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CONTENTS

This issue of Ciné-Tracts introduces treatments of some specific problems of film — areas of concern which have attracted little attention in previous issues. In this issue we hope to isolate some basic features of film which constitute it as both a social and industrial institution. To this end two new sections have been inaugurated with this issue: One concerned with the history and political economy of the film and broadcast industries; the other concerned with forms of non-fiction film e.g., documentary, direct cinema, ethnographic film.

The articles by Boddy and Mitchell deal with an early period in the history of broadcasting and film respectively. Both articles contribute towards an account of the ideological contexts which permeate the history of both these institutions. It is hoped that the publication of these articles will constitute an area of on-going concern in the pages of Ciné-Tracts, an area intimately linked to the larger project of the magazine. (The Mitchell article will be continued in issue number seven which will also include articles dealing with the early American and Soviet film industries.)

The section on non-fiction film is an interrogation into the viability of such a category in film study. The section proposes to examine different problematics in the very constitution of the field as well as to present on going work on film practices that stand apart from conventional narrative fiction. Elder proposes new conceptual tools through which the field may be re-thought specifically in his terms, as the 'Cinema of Presentation' and the 'Cinema of Illustration'. The second article presents a filmic re-evaluation of Chagnon and Asch's ethnographic film — The Ax Fight. The article questions the viability of using film as a tool for scientific explanation as such a notion is understood within the disciplinary constraints of anthropology.

Finally a note is due with respect to the publication of Wilden's article "Culture and Identity: The Canadian Question." Much of the criticism of Ciné-Tracts to this point has revolved around the lack of concern for the specifically Canadian problems in the film industry and its cultural contexts. The articulation of this criticism has been greatly impoverished by a lack of any substantial definition and/or interrogation of notions like 'Canadian Culture' or 'Canadian Identity'. In many instances this criticism has adopted the criteria (e.g., Canadian content, co-production agreements) utilized by legislative institutions (CRTC, CFDC) to define these concepts in a practical way. As a result the notions of Canadian culture and identity have remained empty media clichés devoid of any reflected upon historical or ideological definition. Wilden's article makes a significant contribution towards reversing the manner in which the notions of Canadian culture and identity are conceived. The current notion of Canadian culture is grounded by Wilden within events that form a largely suppressed part of Canadian economic and political history. The Canadian identity is then psycho-analyzed by Wilden in terms of its economic and historical Other (the U.S., England and France). The colonization of the Canadian national consciousness, therefore, results in a borrowed culture; and it is primarily as a feature of this borrowed, second-hand culture that a Canadian Identity is forged.

Hart Cohen and Bram Herlich.

CULTURE AND IDENTITY

The Canadian Question, Why?

Anthony Wilden

I

After working at numerous occupations in British Colombia for over ten years, my family and I left for the United States in 1965. I had been accepted into graduate school at the John Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland. Almost a decade later, after six years on the faculty of the University of California at San Diego, after considerable foreign travel, a short period teaching in Togo, West Africa and in Paris, I returned to Canada in 1974 to take up a position in the Department of Communications at Simon Fraser University.

The essay which follows is the product of my experiences as a Canadian, both at home and abroad.

When I returned to British Columbia, I discovered -- to my growing amazement, if not exactly to my surprise --that by coming home to Canada, I had moved back into another colony, into an old-line colonial dependency now dominated by the English, the Scots, the West Germans, the Japanese, the Americans, of course, and to a much lesser extent, by the French. I have not quite got used to this situation yet, mainly because my experiences in the United States in the 1960's, East and West, had trained me for living at the heart of one great imperial state, and not on the end of one of its economic life lines.

For me, then, returning to Canada has been almost like travelling backwards in time After all, this country is the only 'democracy' which in recent memory and in peacetime has been placed under martial law (invocation of the War Measures Act: October, 1970). It is also the only 'democracy' to my knowledge -- and learning of others would not make the situation any better -- in which revelations of blatantly illegal acts by the heroes of the state police (including, oddly enough, the destruction of private property) have been countered both inside and outside the Federal government with suggestions that the whole business ought to be cleared up once and for all by the simple expedient of making such activities 'legal'.

We have yet to hear the end of this particular threat to what few civil liberties we are permitted to have in this country -- it appears that one 'legal' excuse for our 'security agents' opening and reading our mail, for instance, will not be the 'Reasons of State' or the 'national security' popular in other times and places, but rather 'suspicion of engaging in drug trafficking'.

The subject of civil liberties, and of the many threats to them by business and by government, has been a matter of intense concern and debate in the United States for over twenty years, as we know, In Canada, however, the debates and the concerns have been less intense (until recently), less clearly articulated, and of more recent vintage. It appears, moreover, that the questionable activities of the RCMP, which have gone far beyond the 'invasion of privacy' just mentioned, are merely symptoms of much more serious threats to the economic and personal well being of Canadians.

We may well recognize the recent revelations about the RCMP and the government as the classic 'tip of the iceberg', as many Canadians certainly do. Nevertheless, it is not at all easy at first to figure out what the rest of the iceberg actually looks like. This essay is the product of my puzzlement at the complexity of this problem -- from our economic and ecological difficulties to the nature of our government and the nature of our economy and our history. And no matter how and where one looks for answers, there is one single question for Canadians, one which arises again and again, from the personal level to the social level: the question of Canadian identity.

This is the major question --the major **symptom** of the situation of Canadians in the modern world --which this essay seeks to explore.

II

It is commonly said that the population of this huge and strangely insular archipelago of a country is mostly strung out like a necklace of large and small beads along the 49th parallel, and that it is 'divided from itself' by the supposed effects of 'geography' and 'culture'. But these are not the primary reasons for the Canadian brand of 'separate and unequal', for the various de facto separatisms which presently divide this country and its people on the basis of region, religion and language, and class, race and sex. The primary sources of the 'Divide' in Canada, as elsewhere, stem from the nature of the Rule -- as in 'divide and rule'.

Our country is so superficially similar to the United States -- if you've seen us at the movies, it probably **was** the United States: America and Americans in fancy dress and imaginary history -- that even we Canadians are inclined to get confused about who is which. The comparison is not an odious one for us because Americans are Americans, however. It is odious because we are now their richest single colony; and because we who are colonized, like those in 'the other America', i.e., South America, have an intense and pardonable dislike of being confused with our colonizers -- be they British, American, or French.

What is less commonly said about Canada is that in this country, the privileged live so apparently secure in their privileges that they encourage and practice the most unsavory kinds of economic, political, and governmental behavior.

Indeed, we live under the heel of not merely a bureaucratic and intensely secretive monster of a central government, one repeatedly accused of sharp practice and corruption, but also under the dictatorship of the 'State Democracy' which our

constitutional arrangements permit and encourage.

Thus it is that the Canadian establishment and their political representatives can remain so apparently sure of their efficiency in managing this economic colony for domestic and multinational business interests, that they can afford to treat our adult citizenry like children and foreign capital like our mother and father combined.

Given Canada's altogether hazy tradition of civil and political rights, it may not come as such a surprise to Canadians as other peoples might expect, to know that in this country, with a constitution which is dangerously and unfortunately largely 'unwritten', we have fewer legal rights and weaker constitutional protections against the whims of the police, business interests, the judiciary, and the government than even the 'suspects' being smilingly bullied by Kojak on the most technically polished, the most medium-mediated, and the most manipulatively advanced ideological enforcer in the world: American TV.

In Canada, indeed, where television has traditionally been electric theatre or radio with pictures (except for the commercials), as it is in some European countries, and where we are sternly lectured to from the tube by people who look like English schoolmasters, Scottish pugilists, French actors and American football players, in Canada, indeed -- where even the laugh tracks are noticeably disciplined -- we have as yet hardly even noticed the newly ferocious onslaught against the rights and the persons of women presently being mounted by many of the productions of the various networks, which are replacing ordinary physical violence by the more acceptable violences of 'soft porn'. We are not fully experiencing this 'backlash' against women in our national media because in our country there was so little 'frontlash' to begin with.

Add to these problems, if you will, the still viscerally crude bigotry of many of the Anglos and their cohorts, notably towards native Canadians,, third-world immigrants and Quebec, especially on the matter of languages and cultures; consider also the manipulative and openly coercive behavior of the Federal government and domestic and foreign business interests against the government and people of Quebec, or a few examples of the attitudes and the hardly concealed manipulation of public information by the Anglo news media, especially in the ostrich-like conservatism of the west-coast province of British Columbia, where most of the more unpleasant and oppressive socioeconomic '-isms', including crude anti-Semitism, still find themselves pretty much at home.

Join with these, let us say, the orchestration by the Federal government of the 'approval' of 'public opinion' for the recently revealed police-state behaviour already mentioned, with promises of more to come; or the muted murmurings on behalf of the 'right to privacy' and 'civil rights' in general by the Canadian media, which unfortunately still display serious difficulties even in formulating the liberal constitutional issues involved.

Throw in the sinuous history of the provincial dynasty which has ruled us here in the West for almost a quarter of a century, with its almost unblemished record of selling this province and its people down the river; or the circumstances that this same provincial government, which we do not even see for months at a time, is now in its dubious campaign for 'back-to-basics' in education for some reason trying to invite the British back again to educate our 'hinterland', our 'bush'. This is the government of small business people which imports American executives into its bureaucracy in open defiance of 'Canada first' employment policies, born of our most recent hard times; the same government which has just successfully forced through the Legislature in Victoria a bill empowering it to subject suspected heroin addicts to compulsory incarceration and 'treatment' -- without benefit of trial by due process (much less a trial by jury, which for many offences is not guaranteed in Canada anyway), and above all on the grounds that 'suspected addicts' are guilty unless they can prove themselves innocent.

'Enough', you say. I wish that this were all that troubles us.

Add to what has already been touched on the recent news that the Liberal govern-ment in Ottawa, having just completed one Star Chamber trial of a NATO consul-tant under the Official Secrets Act, is now shedding crocodile tears about the 'rule of law' -- which seems never really to have existed in Canada, whereas the 'rule of order' always has.   Our Federal government is moreover still delivering sententious monologues about the importance of the 'freedom of the press', at the same time as it promises to prosecute a Toronto newspaper under the 'official secrets' rules for secret trials, which also have the effect of making legal appeals difficult, if not impossible, unless the defendant can find friends on Parliament Hill. (The Toronto Sun isaccused of 'revealing national security information' related to the North American politics of our latest 'Red spy scare'.)

Or, if you wish, just look around: for the first time in our small history, one million unemployed… at present, the highest rate of unemployment (officially said to be 8.6 per cent) in the industrialized countries.

Moreover, as if our perennial employment crisis were not enough, many of those who **are** at work --as well as their families -- are threatened every day by close-range industrial pollution at higher levels than elsewhere (heavy metals, asbestos fibers, other particulates, oxides of sulfur), as well as by the continued pesticide war against our forests. (Declare war on the insects in this way, and you are heading for trouble with one of the toughest group of species on this earth.) There is little public or governmental consciousness in Canada, relative to other countries, about the imperative necessity of our being protected from the disorders industry injects into the natural environment, of which we ourselves, as organisms, are a (dispen-sable) part.

As a result of these discharges of waste -- which economists are pleased to call 'the externalities of production' (i.e., what does not count in 'cost-benefit' analyses), and which tell us that at present and for a little while longer 'good business' goes along with a callous disregard for life -- we in Canada have unfortunately progressed beyond the personalized technology of our gift of smallpox to the Indians. By impersonally dumping invisible toxins into the rivers they still fish, we have now managed to cripple a whole group of them with the mercury poisoning which we once thought was limited to the cases amongst the fisherfolk of Japan.

III

What does all this and more come to? For me -- apart from considerable political uneasiness -- mostly to an unaccustomed level of understanding. As a token of 'social mobility',who was permitted under certain specified conditions to migrate into a relatively privileged social and economic position --and ever since the liberal days of civil rights in the United States -- I have found myself too often as a spectator torevelation upon revelation about the escalating violence of our so-called 'civilization' in this violent century, violence upon violence against group after group on this tiny planet -- violence physical, logical, and psychological; violence verbal and non-verbal; violence economic, ecological, and political -- relatively little of which was aimed at me.

As a result, I also found myself caught over and again in the unavoidably patron-izing paradox of talking to one set of people about the oppression of other sets of people. True that the experience of overt exploitation by class (in England) and by ordinary day-to-day work (in Canada) makes it easier to understand other forms. But as an author and as a teacher later in life, I have found myself repeatedly in the paradoxical position of talking about the oppressed situation of people whom I did not in any direct way represent.

Part of the difficulty here is that a critical examination of the exploitative class relationships we live --wherever their structures are not simply reinforced in the

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university by the many varieties of intellectual fascism now more popular than they used to be -- remain the one subject which is the most foreign and the most obscured in academia, for academia itself, as we know, is founded on the denial and the disavowal of exploitation by class. The unfortunate result is that -- unlike at least some aspects of racism and sexism (not directed at me) -- analyses of class relationships are ordinarily such uphill work that they do not commonly provide students with immediately or generally understandable examples.

