resources.

— Amulree Report (1933)

As we have already seen, the various agents of institutional culture had more or less consistently come to deploy film as a meditative tool towards the purposes of social rehabilitation on the Island. Something altogether different, however, was occurring in Labrador. While the Amulree Report had singled out Newfoundland as a site for such a rehabilitative project, it envisioned Labrador — the epigraph attests — as a site to be developed exclusively for the benefit of Newfoundland. As a consequence, Labrador was subjected to the machinations of an institutional culture that, while certainly proceeding from both Commission and Provincial Governments, was more concerned with the establishment and furtherance of enterprise than it was the rehabilitation of any societies that already existed within the region. This emphasis on enterprise during the given period finds its corollary in filmed representations of the region, necessarily envisioning it, to borrow those adjectives used in a number of films in question, as: empty, remote, neglected, vast, and even unsentimental\(^1\). That the area now known as Labrador had functioned as the home for at least three distinct ethnic groups of barter and/or subsistence classes, each with a particular historical relationship to its region of Labrador.

\(^1\) As per Ore in ’54 (1954), The Carol Operation (196-) and Power in Perpetuity: The Churchill Falls Project (1967).
was of little consequence. The project of rehabilitating Newfoundland along the lines of a functioning capitalist state meant that those classes furthest away from this mode of economic practice would remain functionally invisible and, accordingly, unrepresented, a tendency that would bring much to bear upon those film texts produced by the agents of local culture. As we shall come to see here, the rather singular nature of policy towards Labrador during the epoch of institutional culture would have a correspondingly singular effect on those films produced by its agents. But as uniform as the rhetoric of these films are, they also serve importantly as documents of a set of activities that came to directly influence a range of social, economic and even ethnic transformations that define present-day Labrador.

Practice as policy

For all of its lack of subtlety and lack of attention to detail with regards to policy towards Labrador, it should be noted that the *Amulree Report* merely reified what had been a common practice toward the region since the British Government gave Newfoundland jurisdiction over a version of Labrador in 1763. The maintenance of this jurisdiction was generally directed toward coastal Labrador and the Labrador Sea, locations that were more directly related to the fishery than any other activity. The author of the *Amulree Report* reminds us that as of 1933 the interior of the region had yet to be surveyed, a fact that did not deter Newfoundland from attempting to sell Labrador to the province of Quebec in 1925. Neither, the *Report* also suggests, had Labrador been the object of a proper census: “the number of settlers in Labrador is estimated at about 4,000;
in addition, there are some 1,300 Esquimaux and a number of Indians.” (5). Until the establishment of the Commission of Government, the contents of Labrador – that is both its physical and human geography – remained functionally unknown to Newfoundland.

That the pair had come to co-exist in such an awkward political union owed as much to the lack of capacity for governance and the maintenance of the state on the Island as it did to the complicated history of Labrador’s boundaries. The state, as it existed in Newfoundland prior to the Commission of Government, was entirely specialized and inadequately suited to perform its own maintenance, let alone the maintenance of an area that lay outside of its own precisely defined borders. With Labrador, its ability to be governed and accordingly to self-govern was frustrated by both a complex lineage of external ownership and of mutable borders; saying nothing of other cultural understandings of the division of land that constituted its mass. After James C. Scott’s arguments for the larger social and political function of Zomia, Labrador, by virtue of its fluid ownership, malleable borders and scattered population, stands as a political cast of the same phenomenon. The confusion of Labrador’s ownership, contents, and limits prior to the most recent granting of Labrador to Newfoundland in 1927 functionally prevented the occurrence of traditional state activities by any of its

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2 In Labrador, the term “settler” referred to persons of mixed Inuit-European ancestry. The author is using the term here to refer to persons of European descent exclusively. By Indians he is referring to the Innu.

3 Nitassinan, the ancestral homeland of the Innu that extends from the Québec Lower North Shore in the southwest to Natuashish on coastal Labrador in the northeast, has been consistently populated for 1,200 years (Tanner N. pag.). Present-day Nunatsiavut, the semi-autonomous Inuit controlled region of Labrador which functionally extends from the north of Lake Melville to the northern tip of mainland north America might more adequately be grouped with present day Nunavik.

4 As Scott contends in *The Art of Not Being Governed* the upland regions of southeast Asia offered respite from colonizing forces by virtue of its rugged, mountainous terrain. He presents the argument that the inhabitants of this region (Zomia), consciously retreated and adapted to the area in order to prevent their assimilation into colonizing states.
owners. From the perspective of a state (be it in a Federal, Provincial or Dominion incarnation), such activities would fail to provide a meaningful return as both the certainty of jurisdiction over the region and the certainty of the allegiance of its residents (virtually all of which existed outside of the infrastructure upon which modern states are predicated) could not be guaranteed. Granting the region to an otherwise specialized state would only serve to complicate the manner in which Labrador would passage into a modern political and economic entity.

Certainly, had Labrador been granted to another state whose mode of economic practice was more fully integrated into capitalism, the pace and scope of the development of its natural resources would have been no less frenetic than it was under Newfoundland’s Commission and Provincial Governments. But what distinguishes Newfoundland’s pattern of development in Labrador, a characteristic that has brought much to bear upon the relationship between these two regions since their political unification, is that Labrador’s development was in the first instance conceived of as being instrumental to the economic development and maintenance of Newfoundland by a non-democratically elected government whose mandate was to facilitate the social and economic rehabilitation of Newfoundland. As is clear from the reading of the Amulree Report, prior to the suspension of Representative Government, Newfoundland’s interest in Labrador was on the surface nominal. As of 1933, none of the components of either Newfoundland’s civil or political society had been introduced into Labrador: there had been no census, no survey of its interior geography, no introduction of an education system, no introduction of law enforcement. What interest Newfoundland did have in Labrador was exclusively directed towards its fishery, a seasonal boon for fishermen.
from the Island who were, even as of this early date, contending with depleted inshore fish stocks. For the Dominion of Newfoundland, Labrador represented a means by which it would be able to perpetuate its defining mode of industrial practice, a territory that offered an abundance of exploitable coast rather than an abundance of an exploitable interior. Newfoundland’s specialized mode of economic practice and its attendant mode of labour resulted in a tendency to fashion, approach, and ultimately see Labrador as a region that would work within and support these practices: it came to fashion Labrador in its own image.

With the establishment of the Commission of Government and the implementation of their rehabilitative project, Newfoundland was directed to see Labrador in an altogether different manner: one that emphasized the possibilities afforded by its interior rather than its coast. Where the former had left the residents of the region relatively unmolested and, accordingly, largely unknown, the latter would prove to be decisively colonial in aspect: the ultimate end of aggressive campaigns to allocate Labrador’s human and physical geographies (necessary preconditions for wide-scale natural resource development). In the absence of societies that were organized along lines that bore any resemblance to western political or economic practices, both the Commission of Government and the Provincial Government necessarily saw this repurposed Labrador as a region that was, functionally speaking, unpeopled. Encountering no resistance from the residents of Labrador in traditional western forums (be those of civil or political society), neither the Commission nor Provincial Governments perceived any impediment to the development of Labrador’s natural resources, its condition as empty, remote, and neglected was self-fulfilling.
Modernization, after a fashion

It should come as no surprise that the actual task of developing the region was consistently placed in the hands of special interest groups and private industry. Given the scope of the Commission of Government’s rehabilitative project on the Island and its idea of Labrador as a territory meant to facilitate that rehabilitation (not as a territory to be rehabilitated), such a development strategy would provide an immediate economic yield without the significant commitment of political or civil resources. Under the Commission of Government, the residents of Labrador would bear witness to a range of development projects that would rapidly and unevenly introduce the various materials and processes of modernization, materials and processes that were, more often than not, unintended for them. With little direct oversight on the part of the Commission as to how these industries were conducting their operations in the region, and with no ability for its residents to affect either the locations or qualities of these operations, Labrador was ultimately subjected to a program of garrisoned modernization. Although this program would seek to develop the region in exclusionary terms, its practice would also work to galvanize both the region as a region and its various sub-regions as regions themselves.

Prior to 1933, Labrador had existed along other garrisoned lines: what I have already described as a metaphorical archipelago. To the north of Lake Melville, the Inuit had come to co-exist with their evangelical benefactors, the Moravians, in a series of communities that form what is now present-day Nunatsiavut. The Innu maintained a

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5 The first comprehensive plan to develop the Labrador interior sought to engage Jewish immigrants from across Europe for the purpose. Presented to the Commission of Government in 1936 by Frank Banikhin, a member of the St. John’s Jewish community, this program of colonization was meant to provide European Jews a haven from the encroaching Third Reich and, at its outset, develop a hydroelectric project at Churchill Falls. Though the Commission received the plan favourably, Banikhin was unable to mobilize the necessary support from the international Jewish community to see it through (Bassler 1997: N. pag.)
nomadic existence in Nitassinan, a landmass comprised of most of eastern Québec and southern Labrador; the Metis in a series of communities on Labrador’s south coast in what is now referred to as present-day NunatuKavut; European settlers in a handful of communities throughout the Straits; and a mixed population at the southwest end of Lake Melville in North West River, the site of a Hudson’s Bay Company Trading Post and, after 1915, the Labrador headquarters of the Grenfell Mission. In the absence of the materials and processes of modernization – materials and processes that are predicated upon notions of private ownership – Labrador was able to sustain mutually inclusive understandings and, even more importantly, uses of its landmass. This, obviously, is not to say that these patterns of understanding and use are not without their own history of hostility and conflict, but what distinguishes them is their ability to facilitate a manner of co-existence that otherwise seems untenable in modernized spaces.

Between 1938 and 1971, however, three large-scale developments across central Labrador would radically reconfigure both the understandings and uses of the region’s landmass. First, in 1938, the Commission of Government granted mineral exploration rights for some 32,000 km² of western Labrador to the Hollinger North Shore Company Ltd., a subsidiary of Hollinger Consolidated Gold Mines Ltd. and precursor to the Iron Ore Company of Canada. The development of this claim would not only see the establishment of Labrador City (officially a company town until 1980) as well as Burnt Creek, Gagnon, Fermont and Schefferville in Québec, it would also see the construction of the 578 km-long Quebec North Shore and Labrador Railway (QNS&L) from Sept-Îles, QC to Schefferville, QC (through western Labrador), and the construction of a power generating facility at Menihek Lake in western Labrador. Second, in 1941, the
Commission of Government granted the Canadian Government permission to construct an air force base at what is now the community of Happy Valley-Goose Bay at the mouth of the Churchill River, some 40km south of the existing community of North West River. Originally two separate communities, Goose Bay, the community that housed the base and army personnel, and Happy Valley, the community that housed the civilian personnel that worked on the base, the now amalgamated community functions as the administrative centre for the entire region. Third, in 1966 the crown corporation, Churchill Falls (Labrador) Corporation Limited commenced construction of the Churchill Falls hydroelectric complex, which, at the time of its completion in 1971, had the largest hydroelectric generating capacity in North America. Draining an area the size of the Ireland, the development necessitated the re-direction of rivers and the flooding of some 1,300 km² of land, as well as the establishment of the company town, Churchill Falls. Each instance of development here not only facilitated the privatization, pollution, or destruction of significant tracts of land in central Labrador, at the outset each either occluded or heavily mediated the manner in which residents of the region could participate in these developments. Modernization, such as it was occurring in Labrador, was restricted to the spaces manufactured by these developments, its materials and processes were not intended for the remainder of the region⁶.

This practice of garrisoned modernization created a number of issues. Distinct from other late colonial configurations of modernization, the developments that occurred during Labrador’s epoch of industrialization did not actively seek to engage residents of

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⁶ The most concrete example of this is the Churchill Falls Hydroelectric Project. While completed in 1971, neither Labrador’s north coast (Nunatsiavut) nor its south coast (NunatuKavut and the Straits) receives power from the project. Communities in both regions continue to receive their power from diesel generating systems.
the region: should they wish, they could relocate to Happy Valley to seek employment at Goose Bay, but Labrador City and Churchill Falls remained functionally off limits. For those looking to transition from either a barter or subsistence way of life to one more fully integrated in capitalism, there was only one possible location to make such a transition. Yet, as indifferent as these spaces proved to be toward people, their existence constituted nothing less than a form of geographical violence toward the region itself, removing large tracts of land from a local, mutually inclusive understanding of Labrador. Where the Commission had, through its rehabilitative project, come to interpellate the residents of Newfoundland as developing but unable, it would, through its proxies, interpellate the residents of Labrador as non-citizens, neither able to participate in the industrial development occurring on their land, nor engage in traditional modes of labour that required access to their land.

The developments that occurred during this epoch of industrialization – the same developments that rendered Labrador’s residents as non-citizens – also established the necessary conditions for the more or less consistent practice of film production in the region. A rare occurrence before 1933⁷, the act of film production not only requires, to extend our working definition, a certain number of specialized workers for the purpose,

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⁷ Excluding newsreels, I have been able to confirm the existence of five finished productions in Labrador prior 1933. Both Sir Wilfred Grenfell and Donald Baxter MacMillan generated vast amounts of footage of Labrador but this was frequently re-cut into a number of different lecture films. Of the finished productions, only textual evidence exists for the first and second: Edison’s *Eskimos in Labrador* (1911) by way of Lamarr Walls and Norman, Gallant and Norman, and Post Nature Picture’s *Labrador* (1919) by way of the Internet Movie Database. The third, a document of the Taylor and Rogers Expedition up the Churchill River in 1928 is included in the Crawley Films-produced *Power in Perpetuity* (1967). Fourth, Varick Frissell’s *The Lure of the Labrador* (1926), another document of an expedition up the Churchill River, but the first film ever to be taken of Churchill Falls. Fifth, with thanks to Hans Rollman for the reference, is the German film *Vom Spreewald zum Urwald* (1929) that contains some footage of the Moravian Missions throughout Labrador. According to Rollman, the film was show commercially in theatres in Germany. By contrast, Labrador Inuit have served as either the subjects or principal actors for a number of films from as early as 1901, albeit, in various locations throughout the United States.
but, equally important, a range of materials that are themselves the products of modernization (e.g. electricity). Proceeding from these configurations and deployments, from these garrisons of modernization, initial filmmaking practices in the region inevitably perpetuated this interpellative tendency, hailing residents as non-citizens, and, more often than not, as explicitly non-existent. If, as Benjamin asserts, “[t]he characteristics of the film lie not only in the manner in which man presents himself to mechanical equipment but also in the manner in which, by means of the apparatus, man represents his environment,” (1968: 235) then in Labrador, the characteristics of the film bear witness to a configuration of its constitutive elements that is both dominated and structured by space, a space that is born out of and necessarily rehearses forceful ideological and interpellative operations. For the purposes of our discussion, then, the act of film production is itself predicated upon the act of corporate spatial production. It is impossible to consider one without the other.

Spaces of iron

In the first instance, we are presented with that corporate space developed by the Iron Ore Company of Canada and its related and controlling interests, a space that, even at the time of this writing, is responsible for the largest output of completed film productions in the region. Extending far beyond the original 32,000 km² claim in the area now commonly referred to as Labrador West, the full breadth of that corporate space articulated and rehearsed by the Iron Ore Company of Canada is a tract of land that runs

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8 Prior to 1972, there are at least twelve finished films that document first the development and then general operations in this area.
the length of the QNS&L Railway: from Schefferville in the north to Sept-Îles in the
south; what is known to the Innu as the western edge of Nitassinan (Fig. 1). This space,
unceremoniously dubbed the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region by economic
geographer John Bradbury, represents one of the first of Canada’s post-war large-scale
natural resource developments and – like the space manufactured by way of the Churchill
Falls hydro-electric project – was consistently represented on film both as a testament to
and evidence of a Canadian national ingenuity, ability and imagination. In the case of
both spaces, the history of film production is analogous with the history of development.

Fig. 1: On the left, the approximate boundaries of the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining
Region highlighted in yellow. On the right, the approximate boundaries of Nitassinan
highlighted in grey.

For the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region, development began in earnest
in 1929 when J.E. Gill and W.F. James began mapping in detail large deposits that had
been identified there a century before by Fr. Louis Babel (1870) and A.P. Low (1892)
(Bradbury 355; McKillen, Hooley, Dufort 34). In 1936, Dr. J.S. Wishart, a member of the
Gill-James party, led a second geological and cartographic expedition to the region, this time with a camera in hand. His footage from the second expedition was assembled into what the Iron Ore Company of Canada records as *Dr. Wishart’s Labrador Journey*\(^9\): a travelogue documenting the expedition’s movement from Trois-Pistoles in Bas-Saint-Laurent, QC to Labrador West through the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region. While there is no evidence to suggest that Wishart’s film was prepared for any type of promotional or geological purpose, it rather peculiarly anticipates many of the formal techniques employed by later films documenting the region and its development. There is a direct relationship between film form and the particular tools that allowed for the traversing and development of the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region (i.e. the materials of modernization).

For the purposes of our discussion, this relationship is best evidenced in the second half of this eleven-minute film, notwithstanding some of the peculiar formal characteristics of the first five or so minutes\(^10\). Wishart signals his entry into the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region with a trio of shots that not only structure the remainder of his film, but also serves as a basic visual syntax for virtually all of the films that document the region. In order, these are: (1) the cartography – quite literally a map providing relational context for the location of development; (2) the land from above, the logical transition from the cartographic perspective: the empty/developed space itself

\(^9\) It is uncertain if this is the actual title of the piece. The title provided here is recorded at the Iron Ore Company of Canada’s offices at Labrador City. However, the Newfoundland and Labrador Geological Survey records the variant, *Dr. Wishart’s Journey*. I defer to the IOCC’s title, as the copy held by the Geological Survey was prepared from the IOCC’s copy. There is likely an error in transcription.

\(^10\) Among other things, there is an extremely peculiar, and otherwise unmotivated cross cut from cleaning sealskins at Sept-Îles to a still image of an Inuit sealskin tent on Baffin Island. As the final three shots of the film are, in sequence, an iceberg, pack ice, and the map of Québec-Labrador used to frame the intertitles, it appears as if Wishart is using stills (whether by way of cross-cut or montage) to visually establish an idea of some larger geographical region than he is actually travelling through.
represented from above; and (3) man (almost invariably) in the context of the empty land with the tools used for transport/development (Fig. 2). This syntax becomes common because of the embedded teleology in this manner of documentation: the land is rendered empty and fit for development as none of the modern tools used for the purposes of documentation register anything that might actively resist the process. The map – a product of the modern process of cartography – registers unused land. A wide angled master shot taken from a moving airplane register unused land. A second wide angle shot of a selected location of development taken in situ registers unused land. The only impediment registered by these modern tools and processes is, ultimately, the land itself.

Fig. 2: Wishart embarks on his journey across the QLIOMR – the first three shots in succession.

The processes that enable the construction of this syntax are also a rehearsal of the processes that Maurice Charland has argued serve as the foundation for Canadian technological nationalism. But unlike Charland’s model, which accounts for these processes across a range of technologies and throughout a relatively long historical epoch, the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region stands as a collapsed synchronic cast of the same constitutive phenomena. Both transportation and broadcast media technology are employed alongside space-binding transportation technology to manufacture another form of corporate space, one that was carved within the known
boundaries of the Canadian state. The significance of this syntactical unit is only strengthened by the historical moment of its practice. First, there is the issue of the development itself. Occurring within that moment immediately proceeding World War II, a moment that in Canada was defined by industrial expansion, the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region stood as a celebrated example of the magnitude of Canada’s industrial development. Its films frequently remind us of the conceptual and technological innovation required for the project: that it is responsible for the single largest civilian airlift in history, and, perhaps even more importantly, that it is responsible for the construction of the only railway to be built during the twentieth century in Canada. If the CPR represented the expansion of Canada’s borders, the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region represented the meaningful development of what lay within those borders through the reapplication of similar technologies. Second, there is the issue of the historical moment of film and more generally of Canadian media practice which had yet to relinquish its positivist bias. Where, for Charland, radio had taken over the work of the CPR in manufacturing and mediating a state space, film for the QLIOMR was meant to manufacture and *chronicle* the great undertaking that was occurring within state space. The distinction here is an important one. While Charland’s model proceeds from the physical binding of a newly manufactured state space via the CPR to the inherently problematic mediation of that space via radio and other communicative technologies, the QLIOMR would carve a territory out of existing state space with the aid of space-binding technologies for the purposes of a single activity – mining – and use film to establish a relationship between this activity and its location of practice. Film as it
is created by the agents of the QLIOMR, does not work to mediate so much as it does to codify an understanding of state space.

Wishart’s Principle, then, is so effective as a structuring unit precisely because it is both a product and re-presentation of those same processes that facilitated the production of the Canadian state. That it is pressed into the service of codifying space that already exists within the confines of the state is all the better: it reinforces the significance of these nationalizing processes and its usefulness in the act of domestic development. But the effectiveness of this principle becomes even more apparent when it is used in tandem with narration. The first film to combine the two is Walford Hewitson’s *Road of Iron*\(^{11}\) (1955). As, also, the first film by the National Film Board to generally chronicle the development of the QLIOMR, Hewitson makes effective use of Wishart’s Principle off the top. However, rather than approximating the zoom effect implied by Wishart, Hewitson opts instead to reconfigure the rendering of space, fixing the cartographic perspective at the end of a four shot sequence. Beginning with a slow leftward pan, Hewitson places particular emphasis on the master shot of the land, impressing upon us the scope of its barrenness.

\(^{11}\) A subsequent film by the NFB chronicling the development of the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region, *Iron From the North* (1956), was cut from the same footage used to produce *Road of Iron*. 
Fig 3. *Road of Iron*. Stills 1 through 3 are extracted from the opening pan. Stills 4 through 6 continue the reversal of the Wishart Principle.

John Drainie, Hewitson’s narrator, strengthens and structures the effect, both implying the absent cartographic master shot and alerting us to the specialized cartographic exercise occurring in the fourth shot (still 6, Fig. 3):

> Few men have walked these hostile hills. Few men have seen these lakes. Few men have known Ungava\(^{12}\): a desolate land, an empty land. A great space on Canada’s map. Nothing here but the scars of fire, the wind in the sky and treasure in the ground. Great treasure in the ground. And so finally, men came to look and probe and break the silence.

Drainie’s narration quite literally works to reinforce the teleology embedded in the process of documentation. Few people, he asserts, have seen this land. But, through

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\(^{12}\) While today Ungava is generally used in reference to Ungava Bay, a large bay in the northeast of Quebec, Ungava here is used in the antiquated sense of Ungava District, a tract of land that extended from the eastern shore of Hudson Bay through to the interior of Labrador. Ungava is frequently used early films documenting the QLIOMR even though it ceased to exist as a political entity in 1912.
modern technologies, we are now able to see it in a context entirely removed. And, importantly, as you can see within this representation, there is nothing here: it is, quite evidently, a great void on Canada’s map. You will have to take his word on the treasure in the ground, but midway through the sequence, two specialists appear who are working in and on this great space that can successfully demonstrate what the treasure is and how to access it. Only through further application of the tools and processes of modernization can this be accurately demonstrated. This is the overture of Road of Iron; the demonstration and explication of modern tools and processes is its primary theme.