Fortunately, this problem of how to discuss in a useful and instructive fashion the relationships of oppression that all of us experience and participate in -- if at significantly distinct levels in the present socioeconomic hierarchy --has not proved insoluble.

For, as an Anglo Canadian, I have recently felt for the first time since childhood in the British school system -- where we contested our drilling and grilling as best we could, by forming a secret society which operated in the dark to break every Rule in the Book -- as a Canadian, I have recently re-experienced, long after the event, that indefinable sense of belonging to a collectivity, to a group of people, all of whom, if you'll excuse the directness, are being royally screwed around. What is worse for us is that we Canadians tend to have an even more unhappy time of it than most predominantly Anglo-European peoples do in collaborating in our own exploitation, because we know that we are regarded as not being quite as good as the British, or the Americans, or the French....

Consider, for example, the patronizing and uninformed way in which the representatives of our good neighbor to the South and the Northwest still treat us -- whether in letting us have their secondhand airplanes or in pressuring us to subsidire developments of certain new ones; or in making economic treaties with us by means of which our energy, our labor, and our air and our water and our soil provide other kinds of subsidies; or when one group gets annoyed at the price of our small reserves of gas and oil, which another group effectively controls; or when they need a front-nation to represent them and their friends in 'peacekeeping' -- as, for instance, when our representatives on the International Control Commission in the early days of the Second Indochina War were required to turn a blind eye to American imports of men and material in violation of the Geneva Accords of 1954.

Indeed, American officials have in more than one way long regarded the boundary between our two countries as irrelevant in cases of 'hot pursuit' -- as, for example, in an incident a short time ago, when American security forces pursued a fleeing suspect stopped at the border right past US immigration, through our local 'Peace Arch', and over the grass back into Canada, where they tried to wrestle him to the ground, in full view of numerous Canadians waiting to cross into the United States. It seems that our cousins the Americans cannot even be polite about their disdain for their poor relations, whenever their 'interests' are involved -- no more polite, indeed, than is the international old-boy network that repeatedly holds this country, its peoples, and its resources up for ransom.

On the subject of border violations, moreover, it happens that just as the slow destruction of the quality of Colorado river water by massive irrigation in the United States has resulted in the downstream export of salination across the Mexican border, where it ruins once productive farmland, so also in Western Canada, but on the upstream end of the exploitation, have American demands for cheap water and hydroelectric power resulted in the inundation of Canadian farmland and the disruption of fisheries as the water backs up into our artificial lakes -- where we store it for free, our 'Social Credit'government having sold it for less than it cost us to build the dams for the benefit of the United States in the first place. If electric power is cheaper in Seattle, for instance, than it ought to be, it is because we British Columbians are still paying the difference.

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What I am saying here is that in the process of trying to articulate my knowledge of the 'Canadian situation' by writing it out, I discovered the first stirrings of an adopted political nationality.   In other words, by trying to understand the patterns which underly my knowledge of being Canadian, I was able to come to a new understanding of it, i.e., I was able to translate the **knowledge** of a situation into at least a partial **recognition** of how and why it has become what it is.2

A major part of this recognition involved the use of a number of ways of talking about the relationships of human beings in society. These 'ways of talking' about basic patterns of social behavior are worth some attention, I feel, because of the manner in which they can help us to understand colonization, and specifically, the colonization of Canadians.

From the very beginning of my academic work, I have been concerned to understand a particular kind of alienating relationship in modern society. From the discussion of this type of personal, social and economic experience in the work of Marx, Sartre, and Freud (the latter as interpreted by the French psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan, who gave it a name in 1953), this relationship is here called 'Imaginary'.

I wish that there was a less peculiar and more suitable English equivalent for this expression; but in spite of many years of thinking about it, I have not been able to come up with one. What makes this terminology more of a problem is that it is not possible to give an adequately inclusive definition of Imaginary relations in a few sentences, no matter how well chosen. Like many other important expressions which help to organize our understanding of human beings in society, the 'Imaginary' belongs to a species of expressions whose 'definition' emerges, not simply in words, but in the process of understanding and experiencing the human realities they refer to.

The Imaginary relationships I am referring to are relationships between people that, when dominant in social relations, are not 'imaginary' in the ordinary English sense. They are Imaginary more in the French sense of l'imaginaire. That is to say, these relationships are constructed out of images, imagining imaginations and fantasy, but they are constructed in such a commonly unrecognized way that we are easily induced by our society to imagine them to be real, and hence to go on treating them as if they actually were.   In other words, an Imaginary relationship is dependent on the collective and individual **projection** of image into image, the **identification** of images with images and the **conflict** of image with image (instead of **real** with **real)** --of which any number of examples may easily be found in our social experience. Some of the more readily appreciated and recognized instances of such 'imaginistic' relations occur in the collective process by which one group of people invents both an image of **itself** and an image of **others** in another social group: the collective process ordinarily called **stereotyping.**

One example I now remember from my childhood is the grotesque, evil, and alien image of the 'medieval Jew' from Dickens' **Oliver Twist,** the Fagin portrayed by Alec Guiness in the very striking English film made of the story in 1948.

In such relationships -- which of course extend from images considered valid by society as a whole to equally Imaginary images constructed by individuals on the basis of what are believed to be real personal experiences -- the Imaginary compon- ents of the stereotype, the **other** of an Imaginary 'self', are commonly quite com- plex, and usually far more difficult to recognize than the Fagin example. The reason for this difficulty is not difficult to discover but is very often difficult to accept. It is that if we, as individuals, are participating in the many aspects of the Imaginary constructed as a predominant relationship by the various collectivities of which we are a part, then we will unconsciously develop a vested interest in these Imaginary images. They will come to appear to be real relations that we cannot afford easily to give up --for the simple reason that in constructing an Imaginary

image of the other, we are willy-nilly involved in constructing a **retroactively** Imaginary image of our **self.**

Along with its other characteristics, this Imaginary self will be constructed around everything we believe the **other** is **not.** The imaginary **other** will take on the characteristics of an (absolute) not-self -- which means that at any time when we discover that we are very much like it, then we are likely to feel even more uneasy and insecure (in our 'selfness'), than we were already. The Imaginary it our social relations have created will return to us as what we perceive to be a threat.

Consequently, especially when the **other** is collectively regarded as inferior, as dangerous to society, as alien, as evil, as 'uncivilized', as 'genetically unequal', as 'irrational', as 'hysterical', as 'primitive'... --or as a **scapegoat** for our personal and collective troubles --a scapegoat being used as a screen to mask the real sources of those troubles -- then we are not likely to realize that, as often as not, when we consciously or unconsciously attack these Imaginary **others**, it is in reality the other half of our Imaginary selves we are seeing in the **others** we condemn (Rene/Girard).

We may quite sincerely believe that in expressing our Imaginary 'superiority' over the others, we are responding to real characteristics of these **others** -- having failed to notice that between our **self** and the **other,** society has erected a mirror, as it were, a mirror in which it is our own Imaginary reflection that we see.

It can easily be shown, for instance, and by means of a host of examples past and present, that every type of supposedly 'primitive' behavior which whites attribute collectively to non-whites, partakes in its essence of this Imaginary relation. Some of the commonest adjectives applied with a generous lack of discrimination by whites to non-whites -- and by Anglos to French Canadians -- include their stigmatization as violent, savage, crafty, greedy, untrustworthy, ignorant, superstitious, cowardly, stupid, irrational, 'uncivilized', 'lazy', given to sharp practice and to supposedly 'childlike' emotional gratification, or to too much or to too little concern for 'their own kind' -- not to mention 'racist' and 'murderous'. They also work like hell when driven.

Yet every one of these characterizations is in reality an accurate description, not of the **others**, but of the actual barbarity and generalized pathology of the collective behavior of white males, and especially towards those they believe to be inferior. This white collectivity includes those who actually teach, encourage, and perpetrate atrocities, physical and otherwise, against the 'others'; those who condone such activities (often in the name of 'morality', 'peace and progress', or of a 'higher good'); and those whose ignorance of the reality, or whose refusal to recognize it, does not excuse them of responsibility for it, in both word and deed.

Whites have had plenty of practice in such matters. After all, practically every one of the characterizations mentioned -- as well as the statement that 'they breed like rabbits' -- was commonly applied to the laboring poor in England throughout the nineteenth century by the upper and middle classes, but especially by the upper class, the one that believes in 'merit' supposedly attained by 'good breeding'. Their descendants still do the same -- as their equivalents in North America also do for those they call the 'masses' and the 'rednecks'.

Ever since I first began to become partially aware of this kind of relationship, I have been especially concerned to understand how such mirror-like relations become socially and economically articulated in the many and varied relations between the **subordinate** and the **dominant** in modern society.

For one major characteristic of the Imaginary when it is the predominant mediator (or locus of mediation) of such actually hierarchical relationships is a peculiar and quite unreal 'flattening out' or 'neutralization' of the real hierarchy involved. Imaginary mediations reduce the real socioeconomic hierarchy -- e.g., the relationship between the (image) 'Woman' and the (image) 'Man' in our society, or the

subordinate-dominant relationship between labor and capital under state and private capitalism -- they reduce the actual hierarchy between two groups or terms to an Imaginary **symmetry,** to a relationship in which all levels are reduced to one, to a relationship in which the subordinate is invested with a totally unreal 'equality' with the dominant.

Indeed, since we all know that such socioeconomic hierarchies actually exist every-where around us, and since we all feel that we are the object of at least one form of alienating combination, then we may next become involved in an utterly paranoid attempt to put the hierarchy back in place somehow. (Paranoia is what describes our behavior when we have been so terribly injured by a very real domination, and usually so frightened by it, that we have lost all of the contextual perspective necessary to recognize the original source of the oppression we have suffered. The result is that we project this real source, as an Imaginary image, onto any **other** we feel threatened by, no matter how unjustly.) Our paranoia will be ex-pressed in a projection by means of which we not only symmetrize the real hierarchy, in one breath, but in the next, we turn it upside down --and thus fall into the Imaginary fiction that it is the subordinate who is 'really' dominant after all.

There are enough real reasons for feeling paranoid under modern capitalism to make the processes just discussed an all too common, indeed daily, event.

V

One relationship I have noticed in particular is the apparent 'contradiction' which, in an oppressive society such as ours, engenders a form of 'bad faith' (or 'false cons-ciousness' or 'unconscious denial' or 'unrecognized rejection') through which political dissenters, amongst other subordinates, may come to play out Imaginary roles. Dissenters may come to play out Imaginary roles as the simple 'negative', at a single level, of what they dissent **against --** in this case a **dominant Other** (not nec-essarily a person) that **represents** or 'stands for' a real locus of real violence and oppression in the socioeconomic system.

This Other, capital 'O', operates at a level in society which is distinct from that of particular **others**[3] --although as we see from our definition of paranoia, any number of particular **others** may be made, by Imaginary projection or identification, into an Other in a particular relationship. What makes this situation especially tricky is that **others** exercising exploitative power, alienating domination, and real oppression -- whether at home or abroad -- are quite correctly to be dealt with as **representatives** of a real and oppressive Other.

Furthermore, since any one of us -- no matter what our particular personal and collective characteristics -- actually constitutes a **number** of 'others-for other', as R.D. Laing has put it, then we -- for others -- will ordinarily be representative in some way, for them, of at least one such alienating Other. This is an inherent aspect of the capitalist order of things; and it works in many ways to divide us from each other. The only class or group of people who would not directly represent **any** form of alienating dominance for others would presumably be those who carry the socially and economically defined markers for exploitation in every system and subsystem -- and at every level -- in their context, e.g., in North America, a female child with only one parent (or none) from a 'deculturated' and poverty-'stricken' indigenous people living on a 'reservation' close to a sizeable town --and particularly a child socially and economically coded as 'ugly'.

The question we are working toward answering here is the 'Canadian Question'. Canadians are a colonized people, but our colonization has been a complex process; and, quite frankly, we don't enjoy talking about it very much. Thus the real question: 'Who is the dominant Other for Canadians'! requires some more groundwork before we can hope to answer it adequately, and in a non-paranoid way.

However real and necessary the hierarchical conflict between a 'self' and a dominating Other may actually be -- and for any and all oppressed peoples, it is indeed a real and necessary struggle -- we must remain aware that if this struggle is translated or articulated in primarily Imaginary terms, then it will take on the unhelpful characteristics of an **opposition** between Imaginary images. (Images, we should note, may also be symbolic, rather than Imaginary, and they may also be real.) The relation will then be played out as a single-level mirror-relationship -- and, as a result, the subordinate will have already lost the struggle -- and lost the very **worth** of the struggle -- before it began.

The struggle will have been lost because it will have been expressed and fought as an opposition which is a simple attempt to **'negate'** the dominant Other. Unlike relations of oppression and exploitation in which the subordinate is the one who is 'negated' by the Other -- and not in theory, but in body and soul and in person -- one primary and essential characteristic of the relation to dominant Others is that although the mediation of an oppressive Other can in principle and in practice be **overcome** in various ways when necessary, dominant Others cannot be 'negated', except in a generally pathological sense, and in any case, not 'from below'.

A simple example: No symmetrical equation can legitimately be made between the epithets 'Honkie', and 'Nigger' -- in spite of the reality that they are commonly treated as the 'two sides' of an Imaginary and symmetrical question, like Anti-Semite and Jew, like 'Man' and 'Woman', like 'Business' and 'Labor'. Because each term and each image in each pair refers to distinct **levels** of exploitation under capitalism -- a system of many levels -- the two terms or states are not exchangeable equivalents.

In the real world supported and maintained by real labor, and where words may also be forms of violence, potential and actual, we know that one white person's 'Nigger!' does incalculable damage to the 'self-concept' of the black, whereas one thousand or one million blacks responding to an original white assault by means of 'Honkie' has no necessary or significant effect on the white at all. Such 'negation' and 'counter-negation' cannot under state and private capitalism be reciprocal or symmetrical because the white **collectivity** represents a dominant Other for the black, as Frantz Fanon pointed out in the 1950s.

In other words, in terms of race, the white collectivity represents a real Other for the non-white -- just as in Canada, in terms of economics and culture, the Anglos and their kin represent a dominant Other for the French, the 'Canayen', the Quebecois. In these examples, amongst many others, the white or the Anglo participate in a systemic and systematic dominance which signifies that in these terms the white or the Anglo can comfortably continue to believe in a collective delusion -- in a denial of reality. This is the delusion of autonomy, the delusion which teaches us that in terms of race and culture, we (male) whites and we Anglos do not have to answer for the meaning of our existence to anyone in any way whatsoever.

Not so the non-white or the Quebecois, however, for at this level, their existence in society has been made by history and by economic realities into a dependency in relation to the white and the Anglo -- into a function of the existence of the white and the Anglo as dominant Others.

As Sartre pointed out about anti-Semitism in his **Anti-Semite and Jew** (1946), whites and non-jews are protected by the dominance of white racism and bigotry from all but the retroactive dehumanization which results from being racist, conscious or unconscious. Individually, of course, we are not protected in the same way from the counter-violence of the guerilla; and if we consider our situation under another of its many aspects, we are all subjected to other forms of alienation stemming from our subordination to different representation and representatives of dominant Others -- to the dehumanization of being treated as commodities in the marketplace, for instance.

It is not however the dominance as such, or the mediation by the Other as such, which is the problem. The human identity through which we come to social **individuality** is as much the structural effect of mediation as are the Imaginary identities of (economic) **individualism** under capitalism. Individuality is obviously a function of the relation to **Otherness** -- a function of **mediation** by Otherness -- and under oppressive and exploitative socioeconomic systems, it is this relationship which is perverted into alienation in the dehumanizing sense we are concerned with here. ('Alienation' literally means only 'making other', after all; as such it is not necessarily pathological.)

Hence it is not the structure of mediation as such which creates the problem, for mediation is universal in human experience.

Rather it is the distortion and perversion of this structure by the Other of oppression and exploitation, the twisted substructures created by oppression, and the alienating **contents** imposed on the **form** of this structure by those with the power to do so -- these are the realities which are responsible for the dehumanizing mediation by dominant Others which we almost all experience.

The result, of course, is to reinforce our fictional mosaic of individualism, for when oppression by the Other is predominant in our lives, then we will tend to reject the recognition of **any** form of systematic mediation as oppressive, lock, stock, and barrel.

When in the struggle with the dominant Other, the subordinate is living the process predominantly in the Imaginary, then the relationship will become reduced to an 'identity of opposites' (as distinct from a system of contradictions). As a result, the representatives of the Other will always be able to use to their own advantage the Imaginary symmetry which has been used to veil what is actually a dominant-subordinate relation. And this they do, day by day, whether they recognize what they are up to or not.

For the subordinate, in contrast, there is no advantage. The single-level opposition being played out will characteristically express itself for them as a **negative identification.**[4] It will emerge as the Imaginary opposite of an identification **with** the Other, that is to say, as an identification **against** the Other --and this is precisely what entraps the subordinate in a (transferential) identity which has been constructed primarily in the very Imaginary relation to the Other which the subordinate is attempting to reject or escape.

In Canada, this relationship in one of its forms is commonly expressed in the infantile anti-Americanism -- the bourgeois nationalism -- encouraged by our local manipulators in the media, including the university.

To put this another way: Because the subordinates of such Imaginary relations will not ordinarily have been provided with the wherewithal to begin to transcend their 'self-definition' by the oppressive mediation of the alienating Other, then the relationship will remain articulated primarily in the **code** of the Other. And so long as the subordinates do not transcend their alienated identity and their alienated existence as constrained by the code of the alienating Other in question, then they will not transcend their subordinate status as a **message,** as a message communicated in the code of the Other.

Were the Other in our society not a locus of real and Imaginary violence, then this quest to transcend the relation to the Other would not of course be necessary.

VI

One Other of notable concern to me is the figure of the Academic, the Other of the academic discourse in all its Imaginary trappings -- of notable concern, of course, because this is one Other which beckons me into its parlor. Consequently, in order

to accomplish one objective of this text, I must find a way of breaking the more important of the ordinary rules of communication in the academic discourse. I must find a way of transcending the ordinary and Imaginary **circularity** and 'self-reference' of that discourse so that I can usefully communicate **about** it, i.e., approach it from a level distinct from that of its ordinary communication, that is to say, be able (relatively) successfully to **metacommunicate** about it and its codes.

The problem is that without a means of transcending an Imaginary identification **with** or **against** that discourse and its Other, any attempt to metacommunicate about it will waste itself in the domain of fantasy. In such an event, the attempted metacommunication will be reduced through and through to just one more 'mirror-game' amongst the others -- in part because in the Imaginary the qualitative distinction between the **level of tactics** and the **level of strategy** (in a given set of relations) is confused.

There is however a privileged domain to which even the preponderance of Imaginary behavior in our society is inevitably and ultimately subordinate, This is the Real.

As obscured as the Real may ordinarily be by the idealist and Imaginary veil of Maya cast over our capitalist social relations, it is nevertheless our relation to the Real which provides us with a set of significant distinctions by means of which we can decode and recode the academic discourse in order to find out what it is actually doing. We break its now hallowed circularity by re-reading it, not in relation to itself -- which is what most attempts to talk about it have ended up doing, from logical positivism to anthropology and sociology and psychoanalysis -- but in relation to its actual **context**. This is to say that the significant distinctions we need cannot be found in the dominant discourse in academia itself. They can be found only in the relationship of the academic discourse to itsenvironments, including the social, the historical, and the natural environments.

<center>VII</center>

The academic discourse dominant in our schools is not of course the only Imaginary communications system in our society; indeed it is merely representative of many others. And there is one Imaginary discourse, one Imaginary communications system in particular, which concerns Canadians in every aspect of their lives: the Imaginary communicationsof the Canadian bourgeoisie.[5]

The Canadian bourgeoisie is significantly Canadian only in name, not in reality. It is not, and has not been for some considerable time, a **national** bourgeoisie, i.e., a class of capitalist entrepreneurs who take on the task of the economic development of a particular country in the generalized world context of capitalism. Throughout its history, Canada has been primarily developed in its productive and basic industries by foreigners and by foreign capital. (For generally useful accounts of this process, with some reservations, see the references.)

Our pseudo-bourgeoisie long ago decided, it appears now -- for whatever reasons -- that they would be and could be quite comfortably well off by engaging in profitable and relatively secure second-level, third-level, and service industries, while leaving the more risky primary industries, including most manufacturing, to others. Thus it is that the Canadian bourgeoisie is dominant in banking, in transportation, in some forms of 'local communication', in retailing, and the like; and it invests most of its surplus Canadian capital outside Canada (e.g., in the U.S., in the Caribbean), not where it has always been needed: at home.

Their traditional role, especially since the erection of our tariff walls after the 1880s, has been that of openly and actively encouraging American capital to invest **directly** in the raw-material resource industries and the manufacturing industries of Canada, i.e., in the basic, productive industries, outside agriculture, which are this country's most important source of wealth (use values) and riches (exchange values). The result has been that again withtheactive collaboration of Canadian vested interests -- our raw-material resources must after all be used in order to

create value, if the secondary industries dominated by Canadians are to survive -- American capital does not now simply dominate the country **quantitatively**, but more importantly, it exerts positive and **qualitative** controls, as well as negative but still qualitative constraints, over the fundamental character of the Canadian national economy and over the future goals of this as yet still relatively 'undeveloped' country.

Recently, for example, while this essay was in press, we in British Columbia have watched helplessly while the Provincial government revised the **Forest Act** -- the timber industry is the biggest in the province -- in such a way as to permit the presently effective foreign domination in the market and the monopolistic character of the industry to become even more concentrated. This is not all, however. At the same time, the government also opened the door to wholesale violations of the ecological principle of maintaining the 'sustained yield' of a renewable resource, violations more serious than the shenanigans we are already used to in B.C. (e.g., counting timber that cannot economically be cut as part of the unused 'forest-management' 'tree bank').

There are indeed a lot of trees in this province -- 50 kilometers or so from Van-couver will put you in untrodden bush if you choose the right direction -- and we British Columbians may perhaps be pardonably excused for considering our forests to be inexhaustible. Not only are they not inexhaustible, however, but even the Federal Minister of the Environment took the time to let us know, nearly six months before the present sell-out, that what is true of Oregon's forest reserves is true of ours: that in 20 or 30 years the local industry and its workers, to say nothing of secondary industries, could be on their knees before the reality of an effectively irreversible depletion of harvestable forest resources -- the ultimate depletion of stands of trees that were several hundred years old when the original 'cut-and-run' loggers first waxed fat upon them, trees which require at least eighty years of growth to attain even 70 per cent of the useable volume of their ancestors.

(In Paris, in 1973, following an article by Jacques Vignes in **Africasie,** I wrote some-thing similar about the exploitation of the forest reserves of the Ivory Coast by foreign, neocolonial capital -- not expecting it to come so directly home to roost.)

For the industry this depletion is not very significant -- the industry will by then presumably be already 'diversifying' its operations by finding other environments to exploit. For the workers and others dependent on the industry, however, this depletion will be disastrous.

VIII

There are many economic and historical details about these matters which cannot be included here; and there are of course exceptions to the general patterning of the foreign ownership and control of the productive resources of this country. But in proportionas we become acquainted for the first time as a nation with 'what actually happened' in our own past, then new or previously unrecognized patterns begin to present themselves to our consciousness.

In particular, the perennial problem of the 'quest for Canadian identity' -- which has not as far as I can tell changed one significant jot from the time when I emigrated here some 25 years ago -- this uncomfortably perplexing problem for Canadians suddenly begins to make unusual sense. It begins to make new sense once its real economic and historical sources are used to understand it, that is to say, once the context of the Real -- our natural, social and historical reality -- is rescued from the oblivion into which our bourgeois compradors have manifestly been obliged to cast it.

'Obliged?, you say. Yes, obliged in the sense that George Orwell explained it, with his remark that 'Whoever controls the past controls the future. Whoever controls the present controls the past.'

The peculiarities of Canadian history -- much of which is symmetrized British history to start with -- beg to be understood here. Canadians are ordinarily brought up to take about as much pride in their history as they do in their postage stamps. After all, it is a little difficult to feel pride in an economic and historical tradition when it is our own capitalists who have thrown us to the wolves of foreign exploitation.

When we gallantly expended our blood and treasure to help the 'Mother Country' in the First World War, for example, we were contributing -- without knowing it and for the best of intentions -- to a new era of domination for this British Dominion, which was not granted 'official' independence until 1931. If it was as colonials that we went to war, as in the earlier British war against the Boers, then it was as budding neocolonials that we returned. For after Europe had bled itself near to death, British **indirect** (portfolio) investment in Canada began its precipitous decline. At the same time, the already existing **direct**[6] investment of American capital in this country began its equally dramatic escalation. American branch plants, new and old, were explicitly guaranteed high profits and relative freedom from domestic and foreign competition by our political and business representatives, principally through the pseudo-protectionist 'National Policy' which had begun the erection of our present tariff walls.

At the ideological level of this neocolonial relationship, and in the mirror-game which many of our pundits use to play us off against each other and to keep us oscillating between the British and the Americans, we are repeatedly told that the only really significant 'internal' threat to our 'liberties' in our history has come from French Canada -- our largest colony within a colony -- symbolized by the heroic and tragic figure of the Métis, Louis Riel.

In 1870, Riel led the citizens of the Red River Colony in the Manitoba they founded -- with the support of the still powerful Plains Indians -- in military resistance against the economic and political expansionism of the newly 'confederated' Canada, the confederation through which vast expanses west of the Canadian Shield were delivered into the hands of the railway promoters. And if Anglo Canadians remember the date, 1885, at all, it is generally as the date of the year in which the last spike was driven on the Pacific railroad. French Canadians, in contrast, have never forgotten it, for it is also the date that Louis Riel, in spite of a recommendation for mercy, was hanged as a traitor in Regina by the Macdonald government in Ottawa.