Where Hewitson’s film builds upon the Wishart principle, and indeed this may be said for a number of subsequent films about the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region, is through its specific attention to the documentation of modern economic processes and their role in the development of the region. Undoubtedly more abstract than the physical tools of exploration, the successful ability to both document and convey the economic processes required to facilitate the development is entirely contingent upon the use of soundtrack; that is, through the aural descriptions and/or allusion of their role of economics in this development. Rather than foregrounding these economic processes, Hewitson and a number of his successors opt to incorporate their account via the techniques of reportage that speaks to the national significance of the project, collapsing its description into the more general rehearsal of the themes of technological nationalism. For Hewitson, this scene serves as a secondary structuring element, situating the scope of the development on a national scale.
Fig. 4. *Road of Iron*. From frontier to city: what to do about Ungava and how to do it.

After introducing us to the desolate and empty land, Hewitson promptly removes us to urban space (Fig. 4). Over these visuals, he provides us with a rather casual, dialogic account of the financial resources needed to undertake the project:

Drainie: But how do you get iron out of a country like this in the middle of nowhere? Far to the south, in Montreal, the Iron Ore Company of Canada told reporters that it knew how.

Dr. Moss: I believe you’ve all seen our press release and no doubt many of you consider the whole idea slightly hair-brained. I must admit that this same thought has occurred to us but our top engineers are convinced the job can be done. And, by August 1954, ore will start to flow southward from Knob Lake.

Reporter: Pardon me Dr. Moss but just what is the reason for getting out the iron ore so quickly?

Dr. Moss: Well the reason for the haste in brining these deposits into production is merely a matter of economics. We expect to spend well over $200,000,000.00 in order to get this operation into production. Naturally, we are most anxious to receive some return on our money at the earliest possible date.
The nonchalance at the process mobilizing this kind of capital is striking. Yet, it is clear: the economic commitment to the project requires that it be executed in a compressed amount of time so as to ensure the feasibility of the economic commitment. This demonstration of the ability to mobilize capital is as important as demonstrating the use of either space binding transportation or space binding media technologies. It is, as Dr. Moss suggests, underwritten by the confidence of the IOCC engineers, which refers us once again back to the tools and processes of modernization.

By introducing the techniques of reportage into this documentary tradition, Hewitson provided subsequent filmmakers with a paradigm through which to render Wishart’s Principle less abstract and to speak more directly and precisely to those themes it rehearses. As the last film to chronicle the entire scope of the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region, Richard Finnie’s *Iron From Labrador* (1963), is the logical outcome of this ideological/stylistic confluence. Relying exclusively on continuous voice of god narration by Lloyd Robertson, Finnie’s piece combines footage of various phases of the development itself along with footage of the locations of and activities within the sites of economic and administrative power to create what is, for all intents and purposes, an extended news piece.

Beginning with a brief establishing sequence depicting the mechanical process of refining iron ore into steel (people, it should be noted, are entirely absent from this sequence) Finnie uses the Wishart Principle to historically anchor and structure the content proper. To achieve this, he engages in a particularly effective stylistic variation: between the traditional second and third shots, he cuts in two shots of texts authored by A.P. Low (stills 4 and 5, Fig. 5), one of the first people to identify the iron ore deposits in
the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region. Ascribing – incorrectly, Babel preceded Low by some 22 years – the historical beginning of this development to the sole, visionary geologist, Finnie’s deployment of the Wishart Principle establishes a discrete history of the development itself. For Finnie, A.P. Low was, quite literally, the first to see what had remained hidden. His discovery would anticipate all of the development that was to come.

Fig. 5. *Iron From Labrador*. The Wishart Principle expanded to include the work of A.P. Low.

Over the sequence Lloyd Robertson adds:

One of the regions marked for investigation was the central trough of Canada’s Great Labrador Peninsula: part of it belonging to the province of Quebec, part to the province of Newfoundland. This was the brooding sub-arctic wilderness dubbed by early explorers as “the Land God Gave Cain”. Mile after mile of lakes, rivers, bush and tundra: remote, and forbidding. But the geologists knew that in the 1890s, one of their Canadian predecessors, A.P. Low, followed an Indian trail
into the Labrador trough and came upon vast deposits of iron ore. […] It was just one man who pointed the way. It would take many men and many millions of dollars to get the ore to market.

Building upon what by this point would have been an altogether traditional narrative of the emptiness of the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region – with the curious exception of his brief attempt to anthropomorphize the land, nothing seems particularly novel about Robertson’s narration – Finnie is able to construct the idea of a corporate history of this space. Here, Low’s documents provide us with tangible evidence of this history: they constitute the earliest evidence of the application of the tools and processes of modernization to this area. Low, quite literally, marks the beginning of a particular history of seeing.

This manner of historical grounding is particularly important here as Iron From Labrador is the last film to be commissioned directly by the Iron Ore Company of Canada that broadly documents the development of the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region. Produced almost a decade after the original mine at Carol Lake opened, the intervening years had seen the incorporation and expansion of Labrador City and the neighbouring community of Wabush, the building of a pellet plan to further refine the extracted iron ore before shipping it to market, and the general expansion of mining operations throughout the QLIOMR. Development, such as it had occurred, was no longer needed as the project was producing to its expected capacity. Iron From Labrador is really a summary document commissioned for this historical coda. Robertson’s final cadence emphasizes the directions of that development: “In successful operation, on schedule, and within budget, the development in the heart of Labrador represented a big
new industry whose economic benefits would be enjoyed in Newfoundland and throughout the rest of Canada for long years to come. Tapping one of the world’s greatest known sources of iron ore”.

For all that *Dr. Wishart’s Labrador Journey* was able to anticipate with regard to the structuring of films in this tradition, in one certain respect, his film stands glaringly apart: in its depiction of the Innu. This is by no means to suggest that Wishart’s film works to represent their relationship with the land that he is traversing; it is simply to say that he includes footage of them at all. In virtually every film subsequent, if Innu presence in the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region is referenced, it is done with remarkable brevity and exclusively by means of aural communication: never through visual images. That Wishart would opt to include any visual of the Innu at all owes something to the nuanced nature of the document he was producing. If he was attempting to rehearse some broader idea of a region, one in which aboriginal presence was a defining factor, then we can begin to reconcile the minute-long montage of Innu at Sept-Îles that constitutes final minute of the film. But, read within the larger context of this tradition of filmmaking, we can discern another, more functional motivation for its inclusion and location at the end of the film: namely, that it implies the Innu have taken up a sedentary existence away from the location of development. Beginning with the establishing shot of the structure of Hudson’s Bay Trading Post, the organization that partly facilitated the Innu seasonal residence at Sept-Îles, the remainder of the montage depicts the Innu living in permanent structures and wearing decisively white-western clothing. A fitting coda, the Innu are located at the end of Wishart’s journey and,
accordingly, at the edge of their territory (not within it), ostensibly moving from their
traditional modes of social organization and labour and the locations of their practice.

Fig. 6: Coda. The unpeopling of Nitassinan: Innu at Sept-Îles.

It is worth noting that the only other film arising out of this development that
includes any visual representation of the Innu is a film sponsored by the Iron Ore
Company of Canada for the Archaeological Society of Sherbrooke. Having nothing to do
directly with the development of the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region, Sept-Îles
à la recherche de son passé (1964) is a document of an archaeological project excavating
the first European settlements in the region. Even here, the Innu are relegated to two
rather foreboding shots, suggesting the obsolescence of their way of life. The narrator
muses: “Aujourd’hui, la noble race des indiens Montagnais coopère fièrement à
l’édification d’une ville nouvelle. Vivant aux milieux des installations ultra moderne de
l’iron ore, les Montagnais on fait preuve d’une étonnante facilité d’adaptation”. Their
representation, it seems, is contingent upon their ability to cooperate in and co-exist with
the development of Nitassinan.
Spaces of water

Second we are presented with that corporate space developed by the British Newfoundland Corporation (Brinco) and its subsidiary, the Churchill Falls (Labrador) Corporation. No less expansive than the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region, the space developed throughout the course of the Churchill Falls Hydro-Electric Development Project is, due to the character of the development, difficult to qualify along the same lines. Where the former region had sought to enable access to and exploitation of particular and discrete tracts of land that contained ore bodies – an inherently selective process – the Churchill Falls Hydro-Electric Development Project would seek to expand the breadth of pre-existing natural phenomenon (in the form of a drainage area) through focussed manipulation, an inherently facilitative process. Thus, while we know that Brinco was given title to some 129,500 km² of central Labrador (Kennedy N. pag.) and that, as we have already established, the amount of land flooded for the project itself was 1,300 km², the actual amounts of land and water that are either complicit in this development or affected by it are impossible to quantify. According to Sally Macdonald’s film, *Power in Perpetuity: The Churchill Falls Project* (1967), the
drainage basin (that is, the area that catches all of the water that is ultimately directed into
the project) is the size of the, or 70,273 km² and encompasses most of the Québec-
Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region as well as a vast tract of Nitassinan: the Churchill Falls
Hydro Electric Drainage Region (Fig. 8).

Fig. 8: *Power in Perpetuity*. Still 1: the size and shape of water bodies after the system of
dykes has been created in western Labrador. Still 2: the drainage area. To be read against
Fig. 1.

Yet, for as vast as the development of the Churchill Falls Hydro Electric Drainage
Region was, it serves as the subject for only three films: Macdonald’s *Power in
Perpetuity*, *Power From Labrador* (1970), and *Journey to Power* (1972), commissioned
by the CF(L)CO and all produced by Crawley Films. If the development of the Québec-
Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region itself had rehearsed those narratives and ideologies
that led to the establishment of the Canadian state, narratives and ideologies that we
understand to have had a particular epochal resonance, the Churchill Falls Hydro Electric
Drainage Region rehearsed a set of narratives and ideologies that would find their
ultimate ends in Meech Lake. Inherently non-federal in character, the development of this
region served as a forum through which the particularities of provincial sovereignty as we
now understand it would be articulated and established\textsuperscript{13}. These films, then, engage in a process of double revision. While they actively seek to build upon that visual syntax developed in the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region films and un-register a continued presence in and use of this territory, they also work to elide that interprovincial dispute that came to shape the project, attempting instead to depict the project as another instance of Canadian national ingenuity and imagination. Both films achieve this through particular emphases on aspects of form rather than content, foregrounding those unique visual and auditory characteristics of both the materials and products of development.

With Macdonald’s film, \textit{Power in Perpetuity}, this emphasis on form is evident from her opening sequence, an extended deployment and reconfiguration of the Wishart Principle. Fading in from black to a close-up of an otherwise unidentified map (still 1, Fig. 9), she structures our reading of the visual data with an accompanying fade-in of the sound of power coursing through a transfer station. Even as the graphics change, providing us with precise co-ordinates of that map we are looking at, J. Frank Willis’ accompanying narration provides us with no context other than: “Churchill Falls. 750 million horsepower” (Fig. 9). The film’s opening is meant to establish the relationship between geographical location and the products of development; little other context of any form is provided. If the Wishart Principle more generally works to establish a hypothetical national context through which to interpret the remainder of a film’s content,

\textsuperscript{13} The issues surrounding the contract between CF(L)CO and Hydro-Québec for the development of the Churchill Falls Hydro Electric Project and control over its power have been variously and documented and require no articulation here. The most recent account of this conflict is James P. Feehan and Melvin Baker’s “The Origins of a Coming Crisis: Renewal of the Churchill Falls Contract”.
its configuration here encourages us to interpret what is to follow in a distinctly localized corporate context.

Fig. 9: *Power in Perpetuity*. Physical co-ordinates.

Structured upon such acontextualizing formal strategies, Macdonald’s film is able to impose a discrete history of the Churchill Falls Hydro Electric Drainage Region precisely because it works to foreground the extreme sensory data of those phenomena that constitute the materials and products of development; literally, the film showcases the extremities of the sites and sounds of its constitutive materials. Organizing a rather long historical arc along the lines of the sensory experiences attendant with the materials of development – through an emphasis on spectacle – Macdonald’s film is both able to establish a national significance for the project and, importantly, able to incorporate a range of other materials that, in more conventionally structured industrial films, would prove to be problematic. So singular and imposing are the representations of the materials and products of development that all other narrative elements are pressed into the service of foregrounding the spectacle. It is then, within this specialized formal context, that we can begin to account for what is the longest passage in any of the

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14 Like some accounts of the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region, MacDonald’s historical arc also finds its roots with the explorations of A.P. Low. Neither *Power in Perpetuity* nor *Power From Labrador* fully examines the degree to which the development of the Churchill Falls Hydro Electric Drainage Region was predicated upon that infrastructure built for the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region. Interesting, in light of the fact that there is a clear overlap in the territory encompassed by both projects.
Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region or Churchill Falls Hydro Electric Drainage Region films that directly acknowledge an Innu relationship with the spaces of development.

Immediately after her reconfigured Wishart Principle, Macdonald presents us with this jarring six-shot sequence:

Fig. 10: Power in Perpetuity. “Indian” acknowledgement.

Match cuts, shots three and six (respectively, a zoom in and a cross-dissolve), are forcefully emphasized in this sequence through both the speed of their cuts as well as their accompanying loud, siren-like sound effect. As the only visual evidence of anything related to the Innu, these shots and their accompanying sound effect are not meant to provide any form of context for an historical relationship with the Falls, rather they work to imply and establish homologous cultural understandings of Churchill Falls itself. The rapidity of the cuts, their clear lack of motivation in the diegesis, and the accompanying sound effect all work to draw our attention to the audible and visual material. It is a sequence that literally instructs us to where we should be directing our attention: to those
sensory extremes afforded by the Falls itself. Willis’ narration structures the effect more precisely: “From 25 miles away, the Indians saw a great cloud of mist. Patshetshunau, they called the falls: it steams. And they feared it. They feared its great caldron of white water, believing it to be the home of Manitou, their most powerful god”. The particulars of this relationship with the Falls are of little consequence. What matters here is that the Innu have provided us with an historical context for seeing this natural phenomenon as a spectacle.

Building upon Macdonald’s organizational strategy, the un-credited director of *Power From Labrador* structures that film along practically the same lines, albeit, here, the tools and processes of development are the primary focus. Beginning in black, we are hear an explosion, followed by a quick cut to a close-up of the Churchill River at the top of the Falls and an accompanying cross-fade into the sound of the river. Establishing both the spectacle of the natural resource as well as the tools necessary to undertake its development at the outset, *Power From Labrador* offers little in the way of stylistic variation on *Power in Perpetuity*: it is, in part, constructed with the same footage.

Fig. 11: *Power From Labrador*. Opening sequence. Stills one and two are from the same zoom and pan.

Where *Power From Labrador* departs from its predecessor is in its particular attention to the representation of the administration and financing of the project. Drawing
upon a range of archival footage of the groundbreaking ceremony, the loan financing for its development, the incorporation of the Churchill Falls (Labrador) Corporation, this footage is included to strengthen the overall effect of the spectacle. Usually sandwiched between sequences of construction, these archival passages emphasize the removal of the location of development, establishing a clear distinction between modern urban spaces and the spaces that contain those natural resources needed for the latter’s development. What is problematic about this footage is that through its selective inclusion here, it contains little trace of its original context, contexts that often documented the inter-provincial conflict that came to define this project.

In one striking instance towards the beginning of the film, we see an archival sequence documenting the groundbreaking ceremony (footage, it should also be acknowledged, that was used in Power in Perpetuity as well). Over a series of four shots (Fig. 12), Lloyd Robertson, again, briskly summarizes the action: “Brinco: through its subsidiary, Churchill Falls Labrador Corporation, is making the dream of Newfoundland’s Joey Smallwood come alive”. Beginning the sequence with an explosion (still 1), this archival sequence is characteristically followed by a rapid montage of construction work at the site of what would become the pump house for the completed project.
What this archival footage actually documents is not so much a commemorative lull in an otherwise dynamistic process; it is a lament for the course that had led to the present moment. This is what Smallwood actually said at this event:

Let it not be misunderstood. [...] It is our united determination that this power shall be developed primarily, not exclusively, not solely, but primarily for the benefit of the people of this province. This is why we wanted it to be developed. We were entirely selfish in that. We were completely selfish. This is our land. This is our province. This is our river. This is our waterfall and we will forever make sure that it will be developed, and when developed, will operate primarily, chiefly, mainly, for the benefit of the people of Newfoundland. (qtd. in “The Mighty Churchill”)
As powerful as the spectacle of the development might be, Smallwood’s candidness with the province of Québec here could not be repackaged to work along such lines. Archival footage, such as it is repurposed in this film, is merely meant to insinuate a corporate agency over spectacle. Their inclusions are fleeting reminders of a homologous spectacle of administration and financing that is occurring far from the spaces of development.

The ends of filmic-spatial production

Finally, we are presented with two instances of space-producing organizations that, while are certainly corporative, are also decisively non-industrial. That I am approaching these only by way of conclusion owes as much to the current status of their media (which is to say, unavailable) as it does to the transitional character of these organizations. They anticipate, perpetuate, and to a degree, continue on with the practice of media production in the subsequent epoch of film practice shaped by local culture. It should, however, be emphasized, both the work of the Grenfell Mission and James Robert Andersen (colloquially known throughout Labrador as Uncle Jim) and the audiovisual media produced by both require a great deal more critical attention than can given here15.

Certainly, the media output by Sir Wilfred Grenfell and his related not for profit organizations, the Grenfell Mission and the International Grenfell Association, requires its own discrete history. In his efforts to generate funds for his medical and social mission work, Grenfell frequently used a range of media to publicize the material conditions of

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15 Nearly all of the media produced by the International Grenfell Association as well a significant portion of the Uncle Jim media is located in the Rooms’ Film Collection. Those items of Uncle Jim’s that remain outside of the Rooms are only now being transferred from their legacy formats. I am leading this project, which is being facilitated by the White Elephant Museum, Makkovik.
northern Newfoundland and coastal Labrador as well as the efforts of his organizations. First through magic lantern slides, then through still photography and, ultimately, cinematography, Grenfell and his related organizations are, taken as a whole, one of the largest producers of visual media in either Labrador or Newfoundland. What is interesting about this body of work is that, unlike the earlier case studies, these items operate along interpellative lines similar to those of the Commission of Government’s on the Island: that is, the citizens of coastal Labrador are understood as developing yet, inherently unable to see to their own physical and social well-being. However, unlike, a region that we have already established as existing in a specialized form of capitalism, at the time Grenfell commenced his mission work, Labrador was organized along the lines of relatively disconnected barter-subsistence groups. His work in Labrador would not only impose a particular spatial schema on the region – one that, for all intents and purposes, established North West River as the centre of Labrador – but it would also, importantly, facilitate the widespread introduction of contemporary forms of social and economic organization, often with lasting complications.

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16 While the International Grenfell Association was charged with providing services to both Newfoundland and Labrador, I am only considering their film output in the context of the latter region. There are three reasons for this. First, the majority of Grenfell’s film work in Newfoundland occurred prior to the period under examination here. Second, most of the footage produced by either organization was prepared for the purposes of exhibition during lecture films that are no longer extant or remain unavailable for review. Third, unlike the residents of northern Newfoundland, those services provided by these organizations were often the only modern services available to the residents of Labrador: these organizations are responsible for the introduction of the elements of contemporary civil society to the region.

17 The most pressing example of this are Grenfell Mission boarding schools that were operated at North West River and St. Anthony. While not yet recognized by the Federal Government as being instances of residential schools (these operations were not administered directly by the Federal Government), there is a movement amongst Labrador Inuit specifically see these facilities recognized as such and ensure compensation for former residents.
Fig 13: Grenfell Posts. The figure represents all currently existing communities that housed permanent staff of either organization. The mission ship Strathcona serviced those communities and stations that did not host permanent staff.

What is striking about those films produced by or on behalf of the Grenfell Mission during the period in question then is that they stand as some of the only commercially produced items to present footage of Labradorians in Labrador, be they of aboriginal or of European decent. Though they are generally divorced from their local contexts and represented within the apparatus of the Grenfell Mission, both *Report From Down North: The Grenfell Mission Today* (c.1960) and *The Grenfell Challenge: Adventure and Experience* (c.1967) are significant precisely for the ability to register a local presence, regardless of how nuanced their representation of the local is. Structured around a continuous voice of god narration, both films are clearly meant to showcase what would by this time have been solely the Grenfell Mission’s work in the region. Labradorians, such as they are depicted, are always the recipients of benevolence, not
active interlocutors with an organization mandated to care for their physical and social well being. These two films appear to be the last film documents commissioned by the Grenfell Mission, which passed its medical and social mission over to the Provincial Government in 1981; their clear emphasis is on establishing the legacy of Grenfell and his related organizations.

It is, finally, with the work of Uncle Jim Andersen that we are presented with the first and most comprehensive\textsuperscript{18} set of film documents produced by a Labradorian of Labradorians. Some time after 1960, Uncle Jim began shooting 8mm film; moving into a succession of different film and video formats including Super 8, Betamax, VHS, Video8 and Hi8, his work almost exclusively documents his home community, Makkovik and its people. What distinguishes Uncle Jim’s output, and certainly what makes it particularly difficult to account for, is its complicated relationship to an amateur home-movie making tradition. Unlike all of preceding case studies where film is pressed into the service of articulating and rehearsing a region that is physically removed from the locations of exhibition, Uncle Jim’s footage was clearly generated for local and transitory audiences that were, in one respect or another, his patrons. An independent businessman, he served as the Postmaster for Makkovik, maintained a boarding house, a general store, held the only license for the sale of beer in the community, and prior to the introduction of television, operated as an independent projectionist (Murphy N. pag.). Rather than packaging his footage into completed productions for the purposes of re-sale, the apparent value in the act of production was first realized in the act itself – that is, through

\textsuperscript{18} In 2002, Uncle Jim sold a portion of his still and moving image collection to the Torgâsok Cultural Centre, the cultural arm of the Nunatsiavut Government. Administered and maintained by the Rooms, the collection is yet to be full described, however, their most recent finding aid lists 576 items in the collection. In addition to this, I have already transferred some 570 items of film and video during the course of the archival project I am engaged in with the White Elephant Museum.
the demonstration of the financial means to own such equipment and the corresponding technical prowess needed to operate it – and second, through the occasional local exhibition of this footage\textsuperscript{19}. His self-defined position in the community had a particular affect upon his work as a film producer and vice-versa.

That Uncle Jim would come to produce film toward such a rather idiosyncratic ends reveals much about the local impact of those corporatizing projects that shaped Labrador during the epoch of institutional culture. If those various projects had facilitated the introduction of the capitalist systems into circumscribed areas of Labrador, the aggregate of Uncle Jim’s diverse business interests represented one of the first expressions and iterations of that system in a local setting. I am not suggesting that Uncle Jim was single-handedly responsible for the introduction of a system of capital into the community of Makkovik, but I am saying that the particular manner in which his interests operated and coalesced are indicative of a transitional moment during which the practice of subsistence was rapidly replaced by a vigorous system of capital. In this passage, the demonstration of fluency in the new economic system is as important as the ability to actually operate within it. As an independent businessman, Uncle Jim took this demonstration to be paramount; its corollary was to be his very public use of the photographic apparatus.

What is significant about the Uncle Jim example is that his decisively structural approach toward the act of film production is taken up in the subsequent epoch.

Commencing with the Memorial University of Newfoundland Extension Service’s

\textsuperscript{19} Other than the seemingly aborted \textit{Visions of Makkovik} series of self-produced VHS tapes (commencing some time on or after 1992) and the 2008 Torngâsok Cultural Centre purchase, there is no evidence to suggest that Uncle Jim ever directly attempted to monetize his footage.
Labrador Film Project 1969 and continuing through to the work of the OKâlaKatiget Society, film production was, almost invariably, used as a facilitative process to assist in establishment, rehearsal, and circumscription of local communities and sub-regions throughout Labrador. As we shall come to see, the work of these media organizations would, conflictingly, work to both offset the affects of and further entrench a system of capital.
Chapter Four

Local Culture: Film Production in Labrador, 1969-1997

Labrador’s epoch of institutional culture had left the local population with a troubled legacy. Through the practice of garrisoned modernization the industrial proxies of the Commission and Provincial Governments had fixed Labrador as a liminal economic and political territory. It was to be the site of various massive industrial projects but these were not to be conducted by Labradorians; it was to be the site of massive investments of capital but this system of economic organization was not be generally applied to the region; it was to be part of the Canadian province called Newfoundland but joint entry into Confederation did not see the even application of federal or provincial resources\(^1\). In its final cast, the organization and structuring of Labrador was imposed both from without and from within by removed economic and political interests. Post-Confederation Labrador was precisely held into place by systems that remained functionally unavailable to its residents.

For all that this externally imposed stasis did to prevent Labrador’s residents from participating in those civil and political societies attendant with Confederation, they did, to varying degrees, allow for the perpetuation of those ethnic-regional groups that constituted pre-Confederation Labrador. The establishment of the industrial garrisons may have resulted in massive disruptions of regional space, removing vast tracts of land from common use, but their establishment did not facilitate the same manner of invasive social engineering that occurred on the Island during the various phases of government-

\(^1\) See in particular the Provincial and Federal Services sections of *Summary of the Report of the Royal Commission on Labrador, 1974.*
sponsored Resettlement. Labrador was also subjected to Resettlement programs, however, here the object of these programs was less to encourage the diversification of labour practices as it was to group residents into designated communities that could more easily receive selected government services as well as those services offered by the Grenfell Mission. There is an important distinction between these practices of Resettlement. Unlike Resettlement on the Island which facilitated shifts of population into modernized, physically connected spaces that were to host diversified labour practices, Resettlement in Labrador facilitated shifts of population into unevenly modernized and physically disconnected spaces that were to host the same labour practices as the resettled community. Taken together, the establishment of the industrial garrisons and the various Resettlement programs worked to both reinforce and amplify Labrador’s regional distinctions: the North Coast (Nunatsiavut); the Upper Lake Melville Area; the South Coast (NunatuKavut); the Straits; and the newly minted Labrador West each constituted their own figurative island circumscribed by the Labrador Peninsula.

As a pair of social-economic interventions, industrialization and Resettlement facilitated a very specific form of structural change within Labrador’s regions. Unable to work directly within either the new economic or political systems (that is with the obvious nuanced exceptions of Labrador West and the Upper Lake Melville areas), each region engaged in alternative manners of social, political, and to a degree, economic organization. While the particular expression and iteration would vary according to region, it is important to recognize that these organizing strategies were fundamentally contingent upon federal and provincial civil and political societies. Put another way, the various regions of post-Confederation Labrador are both structured by and a reaction to
the state itself. The example of Uncle Jim Andersen of Makkovik is a localized (civic) instance of this practice of contingent organization. His diverse business practices arose out of and anticipated a range of social and economic shifts that Makkovik was subjected to since Canadian Confederation. Contingent organization, such as we might begin to define it in this context then, presupposes concomitant processes of coercion and adaptation; its final expression necessarily circumscribed by the very political and economic systems that serve as the source of this coercion and structure the range of possible adaptive strategies.

At the larger territorial level, the Memorial University of Newfoundland Extension Service facilitated much of the initial practice of contingent organization. Beginning in 1967 its various Community Development Workers served as the catalysts for a range of social and economic initiatives from facilitating the establishment of locally run cooperatives, to providing supports for local enterprise, to liaising between Federal and Provincial Governments and local communities, and more generally serving as a facilitative agency that would allow for local and regional integration into contemporary state and political society. Broadly speaking the Extension Service’s mandate in Labrador was to establish a framework for communication (be it at the civic, regional, territorial, provincial, or federal level) in order to encourage the practice of contingent organization. Already it had made great strides on the Island with facilitating such forms of communication though the act of film production. But its particular application in Labrador would be to even greater effect. Film production not only offered the first visible (public) means of social forum at the regional and then territorial level, it would, once locally practiced, serve as a medium through which regional-ethnic identities
could be publicly rehearsed and accordingly amplified. As we shall come to see here, film production in Labrador’s epoch of local culture did not so much assist in the formation of a broader pan-Labrador culture as it did entrench regional and ethnic cultures along state lines.

The advent of communications technologies

That film production would come to assume such a function here owes much to the more general circumstances of cultural formation during Labrador’s epoch of local culture and that formation’s relationship to the process of contingent organization. As we have already seen on the Island, the process of cultural formation was not constrained by such exigencies. Resettlement had displaced a significant portion of the population but those affected were moved into technologically modernized, physically connected spaces that were to host diversified labour practices and that were importantly integrated into provincial and federal state and civil society; in other words, places in which the practice of contingent organization was not required. Culture, such as it arose during this epoch in Newfoundland was at the same time comprehensive (i.e. pan-Newfoundland) and highly specialized, which is to say that as a form of organized response it was not pressed into the more general service of either economic, social or political organization but was able to broadly react to it. But even more importantly, those locations in which the process of cultural formation occurred were suited toward facilitating the activity of film production, allowing, as per my working definition of the medium, the necessary confluence of technology, skilled personnel, and capital. In Labrador, however, Resettlement had displaced and centralized the population into communities quite unlike those on the
Island. Unevenly modernized, physically disconnected, and extraordinarily varied in their practice of capital, those Labrador communities that remained at the end of Resettlement programs were unable to support an analogous manner of cultural formation; neither the necessary physical nor economic infrastructures had been established. Other than their shared occupancy of the same geographical area, the various regions of Labrador had yet to be integrated within any manner of network.

Perpetuating this condition in no small part was the lack of an effective pan-Labrador communication system. It comes as no surprise that those systems established by the various agents of institutional culture were always self-serving, intended either for regionally specific communications or for communications between the industrial garrisons and areas outside of Labrador. Little had changed during the early years of the epoch of local culture. The *Summary of the Report of the Royal Commission on Labrador* published in 1974 had characterized communications services outside of the industrial garrisons as existing “at a primitive level” (1): there were no newspapers, no readily accessible long distance telephone service, limited telegraph services, and limited radio services (1-3). If the issue of pan-Newfoundland communications services had proven to be the domain of virtually all manners of government on the Island, it remained a characteristically non-governmental endeavour in Labrador. Even after the Royal Commission had made its findings on this public, little effort was directed toward rectifying this issue. Solutions, such as they were to be developed and implemented were to be from Labrador itself, not the Provincial Government *per se*.

In response to the Commission’s findings the Provincial Government established the Labrador Resources Advisory Council in 1976: a provincially funded organization
made up of elected representatives from the various regions of Labrador and mandated to represent the interests of Labradorians to the Provincial Government. Intended as something of a bureaucratic salve for the vexed trajectory of Labrador’s governance, improvements to the acts and materials of communication figured prominently in the Labrador Resources Advisory Council’s mandate. Nevertheless its status as a government-funded organization complicated the Council’s ability to achieve its mandate with a local population that was growing increasingly frustrated with its treatment by Newfoundland. The degree to which it was successful in achieving that mandate remains unclear.

But if the Provincial Government remained unwilling or unable to improve the status of pan-Labrador communications, and the Labrador Resources Advisory Council was encumbered by virtue of its association with said government, no such impediments existed for the Memorial University of Newfoundland Extension Service. Even before it had commenced its *Newfoundland Project*, the improvement of communications in rural parts of the Island had always been a central part of its operations, albeit there that facilitation generally occurred at the community level. What the *Newfoundland Project*

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2 It is worth noting that there is a dearth of literature on the Labrador Resources Advisory Council and its function in post-Confederation Labrador. Bill Rompkey provides an extremely brief account of the organization in *The Story of Labrador*. The stated objectives of the Council were as follows:

(a) Be able to speak to government representing the feelings of the people in Labrador Communities on all resource issues such as fishery, forestry, oil and gas, uranium developments and national parks.
(b) Get communities aware of the use of resources and the good and bad effects of that resource development may have on the people and the environment.
(c) Develop policies on how traditional resources such as fishing, trapping and hunting may be improved.
(d) Find out what plans government and industrial companies may have for the development of mineral reserves in Labrador and assist the Labrador communities to develop a position toward such exploration and development.
(e) To ensure the development of new ideas in resource use which take into consideration the traditions and aspirations of Labradorians.
(f) Develop better communications between the various areas of Labrador. (“Objectives – Labrador Resources Advisory Council” N. pag.)
had revealed was a communicative paradigm that could be applied to a cluster of communities rather than the one or two that were previously serviced through the placement of Community Development Workers. For Don Snowden, the Director of Extension Services who had developed it along with Colin Low and Fred Earle, the Fogo Process would come to serve as a structuring metaphor for the general operations of the Extension Service. Granting the many forms it would take, its primary objective would be to facilitate the act of communication for the purpose of development. As we shall see, this more abstract commitment to a Fogo Process would bear heavily upon the application of the Fogo Process (i.e. its iteration as a film-based communications project) on the South Coast of Labrador in 1968, Extension Service’s first attempt at implementing a regional albeit finite communication service.

For Snowden, the commitment to a Fogo Process would define the remainder of his professional career. Overseeing its application in Northern Canada, the United States, Nepal, and India in contexts outside of his role as Director of the Extension Service, Fogo was understood to be a globally relevant process made possible by the mimetic force of the mechanically reproducible moving image. “Video,” he tells us in his 1984 essay “Eyes see; ears hear,”

in the hands of a skilled community worker can assist people to talk to other people with whom they may have never before had any communication or access. It can remove the inherent threat in communicating with persons of authority. It can assist in the planning of action and in the resolution of conflict, potential or actual. (N. pag.)
Focussed implementation of communication technology created a privileged forum through which ideas of development could be communicated and ultimately constituted. We can however perceive an embedded interpellative operation at work here. Under the direction of specialized community development workers *cum* content producers, this manner of communicative project is at all times predicated upon the idea that development, in its more general and abstracted sense, is both necessary and correct. There is no mechanism within the process to allow for discourse on whether or not development is indeed what is desired. In this sense, this practice of the Fogo Process stands as something of an analogue to the process of continent organization as both rehearse the same procedures of coercion and adaptation. During the first application of the Fogo Process, the decision to engage in the activity of development was arrived at only after a consensus was reached to remain on the Island rather than participate in a provincially sponsored Resettlement program.

For our more immediate purposes, the significance of Snowden’s ideas on the role and function of communications technology derives as much from his position as the Director of the Memorial University of Newfoundland Extension Service as it does his position as chair of the Royal Commission on Labrador, established by the Provincial Government in 1972. In these roles Snowden was able to both assess and posit solutions for the issues surrounding communications in Labrador more generally. As we have already seen, one of those solutions that resulted from the report of the Commission was the establishment of the Labrador Resources Advisory Council. But in his role as Director of Extension Services more specifically, Snowden was able to direct that organization’s resources towards the facilitation of communications infrastructure and
operations throughout Labrador. Both the Extension Service and its later incarnation in Labrador as the Labrador Institute of Northern Studies (established in 1979) were responsible for not only constructing and operating infrastructure such as an inter-community teleconference network (OKâlaKatiget Society 5) but also for overseeing various communications programs and events as well as communications technology education and training initiatives until the early 1990s.

Commencing in 1968 with the somewhat inappropriately titled Labrador Film Project 1969 – more or less an attempt to reproduce the Newfoundland Project on the South Coast of Labrador – the Extension Service’s general strategy to facilitate communications throughout Labrador favoured the use of film and video technology. Until the establishment of the Labrador Institute in 1979, it had engaged in or facilitated no less than three separate Fogo-inspired film projects and at least one documentary theatre project that took its inspiration from the same communication paradigm. This is distinct from the other dozen or so films that it had produced during the course of communication events it either conducted or assisted in facilitating such as the Labrador Land Use Conference in 1977, the Northern Women Conference in 1978, Labrador Resources Advisory Council meetings as well as those standalone films produced by the

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3 It remains unclear what is precisely meant by “inter-community teleconference network” here as telecommunications companies generally maintain such networks. Given the lack of corroborating accounts of such infrastructure, it seems probable that the source of this information, the “A Proposal for Labrador Inuit Broadcast Training,” has incorrectly described another manner of communications network.

4 This title is recorded in the Extension Service of Memorial University of Newfoundland Media Catalogue. It is entirely likely that this project has been referred to by other names.

5 In 1975 Don Snowden recommended to Chris Brookes that his company the Mummers Troupe, a theatrical collective based in St. John’s, undertake a production in Northern Labrador. Under sponsorship from the Labrador Inuit Association and the Labrador Resources Advisory Council, the company lived in three communities in Northern Labrador during the winter months of 1977 to produce Silakepat Kissiane – Weather Permitting.
Extension Service on a range of local subjects from bilingual education, to the fishery, to the history of aboriginal peoples. Under Snowden’s direction, the Extension Service was responsible for establishing a local practice of film production that, above all else, sought to facilitate a very particular manner of communication as circumscribed by a Fogo Process. Under such conditions, those films that were produced necessarily brokered in representations of literality, not representations approaching either purposeful artistic abstraction or narrative. The general character of this epoch is that it favoured films that appeared to belong to the documentary mode. However, it would be more accurate in characterizing this tradition as mechanically recorded interlocutions rather than mechanically recorded documentations.

Subtle though it may be, it is necessary to recognize this difference. For while the documentary mode would persist throughout the epoch\(^6\), the manner of its construction and accordingly the subjects it would seek to address would both change. We can understand this as a function of the continued lack of pan-Labrador physical or economic infrastructure this communication paradigm had sough to establish. If the Fogo Process had enabled the residents of that island to both create infrastructure in their communities and even more importantly integrate with the infrastructure on Newfoundland, then it had allowed for the creation of regional, non-integrative infrastructure in Labrador. Each of the latter’s various regions had remained functionally exclusive from one another.

Engaged as their targeted interlocutors may have been by these films, neither the Federal nor Provincial Governments had committed to producing a means by which to physically

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\(^6\) Even at the time of this writing, I am aware of only two narrative films that have been produced in Labrador. Both films based upon Innu legends are by the Mushuau Innu filmmaker Christine Poker: *The Legend of the Tshuishuas* (2010), and a yet to be titled/released monster movie.
connect Labrador⁷. Yet, as a medium through which the residents of a single region could communicate, organize, and ultimately precipitate internal development, this manner of film production had revealed itself to be extraordinarily effective. The Extension Service’s Labrador Film Project 1969 had provided a glimpse of what could be achieved through such a communication initiative. The OKâlaKatiget Society, a media producing organization established in Northern Labrador in 1982, would reveal the full range of what could be accomplished. It would prove to be instrumental in the establishment of Nunatsiavut, a semi-autonomous region of Northern Labrador created in 2005 to satisfy the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement.

Increased regional emphasis had also revealed the particular suitability of film as a medium through which regional history could be both chronicled and manufactured⁸. Purposed along with its related technologies towards the conveyance of immediate events, this entire communication initiative inevitably assisted in raising awareness of the sweeping absence of historical sources, primary, secondary, or otherwise. Prior to its implementation, the collection of primary historical sources and the preparation of secondary materials from and regarding Labrador were activities conducted by persons and organizations from outside of the area. In response, Them Days Magazine was founded at Happy Valley-Goose Bay in 1973 with a mandate to publish interviews and essays on historical subjects relevant to Labrador as well as collect and maintain relevant archival materials. Granting its clear textual bias, the establishment of Them Days and its

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⁷ A road connecting the communities of Labrador West, the Upper Lake Melville Area, the South Coast, and the Straits was completed in December 2009. The five communities that make up Nunatsiavut, and the communities of Natuashish and Black Tickle remain accessible only by air and water.

⁸ For a more thorough account of the processes of historical awareness and manufacture, particularly in relation to the archive, see “The Tyranny of Absence: One Account of Archival Practice at the Fringe of the State”.

related archive signals the commencement of a contemporary concern for Labrador
related historical matters. Following with the Labrador Heritage Society in 1976 – the
organization responsible for the creation of the unofficial regionalist flag – the 1970s and
1980s would see a proliferation of museums and historical associations with regional or
community foci. Guided by the local population, film and video became tools pressed
into the service of what was increasingly becoming a territorial concern for history.
Beginning with Extension Service productions such as The Indians’ Father Whitehead
(1979), proceeding through National Film Board of Canada productions such as The Last
Days of Okak (1985) (produced with materials from the Them Days Labrador Archive),
and ultimately with the “Them Days with…” series of Labradorimiut episodes by the
OKâlaKatiget Society, this tradition of historical film moves away from an
interloctuionary model and approaches one that resembles more conventional
documentation. Granted, this tradition of documentation pays particular attention to
orally constructed histories than it does other forms, a trend necessitated as much by the
availability of primary sources as it is by the idea of historical documentation forwarded
by Them Days.

Finally, we can understand these shifts in construction and address as being
influenced by external production agencies. As localized as regional development may
have been throughout Labrador, those developments that did occur had made it easier for
people from outside to travel both to and within the area, the prohibitive expensive
notwithstanding. This new access directly affected the ability for production companies
such as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the National Film Board of Canada
to produce film in the region, an increasing occurrence in the post-Challenge for
Change/Société Nouvelle moment in Canada’s media history. Beginning as early as 1971 with the unfinished documentary film on the bicentenary of the Moravian arrival in northern Labrador\(^9\), the CBC had sought to create more programming in area; the NFB would follow suit with the CFC/SN produced *Labrador North* (1973), a short film about contemporary social change in Northern Labrador and its affect upon the local Inuit population. For the NFB the representation of Labrador’s aboriginal peoples would become a central concern, one singularly taken up in the work of Nigel Markham. So significant is Markham’s output that he is given equal status with the NFB below.

What of course distinguishes these organizations and their work is their reliance upon for non-intelocutionary techniques, what we would characterize as more traditional forms of documentation. Though their actual point of convergence lays beyond the boundaries of this study, we will finally albeit provisionally consider the affect of these organizations on local media production in Labrador.

From Extension to Institute

But at the outset we must necessarily turn our attentions back towards the Extension Service of Memorial University of Newfoundland and its subsequent iteration in the Labrador Institute of Northern Studies (now known as the Labrador Institute of Memorial University). Although it was set up by Memorial in 1959, the Extension Service was relatively late to arrive in Labrador; its operations there would commence in

\(^9\) Footage from this project is located in the in-process James Robert Andersen Collection. Unfortunately, there is little information available about the footage as the CBC is unable to confirm its existence. Shot over a number of days in the Nain area, the extant footage is of church services, a community dance, interviews with the organizing Moravian authorities, and an historical pageant re-enacting the first contact between the Moravians and Labrador Inuit.
1967 when Community Development Workers Tony Williamson and Ian Strachan were dispatched respectively to Cartwright on the South Coast and Nain on the North Coast. It was Williamson that would ultimately be responsible for bringing Fogo to Labrador.

A geographer by training, Williamson worked variously throughout the circumpolar north for both governmental agencies and post-secondary institutions in the field of resource use and development. The vast majority of his working career was based in Labrador. Following his Master’s thesis on population movement and the food gathering economy in the region, he took up a position as a Research Fellow with the Institute for Social and Economic Research at Memorial in 1965 to conduct doctoral work on the history and use of marine mammals throughout coastal Labrador. He abandoned that work in 1967 to take on the position of Community Development Worker and would eventually go on to assume the role of the Associate Director of Extension Services in Labrador in 1977 as well as that of the founding Director of the Labrador Institute of Northern Studies at Happy Valley-Goose Bay in 1979. Along with Don Snowden, he was instrumental in the development and delivery of a Fogo-inspired communication paradigm in Labrador. If Snowden had served as an architect for the model then Williamson was ultimately responsible for its implementation and maintenance here.

According to report diaries Williamson had prepared during his time as a Community Development Worker, the Extension Service had designs on conducting a project similar to the Newfoundland Project along the South Coast of Labrador as early as February 1968, though the language of his reports suggest that the location for this
project was determined some months prior (Williamson “Report Diaries”)\textsuperscript{10}. Eager to see the proliferation of a communicative paradigm that had proven to be a unilateral success for the residents of Fogo, the Extension Service set upon the idea of a film project on the South Coast of Labrador quickly. On the surface, the problems faced by both regions were analogous: both were home to a number of physically disconnected communities whose combined existence as a region was threatened by looming government-sponsored Resettlement programs. But this is where the similarities ended. For all the problems that Fogo faced it still remained physically proximate to the Island of Newfoundland, the location of government-sponsored social and economic development. Regardless of how successful a Fogo project might be on the South Coast of Labrador at enabling residents to mobilize as a region and address their problems collectively, that success would necessarily be tempered by that region’s proximity to existing infrastructure. \textit{Labrador Film Project 1969} would test the Fogo Process’s ability to mobilize the residents of a region virtually cut off from government-sanctioned spaces of development.

\textit{Labrador Film Project 1969} would also depart from the \textit{Newfoundland Project}’s implementation of the Fogo Process in a number of significant ways. One of the primary differences between the two projects was personnel. Where the \textit{Newfoundland Project} had been conducted by both a creative team composed of Colin Low and a National Film Board crew as well as a community development team composed of Extension Service Community Development Worker Fred Earle who was originally from Fogo, Don Snowden, and other Extension Service staff, \textit{Labrador Film Project 1969} was conducted

\textsuperscript{10} In his report diary for 4 February 1968, Williamson mentions that he served as the subject for a CBC interview regarding “the Extension program for the Labrador coast” (N. pag.). Subsequent entries chronicle his travel by skidoo across the south coast for the purposes of initial community consultations.
by a significantly smaller creative *cum* development team: Tony Williamson as project leader, Joe Harvey as cameraman and editor and Randy Coffin as sound recordist. Williamson was responsible for both the artistic and community direction of this project, no local representatives served in production roles. Likewise, there is a marked difference in both project’s ability to access relevant personnel. Where the *Newfoundland Project* was able to engage politicians, researchers, and policymakers as subjects for a number of its films – the people to whom these films are in part meant to address – *Labrador Film Project 1969* engages with local residents exclusively. Neither elected officials in the Provincial Government nor many of the merchants that supported the fishing industry in the area were readily accessible to its residents. As one of the uncredited subjects of *Time For Change, Cape Charles* suggests, “[f]our years I think since our member been here to have a meeting. He just came in then and he stepped on the wharf for about five or ten minutes I guess and he was gone again. I haven’t seen him since. That was just about the last election”. If the *Newfoundland Project* had managed to establish itself as an event that was in the best interests of politicians and policy-makers to attend, *Labrador Film Project 1969* had no such effect. It appears that communication with such people was a much later outcome of this project.

But the primary difference between this application of the Fogo Process and that of the *Newfoundland Project*, indeed the difference that distinguishes all future applications of the Fogo Process by the Extension Service, is one of historical precedent. Prior to the *Newfoundland Project* there was no set of film texts that embodied this

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11 This led to some friction between the crew. In a memo submitted to Don Snowden regarding Joe Harvey’s suitability as a cameraman for *Labrador Film Project 1969*, Williamson speaks of Harvey’s occasional inability to cooperate within the context of the team, suggesting that Harvey might lack the necessary sensitivity to engage in such work as well as Harvey’s over-reaching in the coordination of the project (Williamson 1969: 1).
communicative process, much less a set of texts that legitimated it as a process. All subsequent applications of the Fogo Process in both Labrador and Newfoundland were predicated upon and made use of this foundational set of twenty-seven films that provided an aesthetic-ideological basis for its application as a process. These films would serve as a constitutive paradigm, demonstrating both the manner in which the process of communication should unfold as well as a set of desired outcomes from that process. 