In the same ideological vein, if the French Canadians have been made into our **'internal'** scapegoats (led of course by 'outside agitators'), it is the Americans -- whose interests are already so firmly entrenched inside the country that they and their collaborators are our nearest present danger -- who have been repeatedly used as a fictional **'external'** threat to Canadian 'liberty' -- and indeed we did help the British defeat the several military invasions of this country by the American revolutionists.

The same ideological sources also imply that our erstwhile 'colonial' years, before 1867, were in general so peaceful and progressive that we never experienced any form of civil war, or revolution, or whatever. We didn't need them, so the story goes, because the British had already had them for us.

Indeed, it is certainly true that we have not yet experienced a **successful** uprising against colonial power, inherited privilege -- such as that of the Family Compact in the 1830s in 'English' Canada (then Upper Canada) and that of the Chateau Clique in Lower Canada -- or against any form of political and economic domination.

In that one word, 'successful', our history diverges significantly from that of the French and the Anglo Saxons who were primarily responsible for stealing this land from its original inhabitants in the first place.

In other words, this country has never at any time since the Europeans named it been other than a colony controlled, exploited, and garrisoned for the benefit of somebody else -- someone other than the working people of many nationalities who built it, someone other than the people who still carry it on their backs.

Above all, we have never experienced the war of class independence, the bourgeois revolutions, and the rise of a home-grown industrial capitalism that made our principal ancestors -- French, British, American -- what they are. To put the matter bluntly, we suffer from the awkward and unpleasant reality that our 'Canadian' bourgeoisie is a hand-me-down, secondhand bourgeoisie -- a bourgeoisie that repeatedly capitulated to our various overlords rather than fight such military, political, and economic struggles in its own right.

From this we may permissibly conclude that if Canadians as Canadians have been socialized to be an **Imaginary people**, it is primarily because in terms of world history, the 'Canadian' bourgeoisie, real as they are, is a class of Imaginary capitalists.

Thus it is that the marginal role we have been granted in other peoples' histories, our relative lack of a Canadian class of productive entrepreneurs, the corruption and conniving of our politicians in history, the treasonable renewals of our always colonial status, our repressive heritage of irresponsible government and colonial authoritarianism, and the repeated manipulation of our supposed independence of the 'Yankee spectre' by our ideologists, have all resulted in a peculiarly Canadian anomaly amongst a supposedly non-third-world people.

This is the anomaly that Canadians are surely one of the largest groups of such people whose 'national identity' is almost exclusively defined by **what we are not**.

Above all, we realize that -- with the exception of the indigenous peoples -- our historical and economic reality has meant that the dominant Other for Canadians as a whole -- Symbolic, Imaginary, or Real -- has never been a **Canadian Other.**

IX

You'll agree that we Canadians are faced with a problem which is now much more difficult to overcome than it would have been at almost any other time in our past. Fortunately, however, at least this time around we know where to go for help, would we but seize the time.

After all, particularly during the past twenty years or so, we have heard all over the world, coming from every oppressed group we know of, the long and as yet unresolved echoes of a new conception of personal worth, a cry for a new kind of freedom, So new, indeed, that as yet we are not even sure any longer of what 'freedom' could actually mean. Of course, we well know that ideas alone -- or ideas as such -- don't rule the world, but that is because 'ideas alone' do not exist, not because ideas are worthless. Changed ideas require changed behaviour; changing ideas are statements about a changing socioeconomic reality.

Every such cry for rights and for 'in-dependence' (rather than out-dependence) is simply and surely a demand that state and private capitalism live up to the ideology it invented and get on with the perfection and progress it has been promising everyone since the eighteenth century. And if it will not listen -- or if such a reform should

prove impossible -- then we shall have to respond in the only 'language' we are quite sure it knows: that of economic counterattack.

However, we are also very unsure about how to go about this. Economic counter-attack docs not preclude any other useful mode of response; and we can learn a great deal about what many of these responses have been and arc becoming, by the simple act of turning to the experience of others who have resisted and arc resisting alienating domination.

One writer I have found especially helpful is the late Frantz Fanon, both his **Black Skin, White Masks** (1954) and his **Wretched of the Earth** (1961).

Indeed, the 'Canadian Question' -- no, the term 'Canadian' is misplaced, the wording projects the problem onto ourselves and out of context -- the 'question of the Other for Canadians' has long lain on page 240 of Fanon's **Wretched of the Earth,** waiting for us to discover it. Like many of the other groups and peoples to whom the following quotation refers, we need paraphrase only two of Fanon's words:

> Because it is a systematic negation of the other person and a furious determination to deny the other person all (or any) of the attributes of humanity (or 'self-worth'), colonialism forces the people it dominates constantly to ask themselves the question: 'In reality, who am I?'

To which we add: **'And why don't we know?**

It should be obvious, I would think, that unlike the 'answers' constantly formulated by our representatives in business, in academia, and in government, this 'oedipal' question is not primarily a psychological one. For better or for worse, it is prim-arily a political and economic one. But our representatives prefer to blame Canada on the Canadians -- I have listened to this fairytale for more than two decades now -- and **by blaming Canadian workers** for our economic instability in the context of the oscillating pseudo-stability of capitalism, the Others have amazed us with one more triumphant extension of Freudianism: **The Canadian Complex theory of Canadian history.**

X

For any person and for any human collectivity, it is surely in their history that will be found the basic patterning of the social individuality which links a people together. This is the individuality which is indivisible from our relationships to others. But Canadians, like so many millions of others in similar and in much worse circum–stances, have not been permitted by their schooling and their upbringing to know their own history, much less been encouraged to find it out.

The story of Canadian history is a story of cunning distortions, of convenient lapses of memory, and of twisted symbols that bear little readily understandable relation-ships to what they represent. Subjected as we have been, and still are, to repression by armed force, by the agents of Canadian 'law and order', by ideological censorship, by economic coercion, and by plain bloody ignorance, we Canadians, historically speaking are a nation of amnesia victims. The history we are taught, and the histor-ical and other fictions reinforced by the media, are little more than a long series of denials and rejections, by the spokespersons for our foreign rulers and their collabor-ators, of our actual historical experience.

As Greg Keilty has put it more bluntly: 'An almost unbroken line of paid liars, masquerading as historians, have laboured to convince us that we have always been happy to be a colony, have never fought back, have no heroes and no history' (1837: **Revolution in the Canadas**, 1974, p. 10).

As any number of other oppressed groups already know -- non-whites, women, productive workers, tor example -- the biggest lie in all these secret histories is not necessarily the overt (and often unconscious) misrepresentation ofthe reality As often as not, the biggest lie of all is **what is not said**, the lie communicated by silence (Mark Twain)

There are many significant silences about Canadian history, but two in particular attract our attention. Separated by almost exactly a century. both concern Canadians under arms in civil wars against oppression. The first is the story of the Canadian volunteers in the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39. (One of these volunteers wasthe Dr. Norman Bethune who so distinguished himself in his later service to the Chinese people, before his death in 1939, that he is better remembered by millions of Chinese than he is by own country.) The second is closer to home, but more distant in time: the Canadian Rebellion of 1837-39.

I wonder how many Canadians under 50 years old today remember the open outpourings of popular support in Canada in the late 1930s for the volunteers our people sent to Spain! Proportionate to population, more Canadians volunteered to fight Franco, Hitler, and Mussolini in Spain than did the citizens of any other country outside Spain, except for France. Do we remember that the Canadians in the International Brigades assisting the legitimate, elected government or Spain were fighting the mechanized might of Fascist and Nazi troops, guns, tanks, and planes! Some 80 percent of the Brigades consisted of working people -- and this was at a time when the governments of the western 'democracies', by means of an agreed-on 'policy of non-intervention, were effectively and decisively intervening in the conflict on the side of the Fascists. This they accomplished by the simple expedient of refusing to sell to the embattled Republic -- even for cash on the barrelhead -- the arms without which it could not possibly continue to protect its people.

The Americans sent the Abraham Lincoln Battalion; the French Battalion was called the 'Commune de Paris: ours was the 'Mac-Paps', the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion of the International Brigades.

Louis-Joseph Papineau(1786-1871), the democrat and **Patriote** who led the French-Canadian resistance to the British until he felt compelled to choose exile in 1837, is remembered as a national hero by many Quebecois. The Scots-born Reform democrat and militant, William Lyon Mackenzie (1795-1861), the elected leader of the people of what is now Ontario in the violent Rebellion of 1837-39, is not so well remembered by Canadians.[7] Both of these men, amongst thousands of other Canadians, were leading figures in the greatest struggle for **independence** from British colonial tyranny and from its agents in the Canadas that our history record,.

But few standard histories or standard references mention the word 'independence' at all; and the accounts they give of our war with colonialism are in general so sanitized and distorted that some of the 'authorities' ordinarily available to us not only persist with the 'outside agitator' theory, but actually refer to this hard-fought series of uprisings, pitched battles, naval excursions, and guerilla attacks on the British gurrison and the bloodthirsty Tories of the 'Canadian' militia, as 'Papineau's Rebellion'.

Before their final defeat, the Canadian Patriots were aided by a number of individual Americans who shared the Canadian hatred of British rule -- some of them Catholic Irish. The circumstance was twisted by the ruling oligarchy in Upper Canada, the 'Family Compact', into another fiction in the 'outside agitator' theory, into the propaganda that the Rebellion was American inspired. The truth is that American federal troops assisted the British in various ways in putting the Rebellion down.

In their mercantilist and almost feudal exploitation of Upper Canada, and in their refusal to attend to the economic development of the colony, the Family Compact in Upper Canada are readily recognizable as the direct ancestors of today's 'Canadian' bourgeoisie.

In the history of other countries, it was in the 'progressive' rise of a national bourgeoisie, later an industrial bourgeoisie, that the capitalist version of democracy was worked out. Not so in Canada. When the Canadian Patriots rose up -- in the face of years of economic coercion, political manipulation and violent provocations, including the attempted assassination of Mackenzie, and repeated attacks by Tory terrorists -- it was only after their elected representatives, both French and Anglo, had struggled without success for over a decade to obtain redress of grievances by every available democratic method, including the principles of majority rule.

But so effectively has this particular criminal conspiracy of silence been enforced against the Canadian people that even 50 years later, when a monument was finally erected in Toronto in 1893, a monument to the memory of two of the Canadians the British hanged, Samuel Lount and Peter Matthews, the inscription on it made no mention of the manner of their death, nor of the civil war and the attempted war of independence of which they had been a part.

Perhaps needless to say, we are generally informed neither of the tenaciousness of the Patriots' resistance, nor of the **national** character of this struggle -- much less of the reality that, as the evidence in our archives makes plain, the Rebellion of 1837-39 was a direct response to the class warfare originally initiated by the British and their local allies against the Canadian people.

Unfortunately for Canada and its future, the British had learned too many lessons too well from their ignominiousdefeat in the American colonies fifty years before. The eventual outcome of the two full years of fighting in this attempted War of Independence was that the two Canadas were gerrymandered into a new colonial union in 1840 -- this alone cost French Canada a pretty penny -- and the means were put in hand to stamp the very memory of the Rebellion out.

But before this, the British had to stamp out the Rebellion itself. The details are too complicated to be recounted here; most of the story may be found, with some pardonable exaggerations, in Greg Keilty's edition of extracts from the original sources, largely from Mackenzie's writings and from his two newspapers, the **Colonial Advocate** and the **Constitution.** (For a classic of economic and political analysis, see Stanley Ryerson's Unequal Union, Toronto: Progress Books, 1968.)

The British and Tory reprisals were brutal and bloody, including attacks on Patriot women, the shooting of wounded, and massacres of prisoners. It is not known precisely how many hundred Patriots were killed in the war, but 1500 or more were jailed on various charges. Well over a hundred were transported to the penal colonies of Australia and Tasmania. Hundreds more were exiled or banished to the United States. Thousands were rounded up and harassed by the British Army and the Tory militia, their homes and farms destroyed or confiscated. In Upper Canada (now Ontario), perhaps 25,000 became refugees and left the Canadas for good **(1837: Revolution in the Canadas,** 1974, p.9).

During this reign of terror, hundreds of Canadians -- who were tried by court-martial, or otherwise denied due process by hostile courts -- were sentenced to death.

The British and the Toriesfinally selected 12 French Canadiansand 20others,mostly Anglo Canadians, 32 in all. These men were hanged as traitors in 1838 and 1839 -- but how many of LIS can recite the names of this Canadian roll of honour?

XI

We cannot surely afford to live in the chronic economic instability of an increasingly colonized country for very much longer -- for the economic and ecological future of the world ecosystem cannot reasonably be expected to improve very much over the present; indeed, the probabilities are that it will be worse. Nor can

we seriously afford to play out very much longer our Imaginary identity as not-American, not-British, not-French.