Labrador Film Project 1969 was at the outset rooted in the activity of quite literally watching the Newfoundland Project, its process demonstrated to and adapted by the residents of the South Coast rather than it being wholly determined by them.

In the context of this project, we can interpret the strategy of exhibiting a set of Fogo master texts as an expedient, revealing those aspects of its initial implementation that would otherwise prove irrelevant here. In his report on screening Newfoundland Project films at Cartwright, Williamson catalogues many of the structural incompatibilities: the Newfoundland Project assumed a degree of textual literacy which the population on Labrador’s South Coast did not have; it assumed a degree of aural comprehension that was not present; it assumed a degree of media literacy that was not present; it assumed a depletion of fish stocks that was not occurring; and perhaps most importantly, it assumed the process of Resettlement was something to be actively resisted, which it was not in the Cartwright area12 (Williamson 1968). The process of screening the Newfoundland Project films enabled Williamson to develop a production

12 The final item here requires further clarification. Under the Centralization scheme, the last of the phases of Resettlement, Cartwright was designated a growth centre. Unlike Newfoundland where growth centres were meant to serves as the designated transfer point for residents of permanent communities, Cartwright was to act as a permanent community for residents that would seasonally relocate to fishing stations throughout the South Coast. While certainly diminished, the practice of maintaining summer and winter communities remained relatively common until the 1992 cod moratorium.
strategy that would, in theory, cater more directly to the needs and limitations of the present population.

Likewise, in screening the Fogo films, Williamson had demonstrated to the population of the South Coast a particular idea of local development: its procedure, its outcome, its more general structure. Though the Newfoundland Project had practiced the Fogo Process, those film texts that it produced would ultimately and inevitably re-present that paradigm in an ossified form. Divorced from the conditions of their production, from the practice of the Fogo Process that resulted in their creation, it is difficult to read the films of the Newfoundland Project as something other than a document of that process, as evidence of interlocution. By their nature these films are obviously unable to register and account for the range of operations that led to their creation. For an audience looking to participate in a similar manner of project the process of reception is critical. Films such as Fishermen’s Meeting\(^\text{13}\) and to a lesser extent Dan Roberts on Fishing, films that we know Williamson showed to audiences throughout the South Coast\(^\text{14}\), establish the ends of this project even though they are themselves the means. As these films propose, and as was ultimately put into practice, the continued existence of Fogo required new developments in labour practices such as the centralization of fish processing, the implementation of new equipment such as longliners, the expansion of species being caught beyond cod, as well as the establishment of new social-economic entities such as co-operatives. If these possible outcomes had only revealed themselves during the application of the Fogo

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\(^{13}\) Williamson records the title as Tilting Fishermen’s Meeting. This title is also recorded in the Extension Service of Memorial University of Newfoundland Media Catalogue and the Digital Archives Initiative, Memorial University of Newfoundland. I am, however, conforming to the National Film Board’s nomenclature.

\(^{14}\) Williamson records screening both of these in his 1968 report “Taped Descriptions of Screenings of Fogo Island Films in Labrador Communities” (1).
Process, the extant film record of that process would, regardless of either Colin Low or Don Snowden’s intentions, place singular emphasis upon these outcomes.

This is not to minimize the role of Extension Service’s Community Development Workers in establishing appropriate ideas of and for local development, upon those outcomes that so many of the films of the *Newfoundland Project* would record. As the representatives for an organization whose mandate was development in the broader sense – what I have already described along other lines as the facilitation of communication for the purposes of contingent organization – through their practical work Extension Service Community Development Workers had constructed a common poetics of development, one that clearly reinforced the outcomes of the *Newfoundland Project*:

- development arises from honest and focussed communication;
- the most meaningful form of development originates from within the community or region, not within government or industry;
- development initiatives are best co-ordinated and maintained through a co-operative structure;
- such development initiatives are necessary in order to ensure the continued existence of communities and regions as they provide both with the means to integrate with Provincial and Federal state and civil societies.

The *Newfoundland Project* had provided a documentary record of the applicability of Extension’s ideas surrounding development, its films had ceased to be the causal agents they were created to be.

What this leads to, and what Williamson interestingly records in his report on screening the *Labrador Film Project 1969* films throughout the South Coast, are related
operations of misrecognition and awareness. Reflecting on the overall success of these initial screenings, he candidly reveals that:

For the first time, some of the petulance, demanding, and childishness of people got under my skin. Despite repetition of what self-help is about of what adult education is about, I continue to be judged by many in the same terms as all other outsiders….what I can produce in the way of goods and services…a judgment which leaves me on the short end of the stick in many quarters. I mention all this in the present report because reception of the films and Randy [Coffin] and myself must be seen in the general context. I do not mean to sound unduly pessimistic, because I do think the ideas are seeping through, that communications is beginning to be understood and that the films with continued utilization will be an effective agent for change, that already the Fogo films have acted as an agent of change. [ellipses in original] (1970: 7)

Though the structure of his thought is complicated by the frustration that clearly informs it, here Williamson hits upon the paradox that would define Extension Service’s initial use of film media in Labrador. Even at the conclusion of Labrador Film Project 1969, a communications project conducted in and for the residents of the South Coast, the screening of the Newfoundland Project films had proven to be a more significant in establishing a particular idea of change. However, neither these screenings nor the film project that followed had successfully communicated the necessary terms for change (i.e. development) as it was understood by the Extension Service. In screening films that failed to account for their own causality, in engaging in a film for development initiative whose desired outcomes were both tacit and structuring, Labrador Film Project 1969 in
fact contributed toward was a general misunderstanding of how change was to occur. From the vantage point of the residents of the South Coast, it must be a top down operation. The first large-scale production of film in Labrador had promised progress but established a complicated idea of how that progress was to be achieved. The Extension Service was understood to be its architect.

All of this would result in a set of films that are markedly different from those of the *Newfoundland Project*, different in the ways they look, the ways they communicate and finally in their ability to affect development. Certainly *Labrador Film Project 1969* is not held in the same critical or institutional regard as its predecessor: only ten of its thirteen films are extant\(^{15}\) and the majority of those remained concealed in the basement of a semi-abandoned building in Happy Valley-Goose Bay for at least a decade\(^{16}\). And beyond those documents produced by Tony Williamson that reference the development of the project as well as its immediate outcome, there are no additional textual records of either its existence or its longer-term outcomes. As we turn our attention to considering these films as films – as aesthetic objects – it is important to emphasize that any analysis here is, at best, provisional. Our consideration of formal concerns is necessarily circumscribed by the lack of supporting data that situates these films as interlocutions, as aesthetic objects that served a tangible meditative social function. The remarks that follow here represent the only possible way forward with the data that presently exists.

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\(^{15}\) There are no extant copies of *Ben Powell – Charlottetown, John Hamel, Cartwright, or Snug Harbour School*.

\(^{16}\) See “The Tyranny of Absence: One Account of Archival Practice at the Fringe of the State”.
What is immediately striking about these films as a set is that unlike the *Newfoundland Project, Labrador Film Project 1969* provides an extremely narrow representation of the society of Labrador’s South Coast. Films such as Jim Decker’s *Party, The Songs of Chris Cobb* and *A Wedding and a Party* all serve as depictions of cultural practices upon Fogo Island, documentary interjections in a paradigm that sought to engage in acts of interlocution. Such interjections seem fundamental to the success of the *Newfoundland Project* as they work to establish, however abstract, an idea of Fogo as a location with a particular history and set of social customs. The *Labrador Film Project 1969* films actively resist such a construction; the emphasis here is placed upon the communication of social issues, not the communication of social issues as they have arisen in a specific context. Even a film such as *Solomon Curl – Fox Harbour* that attempts to capture some manner of local custom divorces that custom from its general context of practice. For as representative as Curl’s musicianship might be of traditions on the South Coast, his performance is emphatically and unapologetically staged. After seven minutes of an unfocussed conversation on the state of the inshore fishery, the film abruptly cuts to black signalling the commencement of Curl’s performance; the passage further demarcated by Joe Harvey’s tendency to frame Curl’s physical actions in performance rather than those actions in their broader context (see stills 2 and 3, Fig. 1). We are certainly made aware of Curl’s abilities as a performer, but to what end those abilities would be applied remains entirely in question.
Fig. 1: Solomon Curl – Fox Harbour. Curl demonstrates the trinity of performance: accordion, dance, fiddle.

The necessary context for reading these films, such as it exists, is contained in overture to the series, *Introduction to Labrador*\(^{17}\). Cut together along with footage from each of the twelve remaining films, *Introduction to Labrador* was to be something of an analogue to *Introduction to Fogo*, outlining the region, the difficulties it was facing, and the communications project at hand. In contrast to its predecessor, *Introduction to Labrador* provides very little context for an audience that might be otherwise unfamiliar with the region. Beginning with a familiar cartographic establishing shot, the first 10 minutes of the 24-minute film place a clear emphasis on visual data (Fig. 2). Through sparse narration we learn variously about the difficulties with winter travel, problems associated with the logging industry, and the persistence of the Truck system, but we learn nothing of the people of the South Coast, why the area stands as a relevant one to conduct such a project, or significantly what the project is. “During the summer of 1969,” narrator Stanley Jackson begins to explain at the ten minute mark, “a Community Development worker and a film crew from Newfoundland’s Memorial University, as part of a multi-directional approach to change, visited many of the coastal communities,\(^{17}\)

\(^{17}\) The National Film Board’s online database contains a listing for this film, indicating it was a co-production between it and the Extension Service. There is, however, no other evidence to support their claim.
talking on film with the people about life on the Labrador”\(^{18}\). Oddly this is where the explanation for the entire project begins ends. The rest of *Introduction to Labrador* is made up of excerpts of interview material from the remaining films in the series. Our attention is directed toward the material conditions of the South Coast, not towards their historical causes or the reasons why the region as a whole should address them.

Fig. 2: *Introduction to Labrador* or introduction to industry? The opening six shots place particular emphasis on the fishing industry.

That these problems were understood to be regional was of course self-evident. For reasons we have already discussed in some detail, the South Coast had already come to understand itself as region, a condition defined equally by external political forces as much as it might be facilitated by a shared material culture. From what we can infer from Williamson’s report, establishing the idea of the South Coast as a region and the

\(^{18}\) Williamson flags this line in his report on the screening of the film, suggesting that it likely meant very little to the Labrador viewers, an instance of “pedogese” (1970:1).
significance of approaching it as such were not necessary operations for a local audience. “I think that nearly all who saw this film would agree that it is an excellent, informative, and delightful film,” he asserts. “A number of people that saw the film more that once also expressed the opinion that it seemed better at each viewing” (1970: 1). Granting by Williamson’s own admission in the same report that the film was not entirely successful in communicating to its subject-audiences the main idea of the project, it seems that this peculiar manner of construction both embodies a local perspective and caters to it. The region itself exists in no small part due to the infrastructural issues it faces; to articulate the reasons why the region should approach these issues as a region would be redundant. Likewise, the model for the present communications experiment had been demonstrated through screening the Newfoundland Project films; to explain that again would be redundant. As we now know such steps are necessary in order to demarcate the parameters of the project regardless of their apparent obviousness. The formal consequence is not only an inability to demonstrate causality, but even more generally, a tendency to avoid establishing context, be it through the use of the camera, narration, or the interviews themselves.

These tendencies come to a head in *Time For Change, Cape St. Charles*. As one of the few films in the series that engages multiple subjects it is also rare in that the discussion it records is both focussed and critical. Films such as *West Bay People* and *Ron and Ches Lethbridge on Trapping* work to engage their subjects toward similar ends but fall short in the attempt. The former subjects are clearly reluctant to engage Williamson in discussion, the latter are demonstratively unrepresentative of the residents of the South Coast. Of all the films of *Labrador Film Project 1969, Time For Change,*
Cape St. Charles is the only one that registers a broad if not tepid agreement in the necessity for social change. Yet its ability to communicate this idea effectively is at all times affected by the more general formal tendency to avoid establishing context. In this regard it is entirely representative of the project. There is no title design. In fact with the exception of Introduction to Labrador, none of the extant films contain any title design; the nomenclature provided here is taken from the Extension Service of Memorial University of Newfoundland Media Catalogue. There are no establishing shots. The only context for the location of Cape St. Charles in the entire project comes to us in the form of the establishing cartographic shot in Introduction to Labrador. There is no attempt to locate Cape St. Charles through dialogue. “Where do you live winter and summer?” Williamson asks as the piece begins. An un-credited subject responds (the same as quoted above): “I live out here in the summertime and Lodge Bay in the wintertime”. What remains entirely uncertain is the where of here.

Fig. 3: The un-credited subjects of Time for Change, Cape St. Charles.

But for all that this film is unable or unwilling to show to us, its historical significance is cemented in the fact that in the years proceeding Labrador Film Project 1969, those issues that its three subjects identified would serve as the template for a regional development initiative. Though this initiative was as much a product of the Provincial Government as it was any of the communities themselves (remember, the
region was targeted by the Provincial Government for Resettlement), each of the
grievances voiced by these men would, in one manner or another, be addressed; the first
comprehensive development initiative outside of the industrial garrisons. As structuring
as their criticisms now appear in retrospect, however, there is absolutely no evidence to
suggest that either this film or for that matter the entire project had any affect on the
manner of this development initiative. Williamson’s personal papers stand as the only
critical consideration of their social or communicative function; these films have passed
from memory in many of the communities on the South Coast\(^{19}\). The three subjects of
*Time For Change, Cape St. Charles* provide evidence of the existence of regional
consensus, just not evidence of regional motivation through the filmed representation of
that consensus. If these films were indeed pressed into the service of the latter, that
attempt must necessarily be understood within the context of Extension Service’s larger
complex of operations in Labrador. There is nothing to suggest that *Labrador Film
Project 1969* was able to achieve a set of outcomes on its own\(^{20}\).

No doubt having become aware of its structuring role in such communication for
development initiatives, the next film-based communications project the Extension
Service would undertake in Labrador abandoned an individual project model. Regional
mobilization only represented a portion of the work. Long-term effectiveness was

\(^{19}\) During 2010 and 2011, I had an opportunity to exhibit these films in Cartwright, St. Lewis, Red Bay and
Fortenau. While Tony Williamson is still well regarded in these communities, *Labrador Film Project 1969*
is unremembered. By way of comparison the website for Fogo Island Co-operative Society, the island-wide
coop that served as one of the primary outcomes of the *Newfoundland Project*, acknowledges its
establishment as a function of that communications project.

\(^{20}\) There is an interesting comparison to be made here with the Coastal Labrador Regional Development
Association (CLRDA), a cooperative board composed of community representatives from communities
throughout the South Coast. Similar in mandate to the Labrador Resources Advisory Council, the Coastal
Labrador Regional Development Association is an outcome of the Extension Service’s operations. There is,
however, very little evidence of either the Association’s operations or local relevance.
determined by continued access to and dialogue with the Extension Service as an organization, tasks that film was well suited to assist with. Moreover, through the course of the Newfoundland Project, Labrador Film Project 1969 as well as other film-based communication initiatives such as Decks Awash and a range of standalone productions, the Extension Service had developed an extensive library of media created for the purposes of community and regional development. Their circulation would prove to be as important as the practice of the processes that had resulted in their creation, an activity made significantly easier with the advent of VTR technology.

Based on extant funding proposals authored by the Extension Service, the idea for some kind of audiovisual library service had been floated as early as 1971. Though the primary aim of “A Proposal from Memorial University of Newfoundland to Department of Secretary of State” was to seek funding for a multi-week conference examining the recent uses of VTR technology in the wake of the Newfoundland Project (4), it also sought funding to two other ends: first, to establish a comprehensive centralized videotape library of film and video on the subject of development, and second to provide training to community animators that could work within a number of so-called Community Learning Centres. By 1974, the Extension Service had established ten of these Centres throughout Labrador. Their aims, according to project director Charlie Callanan were to “get information into the community,” and to initiate “community development” (Extension Service 1978: 30). Little evidence of these Centres remains; I am only able to confirm their existence in Davis Inlet, Makkovik and Postville21.

21 These communities are indicated in the transcript of the Northern Communications Conference held at Makkovik between 13 and 16 February 1978. The language of the report suggests CLCs may have existed in Nain, Hopedale, and Rigolet as well, the remaining communities on the North Coast (45). Given the Extension Service’s continued presence at Cartwright as well as its introduction to Happy Valley-Goose...
The evidence that does exist suggests that this new delivery strategy had placed even greater emphasis on the use of film (specifically in this instance, VTR) than either the *Newfoundland Project* or *Labrador Film Project 1969*. The earlier projects had approached film production as a facilitative operation, one that assisted in the structuring and dissemination of a larger discourse of development; the Community Learning Centre project placed singular emphasis on the medium as a manner of discourse unto itself. Not only were these Centres intended to serve as sites through which local populations could access a centralized library of film and video on the subject of development\(^{22}\), they were also meant to function as production studios in which trained community animators could assist local populations in undertaking their own video for development initiatives as well as assist in the production of videos for the purposes of communicating directly with the Provincial Government, the Extension Service, and Memorial University more generally.

Mirroring the NFB’s newfound emphasis on the use of video in its implementation of Challenge for Change/Société Nouvelle projects after 1969, the Community Learning Centres would ultimately fall victim to the same issues faced by projects such as *VTR Rosedale*. As both Jerry White and Janine Marchessault point out, the increased interactivity and participation in the production of community video had led to a condition of access without agency (White 65; Marchessault 141). Without those structures provided by focussed communication for development initiatives, what Marchessault rightly identifies as the work of experienced directors, such wholly community based initiatives are unable to engage in the same manner of focussed

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\(^{22}\) Inventories of available film and video were published in the *Decks Awash* periodical.
communication as the *Newfoundland Project*. Marchessault’s assessment of *VTR Rosedale* is transferrable to the Community Learning Centre project:

Here, the utilization of video to implement the Fogo process produces an astounding observational regress: a displacement of the apprehending gaze which screens and deflects relations of power. The modalities of power inherent in the process become less and less tangible as the frame appears to open forever outward. There is no outside, no semiotic interference to the mimetic process upon which identity construction depends. The refracted gaze makes the community both the subject and the object of knowing. (140-1)

The process of communication beyond the immediate borders of the community is disrupted. Interlocution, when it is occurring, is inevitably local.

For the Community Learning Centre project those problems inherent to the process of access were further exacerbated by the manners in which the project attempted to focus the lines of communication. Though they sought to facilitate community-based production initiatives, as we have already mentioned, these Centres were also specifically meant to facilitate communication between local populations and the broader University community. In this model, residents were to produce videos suggesting the types of activities they would like to see Memorial engaged in within their community. These tapes were then forwarded to the Extension Service’s central office at St. John’s at which point they would either be passed on to specific faculty or Extension Service representatives would act as an intermediary between university faculty and the producing individual(s) in an attempt to facilitate the proposed development or project. The crux of the problem lay at the point of access. Favouring the practice of hiring and
training community animators from within the host communities, these animators may have had an understanding of local issues, however, they lacked that particular form of agency needed to facilitate local communication with the University. Not surprisingly the aesthetic outcome is exceedingly idiosyncratic. *Examples of CLC Usage*, an undated video produced by the Extension Service contains the only extant footage produced by the Labrador Community Learning Centres. Bookended by clips from Community Learning Centre productions throughout Newfoundland, it is entirely uncertain what the bulk of the Labrador material is meant to communicate. Johnny Cash’s “Streets of Laredo” and Merle Haggard’s “One Row at a Time” plays over footage of an Innu camp, an Innu man fixing his snowmobile, and a plane unloading its cargo (stills 1 through 3, Fig. 4). The subsequent excerpt from an interview with Dave Lough, then chairman of the Labrador Resources Advisory Council, appears peculiarly straightforward by comparison.
Coinciding with the end of the CLC project in 1979, the Memorial University of Newfoundland established a permanent presence in Labrador with the founding of the Labrador Institute of Northern Studies at Happy Valley-Goose By. This would bring about the end of Extension Service’s operations in Labrador. Even during the course of the CLC project the Service not only maintained Development Workers at Cartwright, Nain and Happy Valley-Goose Bay, it also continued to produce documentary film in and about the area. Films such as *Bilingual Education in Scotland* (1976), a short piece in which a small group of Inuit from Northern Labrador travel to Scotland to learn about Gaelic language instruction, *Longliner* (1975), a documentary examining the move away from the inshore fishery in the Labrador Straits, and *Herring – Labrador South I & II* (1975), both pieces outlining techniques for the preparation of herring all appear as standalone initiatives while films such as those from the untitled uranium series (1977) appear to be components of more comprehensive projects originating in St. John’s. The last film produced by the Extension Service either within or upon the subject of Labrador was the 1979 documentary *The Indians’ Father Whitehead*, a first-person biographical documentary about Monsignor Edward O’Brien (1885-1986). Though the interviews with O’Brien seem to have been filmed near his home in Carbonear, the bulk of the film was
made up of footage O’Brien had taken during the course of his ecclesiastical work with Innu at Davis Inlet and Sheshatshiu between 1920 and 1945. O’Brien’s footage stands as the earliest of the Labrador Innu, pre-dating both Wishart’s material (Fig. 5).

Fig. 5: *The Indians’ Father Whitehead.* O’Brien’s undated work, stills 2 and 3.

Upon its establishment, the tasks of video production and video dissemination were absorbed directly into the Labrador Institute of Northern Studies’ mandate. That these activities would become the sole domain of this new entity is entirely a function of personnel and the stated objectives of the LINS. Along with Tony Williamson, its founding director, the remaining personnel were made up of Extension Service employees and Development Workers that had been working throughout Labrador. According to the present-day Institute’s website, those original objectives, were “to promote community development, extension services and socio-economic research, and to provide a link with the campus in St. John’s” (Labrador Institute). At its formation, the LINS represented an organization that was functionally analogous with the Extension Service; and though it comes in the form of colloquial evidence, it is worth pointing out that even at the time of this writing the Labrador Institute of Memorial University (as it is now known) is still often referred to as the Extension Service throughout Labrador. The confluence between the two organizations would inform the manners in which the LINS came to approach the tasks of video production and dissemination.
What this meant was that at its outset the LINS functionally picked up where the Extension Service had left off, continuing with those initiatives that had proven to be of value and modifying others whose relevancy was affected by their coordination through St. John’s. The fledgling institution approached the tasks of video dissemination and production in the manner of a latter-day Community Learning Centre. Now the central point of access for all University services in Labrador, it would in turn function as the distribution centre for the Extension Service’s media library, an initiative that survived its association with the original Community Learning Centre project. With its centralized media production facilities and dedicated media production staff23, it was also able to provide substantial support to community-based media projects if and when they should arise. The LINS was able to implement video production in the full range of its programming in manners of its own choosing, whether inspired by a Fogo process or otherwise. This would be particularly important for series such as Speaking Indian With José Mailhot (1980)24, a complete course on the Innu-aimun language, as well as community-academic forums such as the Labrador Straits Studies Conference (1989), the Changing Tides Conference (c. 1984) and community events such as the Labrador Winter Games (1983-1992) and the Labrador Creative Arts Festival (c.1982-c.1986).

The Institute was also able to direct its resources toward the purposes of documenting community events, something the Extension Service had avoided. Productions such as

23 Based upon production credits it seems there were at least three dedicated production staff: Wavey Johnson, Lorne Hollett, and Leo Hanrahan. Laura Jackson, a Program Coordinator with the LINS was also responsible for some media production duties as well as occasional employees such as Bertha Holeiter, Susan McGrath, and Louis Riche.