Admittedly this negative relationship is commonly expressed inthesurface-structure activities of a country which is everyone else's best friend -- so long, that is, as we behave ourselves -- and apparently everyone else's subsidiary. But the reality that, when compared, say, with India, Guatemala or Ghana, our situation is not relatively very painful -- indeed, when the U.S. goes to war or experiences a boom for other reasons, it is for many Canadians much like swimming in milk and honey -- this reality should not be allowed to obscure the economic, political and personal dangers our present situation represents.

Being chopped up as we are by the divide-and-rule of foreign interests, Federal coercion, and interprovincial exploitation -- e.g., the economic domination, enforced by the Federal government's control over import duties and the like, of the Canadian Middle East over the West -- it would seem that we Canadians had better very soon look to what rights and protections and powers we still have left -- before economics, environment, and energy come to conspire even more directly with the authoritarian patterns of our past to make us even more of a (rich and exploited, but also exploiting) third-world country than we are already.

Indeed, before we lose the struggle for good, and before our brothers and sisters in Quebec, in the native lands, and in the North controlled by Ottawa are crushed by the conspiracy of our ignorance with our colonial heritage of apathy and with economic interests most Canadians hardly even know about, we need a newly Canadian political and economic movement, a renewed Canadian Liberation Front -- national, but not chauvinist, and hopefully in association with Quebec and the indigenous peoples' should the conflicts of class, race, sex and culture make such opportunities possible.

Defining a preliminary program of action for such a truly Canadian movement is not difficult. At the moment our most dangerous immediate enemy is our colonized ignorance, our ignorance of the actual nature of the dangers we face, and our ignorance of each other as members of a country that has yet to become a nation in its own right.

It seems to me that since we do not really know, as yet, not simply who we are and how we came to this crisis in our history, but more significantly **who each other is,** then we might just as well begin by following a hallowed and effective tradition in the struggles for independence that, in other times and places, have historically been part of the process of fundamental change.

What we can surely use right now is a Canadian Constitutional Convention.

By this, I do not mean an elitist collection of so-called 'best minds' in Canada, as the 'enlightened' right wing in the country is already suggesting, I mean a Convention of the Canadian people, an elected Convention, a Constitutional Assembly as representative as we can make it. At the very least, such an Assembly of Canadians -- indeed, beginning by the very demand for it -- would enable us to find out what different and even conflicting Canadian interests would reply to the question at the basis of all our questions, the question of what is to be done?

Armed with this knowledge -- **whatever it may turn out to be --** we would then be much better prepared to participate in **whatever it is that comes next.**

A principal reason why we need a Constitutional Assembly in Canada is that we are not guaranteed by our present haphazard 'constitution' nor by our dominant traditions and customs, the freedoms and principles of representation which are necessary to the process of fundamental change. I note that a Canadian wishing to testify before a Government commission recently was refused permission to speak on the grounds that the woman in question was 'only an individual'. Some

Canadians might regard this incident as trivial -- and if taken alone, it might well appear so. But in reality it is symptomatic of a long governmental, business and bureaucratic tradition in this country of **refusing to listen to Canadians** -- much less take action in our interests.

It is moreover symptomatic of the reality that totalitarianism in supposedly democratic States is invariably expressed in the apparently trivial: in petty decisions by petty administrators and executives in apparently petty matters.

A second reason why we need to get together to write a Canadian constitution for Canadians, is that if we do not, the government(s) in power will do it for us. Our past experience should surely warn us of the dangers of governmental cosmetic surgery in such matters. Would you buy a used constitution from **any** of those people?

XII

To conclude on the question of our constitution and our 'customary' protections: The most significant single problem at this level concerns the actual role of the 'Crown' in Canada (as distinct from the Monarchy, at one level, and as distinct from the Queen, at another).

Our long tradition of colonial authoritarianism and irresponsible government is now dangerously ensconced, not simply in 'government', but in the 'Crown' as an administrative and executive entity. The Crown in Canada is the locus of extraordinary power, not simply in 'national emergencies', but also in the day-to-day operation of all our governments. The Crown in Canada is what primarily distinguishes the executive arm of Canadian 'democracy'-- where the executive is dangerously muddled up with the legislative and the judicial -- from that of the United States.

If you look for the final governmental responsibility for executive decisions in the United States, you will find it somewhere in the White House; and if that executive power exceeds its constitutional limits, provisions for redress are already written into the American system of laws about law: the American Constitution. In contrast, if you look for the executive agency and the 'responsibility' called the 'Crown' in Canada, you will not find it **anywhere at all** -- certainly not in the office of the Governor General.

Moreover, you will not be able to localize the responsibility of the executive power symbolized and put into effect by the 'Crown' in any particular person in government. Professor Frank MacKinnon, as reported in the Vancouver Sun, June 29, 1978: "Does this mean that there is no single person in the entire structure of government who actually possesses and wields at his own discretion the executive powers of the state? It means exactly this."

To some people -- to those who have presumably neglected to notice how the power and the secrecy of the operations of our present Federal government have repeatedly been protected and increased by the simple expedient of moving Cabinet Ministers from post to post, so that each new appointee can deny knowledge of the actions of his/her predecessors and thereby escape the **responsibility** to the people which is supposedly part of our supposed tradition of responsible and representative government -- to some people, the reality that **the buck never seems to stop anywhere in Canada** is what 'fortunately' distinguishes us from the United States.

Try suing a 'Crown Corporation' in Canada, such as our provincial health insurance association, B.C. Medical, for example (or Air Canada, and so on). In effect, you can't. And the reason you cannot is that you must first ask permission of

the Crown -- and because of the way the power called the 'Crown' has evolved out of our colonial past, it has remained effectively **above the law.**

Many of the doctors in this province would like to take B.C. Medical to court over its administrative rulings about health care. But when our 'invisible Crown' chooses to exert itself, Canadians have no constitutional redress against its arbitrary powers beyond that of attempting to force an election.

This is an illusory alternative, given that it is the daily and most apparently trivial operations of government and monopoly capital which prepare the system and its people for totalitarianism; and that under the Canadian system of government, it is traditional for the majority party or dynasty in power to do more or less what it wants, no matter what the Opposition or people say.

This the Government can do because members of the majority party are not permitted by party 'discipline' to diverge from the government's Party Line -- except when the Party Line is that they must vote their 'consciences'',e.g., on capital punishment. Our elected representatives -- and the same principle of course extends at a different level to our Loyal Opposition -- are not permitted by our system to vote as individuals. (If they do, they are likely very soon to discover themselves Independents -- and thus to discover the joys of being a majority of one, an incarnation of the 'freedom of the individual' under capitalism.)

In other words, the government in power votes as a monolith -- at the direction of the Executive (Prime Minister and Cabinet). The opposition will ordinarily do so as well. But the Canadian people are not a monolith, or even three or four monoliths. We are infinitely more diverse than that. Nevertheless, our system of party 'discipline' tends inevitably to reduce the amount and type of **variety** that is actually expressed in the parliamentary activities of our representatives.

Now, I am not suggesting that what follows here is a cure for the common cold; but this question of the **representation**, in a **representative** government, of the diverse interests of a nation, raises two puzzles for anyone concerned with ecology and communication:

1) Is the variety manifested in our House of Commons an adequate representation of the actual variety of the Canadian people? and
2) If it is not, does anyone remember what the Principle of Requisite Variety in engineering control theory tells us?

One of the extensions of this 'cybernetic' principle tells us that if the variety of the 'control' part of the system does not **adequately** represent the variety of that other part of the system, the part is 'controlling', then in that system ordinarily regulated control will eventually become impossible. The result will tend to be that draconian control measures will become necessary, for the system may well run amuck.

We should never underestimate the power of a symbol; and the 'Crown' in this country (not the Monarchy) has evolved from its colonial authority in such a way as to become the symbol of arbitrary and irresponsible government power -- legislative, executive, judicial: administrative, bureaucratic.[9]

Along with the whole ramshackle edifice of 'law and order' -- principally order, and order outside the law -- that has been erected over the past 150 years in Canada, the 'Crown' is the symbol of what is still praised today in public and pulpit as the 'distinctively Canadian' entity which keeps us from becoming Americans.

This fleabitten fairytale depends on an argument that traduces the principles of what we know as democracy -- an argument that is little

short of a treasonable betrayal of the Canadian people. As an open invitation for governments to set themselves above the law in matters both petty and portentous, the reality of the 'Crown' in this country -- as a very real symbol of a very real power -- is representative, not of what prevents us from becoming Americans, but rather of what prevents us from becoming a nation.

This is the (colonialist) **tyranny of the Executive**; and it operates at practically every level of decision-making and 'rule-making' in Canadian society.

The people are not ordinarily allowed to count.

Professor MacKinnon again, author of **The Crown in Canada,** as quoted in the Vancouver Sun of June 27,1978:

> The crown in government resembles the soul of man in philosophy and the algebraic **x** in mathematics -- the one powerful and the other useful.

God save the Queen from such Imaginary flights of fancy! But they nevertheless betray a truth. We have just been told that in one way, the Crown in Canada is an **unknown quality**; and in another way, an **un-- known quantity.** Take your pick.

The reality of our political situation -- commented on by newspapers such as the Toronto Star, and by organizations such as the Canadian Human Rights Foundation and the Quebec Human Rights League -- is that, in the continued absence of any remotely clear conception of what is 'constitutional' in this country, our governments have already established in place many of the links that are necessary to the 'legal' operations of a fully fledged police state.

Indeed, many of the rights and the constitutional prerogatives which are ordinarily available to residents and citizens of the United States-- although some of them are easily circumvented by electronic eaves-dropping (including the use of satellites) and by the surreptitious retrieval of information from computer memories -- many of these rights, if converted into demands in the Canadian context, could be regarded as seditious libels tending to promote disloyalty to the Governors of the Colony and thus to trouble the good order and the tranquillity of the State.

Surely we must agree, however, that anyone who sees a danger to our heritage -- or a threat to what little sovereignty the Canadian people have over themselves and their own country -- in the establishment for the first time in our history of a 'constitutional democracy' of due process and the rule of law in Canada10 -- surely we must agree that such persons, whether they know it or not, are representing vested interests which cannot be those of the Canadian people.

It seems then that we should try to hang together on this, **nam tua res agitur, paries cum proximus ardet.**[11]

And for advice and instruction about what is at stake, let us read from the secret history of the fight for freedom and liberty in our own past. We might begin by reading from Mackenzie's second newspaper, the **Constitution,** the following report of a motion put forward by James Baird and Owen Garrity of the Patriots of Caledon Township, Upper Canada, published August 16, 1837.[12]

If the redress of our wrongs can be otherwise obtained, the people of Upper Canada have not a just cause to use force.

But the highest obligation of a citizen being to preserve the community --and every other political duty being derived from, and subordinate to it --every citizen is bound to defend his country against its enemies, both foreign and domestic.

When a government is engaged in systematically oppressing a people, and destroying their securities against future oppression, it commits the same species of wrong to them which warrants an appeal to force against a foreign enemy.

The history of England and of this continent is not wanting in examples, by which the rulers and the ruled may see that, although the people have been often willing to endure bad government with patience, there are legal and constitutional limits to that endurance.

The glorious revolutions of 1688, on one continent, and of 1776, on another, may serve to remind those rulers who are obstinately persisting in withholding from their subjects adequate securities for good government, although obviously necessary for the permanence of that blessing, that they are placing themselves in a state of hostility against the governed; and that to prolong a state of irresponsibility and insecurity, such as existed in England during the reign of James II (1685-1688), and as now exists in Lower Canada (as a result of the British parliament's Coercion Bill and its refusal to be guided by the wishes of the elected representatives of that colony), is a dangerous act of aggression against a people.

A magistrate who degenerates into a systematic oppressor, and shuts the gates of justice on the public, thereby restores them to their original right of defending themselves, for he withholds the protection of the law, and so forfeits his claim to enforce their obedience by the authority of law. ○

Vancouver, British Columbia, March-August, 1978

FOOTNOTES

1. Including Hollywood's many contributions to racial stereotypes of Canadians, as Pierre Berton's **Hollywood's Canada** (1975) makes plain: e.g., the 'wooden' Indian, the 'murderous savage', the 'happy-go-lucky' or 'treacherous' Canadian 'spitfire', ('the little witch!'), and the 'evil' or 'bestial' Metis, the 'deg enerate half-breed' (almost invariably half French Canadian).

And if you have ever wondered why so many American movie scripts casually mention 'Montreal' or 'Toronto' or 'Saskatchewan', and the like, this is the result of Hollywood's notorious 'Canadian Cooperation Project' (sic). In the 1940s. the possibilities of an effective Canadian commercial film industry were in effect snuffed out by the nefarious 'bargain' struck by lobbyists for the U.S. film industry with leading representatives of the Canadian Government, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and Canadian business. The details are to be found in Berton's book, but the essence of the economic blackmail involved was that our leaders traded our film industry for 'Canadian references' in American films, references that would serve 'to attract tourists to Canada'. We then sent a man to Hollywood whose life work consisted of persuading Hollywood film makers to insert such quaint references into their scripts. Shades of a mess of pottage!