24 In her book The People of Sheshatshit, Mailhot refers to a linguistics course she taught on the Innu-aimun language for the Teacher Education Program offered by Memorial University at the LINS in 1979. It seems likely that this served as the basis for series of videos that LINS produced (ix).
Fisheries Meeting – Goose Bay (1977), Labrador Land Use Conference (1977) and Labrador Resources Advisory Council (1976) reflected what we now know to be the Extensions Service’s general concern; all were created with footage shot during their course of their eponymous development conferences. The establishment of local production facilities had allowed the LINS to move beyond a media for development paradigm and engage in media for community documentation initiatives.

Ultimately, the Institute’s ability to fully realize this new media production mandate was circumscribed by its capacity. The Extension Service had been able to sustain a diverse program of media production and dissemination because of its sizeable, dedicated, and relatively organized production staff. The LINS, meanwhile, seems to have only been able to engage two dedicated media production-dissemination staff at any given time. As a direct result, the vast majority of the Institute’s productions, whether for the purposes of community documentation or for initiatives derived from the Institute’s programming, were never completed. The act of documentation represented the beginning and the end of production; seldom is there evidence of post-production. Series such as Labradorians at Work (1984) that profiled various professions and professionals throughout Labrador and the standalone film Visions of Labrador (c.1991), an historical overview of craft production in the area, represent some of the only completed LINS productions. Both, it should be noted, were sponsored by external organizations: Innovations, Employment and Immigration Canada provided funding for Labradorians at Work, while the Labrador Craft Producers Association by way of the Comprehensive Labrador Agreement provided funding for Visions of Labrador.
Material generated during the course of sprawling community education initiatives such as the *Torngat Fisheries Co-Operative* series (1980), documenting the establishment of the Torngat Fish Producers Co-operative Society, and the *Fisheries Co-operative Education Project* series (1983), an otherwise unaccounted for project that examined the state of the inshore fishery along coastal Labrador, was never edited. That the latter was left un-edited is particularly curious given the breadth of the project. During its course, coordinator Lorne Hollett travelled from Okak Bay on the North Coast to Red Bay in the Straits, continuing on to St. John’s for footage of and interviews at the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. The cost associated with travel alone would have been significant. That the project was never brought to some phase of completion after such an investment reveals something about the Institute’s capacity for both production and dissemination. It stands to reason that even if it were unable to render this footage into a comprehensive document, it would have been able to make use of the raw footage in the form of community screenings or through general circulation. There is no evidence to suggest that the LINS itself would use any of this material after its creation. The *Fisheries Co-Operative Education Project* series represents the final large-scale media production initiative the LINS would undertake.

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25 However, footage from this series turns up in the opening sequence of *Labradorimiut*, a television series produced by the OKālaKatiget Society between 1984 and 2010.
Fig. 6: Fisheries Co-Operative Education Project. From left to right: Okak Bay, Red Bay, Department of Fisheries and Oceans at St. John’s. The intention is uncertain.

By 1983 such manners of media education initiatives were becoming obsolete. Advances in telecommunications infrastructure throughout Labrador had allowed for instant and continuous communication between all regions; audiovisual media, once believed to be as rapid as it was mobilizing, was ill suited to compete with the telephone. If the LINS’ ability to complete its various media projects was affected by capacity, its decision to complete certain projects was equally determined by that project’s efficacy. Unlike the Newfoundland Project or Labrador Film Project 1969, competing forms of media would affect the relevancy and timeliness of large-scale initiatives such as the Fisheries Co-Operative Education Project. After 1983, the LINS all but abandoned media projects based upon a Fogo model favouring instead projects that were either precisely focussed (Labradorians at Work) or documentation-only initiatives (Labrador Creative Arts Festival, Labrador Winter Games, etc). By the time the Extension Service folded in 1992, the media unit at the LINS had also ceased to exist. Even as of this late date, the fortunes of the latter were still intricately bound to those of the former.

The demise of media production and dissemination facilities at the LINS represented the logical and desired outcome of that communications project designed by Don Snowden and executed by the Extension Service and the LINS. As is evidenced in
the example of the South Coast, the Extension Service’s program had achieved a modest success as the area was subjected to a program of development, a program that importantly saw the expansion of communications infrastructure. Likewise the particular attention Snowden placed upon the issue of communications on the North Coast, attention that translated into a range of media projects from documentary theatre to dedicated communications conferences, had resulted in improved communications infrastructure. By the time Lorne Hollett had commenced work on the *Fisheries Co-Operative Education Project*, many of the basic regional issues around communications and organization had been addressed. By their own logic, such initiatives were no longer necessary; the basic issues they sought to address were no longer present. The moment of contingent organization had passed. Yet, it does not seem to be a coincidence that the two regions the Extension Service and the LINS directed the bulk of their communications initiatives – the North Coast and the South Coast – respectively represent a finalized Inuit land claim (Nunatsiavut) and an ongoing metis land claim (NunatuKavut). The practice of regional development had given way to a more nuanced and focussed mobilization of regional identity.

**Representations of aboriginality**

Before we examine the particulars of this regional formation in Nunatsiavut and specifically in the work of the OKâlaKatiget Society, a brief detour. Though it was responsible for the vast majority of media production throughout Labrador between 1969 and 1979, one of the outcomes of Extension Service’s interest in the area was the re-introduction of the National Film Board of Canada. The last time the NFB produced
footage near Labrador was for the purposes of David Bairstow’s *Operation Eclipse II* (1955), a short documentary about a scientific crew observing a solar eclipse in a military aircraft off the Labrador coast. None of that footage, however, was shot at ground level. That distinction goes to Walford Hewitson and the footage shot for his 1955 industrials *Road of Iron* and *Iron From the North*, films that profiled the establishment of the industrial garrisons. In the years following the *Newfoundland Project*, Don Snowden had worked to maintain a close relationship between the Extension Service and the National Film Board. When Snowden assumed the position of Chair of the *Royal Commission on Labrador* in 1972 the NFB’s on-going Challenge for Change/Société Nouvelle initiative represented a logical forum within which to assess and publicize those issues faced by the area and particularly the North Coast. As we have already discussed at some length, Snowden had placed singular emphasis upon this region: in his capacity as Chair of the *Royal Commission* and Director of the Extension Service he would serve as the architect of a number of communications initiatives there. The outcome of that concern and relationship would be Roger Hart’s *Labrador North* (1973), the first and only film produced in Labrador as part of the Challenge for Change/Société Nouvelle project and the only co-production between the Extension Service and the NFB in the years proceeding the *Newfoundland Project*.

Though it does not appear that the film was connected to a singular development initiative, it bears Snowden’s mark in that it is singularly focussed on social and

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26 The online NFB database contains a listing for *Labrador Hospital* (1966), a short documentary about the work of the International Grenfell Association, directed by Kryn Taconis. However the accompanying description suggests that the film was shot entirely at the Grenfell Mission headquarters in St. Anthony, Newfoundland.
economic change on the North Coast, placing particular emphasis on the shortcomings of
the Provincial Government and the efforts of the Extension Service and its Community
Development Worker Ian Strachan in facilitating local development. Covering a broad
range of subjects from the status of education, infrastructure, communication, and
governance, the film serves as a primer to virtually all subjects covered by the
Royal Commission. At thirty-eight minutes in length, however, its ability to speak to these
subjects in any detail is limited; a condition further affected by its form. Combining voice
of god narration, first person interviews, and cinéma vérité techniques, Labrador North
has the look and feel of a Challenge for Change/Société Nouvelle overture in the vein of
Introduction to Fogo, not of a standalone film.

Fig. 727: Labrador North. From left to right: brass band at Moravian Church, Nain;
Reverend Siegfried Hettasch of the Moravian Church; Ian Strachan, Extension Service
Community Development Worker at Nain.

What this film had importantly if somewhat indirectly managed to document was
the current status of an aboriginal group in its given material context. Labrador North by
no means represented the first film to take an aboriginal group from the area as its
subject, that distinction goes to Edwin S. Porter and his films of Labrador Inuit at the

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27 These stills have been prepared from the copy of Labrador North in the Labrador Institute’s Film and Video Collection, itself digitized from a black and white print from the Memorial University of Newfoundland. The versions available for screening on the NFB’s website and for purchase are in colour.
1901 Pan-American Exposition at Buffalo. It was, however, the first film to examine the contemporary relationship between an aboriginal group, their material context, and the economic and political systems that shaped that relationship. It represented the first time that the perspective of an aboriginal group from the area had been actively sought out, the first of a number of NFB films to do so.

With the opening of its Atlantic Centre at Halifax in 1973, subsequent NFB productions in Labrador would follow suit. The Challenge for Change/Société Nouvelle project had provided the NFB with a means through which to examine the current status of Labrador’s aboriginal peoples; an increased regional presence in the form of the Atlantic Centre had confirmed the NFB’s commitment to representing these groups, albeit in manners that placed less emphasis on the issue of regional development. Kent Martin’s *A Family of Labrador* (1978) would turn the form on its head. Rather than commencing with the category of region and proceeding toward its inhabitants, Martin constructs his piece around one family: the Goudies of Mud Lake. Inspired by Elizabeth Goudie’s memoir *A Woman of Labrador*, the film profiles Mrs. Goudie and her two sons, Horace and Joe – respectively a trapper and a politician – examining their relationships with the Upper Lake Melville area. Constructed around first person interviews with the three subjects, the film is more balanced than *Labrador North*, skilfully contrasting Elizabeth and Horace Goudie’s muted scepticism toward development with Joe Goudie’s muted approval of it. When Barry Cowling’s narration does intervene, it only works to further our attention toward the subjects at hand. Hubert Schuurman’s 1983 documentary *Unitas Fratrum: The Moravians in Labrador* would follow along similar lines. Structuring the piece around first person interviews with Moravian Brethren from and
working within Northern Labrador as well as residents of the communities the Moravian Church had established, Schuurman ultimately leaves the viewer to a final assessment of the outcome of this colonial endeavour.

As concerned as these films were in conveying an aboriginal perspective, their ability to do so was ultimately affected by the status of their filmmakers. Up until this moment in Labrador’s epoch of local culture, the common feature of NFB films was that journeymen had produced them: career documentary filmmakers that while consummate, lacked a particular understanding of the area and its history. Roger Hart’s *Labrador North* stands a striking example. Produced during the establishment of the Labrador Inuit Association, the representative organization that would eventually go on to negotiate the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement and see the establishment of Nunatsiavut, the piece makes no mention of this body even though it speaks at some length to the LIA’s newsletter, *kinatuinamot illengajuk*28. These films had been able to represent the broad contours of their subjects paying particular deference to local perspectives; they were however the products of limited *access*, produced as they were by filmmakers with a project-based understanding of their subjects. All of this would change when Nigel Markham began working for the NFB in 1985. His significant and exclusive output for the NFB between 1985 and 1994 (he was the only NFB filmmaker producing films in the region during this period) is the product of a long-term commitment to the region, one that precedes his relationship with the NFB by a decade.

Born in Ottawa, Markham first travelled to Labrador in 1974 as a photo documentarian for the final trip of the Strathcona, the Grenfell Mission’s ship that.

28 This translates from Inuttitut into “it belongs to anyone”.
provided medical services throughout coastal Labrador during the summer months. Having secured the position through Dr. Harry Paddon who had wanted a documentary record of the final voyage, Markham spent three weeks on Labrador’s North Coast, photographing the work of the medical mission and the people that it served. Though the trip was originally to provide him with the means to sojourn throughout Labrador, upon returning to Happy Valley-Goose Bay he accepted the position of cameraman at the newly opened Canadian Broadcasting Corporation affiliate, remaining there until 1977. While at the CBC Markham made the acquaintance of Bruce Burke, together the pair developed the concept for Them Days Magazine. Markham would serve as one of the magazine’s first employees along with founding editor Doris Saunders. During his tenure at Them Days he participated in no less than two comprehensive photographic documentation projects. The first, co-sponsored by the Labrador Inuit Association and Them Days, saw Markham return to the North Coast for six months, reproducing and documenting photographs from personal collections, a collection that would both serve as the basis for the Them Days Labrador Archive as well as foundational research for the Labrador Inuit Association’s original land claim document Our Footprints Are Everywhere. The second, sponsored by the Naskapi Montagnais Innu Association (now the Innu Nation), saw him travel extensively throughout the interior of Labrador documenting traditional Innu land use practices. Even after he left Happy Valley-Goose Bay in 1980 to freelance with the St. John’s affiliate of the CBC, he continued to travel back to Labrador as a correspondent until 1984. Markham’s extensive work with two aboriginal groups within the region had given him singular access to broad range of
subjects; his extensive photographic and cinematographic work as both documentarian and archivist had provided him with the broadest possible range of visual data.

His first film for the NFB would not have been possible without these experiences. Co-directed with Anne Budgell and funded by the Canada Council for the Arts’ Explorations Program, *The Last Days of Okak* (1985) is a short documentary about the destruction of the North Coast community as a result of the introduction of Spanish Influenza by the Moravian mission ship Harmony. Though well known throughout the North Coast, the particulars of this story had not been widely circulated outside of Labrador. Markham’s knowledge of it and of those who survived the epidemic result from his engagement with the *Them Days*-LIA archival project. Those same experiences would also provide him with access to the archival materials upon which the film is constructed. Relying only nominally upon voice of god narration to bookend the film, the bulk of the narrative material comes in the form of diaries kept by Moravian Brethren stationed at Okak and the recollections of four Inuit survivors: Maggie Saunders, Rosie Ford, Emelia Merkeratsuk and Martha Joshua. The visual material, meanwhile, is largely composed of still images of Okak that he had reproduced during the course of the same archival project. Quite unlike those NFB films that preceded it, Markham’s singular knowledge of and reliance upon local primary historical sources allows *The Last Days of Okak* to convey a particular and hitherto unaccounted for local aboriginal experience, one that in this instance is equally shaped by the recollections of the survivors of Okak as it is by the recollections of and visual materials produced by the colonizers that unintentionally brought about its demise. Though their manners of construction differ, Markham’s subsequent Labrador films all proceed from his informed deference towards
local aboriginal voices. His ongoing work in the region has done much to both chronicle and publicize the experience of the Inuit and Innu.

Fig. 8: *The Last Days of Okak*. From left to right: Okak, flu survivor Maggie Saunders, brass band at Okak.

After completing *Pelts: Politics of the Fur Trade* (1989), his first film as a staff NFB director, Markham returned to Labrador to co-direct *Hunters and Bombers* (1991) with Hugh Brody, a documentary about the effects of low-level flying upon the Québec and Labrador Innu population. Throughout most of the 1980s, NATO had used 5-Wing Goose Bay as a training facility; it was believed the interior of central Labrador (i.e. Nitassinan) represented an entirely unpopulated and unused landmass, an ideal location to conduct low-level flying exercises. During the late 1980s Innu from both provinces began forcefully protesting this practice. Already profoundly affected by the establishment and operation of the industrial garrisons, low-level flying was causing even greater disturbances to the wildlife within Nitassinan, a traditional source of food for the Innu. Though Brody and Markham had arrived in central Labrador to work on separate productions on the subject for the British Broadcasting Corporation and the NFB respectively, the pair decided to pool their resources for the purposes of one single project. Brody and his production crew had access to NATO military personnel.
Markham, by way of his earlier work with the Naskapi Montagnais Innu Association, had access to the Innu community.

The result is much more than the sum of its parts. Its effectiveness as a document is a function of timing: both Markham and Brody had arrived in Labrador as tensions between the Innu and NATO personnel had reached their height. The piece captures the severity of Innu opposition: the steady stream of meetings, protests and arrests climax as a group of Innu protestors break through a chain-linked fence and occupy the runway at 5-Wing Goose Bay (still 3, Fig. 9). The narrative that emerges through Markham’s interviews with the residents of Sheshatshiu works to counterpoint the visual expression of this opposition. As we come to realize, Innu objection to the practice of low-level flying does not simply proceed from its disruption to the land, the practice is understood as a metonym for the full range of government intervention since Confederation, interventions that prevent the Innu from the practice of a traditional lifestyle. “I really envy my parents, they were always out on the land,” environmental activist and Innu elder Elizabeth Penashue laments during the film’s final moments. “It could have been the same for me if the government hadn’t done all these things, the Church, the school, the alcohol. If only they hadn’t done so much harm to the Innu”. Her confession precisely focuses a sentiment that is slowly developed throughout the piece, one that was often elided during the course of public opposition to this practice. This is entirely a function of Markham’s efforts. That he is able to develop this idea throughout the course of these interviews is entirely a function of his rapport with the community of Sheshatshiu. This film stands as the first in which its residents speak openly and candidly about the status of their culture.
Markham’s rapport with the broader Innu community would also factor heavily in the production of *Place of the Boss: Utshimassits* (1996). Though John Walker is credited as its director, Markham was responsible for brokering the interviews for the film, in effect serving as a community liaison as well as cinematographer. Produced in the wake of the 1992 fire at Davis Inlet (Utshimassits²⁹) that resulted in the death of six children, the film follows *Hunters and Bombers* in that its subject is community response. Like the issue of low-level flying, these deaths were taken by the community to be a catalyzing metonym for a long history of interference on the part of the Provincial Government; a direct outcome was the establishment of a People’s Inquiry in March 1992, tasked with examining the causes of social disintegration in Davis Inlet (Burns 71). Arriving in the community shortly after the conclusion of the Inquiry, Markham and his interview team found a community particularly eager to express their frustrations. As the film reveals, the establishment of Davis Inlet as a permanent community represented the first misstep. Apart from the Labrador mainland its once nomadic inhabitants were entirely removed from their traditional lifestyle, a conceptual shift further encouraged by Catholic missionary Frank Peters (Monsignor Edward O’Brien’s successor). Though the

²⁹ This translates from Innu-aimun into “place of the boss”.

Fig. 9: *Hunters and Bombers*. From left to right: Sheshatshiu elder Pien Penashue, the detritus of low-level flying, Innu at 5-Wing Goose Bay storm the runway.
final product looks noticeably different from Markham’s directorial work – Walker tends to film his interview subjects in front of a matte background which has the unfortunate effect of disrupting the presence and function of the *mise en scène* (Fig. 10) – the sentiments it captures and the precision of their historical contextualization are the direct result of Markham’s involvement. This would be the final NFB film to take the aboriginal peoples of Labrador as its subject.

Fig. 10: *Place of the Boss: Utshimassits*.

Taken as a trio, *The Last Days of Okak, Hunters and Bombers*, and *Place of the Boss* represent a significant shift in the representation of Labrador’s aboriginal peoples, a shift that would have particular implications for local aboriginal media initiatives. While *Labrador North* and its successors clearly proceeded by way of an abstracted category of aboriginal persons, a category whose articulation owed as much to the ideas of its non-Labrador/non-aboriginal producers as it the subjects it sought to engage, Markham’s trio of films would place decisive emphasis on their subjects, whether those subjects were aboriginal or otherwise. As Markham had demonstrated in the construction of *The Last Days of Okak* and *Hunters and Bombers*, the particulars of an aboriginal experience were by no means limited to data provided solely by aboriginal subjects (or for that matter by non-aboriginal subjects heavily invested in the idea and practice of aboriginal development). In both films, the voice of the colonizer is given room to speak directly
alongside the voice of the colonized; an aboriginal experience, such as it is articulated, is
done so by way of this discourse. It is the logical formal outcome of Markham’s
extensive experience as both archivist and documentarian with the Innu and Inuit. The
recent history of both groups (albeit that history is significantly longer for the Inuit) is
shaped by tangible and often co-located colonial powers. Markham’s innovation was
recognizing the role of those powers in the larger process of historical formation, an
innovation that would inform his subsequent work with both aboriginal groups.30

Toward the idea of a Labradorimiut

By way of conclusion, we return once again to the North Coast and to the work of
the OKâlaKatiget Society, an Inuit-operated radio and televisual service based in Nain.
Its place in the historical development of media production in Labrador is critical: the
OKâlaKatiget Society stands as the first local (and aboriginal) organization in all of
Labrador to engage in media production. Its existence is, by its own admission, an
outcome of those media experiments that preceded it. According to “A Proposal for
Labrador Inuit Broadcast Training” authored by the OKâlaKatiget Society and submitted
to the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission, the idea to develop a regional
Inuit broadcasting service originated in 1979 at Nain, one year after the Extension
Service had conducted its “Northern Communications Conference at Makkovik” (2).
Though we know the deployment of such media was a central concern to Don Snowden
and the Extension Service, these projects would also prove central to the formation and

30 This formal innovation is brought to its logical ends with his 1997 film In Caribou Country: The
Adventures of William Brooks Cabot in Labrador, 1903-1910. Produced by Markham’s own company,
Lazybank Productions, this documentary not only profiles the travels of the eponymous Cabot throughout
Northern Labrador; it simultaneously examines Cabot’s experiences with and documentations of the
Mushuau Innu.
articulation of a local (regional) desire for local (regional) broadcasting. The proposal’s author tells us in no uncertain terms that the Memorial University of Newfoundland has been involved with communication and community development in Northern Labrador for many years. In 1978, the Labrador Institute of Northern Studies organized an important conference that brought together people involved with native communications across Canada. The meeting in Makkovik was a catalyst for events leading to the creation of the OKâlaKatiget Society. (5)

This is the only known instance of such an admission. The connection between the OKâlaKatiget Society and any branch of Memorial University of Newfoundland now goes unacknowledged. The author continues:

Today, MUN operates an inter-community teleconference network which will be used to link correspondents and the Nain studios. The Labrador Institute of Northern Studies has offered to share its resources and expertise where ever [sic] needed. The Society and the Institute will co-work to conduct many of the future seminars planned in journalism studies and management. (5)

Though the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation had been pivotal in assisting with the procurement of funding and the facilitation of technical training, it appears that out the outset the OKâlaKatiget Society understood itself to be equally reliant upon the continued assistance of the Labrador Institute of Northern Studies. We can only speculate as to the particulars of this relationship. The original site of the OKâlaKatiget Society, along with its corporate and media archives, was destroyed by fire in 2005. “A Proposal for

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31 This is apocryphal. The Extension Service in fact sponsored the conference. The Labrador Institute of Northern Studies was established in 1979.
“Labrador Inuit Broadcast Training” only survived because a copy was deposited in the Labrador Institute of Memorial University’s library.

What is evident is that at the level of mandate the OKâlaKatiget Society certainly took its cues from both the Extension Service and the LINS. “A Northern Labrador source of radio and television programming is really a matter of survival for our language and culture,” (5) the author of the report tells us, a conviction that would be galvanized in the organization’s mandate “to preserve and promote the language and culture of the Inuit within the region” (2011: N. pag.). Though these concerns may seem at odds with the discourse of development that was foregrounded by the Extension Service and the LINS, the particular function of media is not. Its role is entirely instrumental; it is a medium through which specific ends are to be realized. The purposing of media toward these ends is one of the logical outcomes of a successful media for development initiative in an area such as the North Coast. Improved communications and communications infrastructure gave its residents a means through which to apprehend a shared North Coast culture and language, that is to come to understand itself as region. In theory at least, this represented the affirmative and constitutive realization of the technological nationalist project. Media had become a viable means for a form of civic life. The reality of this is another thing altogether.