2. Recent sources of the Canadian material will be found in the list of references at the end of this piece.

3. The 'Other' involves a relationship of a level which is distinct from that of 'self' and 'other'. As representations, Others will in daily life have their representatives amongst particular others.

4. A useful analogy of this Imaginary relationship--and especially because it is an electromechanical one, rather than a human or social analogy--would be that of the 'binary opposition' of the 'plus' and the 'minus' which, at a single level of reality, complement each other in an electrical circuit. In our society. the representatives of the alien other display a (conscious and unconscious) vested interest in using this kind of analogy. which effectively neutralizes hierarchical relationships -- indeed. they continue to erect entire philosophies, entire 'world views', and entire economic and anthropological theories, on this dualistic /or'. and single-level oppositional base.

views', and entire economic and anthropological theories ondualistic' either/or', and single-level oppositional base.

The ease with which these dyadic oppositions-derived from alienated social relations and from the dominant ideology which purports to tell us that they are 'natural' and 'true' -- are mistakenly encoded into the supposed 'foundations' of logic and social science stems from the illegitimate use of analogies from the domain of physics. such as that just mentioned, as 'models' of a totally distinct order of complexity in the universe, the socioeconomic order. This implicit justification of the use of the dominant ideology under capitalism as a form of 'science' is more readily understood if we recall that there are many Imaginary oppositions in the domain of physics and chemistry, including right and left handed molecules, matter and anti-matter, and the panoply of mirror symmetries at the basis of modern physical theory.

5. 'Bourgeois' and 'bourgeoisie' are terms which lend themselves to unnecessary confusions. They are not used here to signify what is ordinarily signified by 'middle class'. They are used to refer to that class of people -- the dominant structural component of state and private capitalism -- who control and constrain the expression of the productive resources of an economic system. This they do, not as individuals, but as a socioeconomic class whose diverse and competing vested interests are in conflict, as a whole, with those of the working people

whose creative capacities are controlled and constrained by bourgeois interests. The bourgeoisie thus includes all those whose private ownership of the means of production (the productive capacity) of various sectors of the economy is such as to include a controlling interest. (Mere ownership of stock and the like does not necessarily entail control; and many of the bourgeoisie also work for a living.) The bourgeois class also includes the economic managers of the system, as well as bankers and the like, and also their political representatives and their spokespeople in the media. A local or domestic bourgeoisie may themselves be dominated by monopolistic and multinational economic interests, whether willingly or not. Under the power of modern capital, the bourgeoisie may ordinarily be distinguished from the small-business and professional domain of the 'petty bourgeoisie' (who may or may not identify themselves with the bourgeoisie as a whole) by the reality that the petty bourgeoisie operate within the remnants of the 'free competition' of the 'free enterprise' sector of the economy (e.g., service stations), as distinct from the monopolistic (and oligopolistic) sectors (e.g., the energy companies and their partners, e.g., in the Middle East).

The petit bourgeoisie ('small', as distinct from les grands bourgeois) thus coincides with the upper level of what is usually called 'the middle class' in North America. This upper level ranges from truckers with their own trucks to university presidents and Bar Associations, and so on. The name, however, has been translated into English as such a bourgeois put-down that few of us like to recognize our membership in it. (Remember. nevertheless, that the Algerian War of Independence against the French (1954-1962). as in some earlier happenings in the American colonies, was to a considerable extent sustained by petit bourgeois 'politicals', as well as being supported by the majority of the people as a whole. The petit bourgeois generally has more relative freedom and protection, and more free time, than the worker.) Because they form the major boundary between the bourgeoisie and the workers, the petit bourgeoisie are rarely clearly 'united' by or about any issue, except perhaps by the delusion that they need to be 'protected' from people and groups below them in the socioeconomic hierarchy of power. When they do recognize that the real threat actually comes from above, however, they are inclined to become rather militant about it.

6. 'Direct' investment refers not to investment in loans, bonds, stocks, and the like (indirect or 'portfolio' investment), but to investments of capital in subsidiaries and so forth, such that the interests represented by the capital maintain direct control over the plant, industry, or economic sector in question.

7. Indeed. many Canadians cannot avoid an unconscious attempt to 'complete' this seemingly 'incomplete' name, William Lyon Mackenzie. by that of Mackenzie's grandson, William Lyon Mackenzie King (1874-1950). three times prime minister of Canada -- a 'Freudian slip' of some political consequence. In 1834, Mackenzie was elected the first mayor of Toronto. As a member of the colonial Assembly between 1828 and 1836. Mackenzie was expelled by the Tories six times, and elected or re-elected by the franchised voters eight times. In 1828 and 1834, the Reformers held a majority.

8. Note here the demand for independence by the Dene Nation of the Northwest Territories, adopted by the General Assembly of the Indian Brotherhood and Métis Association of the Northwest Territories at Fort Simpson in July, 1975. (These territories do not have provincial status; they are subject to the Federal government and 'Indian Affairs'; their 'government' in the territory is dominated by whites.) The Dene Declaration, published in The Canadian Forum (November. 1976). reads in part:

> Our struggle is for the recognition of the Dene Nation by the Government and people of Canada and the peoples and governments of the world . . . . . .

> The African and Asian peoples -- the peoples of the Third World--have fought for and won the right to selfdetermination, the right to recognition as distinct peoples and the recognition of themselves as nations.

> But in the New World the native peoples have not fared so well. Even in countries in South America where the Native peoples are the vast majority of the population there is not one country which has an Amerindian government for the Amerindian peoples.

> While the Native people of Canada are a minority in their homeland, the Native people of the NWT, the Dene and the Inuit, are a majority of the population of the NWT.

> The Dene find themselves as part of a country. That country is Canada. But the government of Canada is not the government of the Dene. The Govern-

ment of the NWT is not the government of the Dene. These governments were not the choice of the Dene, these were imposed on the Dene. . .

What we seek then is independence and selfdetermination within the country of Canada. This is what we mean when we call for a iust land settlement for the Dene Nation.

Perhaps needless to say, the apparent policy of the Federal government in regard to land settlements (and the pipelines and oil exploration they are holding up) is to offer seemingly large settlements in bits and pieces for parts and parcels in different areas -- the predictable 'divide and rule'.

9. Consider the conclusions which may be reached by pursuing the logical outcome of the following reasoning (Michael Valpy in the Vancouver Sun of June 27, 1978): ''. . .We separate the possession of power from the wielding of power: one institution, the monarchy, possesses the power without wielding it, the other institution, government, wields the power without possessing it.'' Translated into its logical consequence, this argument appears to imply that the 'institution' which is responsible for the exercise of power (i.e., the one that 'possesses' it), here called 'the monarchy', does not exercise it; whereas the institution which does exercise the power, the government, is not responsible for it--because it supposedly does not 'possess' it. If this argument seems difficult to follow, we can do no more than refer to its original sources. Mr. Valpy is an associate editor of The Sun. based in Ottawa.

Perhaps the following remarkable response to Valpy's article by Mark Jowett (July 15, 1978) will help to clear up some of the difficulties. Mr. Jowett says, in part: **"**Although I am a teenager and have therefore grown up in an age when the monarchy's role has greatly diminished, I still feel a sense of love and oneness with the Queen.**"** After asserting that this love is shared by the majority of teenagers today, the letter continues: "Because we are really only the first or second true generation of Canadians, since previous generations consisted primarily of immigrants, the need to establish roots and a Canadian identity is most crucial to the youth of today." Our parents or grandparents "developed roots growing up in their homeland; we have none and therefore live with a sense of insecurity and a lack of self-identity.**"** "We feel we know our roots a little better when we see the Queen, thus helping us to dispell the insecurity and identify ourselves in the present." The writer deserves special credit for putting this matter so clearly for us.

10. In order to avoid any misunderstanding on this point, it should be noted that since the Queen is not the 'Crown' and since the 'Crown' is not the Queen, there is no constitutional or other reason why our new 'constitutional democracy' could not also retain the monarchy, if that is what Canadians decide they want.

This point may well appear obvious, as indeed it is. But the whole argument about the proposed 'reform' of the 'constitution' (by the Liberal government, before the next -- and imminent -- election) needs to be read in the context of statements like the following, by well-informed Canadians (J. V. Cline, late of MacMillan-Bloedel, July 21, 1978):

. . . There is no reason for the (proposed) charter (of political rights and freedoms) to be incorporated in the constitution because the rights it contains already are substantially incorporated in common law, the Canadian Bill of Rights, and the Official Languages Act. These of course can be amended by Parliament, but it is highly unlikely that any fundamental rights would ever he taken away by Parliament in the future and therefore it would seem unnecessary to encrust them in constitution.

The two parliamentary items mentioned are ordinary statutes, and can thus be amended or repealed by a simple majority of the government in power. The twenty-year-old Canadian Bill of Rights is a notoriously toothless document, a motherhood resolution so antiquated that it does not even recognize the right not to 'worship God'.

Apart from the reality that our governments and their agents and allies are attacking our 'freedoms' day by day, the point is surely that someone's opinion -- indeed. any number of opinions -- of what may or may not be 'unlikely' does not constitute a constitutional protection. But this kind or argument—the 'highly unlikely' argument -- is used over and over by politicians and others to excuse everything from unemployment to lax 'environmental standards' and inflation. No wonder they find it useful--for no one can hold them responsible either for the 'opinion' or for the eventual results.

The expression 'encrust . . . in a constitution' in the quotation above is a residue of an apparently endless theme in Canada. This is the anti-American -- and wholly Imaginary -- theme through which we are supposed to be persuaded that in our 'distinctively Canadian'

refusal to adopt supposedly 'American ideas', Canadians are politically both 'more modern' and 'more historical' than Americans. The argument is that our 'unwritten cons- titution' is 'more flexible' that the ('eighteenth-century') American constitution. (For government and business, it certainly is; it just happens to be 'flexible' in the wrong direction.) Historically, the argument is preposterous, because the American Constitution is not 'American' to start with; every major source is British or French. Functionally, the argument is ridiculous, because whatever else may be said about American constitutional and political arrangements, the actual effect has been to produce the most flexible and responsive system of government of any 'democracy' in the world. What is wrong with the U.S. system. is another matter entirely . . .

11. This is a line of Horace, often quoted in many senses, one of which could be: 'For it is your own interest, your self, and your survival that is at stake when your next-door neighbor's house is going up in smoke' (Epistles. 1, 18, 84).

12. Quoted in G. Keilty, editor, 1837: Revolution in the Canadas, 1974, pp. 147-148. Punctuation and paragraphing have been slightly altered to conform with modern usage.

Note: — According to newspaper reports of a Gallup Poll taken in mid-July, 1978, a majority of the 1031 adult Canadians asked would like Canada to **"buy back control"** of U.S. firms in Canada (59%). Over two-thirds (69%) feel that there is at present "enough" (sic) US. capital invested in Canada. What the truly representative figures on this issue may actually be, we have no way of knowing, because of the subtle way in which the 'yes/no' questions are skewed to influence the answers (Vancouver Sun, August 12, 1978, Section D):

First Question: **"Now thinking about U.S. capital invested in Canada-do you think there is enough now or would you like to see more U.S. capital invested in this country?"** (emphasis added)

Second Question: **"Some experts are suggesting that Canada should buy back a majority control -- say 51 per cent -- of U.S. companies in Canada. Even though it might mean a big reduction in our standard of living, would you approve of this or not?'** (emphasis added).

One would   surely have expected the   pollsters   to be a little more astute in   their skewing of the second   question (of course, it   may be   unconscious). They could   probably have achieved a statistically similar result if they had said 'even though it might not mean a big reduction in our standard of living'. However this may be, the majorities quoted by the pollsters are nevertheless significant. I wonder who is listening?

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The Consolidation of the American Film Industry 1915-1920

Part One

George Mitchell

By 1920 most of the pioneering U.S. film producers, firms like Edison, Kalem and Biograph, had been bankrupted or swallowed up in a wave of consolidation and rationalization that swept over the movie business in the mid-teens. No aspect of commercial film production was left untouched by a series of fundamental changes in the organization of the industry such as the transition from low-capital to high-capital film production, and the integration of production, distribution and exhibition. After 1918 a few U.S. producers dominated not only the domestic but also the world market for films. This hegemony on leisure was maintained in the U.S. until the early 1950's and the arrival of television as a mass entertainment.

These new directions had a striking effect on film content and cinematic style. It is no exaggeration to say that the advent of monopoly in the film industry had a more profound effect on the content and technique of films than any technical innovation, change in the composition of the audience, or epochal event. The impact of consolidation becomes clear when we compare early production practices (c. 1908-1914) with those generated by the consolidation of the mid-teens.

ONE

The single most important change in production methods brought on by the economic consolidation was a shift upward in the control of the filmmaking process. The control was removed from the workers directly engaged in the making of films — directors, actors, cameramen and others who assisted in fabricating films — and placed in the hands of managers who reported to corporate heads. In this, the movie business resembled many other American business enterprises which, during the first quarter of the twentieth century, reorganized managerial and shop-floor practices in order to intensify production.