Limited as it was by the constraints of televisual distribution, the OKâlaKatiget Society would necessarily focus its televisual production into one single format: the documentary news television series Labradorimiut. However, the infrastructure that would have allowed the OKâlaKatiget Society to operate as a community television

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32 This translates from Inuttitut as “people of (northern) Labrador”. The title is after a song by Nain musician Sid Dicker that also serves as the theme music for the show.
station was never constructed. Its ability to distribute televisual productions was entirely
dependent upon conforming to the specifications of national television networks, first the
Television Northern Canada service and then the Aboriginal People’s Television
Network. Though the OKâlaKatiget Society would eventually go on to produce a range
of standalone films, beginning with the Nigel Markham directed 2001 documentary
*Forever in Our Hearts: Memories of the Hebron Relocation –
Ommatimmiutagennaniattavut: IkKaumset Hebaronimit Notitausimanningit*, for the
fourteen or so years of its existence, *Labradorimiut* was its only televisual production.
The series was cancelled by APTN in 2010.

Those episodes that I have been able screen that were produced between 1984 and
1997 demonstrate a clear affinity toward the production strategies of the Extension
Service specifically, not joint productions between the NFB and the Extension Service.
There is, at all times, a clear emphasis on interview subjects, on occasion to the point of
obfuscation. Establishing context for viewers that may otherwise be uninitiated is only an
occasional concern: it is at evident that the show is meant to communicate first and
foremost with the residents of the North Coast. There is also a clear emphasis upon
minimal editing. Words and actions are given the time and space to run their course; their
representation is seldom if ever affected through the focussed use of montage. Content is
never sublimated by form. The two seem to co-exist in a state of precise utility (Fig. 11).
Fig. 11: Labradorimiut: “Rigolet 200th Birthday” (1988). From left to right: host Gary Baikie, Uncle George and Aunt Susie Riche, stationary close-up of grass weaving.

The ends of filmic-regional production

If we were to extend our consideration of the OKâlaKatiget Society’s televisual output beyond the confines of this study we would ultimately come to describe a body of work that slowly began to drift away from that paradigm established by the Extension Service and the Labrador Institute of Northern Studies. This owes as equally to the shift away from media production at the LINS as it does to the diversification of televisual production at the OKâlaKatiget Society. Though it was and remains organizationally distinct from the Labrador Inuit Association and its subsequent iteration as the Nunatsiavut Government, the years after 1997 would see the OKâlaKatiget Society undertake more productions for both iterations of the government. In the process it would directly engage the services of both Nigel Markham and the Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers Co-operative brining about an increased emphasis on aspects of form but also the approach toward content, particularly with those productions Markham was involved in. These shifts in alliances reveal a great deal about the altered function of the OKâlaKatiget Society. Televisual media had outgrown its regional instrumental facilitative purpose; it was now to be used as a form of media that could both document
for the sake of historical posterity and interpret a North Coast experience beyond the region itself. In so doing it would work to reinforce an idea of Inuit-ness throughout the North Coast and assert its location within a larger Canadian Inuit context. If the OKâlaKatiget Society had been rooted in a paradigm of media production for the purposes of contingent organization at its outset, that paradigm would ultimately give way to one that rehearsed an identity unequivocally recognized by and able to participate within Provincial and Federal civil and political societies.

What remains inherently problematic about the example of the OKâlaKatiget Society is that it is without peer. Though we can trace the proliferation of media production for the purposes of development and the articulation of regional identity, the North Coast (Nunatsiavut) remains the only region that would develop its own media service dedicated to the preservation of its language and culture. There is, of course, a particular historical confluence at work here. During the moment of its contemporary organization under the ethno-political category of Inuit, the local impetus to set up a local media service was neatly provided for by the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation, an organization that possessed the means with which to assist the flourishing OKâlaKatiget Society and was certainly invested in its success. As much as either the Extension Service or the LINS may have contributed toward those creating those conditions under which the OKâlaKatiget Society was established, the long term success of its televisual production was entirely contingent upon a relationship with a series of corporations that defined themselves along the same ethno-political lines. It is impossible to ignore the singular historical convergence between a certain pattern regional development, ethno-
political organization, and the influence of non-regional broadcasters. In Labrador, such a convergence could only have occurred between these specific elements.

I end my consideration with a hypothesis on a region that remains politically in process: the South Coast or what is now increasingly referred to by its inhabitants as NunatuKavut\textsuperscript{33}. Unlike the North Coast whose idea of region was closely affiliated to an idea of a common, if un-negotiated cultural ethnic group, historically, the South Coast had maintained its distinction as region by virtue of geography and industry. To the south and west lay Québec, to the north Hamilton Inlet; its dominant industry was the inshore fishery. When the Extension Service commenced its Community Development Work there in 1968, these coordinating ideas of region both circumscribed and structured its efforts. Yet as focussed as these efforts were, they would have a secondary outcome. The process of development had created the necessary conditions for the region to become aware of and ultimately negotiate what had remained a largely unacknowledged Inuit heritage, an acknowledgment that would ultimately feed back on the process of regional mobilization under the ethno-political category of metis. Established in 1985, the Labrador Metis Nation is now known as the NunatuKavut Community Council and is attempting to establish itself as the dominant political body for the South Coast, something of an analogue of the Nunatsiavut Government. If as ethnographer John C. Kennedy has suggested that metis culture had remained implicit, necessitated in equal parts by their isolation and contact with seasonal fishermen from Newfoundland (13)\textsuperscript{34},

\textsuperscript{33} The etymology of the word is uncertain though it is likely from the Rigolet dialect of Labrador Inuttut (Inuktut). It translates into “our ancient land”.

\textsuperscript{34} Kennedy is presently engaged as ethnographer and social-economic historian for Understanding the Past to Build the Future, a SSHRC-sponsored Community-University Research Alliance project focusing upon the metis. It is worth emphasizing that in the article I am quoting here he considers the process of Labrador
the regional introduction of audiovisual media not only provided its inhabitants with a means of breaking down that isolation, it quite literally gave them an opportunity to see each other. It was the first step in articulating a group identity.
Conclusion

The society and communication are there, but it is difficult to recognize them, difficult to be sure.

- Raymond Williams, *Communications*

Something was ending by 1997. Sixty-three years after the suspension of Representative Government, forty-eight years after Canadian Confederation, and eight years after the cod moratorium, Newfoundland and Labrador were, respectively, in their final moments of nonsynchronicity. Both regions had, more or less, fully integrated into the Canadian political economy in terms entirely antithetical to either the Commission or Provincial Government’s objectives. The authors of *Our Place in Canada* – the main report of the Royal Commission on Renewing and Strengthening Our Place in Canada – put it bluntly:

There is a worrisome disconnect between the vast resources brought into Confederation and the relatively disadvantaged position of Newfoundland and Labrador compared to that of other provinces. It has the nation’s highest unemployment rate, lowest per capita income, some of the highest rates of taxation, highest per capita debt, the weakest financial position, highest rate of out-migration and fastest population decline. *Whatever else, the perpetuation of economic disparities was not the expectation of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador when they entered Confederation* [itals in original]. (142)

The manner of Newfoundland and Labrador’s integration into Canada had fixed the province as a dependency, not as a partner in Confederation. This is context in which the Newfoundland and Labrador Film Development Corporation was formed. It, like the manifold rehabilitative initiatives that came before, was, in the all too familiar words of the Provincial Government, “designed to diversify the economic base of the province and
generate long-term employment benefits for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador” (1997: N. pag.).

What distinguishes the Corporation from the majority of its predecessors is the location of its impetus. At St. John’s, a film industry had begun to coalesce after the release of *The Adventure of Faustus Bidgood*, maturing through the experimentation of *Anchor Zone* and was given further shape by new organizations such as the Producers Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Film Crew Association of Newfoundland, and the Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers Co-operative. As the key players in developing the strategy that led to the establishment of the Film Corporation, these organizations created a mandate that echoes NIFCO’s, albeit on a much larger scale:

- to support, assist and develop the growth of the private sector film and video industry using sound business principles in the areas of funding, marketing, promotion and infrastructure development;

- to promote the province within the worldwide film and video industry as a location for film, video, television and commercial productions;

- to serve as a focal point of liaison between industry and all levels and sectors of government in support of industry development; and

- to ensure that appropriate pools of investment and equity capital are available to assist in the growth of the indigenous industry. (Newfoundland and Labrador Film Development Corporation: “Programs”)

Set up as an arms length from the not for profit corporation accountable to the Provincial Government, the Film Development Corporation was able to perpetuate and advance a
self-regulating industry that had begun to coalesce at St. John’s under the auspices of the Provincial Government. *Faustus* may have marked the symbolic arrival of that industry but the establishment of the Newfoundland and Labrador Film Development Corporation officially sanctioned it. In economic terms at least, Newfoundland and Labrador would now be concerned with regional film production.

In historical terms, the issue is less cut and dry. By 1997 film had certainly ceased to serve as either a mechanism or means for representational conflict: it was neither being purposed towards state rehabilitation, community animation, the manufacture of space, nor was it consistently the object of formal experimentation. Each of these revolutionary uses for film was closely allied to the conditions of their respective epochs and accordingly, to the ideologies of the producing institutions. Now fully and burdensomely integrated into an ethical state – and as per Gramsci, a cultural state – the struggles of these epochs had, in one sense, only a nominal practical significance. Rehabilitation, modernization, Resettlement, community animation – in other words the progression from the Newfoundland Film Board through to the Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers Co-operative – had made, in every sense of the word, a province out of Newfoundland and Labrador. The establishment of the Newfoundland and Labrador Film Development Corporation did not precipitate the end of these specific revolutionary uses for film; it simply confirmed that moment of such use had definitively passed, brought about, in fact, by the uses themselves. In Newfoundland that shift was more or less completed by 1994 with the release of the industry-minded *Anchor Zone*. In Labrador, the passage was more complex if it did indeed occur at all.

Here, the difficulty is one of historical precedent. As regionally generative as the
practice of film production during Labrador’s epoch of local culture was, that practice did not coalesce into a regional industry. The OKâlaKatiget Society, the region’s only real audiovisual media producer, is more accurately integrated within a national aboriginal media network (by way of the Aboriginal People’s Television Network) than it is a provincial film industry. This, I believe, demonstrates APTN’s strength as a national organization as much as it does the OKâlaKatiget Society’s nominal status in the province outside of Nunatsiavut. More to the point, it also illustrates the fierce commitment of the Labrador Inuit to developing a robust, sub-regionally specific network of communications. The various audiovisual experiments conducted by the Extension Service of Memorial University of Newfoundland and the Labrador Institute of Northern Studies were intended to aid in the overall promotion of communications in the region by way of infrastructural development and media creation. Only the OKâlaKatiget Society would pick up both activities to meet particular regional – or in this case sub-regional – needs. The practice of communications remained instrumental in Labrador; at the regional level experimentation gave way to what appeared to be utility.

But this manner of utility existed strictly at the level of form. The real innovation was, once again, social. During Labrador’s epoch of local culture, film, along with a range of related communications technologies assisted in the construction of a malleable regional identity that, with the possible exception of Churchill Falls (it remains a company town), came to include the garrisons of modernization. As celebrated as these garrisons were for their technological sophistication, they were still functionally islands in the Labrador archipelago, disconnected from each other and from the Island. The political impetus for regional rights – the foundation for an ordered regional identity –
came, in fact, from the Québec-Labrador Iron Ore Mining Region. Established at Wabush in 1969, the provincial New Labrador Party served as the political placeholder for this movement. Running candidates in three districts during the 1972 election that deposed Smallwood, Mike Martin, won the only seat the party would ever hold in Labrador South, the electoral district that would serve as the subject for *Labrador Film Project 1969*. Film had provided a mechanism through which Labrador could not only communicate but also, to a degree, organize. In an historical moment in which the celebration of industrial space had given way to the local recognition of material isolation and disconnection, Labrador’s garrisons of modernization had as much of a vested interest in forwarding regional rights as, say, the communities of the South Coast or the Straits. Of course, the particulars of that regional identity – the idea of its shared experience – were largely determined by sub-regional perspective. The notion of Labrador is not the same in Labrador West as it is in Upper Lake Melville.

And here, again, film is complicit in the process of formation. For while the Extension Service and the Labrador Institute were, primarily, using the medium to facilitate communications, the National Film Board, through its specific attention to aboriginal subjects, was assisting in the promotion and maintenance of other sub-regionally/ethnically rooted ideas of Labrador that either were antipathetic or openly hostile towards the garrisons of modernization and the federally-sanctioned idea of Labrador itself. In films such as *Labrador North, The Last Days of Okak*, or *Unitas Fratrum*, there is, quite literally, no Labrador beyond the North Coast (Nunatsiavut), and seldom a Labrador south of Makkovik. In films such as *Hunters and Bombers and Place of the Boss*, 5-Wing Goose Bay and Labrador itself are actively resisted. As the
productions of a federal agency, these films implicate themselves within a national discourse of aboriginality, a discourse that feeds back into these sub-regional/ethnic understandings of space. There is a remarkable similarity between this process of filmic communication and the process envisioned for Newfoundland by the Commission and Provincial Governments. Here, however, it works to exclusionary ends. Nunatsiavut is now an autonomous area of Labrador under the jurisdiction of Labrador Inuit. The recent New Dawn Agreement will provide Labrador Innu similar rights – though not as extensive – throughout the tract of Nitassinan inside Labrador’s borders. Sub-regional/ethnic devolution is the outcome of this discourse.

The unique character of this instrumentality would have two significant outcomes. First, to repurpose my earlier observation, it assisted in preventing the formation of a pan-regional film industry. There was no functional need for it. Second, it assisted in preventing any form of non-documentary film production within the region. Again, there was no need for it: the process of regional articulation had begun along literal lines with Labrador Film Project 1969. But to reposition Janine Marchessault’s assessment of Challenge for Change/Société Nouvelle, the technological determinism that lay at the heart of the Extension Service’s work here did no so much conflate media technology with democratic participation as it solidified a particular instrumental use of media within the democratic process. Embedded within the ever-changing Fogo process was a poetics of communication that occluded purposive abstraction; the process’ emphasis on textual use-value necessitated as much. Only now, as Labrador finalizes the process of codifying the physical and ideological borders of its sub-regions, has film been conditionally released from this manner of instrumentality.
It is, I think, tempting to draw parallels between the use of film during Labrador’s epoch of local culture and Newfoundland’s epoch of institutional culture by way of the medium’s spatially constitutive function; but such a comparison would inevitably be hollow. The respective projects of these epochs were directed to substantially different ends. In Newfoundland, that project was the unequivocal rehabilitation of what was understood to be some manner of state space along lines set out by other, modernized, spaces. In Labrador, that project was directed towards the mobilization of polysemic regional space in order to affect a manner of social, economic and infrastructural development. Critically, for Labrador, that development was, after a fashion, self-directed, not thrust upon it. It is, however, after a fashion. After all, technological determinism – a certain ideology of progress rooted in the idea of, as per Tony Williamson’s words, self-help – lay at the core of the instrumental application of the medium in the region. In Newfoundland, that was to proceed, in the language of the Division of Adult and Visual Education, by way of the spreading of enlightenment.

This, finally, leads me back to Comolli and Narboni and to a reassessment of their powerful if somewhat scrappy thesis that film serves as a medium through which ideology is both produced and reproduced. What attracted me to their idea in the first place was its potential applicability in accounting for a practice of filmmaking that seemed entirely at odds with what I understood to be the preoccupations of a Canadian national cinema. In Newfoundland and Labrador, there was an overriding concern with development, be it in the form of infrastructure, industry, communications, and even the state itself. There was, it seemed, an uneasiness about lived, material conditions. And indeed, these were preoccupations that signified a certain ideology that was variously
produced and reproduced by way of film, an ideology that found its roots in the creation of an unethical state. Moreover, they were preoccupations with direct corollaries in material existence. Their thesis allowed me to directly address the three basic questions that motivated this study; it provided a framework through which to approach film as a socially generative medium.

But what I did not anticipate – what continues to strike me as problematic – is what this manner of analysis reveals about the relationship between film and ideology in Newfoundland and Labrador respectively. In both regions, the producing institutions were, by and large, the very same. And yet these institutions managed to trigger diverging lineages of ideology that would reaffirm regional perspectives. During their epochs of institutional culture, both Newfoundland and Labrador were, especially by way of film, subjected to latter day colonial projects. In Newfoundland, the filmic response to those projects initially took the form of social mobilization, passed through a phase of social interrogation, and eventually gave way to economic determinism. In Labrador, that response took the form of regional creation, directed first towards unifying the archipelago, then stabilizing the identities within its sub-regions, and only now seems to be flirting with the notion of industry. They are, I think, responses that speak to the marked differences in social composition in Newfoundland and in Labrador. They are, also, I think, responses that confirm what Walter Benjamin asserted some thirty years before Comolli and Narboni:

The characteristics of the film lie not only in the manner in which man presents himself to mechanical equipment but also in the manner in which, by means of the apparatus, man represents his environment. (1968: 235)
Here, in Newfoundland and Labrador, the three – man, equipment, and environment – are impossibly entwined.
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Appendix 1: Additional Secondary Sources


“Explains Value Film Strips.” *The Twillingate Sun* 70.31 (05 August 1950): 3.

“Film Unit for T’gate.” *The Twillingate Sun* 70.27 (07 July 1951): 4.

“Films to the Fore at Springdale.” *The Twillingate Sun* 70.27 (15 December 1951): 4.


Golfman, Noreen. “Documenting the seal fishery: A Short History of Newfoundland


Rowe, Dorian. “Lights... Camera... Action!: Newfoundland and Labrador's Film Industry.” *Downhomer* 12 (October 1999): 31-32.


White, Jerry. “Guys with Brylcreem Discussing Fish Processing: Form, Community, and


Appendix 2: Objectives, General and Specific,  
Division of Adult and Visual Education (1946)

This has been transcribed verbatim from the Department of Education, Division of Adult and Visual Education’s Field Workers Manual.

III. OBJECTIVES

1. General Objectives.

The people of Newfoundland constitute the Island’s greatest asset. The primary objective of the Adult Education Service including Visual Education is, therefore, to assist in the general reconstruction of Newfoundland:

(a) By raising the general educational standard of the Adult population and by affording opportunities for those who, during their early years, were unable to obtain a good education.

(b) By developing in the people right attitudes and a spirit of living for each other, helping each other, and working together for the good of Newfoundland as a whole.

(c) By helping them to analyse and attack their common problems, Community and National, and to work together towards a solution.

(d) By helping them to understand Newfoundland’s peculiar needs and problems, and by showing them how other countries have solved similar problems, and what measures are being taken or may be applied in Newfoundland.
(e) By developing in Newfoundlanders a sense of individual and community interest and responsibility, not only for the improvement and welfare of the home and community, but for the country as a whole.

(f) By spreading culture and enlightenment and an appreciation of proper standards of living including health, nutrition, prevention and cure of diseases.

(g) By increasing the technical competency of the people in basic industries of the country.

(h) By helping Newfoundlanders to help themselves by making the most of what they have, and thus raising the standard of living.

(i) By encouraging schools, School Boards, Town Councils, Community Councils, Welfare Societies, Community Organizations and other bodies, to purchase projectors and equipment and by training a number of members of the community to form a pool of projectionists whose services will be available when required.

(j) By finding ways and means of developing a self supporting Adult Education programme.

(k) By providing a film library of educational films for use in schools, and for showings directly by representatives of the rural film service in small centres and through properly organized visual education associations in the larger centres of the country.

(l) By using educational films to break down and offset the effect of isolation.

(m) By demonstrating, through visual aids, the best methods applying in the various industries.
2. **Specific Objectives.**

(a) To raise the standard of literacy by means of classes in academic subjects.

(b) By means of Visual Aids and group discussions to stimulate and develop interest in Community and National Programs, and in Current Events, at home and abroad.

(c) To develop community projects and leaderships by means or Jr. and Sr. Agricultural Clubs or Organizations on the lines of 4H Clubs and similar organizations.

(d) To direct and develop community effort towards the solution of such community problems as improving community health and sanitation, providing more and better food, improving the home and family relations.

(e) To develop the natural skills of the people to enable them to better themselves economically and socially.

(f) To develop and foster an interest in cultural and recreational pursuits that will make for better use of leisure time.
Appendix 3: History of Organization to Co-op Status, Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers Co-operative (no date)

Reproduced by permission of the Newfoundland Independent Filmmaker’s Co-operative. This document is transcribed, more or less, verbatim. Particular attention has been paid to maintaining formatting, punctuation, capitalization, and the spelling of names, even if these contravene standard rules; or, in the case of the spelling of some names, is blatantly incorrect. The only alterations I have made here are to spellings of words other than improper nouns. “Mwmbers” in the first sentence of the twelfth paragraph has been changed to “members”; “assistanc” assistance in the same paragraph and sentence has been changed to “assistance”; “experiance” in bullet (f) has been changed to experience; and the word “co-opwas” in the final paragraph has been divided into “co-op was”.

History of Organization to Co-op Status

The necessity for some sort of film artist’s organization was first spoken about at the first Newfoundland Conference of the Arts on February 23, 1974 when Bill Doyle, Charlie Calanan, Paul MacLeod, Mike Jones, Derek Norman, Howard Campbell, Gar Fizzard, Grace Penney, Rex Tasker (NFB Halifax), Sandra Gathercole (Toronto Film Co-op), Penni Jaques (Canada Council) met during the election of a representative to the provisional arts council then being formed. Penni Jaques indicated at this and subsequent meetings that there was “seed Money” available for a filmmakers group in Newfoundland.
The idea was talked about but not acted upon by the filmmakers until the fall of 1974 when MUN Extension Services announced that they had received a $17,500 grant from Canada Council for a “Film Advisory Center” and “Filmmaker in Residence”. Filmmakers, worried that might be the “seed money” Penni Jaques spoke of, called a meeting for November 11 to discuss the grant with Extension Service representatives. The meeting was also attended, at the filmmakers’ request, by Chuck Lapp, co-ordinator of the Atlantic Filmmakers Co-op in Halifax.

At the November 11 meeting the filmmakers found that the people who were receiving the grant really didn’t know anything about film and were very vague about how they were going to spend the money. The filmmakers were also upset that they had not been consulted, except in a very nominal way.

They also wondered why, if the University was receiving the money, the Film Unit, the University’s production center, was not administering the grant rather than the Arts Section where there seemed to be almost no film expertise.

They also felt an “artist-in-residence” was not what they needed, that a film co-operative was more necessary if filmmakers were to be developed in Newfoundland.

The next day, November 12, the filmmakers met with Chuck Lapp at the MUN Film Unit to discuss the co-op idea. Chuck described the Halifax operation.

Those present agreed to meet again to begin organizing toward forming a co-operative. The filmmakers’ feelings of dissatisfaction with the $17,500 grant were meanwhile communicated to Penni Jaques and to the Extension Service Arts Section.
After Penni met with both the Extension people and the filmmakers in late January, the grant was reassessed and the filmmakers were asked to submit a proposal regarding the expenditure of the grant.

On February 17, 1975 the filmmakers Association was formed. At subsequent meetings a proposal was drafted requesting that $7,000 of the grant be turned over to the Association to set up working space and organize toward co-operative status under provincial law. The proposal was accepted and the filmmakers were granted the money they asked for.

At meetings in March and April twenty filmmakers worked at assessing their resources, researching the co-op idea and designing a working procedure.

Resources were catalogued and assistance supplementary to the Canada Council money was sought and granted from several quarters.

The Extension Services Film Unit offered the co-op the use of an Auricon single system sound camera; 16mm Bell and Howell; the use, when members were qualified, of the 16mm animation stand; some sound transferring and the occasional use of other facilities, such as sound recording studio and the theatre for double system screenings; space for meetings, typing and administrative help from Pat Barrett, Film Unit’s Administrative Assistant; and the advice and technical assistance of staff members of the Film Unit.