While the pre-nickelodeon era (1895-1906) had sizeable producers (Edison was one) production was also carried out cottage-industry fashion by technician-entrepreneurs directly involved in making and sometimes exhibiting films. As the business grew more complex after 1906, filmmaking became increasingly specialized, yet control of the production process remained in the studio. The director continued to exert considerable authority over most aspects of film production until his power was undercut by the changes of the mid-teens. In the highly competitive years before consolidation, the main concerns of the heads of film companies was less with the specifics of content and form, and more with co-ordinating finances, securing markets, and maintaining an adequate supply of the product. As Terry Ramsaye said of the period, "the calamitous demand was for film, film, film, regardless of the content."[1]

In the nickelodeon period, a booming market, production by small firms, worker controlled methods of film production, and a pro-working class perspective in films all appear to be related. The casual attitude towards the making of films can be seen by Biograph's test of D.W.Griffith's fitness to occupy the director's seat: namely, to check if a film shot under his supervision (and photographed by Arthur Marvin, a studio cameraman) was in sharp focus or not.[2] And these instructions to the dime novelist William Wallace Cook from the Essanay Film Manufacturing Company in 1910 are typical of the rough guidelines that came to story writers and directors from management: "the stories should

be refined but not highbrow" wrote Essanay to Cook, "They should appeal to the middle class people. Your scenes may be laid in either a Fifth Avenue drawing room or Mike O'Toole's shanty. And we want to emphasize this point: there must be plenty of plot and the stories must be funny."[3] This looseness is also clear in what comes down to us about how films wet-e put together during this early period.

In selecting plots for films, directors, producing as many as two to three short films per week, casually mined a variety of sources such as daily newspapers, dime novels, other films, classics, and theatrical pieces (often disregarding copyrights). In actual production, since the films were not rigorously scripted, anyone might suggest an idea. According to Robert Henderson, D.W. Griffith's biographer, "it made little difference to Griffith what the source of his film stories was. He was as willing to accept a story from a member of the acting company as from Dougherty and the Biography story department."[4] Joseph Henabery, who played the part of Abraham Lincoln in **The Birth of a Nation** remembered that before shooting started on his scenes he had received "no instructions, no script, no idea of what I was supposed to do . . . when it came to the Ford's Theater scenes, he'd tell me what he was going to do in the long shots and I'd tell him what I'd read that Lincoln would be doing."[5] In selecting story material and techniques for telling the story directors were supposed to use their common sense, plus what they knew about audience likes and dislikes. Intelligence about audience preferences was often gathered by attending films and observing the response to the program.

Yet another factor distinguishing earlier production methods from post WW1 practices was the relationship between the movie business and major industrial centers: pre-war facilities were usually close to these centers and drew on them extensively in the making of films. Film companies, for example, were located in the midst of or very close to major cities that held their markets; metropolitan centers like New York, Chicago and Philadelphia. Extensive cinematic use was made of city streets, the city skyline and real crowds. In producing **Cry of the Children,** the 1912 anti-child-labour film, the Thanhauser Company shot factory scenes in a real mill located near its New Rochelle, N.Y. studios (which were housed in a converted skating rink). During his Biograph days Griffith and his crew held their planning sessions in a workingman's saloon in New York, not far from their studio, a converted brownstone.[6] This proximity to, and use of, real life was in keeping with what the movie business was supposed to be about as a business. While the medium's capacity for illusion and fantasy was exploited early on by Melies and others, early movies were also prized for their evocation of actual life. In the decade of movie-making preceding the rise of the story film, "actuality" films depicting major cities, famous landscapes, and news events were a mainstay of the trade. In the 1890's some companies even practiced setting up their cameras on busy downtown intersections, photographing pedestrians, and then showing these films at local theatres. People were urged to see themselves, their neighbours, and their city. Interesting examples of these scenes would then be selected for general distribution. Thousands of films were issued offering glimpses of typical metropolitan scenes, films like **Panorama of Flatiron Building**(1903), **Crowds, Ruins, New York** (Edison, 1905), **Seeing Boston** (Biograph, 1906). **Cleveland Fire Department** (Biograph, 1903), **Ambulance at the Accident** (Edison, 1897) and **Lower Broadway** (Biograph, 1903). Story films like **Child of the Ghetto** (1910) were promoted on the basis of their "actuality"footage, in this case real slum scenes. This extensive use of metropolitan life as a backdrop continued on into the teens. "Location" shooting was part of a general policy in the competitive era to keep individual film costs as low as possible. This policy of keeping things cheap and simple is also

plainly visible in the inexpensive movie sets of the period. As late as 1911 the Biograph company used the same basic backdrop for three different scenes in the film **Lily of the Tenements:** an office, a slum tenement room and a room in a middle-class dwelling.

The content and point of view of the story film during the competitive era also demonstrates this proximity to ordinary life. Before 1916, films dealing in one way or another with exploitation in the work-place, usury at the hands of the landlords, and the manipulation of trusts were commonplace.[7] In general, the working class was viewed with a paternalism characteristic of social gospelism and middle-class reformism, two popular movements in the pre-WWI U.S. One example of this sympathy and interest in the plight of the poor can be seen at the Biograph studio where, under Griffith, actors and actresses playing lower-class types were told to familiarize themselves with their real-life models. Mae Marsh remembered that "in several of my earlier plays, Mr. Griffith sent me down to the New York slums on an observation tour. We all made such tours. In **Intolerance** I visited sick and stricken mothers in baby hospitals. We spent half a day once in a jail..."[8] In his unpublished autobiography, Griffith boasted of his first-hand knowledge of the slums noting that early in his career when he was down on his luck he lived in a flop house in Manhattan and got to know "practically every foot of the Ghetto, Mulberry Bend, the Bowery and Chinatown."[9] A paternalis-tic approach to working class life is also evident in other prominent early directors such as Thanhauser, Ince and Porter.

One final note on the subject of control: that control was primarily in the hands of the director and his crew is also evident in the freedom to innovate. In the early years there was considerable leeway to experiment with new techniques, especially in camerawork and editing. Though studio heads often balked at stylistic innovations the small investment in any one film made the risks inconsequential. Moreover, examples of rigid manager-ial control over the actual process of fabricating a film are rare (such as highly detailed, management-supervised scripts) so that innovations could be slipped by and announced as **fait accompli.** This latitude contributed to considerable experimentation and creativity in the U.S. film prior to WWI. Afterwards the restructuring of the movie business along modern corporate lines led to a strict clamp-down on directorial control, on innovation, and, finally, on the open approach to everyday life. As basic narrative techniques were brought to the point where individual films could generate high-level profits, film form was frozen and deviations in content and form were condemned as lunatic. Innovation in the U.S. film henceforward was permitted only where the needs of the business were clearly forwarded.

In the last analysis, the innovations in cinematic technique in the pre-war period and the social and political critique contained in these films cannot be separated, Griffith's social critique, with its emphasis on the human injury brought on by industrialism and urbanization gave impetus to his experimentation with editing. And when, in the twenties, the possibilities of such a critique were severely restricted, technique became flat and static.

II

In spite of the ever increasing demand for films, by 1920 most of the pioneering U.S. companies had closed their doors or merged with other firms. None of the seven major producers who pooled resources in 1909 to form the Motion Picture Patents Company remained intact. Two of the earliest and largest producers, Edison and Biograph had shut down. Vitagraph, Lubin, Selig and Essanay had merged. Those firms that sprang

up after the nickelodeon boom, Kalem, IMP, Rex, Nestor, Thanhauser, Bison, Keystone, Powers, Lux, Helen Gardner Picture Corporation, Morosco Pictures and Pallas Pictures disappeared through bankruptcy, merger or acquisition. In their place appeared new and much more powerful corporations like United Artists, Fox, Famous Players, Triangle and Paramount.

The look and content of films also changed drastically during this period. Comparing the typical film made in 1915 with one made in 1910 one notes striking differences: there are improvements in the mechanics of filmmaking (lighting, for example) and a greater mastery of narrative technique: but the most notable difference is the longer length of films, Individual films lasting an hour or more became standard by the middle of the decade. While the typical film **program** of 1910 might last an hour in total length, most films ran 12-16 minutes. Another trend obvious by the middle decade was a much more costly, elaborate film, the expenditures on which were manifest in sleek, ostentatious "up-front" aspects of film production.

In explaining the disappearance of the old small producers and forces giving impetus to consolidation in the movie business, film historians often point to the feature film and the huge increases in capitalization it required. According to this analysis the upheaval in production, distribution and exhibition going on in the teens was a response to a new, more costly film which, in turn, was a result of an increasingly sophisticated and better heeled audience. The changes, the argument goes, were rooted in the market: as a result of a larger and more sophisticated audience and the popularity of feature films, the motion picture improved into something long, glossy and expensive.[10] Following the lead of the market new improved film companies come on the scene to make and distribute the better product. Companies that faltered did so because they lacked the vitality, ingenuity and flexibility to make the films that would keep them in the running.

This analysis is inadequate and misleading, however, for it obscures the main driving force behind all the important developments of the period, namely the movement to concentrate production and profits in the hands of relatively few firms. Among the keys to this concentration was the film itself, its content and form. That the longer film in itself was not responsible for the increased cost of film production can be seen by comparing film expenditures at various intervals. In 1909 major producers such as Biograph spent around $400-500 on a one-reel film, smaller companies perhaps half that amount. Feature films produced after 1914 ran anywhere from 5 to 10 reels. Using 1908 production costs, a 10 reel film running about two hours could be made for around $5000, And indeed, some of the early feature films made around 1912 were shot on budgets under $8000. In 1914, however, the new Paramount Company was contracting with independent producers, paying them $25000 per film plus a generous cut of rentals. Blockbuster films like Griffith's **Birth of a Nation** and Ince's **Civilization** were running up budgets of $100,000 or more. By the 1920's the average feature cost hovered around $200,000 and blockbusters like **Covered Wagon** cost close to a million. This incredible inflation in the cost of film production was not a matter of longer filmsbut of a much more expensive film, the Hollywood Style. Nor was this Hollywood Style the result of the entrance into the market of the middle-class and the rich, for while the middle-class began to consume more films around this time, the numerical significance of the higher income groups in the film audience was never significant when compared to the presence of the working class, the factory, office and farm worker. The Hollywood Style was not simply a result of demographic shifts in the audience but the introduction of a strategy enabling relatively few firms to dominate the booming world-wide market for cinema

entertainment. In short, inflation in production costs that took place in the decade 1910-1920 was a direct result of the introduction, piece by piece, of a whole new **kind** of film. The enormous potential for profit from the films could be realized only by well-organized corporations with large-scale all-weather studios, extensive capital resources, and most important of all, solid control over production, distribution and exhibition. Those who fashioned such a system would lock up the market and enjoy returns dwarfing the profits of earlier firms. As a leading producer, George Zukor described the scene in 1918, "of 250 producers it is said that only ten are making money; of these ten, four are making millions."[11] A review of the dynamics of this consolidation shows how content and style were key features.

The Hollywood Style (i.e. the star system, lavish production values, plots increasingly divorced from everyday life etc.) began to emerge in the mid-teens as firms like Paramount, Triangle and Famous Players entered into production and distribution. These were by no means the first attempts to dominate the market for films. From the earliest days of the movie business such efforts were underway. Most of the early attempts hinged on patent claims, like those of the Edison Company over projection and camera equipment. The most elaborate and famous early attempt at monopolization was the Motion Picture Patents Company, formed in 1909, which tried to restrict film-making to seven domestic and two foreign firms on the basis of camera and projector patents. A year later MPPC bolstered its efforts by establishing an exchange, the General Film Company, which in a matter of months took over dozens of film distributors throughout the U.S. **On paper,** all films made and shown in the U.S. should have been produced by this cartel. MPPC films went only to exhibitors who ordered MPPC film packages and paid a license fee for the use of projection equipment. The paper arrangements did not succeed to fact, however: in spite of this elaborate system, MPPC was successful only in the short run (if that) in controlling the market for films. Years before anti-trust action clamped down on its operations the arrangement was faltering. Rival firms from the start ignored its patent claims, as did exhibitors. Policing these claims through legal and extra-legal means proved futile. Behind the cartel's failure to monopolize production lay this: films were **cheap and easy to produce,** and profits were high. Means other than patents had to be found to lock up the market. By the middle decade it was clear that the film itself was one key to this domination.

The transformation brought on by consolidation can be expressed qualitatively, in the tremendous increases in capital outlays per film, investments in production facilities, exchanges and theatres, and of course in the profit sheets. At the time when the movie business, new screen magazines and other media were spreading the word about the spectacular success possibilities in Hollywood, monopolization was closing off entry to all areas of the business. Up to 1912 movie-making was still a relatively low-capital process, as we noted in our discussion of film budgets. The costs of individual films had been rising steadily for years but this was primarily a reflection of the gradual lengthening of films, from a minute or less in 1895 to five minutes in 1905 (these are approximate figures) to 12 minutes in 1908, to anywhere from 12 minutes to an hour or longer after 1912. In the earliest days very little capital was needed to enter into production or exhibition. Vitagraph began production in 1896 with $1000; two years later it was showing profits of $4700. In 1907 profits had risen to a quarter-million and in 1912 to $924,000.