The National Film Board Distribution Office in St. John’s gave over, rent free, for a time, the use of space in the NFB building in Pleasantville.
The National Film Board Production Studio in Halifax promised a quantity of film stock and processing as an “overflow” to be used if/when the normal production budget had been exhausted.

CBC St. John’s offered free processing of original colour film type 7242 – the type that is processed in their machines – for a period of one year. In addition they have given the co-op the use of a Moviola and sever pieces of editing equipment.

In March the Filmmakers Association made contact with Bill Bailey of Newfoundland Co-operative Services and invited him to attend a meeting to explain the theory of co-operatives and indicate what practical steps should be followed in the formation of a co-op. Although there was no precedent in Newfoundland for a non-profit co-operative, the definition of a co-op given by Mr. Bailey was broad enough to include the type of organization the Association felt it needed, so a constitution was written and in June of 1975 the filmmakers applied to the Provincial Department of Provincial Affairs for co-operative status. The charter was granted on June 18, 1975 with fourteen charter members.

A constitution written by the Association and found acceptable under the Co-operatives Act of Newfoundland, describes the aims of the Filmmakers Co-op as follows:

(a) Provide a pool of talent, resources, equipment, and space to facilitate film production by members.

(b) Serve as a production agency brining together artists and technical personnel for specific productions by members.

(c) Help improve the calibre of films produced through providing criticisms by peers as well as lectures and workshops by experts in special areas.
(d) Serve as a distribution, exhibition, and marketing agency for regionally produced films.

(e) Serve as an information center about conferences, festivals, publications and all matters concerned with film production, distribution, and exhibition.

(f) Provide a center and an environment in which personal contact promotes exchange of ideas and learning through the experience of others.

(g) Promote the co-operative movement through the association with other registered co-operative societies within the province of Newfoundland, other provinces of Canada and countries abroad for purposes of mutual aid.

(h) Conduct educational work among its members in order to attain the above objects.

(i) Do all acts which may assist in the attainment of the above objects provided that such acts are in accordance with co-operative principles, the Co-operative Societies Act, amendments thereto, rules made under this constitution.

It follows that the working procedure of the Co-op would be such as to implement these aims.

The affairs of the co-op are run by a five-person Board of Directors elected at the annual general meeting. This board will hire a manager to handle day to day matters. Also elected is a program committee consisting of five people, namely the president, the manager and three other members who are not on the Board of Directors will judge script
ideas submitted by the co-op members and recommend the allocation of production
money. The allocation of these funds must be ratified by the majority of members present
at a regular meeting of the co-op.

Although there are yet no by-laws written, it was agreed in principle by all
founding members that the filmmakers will, in general, in some manner as yet
unspecified, own the films they make.

Although the co-op was, at the beginning, heavily populated by St. John’s people,
the founding members feel the necessity of spreading the base of the Co-op’s film
activity as widely as is practical at any time and have committed themselves to promoting
the Co-op throughout the province.
Appendix 4: Filmography, 1933-1997

Given both the quantity of film produced during the period under consideration and my general concern with the output of certain production agencies, I have subdivided this filmography according to producer. There are, really, six separate filmographies here: (1) a general filmography of productions filmed in either Newfoundland or Labrador by local, national, and international agencies; (2) Lee Wulff’s work in Newfoundland and Labrador; (3) Atlantic Films’ work in Newfoundland and Labrador; (3) the National Film Board of Canada’s work in Newfoundland and Labrador; (4) the Memorial University of Newfoundland Extension Service’s work in Newfoundland and Labrador and abroad (so included as their work abroad was uniformly intended to be screened for local audiences); and (6) productions by Newfoundland and Labrador Independent Filmmaker’s Co-operative members filmed in Newfoundland and Labrador. The last item requires further clarification. Though NIFCO continues to serve as a producing agency, it also provides production support to Co-op members working under the auspices of other production companies. Because of this, NIFCO, quite rightly, claims an affiliation with a number of films for which the Co-op did not serve as the primary producer, a tendency confirmed with their now defunct “Film Database” originally published on their website www.nifco.org. This database serves as one of the four primary sources from which the data presented here has been compiled. The remaining sources include (1) the Extension Service, Memorial University of Newfoundland Media Catalogue; (2) Norman, Gallant and Norman’s Film in Newfoundland and Labrador 1904-1980; (3) the National Film Board of Canada’s online database; and (4) the Labrador Institute Film and Video collection.
As a rule, the titles and release dates recorded here have been transcribed verbatim from catalogues or databases maintained by the film’s producer. The only exception is the data transcribed from the Extension Service, Memorial University of Newfoundland Media Catalogue. Due to frequent inconsistencies in transcriptions of the same title and the large number of typographical errors, particularly with place names, some of these titles have been altered to reflect a consensus of transcription and orthographic convention. More generally, for the purposes of commissioned films, I have attempted to indicate both the producing and commissioning agencies: the former, when it is known, is always listed before the latter. I have likewise attempted to identify the location of each of the items by way of an abbreviation at the end of each entry. In instances where multiple copies are available, I have provided the location for the fairest existing copy. The legend is as follows:

ACH = A.C. Hunter Library, St. John’s
CR = Commercially released
DAI = Memorial University of Newfoundland Digital Archives Initiative
LIFVC = Labrador Institute Film and Video Collection
NFBC = National Film Board of Canada Collection
PC = Provided in confidence
SI = Status indeterminate
YT = YouTube
4.1 General

*Dr. Wishart's Labrador Journey* (c. 1936) LIFVC

*Labrador Adventure* (1938) SI

*Caribou Hunt in Newfoundland* (1940) SI

*The Challenge of Labrador* (194-) SI

*49th Parallel, a.k.a. The Invaders* (British Ministry of Information, 1942) CR

*The Golden Jubilee of Archbishop Roach* (1947) SI

*Handling of Salted Codfish* (Greenpark Productions, Newfoundland Fisheries Board. Dir. Peter Plaskitt, 1948) PC

*Wings for an Angler* (Edo Corporation, Piper Aircraft, 1948) SI

*Island Story a.k.a. The Frasers of Cabot Cove* (Greenpark Productions, Commission of Government. Dir. Humphrey Swingler, 1948 or 1949) SI

*Newfoundland Enterprise* (Bowater, 1949) SI

*Newfoundland Scene* (Crawley Films, Imperial Oil, 1950) ACH

*Governor General Visits Newfoundland* (1952) SI

*The Big Island* (Audio Pictures, Canadian National Railway) 1952 ACH

*Newfoundland: Canada's Newest Province* (1952) SI

*Up the Line in '53* (Cinémraft, c. 1953) LIFVC

*The Land We Love* (Harvey’s Travel, 1954) SI

*Ore in '54* (Cinémraft, c. 1954) LIFVC

*The Year of Joy* (1955) SI

*Hamilton Power Survey* (Crawley Films, Newfoundland Hydro, 1956) SI

*Sailing Newfoundland Waters* (Victor Kayfetz Productions, Government of
Newfoundland, 1959) ACH

*St. John’s: A Harbour Reborn* (Crawley Films, Foundation of Canada Engineering Company, Public Works Canada, 1959) ACH

*Accomplishment in Northern Quebec* (United States Steel International, 196-) LIFVC

*The Carol Operation* (Iron Ore Company of Canada, 196-) LIFVC

*Exploration – Iron Ore in Quebec* (United States Steel International, 196-) SI

*The Iron Horse Goes North* (Cinécraft, 196-) LIFVC


*The Road Back* (St. John’s Rehabilitation Centre, 1963) SI

*Sept-Îles à la recherche de son passé* (Archaeological Society of Sherbrooke, Iron Ore Company of Canada, 1964) LIFVC

*The Grenfell Challenge: Adventure and Experience* (Sturgis-Grant Productions, c. 1967) SI


*Le train du Labrador* (Société Nouvelle des Établissements Gaumont, 1968) SI

*Canadian Cities: Newfoundland* (Moreland-Latchford Productions, 1969) SI

*Walk – Don’t Walk* (St. John’s Rehabilitation Centre, 1969) SI

*Herring Neck Fish Facility* (Provincial Department of Fisheries, 197-) SI

*The Modernization of Codtraps* (197-) SI

*Newfoundland Trophy Trip* (International Harvester, 197-) SI
Canadian Artist: David Blackwood (Hobel-Leiterman Productions, 1970) SI

The Grenfell Challenge Mission (Sturgis-Grant Productions, 1970) LIFVC

The New Newfoundland (Moreland-Latchford Productions, 1970) SI

Power From Labrador (Crawley Films, 1970) LIFVC

Journey to Power (Crawley Films, 1972) SI

The Rowdyman (Canart Films. Dir. Peter Carter, 1972) YT

St. John’s Brier (Briston Creative Films, MacDonald Tobacco Company, 1972 or 1973) SI

Come Paint and Photograph Us (NACOM, Government of Newfoundland, 1972 or 1973) ACH

A Ghost of a Choice (NACOM, Provincial Department of Tourism, 1974) SI

The Devil’s Purse (Atlantic Filmmakers Co-operative, 1974) SI

Industrial Opportunity in Newfoundland (Film House, Provincial Department of Industrial Development, 1974) SI

Midwater Trawling (NACOM, Provincial Department of Fisheries, 1974) SI

Ocean Heritage (NACOM, Provincial Department of Tourism, 1974) ACH

The Vital Resource (NACOM, Provincial Department of Fisheries, 1974) SI

Architecture in Newfoundland (1975) ACH

Architecture of Newfoundland (NACOM, Provincial Department of Tourism, 1975) ACH

Energy Forever (Crawley Films, 1975) SI

Newfoundland Architecture (NACOM, Provincial Department of Tourism, 1975) SI

Newfoundland Hospitality (NACOM, Provincial Department of Tourism, 1975) SI

The Value of the Visit (NACOM, Provincial Department of Tourism, 1975) SI
Newfoundland Today (Look Here Productions, Provincial Department of Industrial Development, 1976) SI

Labrador Microwave (Terra Communications, 1977) SI


The Spirit of ’77 (Anchor Films, Canada Summer Games Committee, 1977) SI

Budworm (Anchor Films, Provincial Department of Forestry, 1978) ACH

Trans-Island Microwave (Northlight Photographic, Newfoundland Telephone Company, 1978) SI

The Newfoundlanders: Voices From the Sea (Madgers Films, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1978) ACH

Master of Ungava (Ministry of Tourism, Government of Québec, Dir. Bernard Beaupré, 1979) LIFVC


Labrador: A Battle For Survival (Mid-Canada Communications, 1981) LIFVC

Akuliaq – Hunting Caribou in Northern Quebec (Ministry of Communication, Government of Quebec, Dir. Bernard Beaupré, 1985). LIFVC

Closing the Gap: Poverty in Newfoundland and Labrador (St. Johns OXFAM, 1990) SI

Cain’s Legacy (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Piper Stock Productions Limited, 1991) LIFVC


More Than a Monument (Red Ochre Productions, Dir. Ken Pittman, 1992) ACH

Labrador Inuit: Negotiating the Claim, Part Two (Labrador Inuit Association, 1993) LIFVC

In Caribou Country: The Adventures of William Brooks Cabot in Labrador, 1903-1910
(Lazybank Productions, Dir. Nigel Markham, 1997) LIFVC

4.2 Lee Wulff

Birds on the Barrens, a.k.a. Birds of the Barrens (Newfoundland Tourist Development Board, between 1938-1940) SI

Giant Tuna Fishing (Newfoundland Tourist Development Board, between 1938-1940) SI

Moose Hunting (Newfoundland Tourist Development Board, between 1938-1940) SI

Salmon Fishing in Newfoundland (Newfoundland Tourist Development Board, between 1938-1940) SI

Scenic Newfoundland (Newfoundland Tourist Development Board, between 1938-1940) SI

Sea Sport (Newfoundland Tourist Development Board, between 1938-1940) SI

Sea Trout (Newfoundland Tourist Development Board, between 1938-1940) SI

Snow Partridge Shooting (Newfoundland Tourist Development Board, between 1938-1940) SI

Fishing in Newfoundland (Newfoundland Tourist Development Board, Tourist Development Division of the Provincial Department of Economic Development, c. 1943, revised 1958) ACH
The Silent Menace (Newfoundland Tuberculosis Association, 1946) ACH

Hunting in Newfoundland (Tourist Development Division of the Provincial Department of Economic Development, 1952 or 1954) ACH

Newfoundland Sings (1955) ACH

Minipi’s Discovery (1957) CR

Beautiful Bonne Bay (1958) SI

Bow Hunting by the Sea (Government of Newfoundland, 1959 or 1961) ACH

Double in Bluefins (Government of Newfoundland, 1959) ACH

A Salmon for Junior (Government of Newfoundland, 1959) ACH

Avalon Holiday (Government of Newfoundland, between 1960 and 1963) ACH

Newfoundland Doubleheader (1960) SI

Three Trout to Dream About (1960) CR

Newfoundland Sea Birds (1961) ACH

With Camera and Gun in Newfoundland (Government of Newfoundland, 1961 or 1964) PC

Fishing in Newfoundland (1963) ACH

The Atlantic Salmon, a.k.a. The Atlantic Salmon in Newfoundland (1964) CR

Downstream to the Sea (Government of Newfoundland, 1965) ACH

Newfoundland Trailer Trip (Government of Newfoundland, 1965) ACH

Soliloquy to a Salmon (1965) CR

Come Home Newfoundlander (Government of Newfoundland, 1967) SI

To Labrador for Brook Trout (Government of Newfoundland, 1967) ACH

Moose and Caribou in Newfoundland (Provincial Department of Tourism, 1968) PC
4.3 Atlantic Films

Canada From Sea to Sea (195-) SI

This is Canada (195-) SI

Newfoundland Progress Report, Volume 1 (1951) ACH

Newfoundland Progress Report, Volume 2 (1952) ACH

Sammy Suitcase (1952) SI

Danish Seining (1953) SI

Education in Process (1953) SI

Education is Your Business (1953) SI

Health is Wealth (1953) SI

Local Government (1953) SI
My Latvia (for the United States Information Agency, c. 1953) CR

Newfoundland's North East Coast (1953) SI

Newfoundland Progress Report, Volume 3 (1953) ACH

Old City With a Young Heart (c. 1953) PC

Roads and Bridges (1953) ACH

You Are Welcome (1953) ACH

Long Lining and Boat Building (1954) SI

Need is My Neighbour, a.k.a. Need is Your Neighbour (1954) SI

Newfoundland Progress Report, Volume 4 (1954) SI

Bridge Construction (1954) SI

Cable Laying (1954) SI

Development in LaCie (1954) SI

Housing (1954) SI

Moose for Labrador (1954) ACH

Roads and Bridges (1954) ACH

Seal Hunt (1954) SI

Five Years of Confederation (1955) SI

Pulpwood (for the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Corporation, 1955 or 1958) SI

Happy Union (1958) ACH

Historic Materials (1960) SI

Forest Protection (1961) SI

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1 Principal photography was conducted in Latvia before Jekste immigrated to Canada. Footage for Jeskste’s introduction was photographed at Atlantic Films and Electronics studios at St. John’s where the film was also assembled.
Opening of the New Campus of the Memorial University of Newfoundland (Dir. Ignatius Rumboldt, 1961) DAI

St. John’s Harbour (1961) SI

Confederation Building (1962) ACH

Labrador (1963) ACH

Opening of Trades College (1964) SI

Potato Wart and Its Control in Newfoundland (for the Federal Department of Agriculture, 1966) SI

4.4 National Film Board of Canada

Toilers of the Grand Banks (Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau, Dir. Stuart Legg, 1940) NFBC

Newfoundland: Scenes of Newfoundland (1941)² SI

Workers At War No. 4 (1943) NFBC

Atlantic Crossroads (Dir. Tom Daly, 1945) NFBC

Newfoundland: Sentinel of the Atlantic (1945) NFBC

Across Arctic Ungava (Dir. Douglas Wilkinson, 1949) NFBC

Inside Newfoundland (1949) SI

Newfoundland: Atlantic Province (Dirs. Sydney Newman and Roger Morin, 1949) SI

Operation Moose Trap (1951) SI

Royal Journey (Dirs. David Bairstow and Gudrun Parker and Roger Blais, 1951) NFBC

Sea Coast Service (1952) SI

² This title, recorded by Norman, Gallant and Norman, may be apocryphal. I have not been able to confirm its existence in any other source.
Seven Islands (Dir. Gil LaRoche, 1952) NFBC

Eye Witness No. 58 (Dirs. Grant McLean and Ronald Weyman, 1953) NFBC

Highlights From Royal Journey (Dirs. David Bairstow, Gudrun Parker and Roger Blais, 1953) NFBC

Dorval et Gander (Dir. Gil LaRoche, 1954) SI

La fabrication du papier (Dir. Gil LaRoche, 1954) SI

Saint-Jean (Dir. Gil LaRoche, 1954) SI

Salt Cod (with the Canadian Education Association. Dir. Allan Wargon, 1954) NFBC

High Tide in Newfoundland (Dir. Grant McLean, 1955) NFBC

Operation Eclipse II (Dir. David Bairstow, 1955) NFBC

Iron From the North (Dir. Walford Hewitson, 1955) NFBC

Road of Iron (Dir. Walford Hewitson, 1955) NFBC

The Tenth Frontier (Dir. Thomas Farley, 1956) NFBC

Encounter at Trinity (Dir. Allan Wargon, 1957) NFBC

Away From It All (with the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. Dir. Jean Roy, 1961) SI

Along Newfoundland’s Shores (1962) NFBC

Adventure in Newfoundland (Dir. Ernest Reid, 1964) ACH

Terra Nova (Dir. Roger Blais, 1964) NFBC

Labrador Diary (Scott Films Limited, 1964) NFBC

5,000 Miles (1965) SI

The Baymen (Dir. Rex Tasker, 1965) NFBC

Labrador Hospital (Dir. Kryn Taconis, 1966) SI
The White Ship (Dir. Hector Lemieux, 1966) NFBC

A Rosewood Daydream (Dir. Ian MacNeill, 1970) ACH

A Little Fellow From Gambo – The Joey Smallwood Story (Dir. Julian Biggs, 1970) NFBC

Labrador North (Dir. Roger Hart, 1973) NFBC

Waiting for Fidel (Dir. Michael Rubbo, 1974) NFBC

The Brothers Byrne (Dir. William Gough, 1975) NFBC

Blackwood (Dirs. Tony Ianzelo and Andy Thomson, 1976) NFBC

Grenfell of Labrador: The Great Adventure (with the Canadian Broadcasting Company. Dir. Terence Macartney-Filgate, 1977) ACH

Canada Vignettes: Newfoundland (Dir. George Geertsen, 1978) NFBC

A Family of Labrador (Dir. Kent Martin, 1978) NFBC

A Figgy Duff Christmas (with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Dir. William Gough, 1978) ACH


Cabot (with Atkinson Film-Arts, 1979) SI

Viking Visitors to North America (Dirs. Tony Ianzelo and Anthony Kent, 1979) NFBC

Far From Away: The Arts in St. John’s (Dir. Léonard Forest, 1980) NFBC

Portrait: Gerald Squires of Newfoundland (Dir. Léonard Forest, 1980) ACH


Julie O’Brien (Dir. Beverly Shaffer, 1981) NFBC

The Man Who Discovered America (Dir. Ralph Maud, 1981) NFBC

The Author of These Words: Harold Horwood (Dir. William D. MacGillivray, 1982)
NFBC

*Shanaditti: Last of the Beothuks* (Dir. Ken Pittman, 1982) ACH

*Unitas Fratrum: The Moravians in Labrador* (Dir. Hubert Schuurman, 1983) NFBC

*Bayo* (Dir. Mort Ransen, 1984) SI

*Too Dirty for a Woman* (Dir. Diane Beaudry, 1984) NFBC

*The Last Days of Okak* (Drs. Anne Budgell and Nigel Markham, 1985) NFBC

*10 Days... 48 Hours* (Dir. Georges Dufaux, 1986) ACH


*Eye of the Storm* (with Lazybank Productions. Dir. Nigel Markham, 1991) NFBC

*Hunters and Bombers* (with Nexus Television. Dirs. Hugh Brody and Nigel Markham, 1991) NFBC

*“I Just Didn't Want to Die”: The 1914 Newfoundland Sealing Disaster* (Dir. Joe MacDonald, 1991) NFBC


*Toward Intimacy* (Dir. Debbie McGee, 1992) NFBC

*Thinking Positive* (Dir. Debbie McGee, 1993) NFBC

*Taking Stock* (Dir. Nigel Markham, 1994) NFBC

*Vienna Tribunal* (with Augusta Productions, Dir. Gerry Rogers, 1994) ACH

*The Danger Tree* (with Generic Productions, Nfld. Motion Pictures. Dir. John McGreavy, 1996) ACH

*Place of the Boss: Utshimassits* (with Triad Film Productions, John Walker Productions. Dir. John Walker, 1996) NFBC
Seven Brides for Uncle Sam (Dir. Anita McGee, 1997) NFBC

Kathleen Shannon: On Film, Feminism & Other Dreams (Dir. Gerry Rogers, 1997) NFBC

An Untidy Package (Dir. Debbie McGee, 1997) NFBC

4.5 Memorial University of Newfoundland Extension Service

The Dramatic Urge

The University – The Dramatic Urge – Improvisation (1968) SI

The University – The Dramatic Urge – Involvement (1968) SI

The University – The Dramatic Urge – Music and Movement (1968) SI

The University – The Dramatic Urge – Rehearsal No. 1 (1968) SI

The University – The Dramatic Urge – The Workshop Process (1968) SI

Explorations in Art

The University – Explorations in Art – Child Art (1968) SI

The University – Explorations in Art – Oil Painting (1968) SI

The University – Explorations in Art – Pottery (1968) SI

The University – Explorations in Art – Teenage Art (1968) SI

The University – Explorations in Art – The Visual Language – Don Wright (1968) DAI

The University – Explorations in Art – Water Colors – Don Wright (1968) SI

Labrador Film Project 1969

Ben Powell – Charlottetown (1969) SI
Ron and Ches Lethbridge on Trapping (1968) DAI

Uncle Ace Wentzell, Tub Harbour (1969) DAI

Introduction to Labrador (Dirs. Harvey Best and George C. Story, 1970) DAI

Jack Keefe – Black Tickle (1970) DAI

John Hamel, Cartwright (1970) SI

Ray Rumboldt, Mary’s Harbour (1970) DAI

Ray Ward, Snug Harbour (1970) DAI

Ron and Ches Lethbridge on Education (1970)* DAI

Samson Learning, Calloway Cove (1970) DAI

Snug Harbour School (1970) SI

Solomon Curl – Fox Harbour (1970) DAI

Time for Change, Cape St. Charles (1970) DAI

West Bay People (1970) DAI

Newfoundland Project

Andrew Britt at Shoal Bay (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC

Billy Crane Moves Away (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC

Brian Earle on Merchants and Welfare (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC

The Children of Fogo Island (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC

Citizen Discussion (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC

* Though the Extension Service, Memorial University of Newfoundland Media Catalogue does not indicate as much, it is likely part of Labrador Film Project 1969.
Dan Roberts on Fishing (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC
Discussion on Welfare (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC
Fishermen’s Meeting (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC
The Fogo Island Improvement Committee (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC
Fogo’s Expatriates (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC
The Founding of the Cooperatives (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC
Jim Decker Builds a Longliner (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC
Jim Decker’s Party (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC
Joe Kinsella on Education (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC
McGraths at Home and Fishing (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC
The Mercer Family (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC
The Merchant and the Teacher (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC
Some Problems of Fogo (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC
The Songs of Chris Cobb (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC
The Story of the Up Top (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC
Thoughts on Fogo and Norway (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC
Tom Best on Cooperatives (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC
Two Cabinet Ministers (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC

A Wedding and Party (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC

William Wells Talks about the Island (in collaboration with the NFB, Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC

A Woman’s Place (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1967) NFBC

Introduction to Fogo Island (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low 1968) NFBC

The Specialists at Memorial Discuss the Fogo Films (in collaboration with the NFB, 1969) NFBC

The Winds of Fogo (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Colin Low, 1969) NFBC

A Memo From Fogo (in collaboration with the NFB. Dir. Roger Hart, 1972) NFBC

Port au Choix – Community Development Project

The Barber – Philip Rumboldt (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

Clergy and Social Change and Youth (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

Community Needs – Andrew Swimm (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

Co-operation in Education (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

Education Faculty (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

Family Fishery – The Moores (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

Harbour Development (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

Harbour Development – Part II (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

The Hockey Game – Port au Choix (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

Joe Gaslard – The French Settlers (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

Longliner Fishermen – The Goulds (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI
Millicent Billard and Seafood Preparation (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

The Move (in co-operation with NFB, 1968) DAI

NRDA and Change – Port au Choix (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

NRDA Organization and Structure – Northwest Coast (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

NRDA Meeting (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

Northwest Coast Development (in co-operation with the NFB, c. 1968) SI

Organizing Youth (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) DAI

Outport Education – Port au Choix (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

Political Representation – M. Lowe – Port au Choix (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

The Priest and the Community (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) DAI

Problems of a Community Council (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) DAI

Problems with Draggers – Port au Choix (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

State of Medical Services (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

Voice of Youth – Port au Choix (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) DAI

Why Dropouts (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

Young Fishermen’s Challenge (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

Youth in the Community – Port au Choix (in co-operation with the NFB, 1968) SI

Father McGrath and Students (in co-operation with the NFB, 1969) DAI

Fishery Needs – Andrew Swimm (in co-operation with the NFB, 1969) SI

Poker Game (in co-operation with the NFB, 1969) SI

Ms. Lizita Billard – The Postmistress (in co-operation with the NFB, 1969) SI

Recess (in co-operation with the NFB, 1969) SI

Sports Day (in co-operation with the NFB, 1969) SI

The Women Speak (in co-operation with the NFB, 1969) SI

Brig Bay Development Conference (1967)* SI

Brig Bay (Port au Choix) (1968)* SI

Port au Choix III (1971)* DAI

Port au Choix Wharf (1974)* SI

Trepassey and St. Shott’s Training Project

Captain Cheaters on Draggers (1968) DAI

Co-operation and the Future (1968) SI

Mr. and Mrs. Fitzpatrick (1968) SI

Poultry Farmer – Trepassey (1968) SI

Poultry Farming – Trepassey (1968) SI

St. Shott’s Concert (1968) SI

St. Shott’s – Trepassey (1968) SI

Youth on Religion – St. Shott’s (1968) SI

Trepassey Improvement Committee (1968) DAI

Sheep Farming (1969) SI

* Though the Extension Service, Memorial University of Newfoundland Media Catalogue does not indicate as much, these films are likely part of the Port au Choix Project.
The University

University - Academic Problems of Students (1968) SI

The University – The Biological Sciences (1968) SI

The University – Education Faculty (1968) SI

The University – The Extension Department (1968) SI

The University – Foundation Program (1968) SI

The University – Geography and Geology (1968) SI

The University – Humanities (1968) SI

The University – Intro to Geography (1968) SI

The University – Its Philosophy (1968) SI

The University – Its Purpose, Education Degrees (1968) SI

The University – Medicine and Engineering (1968) SI

The University – Memorial University (1968) SI

The University – Our Province’s Plants (1968) SI

The University – Physical Education and Nursing (1968) SI

The University – Physics/Chemistry/and Mathematics (1968) SI

University Registration, Scholarship and Course Study (1968) SI

The University – Social Sciences, Part I and II (1968) SI

The University – Student Activities (1968) SI

The University – Students in Residence (1968) SI

The University – Teacher Education (1968) SI
Untitled oil and gas project

Fish and Oil (1979) DAI

From Rhynie Loos to Offshore Modules (with the NFB, 1979) DAI

Kishorn Sampler – “If They Could Keep To What They Say” (with the NFB, 1979) DAI

Offshore Oil – Onshore Development (1979) DAI

Oilspill Cleanup – Offshore Exercise (1979) DAI

Planning (with the NFB, 1979) DAI

Power and Control (with the NFB, 1979) DAI

Saint Saen’s Symphony (with the NFB, 1979) SI

Siting Supply Bases (with the NFB, 1979) DAI

Terminal Pollution (with the NFB, 1979) DAI

What’s Happening Now (with the NFB, 1979) DAI

You’ve Got to Sell Yourself (with the NFB, 1979) DAI

How Kids See Oil (1980) DAI

90/10 - Oil and Local Industry (with the NFB, 1980) DAI

Intro to Shetland (with the NFB, 1980) SI

Scotland and Oil: Compensation for Fishermen (with the NFB, 1980) DAI

Speculation (with the NFB, 1980) DAI

Working in Oil (with the NFB, 1980) SI

You Can’t Afford to Ignore It (with the NFB, 1980) DAI

Expropriation (1981) DAI

Offshore Oil – Are We Ready? (with the NFB, 1981) DAI

Property Rights (1981) DAI
Untitled uranium project

Uranium I (1977) DAI

Uranium II – Brinex Composite (1977) DAI

Uranium III – Dr. David Barnes (1977) DAI

Uranium IV – Larry Coady (1977) DAI

Uranium V (1977) DAI

Uranium VI (1977) DAI

General

Caplin (1966) SI

Cod – Labrador and East Newfoundland (1966) SI

Haddock (1965) SI

Lobster (1966) SI

Red Fish (1966) SI

St. Mary’s Conference (1966) SI

Squid (1966) SI

V.E.R.B. (1966) SI

Fish Union – Mr. Pike (1967) SI

Fishermen’s Indemnity Plan (1967) SI

Flounder (1967) SI

The Fogo Launch (1967) DAI

Fogo Fishermen on Tignish Co-op (1967) DAI

Fogo Island Development Conference (1967) DAI
Fogo Island Project – 1967 (1967) SI

Geology of Our Province (1967) DAI

Herring (1967) SI

The Labrador Fishery (1967) DAI

Leyte and Best on Harbour Facilities (1967) SI

Opening Marine Science Lab (1967) SI

Quality Control – Salt Cod (1967) SI

Reverend Jesperson on Education (1967) SI

School March – Fogo (1967) SI

Teachers on Education (1967) DAI

Tilting – Fishermen's Meeting (1967) DAI

A View From Tilting (1967) DAI

Wadel and Condon (1967) SI

Community Nurse (1968) DAI

Credit Unions – Joe Batt’s Arm (1968) DAI

Don Best and A. Leyte on Tignish (1968) SI

Eastport Meeting About the Beach (1968) SI

Eastport and Self-help (1968) SI

Foundation Program (1968) SI

Fred Earle Interview (1968) SI

LeBlanc on Co-ops (1968) SI

Mundy Pond (1968) SI

Longliners and Draggers – Hewitt and Molloy (1968) SI
Seal Hunt (1968) SI

East Avalon (1969) SI

Fogo High School (1969) SI

Fogo Island Conference (1969) DAI

Fishermen’s Union (1969) SI

Gasoline Tax Discussion (1969) SI

Newfoundland Federation of Fishermen (1969) SI

Newfoundland Federation of Fishermen: Role (1969) SI

Knives (1969) SI

Fish Plant Feasibility (1970) SI

The March – Fogo (1970) SI

Plant Union (1970) SI

Salmon Experiment – New Zealand Fishermen (1970) SI


Starting From Scratch (1970) DAI

Stephenville Adult Centre – Witless Bay Fair (1970) SI

Agricultural Co–op (1971) SI

Charlie Chaisson – Irish Moss (1971) SI

Consumer’s Co-op (1971) DAI

Corner Brook Co-op (1971) SI

Erikson on Co-ops (1971) SI

Fishery Producers Co-op (1971) SI

Labrador Series #1 – Nain (1972) SI
Newfoundland Federation of Fishermen P.T.A.: Formation (1971) SI

Northern Labrador Fishery Collection (Nain) (1971) SI

Northern Labrador – Nain Fish Plant (1971) SI

Peter’s River Pioneers (1971) SI

A Resettled Community (1971) SI

Rod Pearce (1971) DAI

Foreign Students (1972) SI

MUN – First Impressions (1972) DAI

Municipal Bookkeeping Tapes (1972) DAI

Preparing Crab Meat (1972) SI

Scallop (1972) DAI

Blueberries (1973) SI

Chambers Brothers – Barr’d Harbour (1973) SI

Crafts I (1973) SI

Craft Training (1973) SI

If Just One of Us Does Something (with the NFB, 1973) SI

Longliner Design II (1973) SI

Marystown (1973) SI

Marystown Shipyards (1973) SI

Petty Harbour – Twine Loft (1973) SI

Port au Port – Long Point (1973) SI

Salmon – King of Fish (1973) SI

Shrimp – Port au Choix (1973) SI
Alternatives in Art Education (1974) DAI

Go Fly a Kite (1974) SI

Herring Fishery – A. King (1974) SI

It’s All Made Up Moneywise (1974) SI

Longliner Design I (1974) SI

Paddy Hepditch (1974) DAI

Wabana (1974) DAI

Back to the Land, Green Bay (1975) DAI

Books and Tools (1975) DAI

Composting and Mulching (1975) DAI

Consumer Co-ops (1975) DAI

Credit Unions (1975) DAI

Cultivation (1975) SI

Dairy Goat Husbandry (1975) DAI

The Draggerman (1975) SI

Education for Survival (1975) DAI

Fire Fighter Brigade (1975) DAI

Further Study on the Fishery (1975) SI

The Garden (1975) SI

Garden Planning (1975) DAI

Greenhouse, Windmills and Market Gardening (1975) DAI

Grow It – Part I (1975) DAI

Grow It – Part II (1975) DAI
Grow It – Part III (1975) DAI

Green Bay Development Association (1975) DAI

Herring – Labrador South, Part I (1975) SI

Herring – Labrador South, Part II (1975) SI

Home Vegetable Gardening (Promo) (1975)

Homes for the Aged (1975) DAI

Labrador Agriculture – Odds and Hens (1975) DAI

Longliner (1975) DAI

Marine Lab (1975) DAI

Newfoundland Safety Council (1975) DAI

Pesticides and Insect Control (1975) SI

Portugal Cove Nursery School (1975) SI

Production Tape (1975) SI

Provincial Folk Festival (1975) DAI

Seed Planting and Transplanting (1975) DAI

Signal Hill Tattoo (with the NFB, 1975) DAI

Soil – What is It? – Part I (1975) DAI

Soil – What is It? – Part II (1975) SI

Why Organic (1975) DAI

Women, Health and Society (1975) DAI

Women’s Institute (1975) SI

515 Air Cadet Squadron (1976) DAI

Adult Education (1976) DAI
Bilingual Education in Scotland (1976) DAI
Bee Keeping (1976) SI
Bread and Butter Issues – Buchans (1976) DAI
Castor River South (1976) DAI
Clyde Rose and the Brothers Byrne (1976) DAI
College of Fisheries (1976) DAI
The Comfort Cove Agricultural Fair (1976) DAI
Daniel’s Harbour – A Changing Community (1976) DAI
Daniel’s Harbour – Raised Expectations Unrealized (1976) DAI
The Family Practice Nurse in Newfoundland (1976) DAI
Food Buying (1976) SI
Glenburnie – Loggers Rebate (1976) DAI
Green Bay Agricultural Meeting (1976) SI
Habitat (1976) DAI
Harbour Breton – “Trawl or Gill Net” (1976) DAI
Hennessey’s Home for the Aged (1976) DAI
High School and World of Work (1976) DAI
Hopeall Trout Farm (1976) SI
Labrador Resources Advisory Council (1976) DAI
“Mose Ambrose” – Yarn Point Crafts – Part 2 (of 2) (1976) SI
Port Albert – “You Have to Hold Together to Do It” (1976) SI
Puppet Show (1976) DAI
Remembrance Day Ceremonies (1976) SI
Round Harbour – “The Last Generation” (1976) DAI

Shoe Cove (1976) DAI

Some Aspects of Fire Fighting (1976) DAI

Voices of Newfoundland (1976) SI

“What’s Wrong” – The LaCie Fish Plant (1976) SI

What are the Feds Doing in Your Grocery Store? (1976) DAI

Women and the Work Force (1976) DAI

Yarn Point Crafts (1976) SI

1977 Folk Festival (1977) DAI

Better Than the Best (1977) DAI

Bonne Bay Ferry (1977) DAI

“…But is this Development?” (1977) SI

College of Trades and Technology (1977) DAI

D’Espoir – People’s Commission on Unemployment (1977) DAI

Don Andrews: Innovations in Fish Technology (1977) DAI

Farming of Fish (with the NFB, 1977) DAI

Fisheries Meeting – Goose Bay (1977) DAI

Gail’s Body Shop (1977) DAI

“Hit the Fillet, Not the Head” (1977) SI

The Hub (1977) DAI

Kindergym (1977) DAI

New World Island (1977) DAI

Labrador Land Use Conference (1977) DAI
Labrador Development Corporation (1977) DAI

Physical Education (1977) DAI

Robinson’s Area Agriculture – “You Gotta Have A Viable Industry” (1977) DAI

Roddickton – Past, Present and Future (1977) DAI

Safe Snowmobiling (1977) SI

Sawmills (1977) SI

Seal Hunting – Landsmen in 1973 and 1978 (1977) DAI

Sense of Balance (1977) DAI

Songs, Stories and Recitations (1977) DAI

The Spruce Budworm Spraying Controversy (1977) SI

Transportation Study (1977) DAI

Twillingate Women’s Institute (1977) DAI

Wrigglin’ Fence (1977) DAI

Would I Lie to You? (with the Alcohol and Drug Addiction Foundation of Newfoundland, 1977) SI

Calypso (1978) DAI

Conversations with Marg Kearney (1978) SI

Corporal Punishment (1978) DAI

The Councillor in Local Government (1978) SI

Fire in Your Home (1978) SI

Fish Drying (1978) SI

Fisheries and Foreign Ownership (1978) DAI

Fisheries Resource Camp 1978 (1978) DAI
Flower’s Cove Stadium (1978) DAI

For the Teacher (1978) SI

Forestry Camp 1978 (1978) DAI

How to Start a Chamber of Commerce (1978) DAI

In the Kitchen – Fish Dishes (1978) DAI

In the Kitchen – Powdered Milk Dishes (1978) DAI

Isle aux Mort Concern Committee (1978) SI

Labrador Nursery Schools (1978) DAI

Mrs. Belbin – Mat Maker (1978) DAI

Musgrave Harbour (1978) DAI

Table Tennis (1978) DAI

Three Bags Full (A) (1978) DAI

Three Bags Full (B) (1978) SI

Wilson Osbourne – Marnie Blacksmith (1978) DAI

Women’s Institute – 12th Provincial Convention (1978) DAI

The World of William Shakespeare (1978) SI

Your Child and You (1978) SI

Gus Etchegary’s Interview (1979) SI

The Indians’ Father Whitehead (Dir. Charles Callanan, 1979) DAI

International Agricultural Exchange Association (1979) DAI

Monsignor O’Brien – Interviews (1979) DAI

New System (1979) SI

Olga Spence – Many Changes (1979) DAI
Ten Days (1979) SI

Uncle Bert Farwell (1979) SI

The Place That Fish Built (1980) DAI

Runnin’ the Goat (1980) DAI

A Sales Bizarre (1980) DAI

Saturday Morning Children’s Animation (1980) SI


Making Our Way (with the NFB. Dir. Pierre Letarte, 1981) ACH

Space (1981) SI

Environmental Assessment and Review Process (with the Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office, 1982) DAI

Pippy Park (1982) DAI

Last Chinese Laundry: The Chinese in Newfoundland (Dir. Charlie Callanan, 1988) DAI

St. Julien’s Road Problems (n.d.) SI

4.6 Labrador Institute of Northern Studies

Changing Tides Conference (series, c. 1984) LIFVC

Fisheries Co-operative Education Project (unfinished series, 1983) LIFVC

Labrador Creative Arts Festival (series, c.1982-c.1986) LIFVC

Labrador in the ’90s (series, 1990) LIFVC

Labrador Straits Studies Conference (series, 1989) LIFVC

Labrador Winter Games (series, 1983-1992) LIFVC

Labradorians at Work (series, 1984) LIFVC
Speaking Indian José Mailhot (series, 1980) LIFVC
Torngat Fisheries Co-Operative (series, 1980) LIFVC
Visions of Labrador (c. 1991) LIFVC

4.7 Newfoundland Independent Filmmaker’s Co-operative Members

Scream Cream Puff (Dir. John Doyle, 1971) SI
The St. John's Youth Test (Dir. John Doyle, 1971) SI
Too Hard to Touch (Dir. John Doyle, 1971) SI
Grand Larceny (Dir. Michael Jones, 1974) SI
You Know You're Downtown (Film East. Dirs. Bill Doyle, John Doyle, and Kate Cooper, 1975) DAI (excerpts)
Dolly Cake (The Increasingly Amazing Movie Company. Dir. Michael Jones, 1976) CR
Offstage Line, part of The Pope Trilogy (NIFCO. Dir. David Pope, 1976) DAI
The St. John’s Film (NIFCO, 1976) DAI
Alms (Dir. Mike Riggio, 1977) SI
Bullbird (NIFCO. Dir. Derek Norman, 1977) DAI
In Evolution (NIFCO. Dir. Tony Duarte, 1977) DAI
Morning (Dir. Michael Jones, 1977) DAI
Not Home (NIFCO. Dir. Paul Pope, 1977) SI
Renaissances (Dir. John Bradshaw, 1977) SI
Torbay (NIFCO. Dir. Paul Goodyear, 1977) SI
Wanes (Dir. Mike Riggio, 1977) DAI (excerpts)

Where Can I Go? (Dir. Keith Whalen, 1977) SI

The Club (NIFCO. Dir. Mike Riggio, 1978) SI

Glass (Dir. Keith Whalen, 1978) SI

Lost Silence (Dir. Tony Duarte, 1978) SI

Maria (NIFCO, 1978) SI

Oials (Dir. Mike Riggio, 1978) SI

Pigs (Dir. Michael Jones, 1978) SI

Qualms (NIFCO. Dir. Mike Riggio, 1978) SI

Slipway, part of The Pope Trilogy (NIFCO, Dirs. David Pope and Paul Pope, 1978) DAI

Sheila (NIFCO, Dir. Mike Riggio, 1978) SI

Twirls (Dir. Mike Riggio, 1978) SI

Film on Film (Dir. Sheila Kunst, 1980) DAI

Hazel and Shirley (Dir. Mike Riggio, 1980) SI

On Rooftops (NIFCO, Dir. Justin Hall, 1980) DAI

Stones Cove, part of The Pope Trilogy (Dirs. David Pope and Paul Pope, 1980) DAI

Sisters of the Silver Scalpel (CODCO Films, Dir. Michael Jones, 1981) DAI

M.V. Arctic - Lake Melville Probe (MacLaren Plansearch, Dir. Derek Norman, 1981) SI

Dig at Cow Head (NIFCO, Dir. Derek Norman, 1982) DAI

Extraordinary Visitor (NIFCO, Dir. John Doyle, 1982) DAI (excerpts)

Under the Knife (NIFCO, Dir. Mary Walsh, 1982) DAI

Stations (Picture Plant, Dir. William D. MacGillivray, 1983) SI

The Dance (Coalition for Cultural Expression, Dir. Justin Hall, 1983) SI
The Hotel (Coalition for Cultural Expression,Dirs. Michael Jones and Jim Maunder, 1983) DAI

Images de Terre-Neuviens Francais (Coalition for Cultural Expression, Dir. Linda Cullum, 1983) DAI

Micmac Cross (Coalition for Cultural Expression, Dir. Gerald Penney, 1983) SI

Old Hag (Coalition for Cultural Expression, Dir. Jim Maunder, 1983) DAI

Running the Goat in Harbour Deep (Coalition for Cultural Expression, Dir. Anne MacLeod, 1983) SI

St. John’s Day (Coalition for Cultural Expression, Dir. Michael Jones, 1983) DAI

Plunge into the Past (Derek Norman Motion Picture Productions, NIFCO, Dir. Robert Woodcock, 1985) SI

Undertow (Reel Films, Dir. Francine Fleming, 1985) SI

The Adventure of Faustus Bidgood (Faustus Bidgood Productions,Dirs. Michael Jones and Andy Jones, 1986) CR

Season of the Water (Cinefort, National Film Board of Canada. Dir. John Doyle, 1986) SI

Albert (1987) SI

Finding Mary March (Red Ochre Productions, Marchco Films, Dir. Ken Pittman, 1988) SI


Nothing to Do (Red Ochre Productions. Dirs. Ken Pittman and Stirling Norris, 1988) SI

Away Zone (NIFCO. Dir. Peggy Hogan, 1989) SI

Multiple Choice (New and Improved Films. Dir. Debbie McGee, 1989) SI

No Apologies (Red Ochre Productions, B.I.G. Films Ltd., Dir. Ken Pittman, 1990) SI
Down the Road (Imagine That, Dir. Jennice Ripley, 1990) SI

Understanding Bliss (Dir. William D. MacGillivray, 1990) SI

Making the Most of Things - Elizabeth Gale, Furniture Maker (Cinemason Films, Dir. Gail Collins, 1991) SI

When Women are Crazy (Still Life Production, Dir. Rosemary House, 1991) SI

Hall Trilogy: Flux (Red Ochre Productions, Dir. Gerald Lunz, 1992) SI

Hall Trilogy: Hanlon House (Red Ochre Productions, Dir. Derek Norman, 1992) SI

Hall Trilogy: Subway to Tickle Gut (Red Ochre Productions, Dir. Rosemary House 1992)

SI

Secret Nation (Black Spot, Dir. Michael Jones, 1992) NFBC

The Trunk (Dir. Anita McGee, c. 1993) SI

Puppets Against AIDS (Morag Productions, National Film Board of Canada, Dir. Barbara Doran, 1993) SI

Anchor Zone (Red Ochre Productions, Dir. Andree Pelletier, 1994) NFBC

Under the Knife - Personal Hysteries (Dir. Pam Hall c. 1994) SI

Changing Minds (Reel Films, Dir. Francine Fleming, 1994) SI

Jack and Libby (Still Life Productions, Dir. Rosemary House, 1994) SI

When Women Kill (Morag Productions, Dir. Barbara Doran, 1994) SI

Sisters of Influence (Sea Level Productions, Dir. Dana Warren, 1995) SI

The Elf (Elf Films, Dir. Debbie McGee, 1996) SI

Dead by the Side of the Road (NIFCO, 1997) SI

The Good, the Bad, and the Hungry (NIFCO, 1997) SI

Unusual Scum (NIFCO, 1997) SI
Wonders (Dir. Derek Norman, n.d.) DAI

Mirage (Dirs. Bill Ritchie and Nigel Markham, n.d.) DAI

Second Wind is For Steve (Dir. Sharon Smith, n.d.) DAI (excerpts)