Kalem began in 1905 with $600 according to the film historian Lewis Jacobs, and was clearing $5000 a week by 1908, from two pictures costing $200 each to produce.[12] In 1909 the cost to the new Bison Life Motion Pictures to produce a one reel film was $200. Baumen

and Kessel of Baumen and Kessel, like many early producers kept expenses down by acting in their own films. In 1909 they were able to turn them out at a cost of from $200-350 each and make a profit of approximately $1500 per film. In 1908 Griffith was turning out some 12-13 pictures per month for Biograph at a cost of $300 per film. Griffith got the budget increased to $500 in 1909.[13]

The character of operations at this time is also reflected in salaries paid to actors, directors and writers. In the earliest days, jobs in the film business were not strictly categorized and apparently there was a good deal of upward mobility. Edwin Porter, for example, went in the 1890's from projectionist to director in the space of a few years. Indeed, it was poss- ible to be cameraman, actor, director and exhibitor all-in-one. job special- ization increased as the industry grew. Working the camera and directing were separated. Acting and writing became discrete tasks as the story films became more complex. As for salaries, we know that actors were paid five dollars a day at Biograph in 1908, and that talent was casually recruited from New York's pool of unemployed stage performers. A synopsis or film treatment could bring a writer about $30, though films were often put to-gether without "treatments". Writing for the films was still open— as were many jobs — as late as 1912. Anita Loos, a 16 year old amateur sent the Biograph Company a film script in that same year which became **The New York Hat** earning her a $25 fee. The salary paid a director at this time was probably not a great deal more than paid an actor (nor did it carry high status) for when Griffith was offered the chance to direct for Biograph in 1908 he did not jump to accept, but began on a tentative basis with the condition he could have his acting job back if he failed.

By 1912 cost-per-film was significantly higher reflecting the introduction of the feature, but film capitalization was still at the low point of a geometric upswing. A detailed breakdown of the Famous Player's feature **The Count of Monte Cristo,** made in that year shows that the major expenditures of film production were still for basic materials such as raw film stock and film processing. Actors' fees were a mere $1025, hotel and travel expenses, $83, costumes and props, $142.[14] Advert- ising was of growing importance, running $1674 for this film; royalties were a significant $1397. Yet the physical production costs came to only $13000; Kenneth MacGowan writes that the film grossed $45,000 for the year 1913.[15] Accordingly, the price of entry into the business was still modest. As late as 1913 C.B. DeMille, Jesse Lasky, and Samuel Goldfish (later Goldwyn) were able to enter production with their Lasky Features Company with $26,500 in capital. They became a major force in the business almost immediately.

Actors' salaries were part of the reason for this upswing in costs. A central problem for the movie business was product identification: how was a producer to influence consumer demand for his studio's product?

The "name" director was one possible solution. Zukor reportedly offered Griffith, the best known director of the pre-war era, $50,000 a year to work for him. But it was soon clear that the most effective way to create product identification (as well as limiting entry into the market) was extravagant outlays on "production values", actors' salaries and advertising. Whereas a few years earlier it was common practice to keep actors' names out of advertising, identifying talent only by the house name (the Biograph film, the Vitagraph girl, etc.), in the mid-teens films were increasingly promoted through the names of star actors. By 1920 a whole pulp magazine industry had been built, with the direct and indirect support of the industry, on the exploitation of the careers and social lives of the stars.

Mary Pickford and Charles Chaplin were among the earliest of the new movie stars. Pickford began her movie career at Biograph earning the standard $5 a day; in 1911 Majestic pictures paid her $250 a week; and in 1915 her salary was $104 thousand a year and rapidly climbing. In 1913 Charles Chaplin started in the films at $150 a week; in 1914 he commanded $1250 a week and from there his "salary" climbed up to $30,000 a week in the twenties. Macgowan (noting the probability of exaggeration) lists the following **weekly** earnings for major stars in the twenties: Harold Lloyd, $40,000; Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., $30,000; Gloria Swanson, $19,000; Tom Mix, $19,000 and Colleen Moore, $8,000.[16] Rough calculations suggest that overall production costs for one minute of film were one hundred times greater in 1925 than in 1908.

The exhibition end of the business also followed these trends. The cost of setting up a small travelling or stationary theatre in the pre-nickelodeon period could run from $200 to $2500 for the basic equipment. At this time films were shown in two basic formats: at peep shows where the audience paid from one to five cents to look at films through closed-projection devices, and at vaudeville shows with their longer-screened programs. Viewing films at vaudeville, however, was still relatively expensive and it was not until nickelodeons appeared that movie-going was a regular possibility for the many. "The man or woman who would hesitate long or who can not afford to pay fifty or seventy-five or even twenty-five cents for a ticket to an ordinary dramatic or vaudeville performance will gladly patronize the five cent theatre" noted a catalogue promoting movie projection devices.[17] A few years after the arrival of the nickelodeon, however, larger and more elaborate theatres appear in big cities, charging higher admissions, often with a system of class-pricing seats. Around 1914 some lavish metropolitan theatres charged from 25 cents to $1.50 per film. The higher prices were for the new block-buster films. The elaborate Strand theatre opening in New York in 1914 had a 3,300 seat capacity and had class-pricing which ranged from 10 cents to 50 cents per head.

These transformations reflect the development of the movie business along capitalist lines. Star salaries, for example, were not a measure of intrinsic worth but a product of the artificial scarcity created by mass exposure, a phenomenon- exploited by the industry to create product identification, Huge salaries were tolerated and even promoted because, in the end, they served vital corporate needs. Launching a star into the upper-income brackets put her or him in the national limelight and made Hollywood a focal point on the global map. Many of these stars became idols of consumption — trend setters on the frontiers of acquisition — and of great use in promoting habits and tastes vital to the growth of the new consumer goods sector. One learned in the twenties, for example, that Gloria Swanson received $10,000 a month living expenses, had a $100,000 penthouse atop the Park Charles Hotel in N.Y., a $75,000 country estate and the title, via marriage, Marquise de la Falaise de Coudray and that Cecil B. DeMille had yachts, rare collections of jewels and Indian relics, not to mention a gold phone. Of Douglas Fairbanks Sr. one Hollywood writer noted : "the rotogravure editors can always fill a spare corner with a new picture of Fairbanks putting grand dukes...at their ease."[18]

Not only did the star system generate priceless quantities of print-media exposure, but once established as a method of "rating", promoting and distributing films it limited entry into the market in various ways since star-making, like oil exploration was a costly and risky business. The small-time producer who could neither afford to make or purchase a star (or imitate the Hollywood Style in other ways) found that his films were automatically classed as inferior "B" grade or lower productions. Furthermore, without stars, chances of getting financial support, good

distribution and publicity were slender. The odd director who **wanted** to work with unknown actors was battling a whole system of production and distribution.

Production values and stars were critical links in the system but concrete measures were needed to insure a tight grip on distribution and exhibition. One way of achieving this goal was for producers to buy controlling interest in film exchanges which acted as middlemen. A few film companies, now earning huge profits on films, were in a position to go ahead with this task after 1916. Block-booking was also tried, a distribution system in which producers forced exhibitors to buy packages containing up to 52 films a year. The uncertain legality of this system plus exhibitor resistance, showed the importance of more direct economic control. Since producers could not buy all the theatres in the country, they concentrated on purchasing or building flagship theatres. These lavish showplaces were mainly built between 1918-1929 and carefully placed in major cities for maximum accessibility and visibility, not only for the convenience of patrons but also to attract metropolitan based media. By 1919 Famous Players Lasky Company dictated what films were shown at about 400 movie houses nationally through outright ownership and controlling interests. The 1926 Seabury study focusing on movie monopolies noted that "the first class theatres were so located throughout the country and were so pretentious in their appointments that the exhibition of pictures in them became a privilege anxiously sought by all producers of pictures, because of the great and far-reaching influence which the exhibition of pictures in these first-class theatres exerted upon the balance of the 14,000 or more theatres throughout the country."[19] In the later twenties, according to Lewis Jacobs, three companies, Paramount, MGM (through Lowes Inc.) and First National, had a tight grip on the nation's theatres: "By 1927, with close to 600 exchanges in 46 key American cities, and 20,000 theatres, exhibition had become almost entirely monopolized by chain theatres, all in the hands of the major producer-distributor-exhibitor combinations."[20]

This is the first section of a two-part article. The concluding section will analyse the impact monopolization had on the style and content of U.S. feature films. □

◇ FOOTNOTES

1. Terry Ramsaye, **A Million and One Nights** (New York, 1926), p. 467
2. Robert Henderson, **D.W. Griffith, His Life and Work** (New York, 1972), p. 39
3. Letter from the Essanay Film Manufacturing Company to William Wallace Cook, November 1, 1910, New York Public Library Manuscript Collection, Hereafter NYPLMC.
4. Henderson, **D.W. Griffith, His Life and Work** (New York, 1972), p. 86-87
5. Quoted in Kevin Brownlow, **The Parade's Gone By** (New York, 1968). p. 48-49
6. Henderson. **D.W. Griffith, His Life...,** p. 87
7. Some examples of early story films with a pro-working class perspective are **A Corner in Wheat** (1909). **Child of the Ghetto** (1910), **The Userer** (1910). **Cry of the Children** (1912). **The Italian** (1914), **The Immigrant** (1915) and the modern segment of Griffith's **Intolerance** called, when it was released as a separate film after the war, **The Mother and the Law.**
8. Mae Marsh, **Screen Acting** (L.A., 1921). p. 108
9. **D.W. Griffith,** p. 54
10. The contention that Hollywood was wired into the minds of its audience is another variation on the "consumer sovereignty" argument (that the productions of American capitalism emerge out of a freely operating consensual process). This interpretation of film content and shifts in content is advanced in a great number of works on the Amer-ican film going back to the twenties. See Jacobs, **The Rise of the American Film,** 271 and 407; Margaret Thorpe, **America at the Movies** (New Haven, 1938), 69, and Iris Barry, **Let's go to the Movies** (New York, 1926), 66.
11. **System, The Magazine of Business,** March 1918
12. Jacobs, p. 57. All of these figures have been derived from secondary sources and **should be taken as approximations.**
13. Henderson, **D.W. Griffith, His Life…,** p.49
14. Kenneth MacGowan **Behind the Screen** (New York, 1965). p. 160
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid., p. 247
17. **Chicago Projecting Company. Special Catalogue no.15,** published around 1905.
18. Allen Talmey, **Doug, Mary and Others** (New York, 1927). p. 36
19. William Marston Seabury, **The Public and the Motion Picture** Industry (New York, **1926). p. 34**
20. Lewis Jacobs, **The Rise of the American Film** (New York, 1939). p. 291
21. **San Francisco Call Chronicle,** February 1, 1920, MOMA Clipping File
22. MacGowan, p. 173
23. Diary of Rogers Lytton, February 15, 1915, NYPLMC
24. **System,** March, 1918
25. Edmund Wilson, **The American Earthquake** (New York, 1958). p. 399
26. Joseph Mankiewicz, interview, Oral History Papers, Popular Arts Project, Series I, Vol. 6, part 2, P. 3, Columbia University Manuscript Collection, hereafter cited as PAP.
27. Letter of Denis O'Brien to George Kleine, June 21, 1915, George Kleine Papers, Library of Congress (hereafter cited as the Kleine Papers).
28. Letter of George Kleine to Denis O'Brien, August 12. 1915. Kleine Papers.
29. See also Jacobs, p. 148
30. **OUTLOOK,** February 14, 1914
31. Ibid.
32. Quoted in Donald Ramsay Young, **Motion Pictures: A study in Social Legislation (Philadelphia, 1922). p. 10**
33. Quoted in the letter of L.W. McChesney to George Kleine, July 23, 1917. Kleine Papers
34. Letter of George Kleine to L.W. McChesney, July 24, 1917, Kleine Papers
35. **Exhibitors Trade Review,** March 16, 1918
36. **Motion Picture News,** September 1 1, 1926
37. **Motion Picture News,** February 6, 1926
38. Ibid.
39. Letter of William DeMille to Samuel Goldfish, February 10, 1915, CUMC
40. **The Moving Picture World,** July 3, 1915
41. **The New York Times,** February 25, 1917
42. Gish, p. 279
43. David Wark Griffith, **"**Are Motion Pictures Destructive of Good Taste?" **Arts and Decoration,** September, 1923 ◇

The Rhetoric and the Economic Roots of the American Broadcasting Industry

William Boddy

There is a general consensus among historians of broadcasting that the period of the 1920's was crucial in setting up the present structures of the broadcast media.[1] Not only were the institutions of network service, broadcast advertising and federal regulation established by 1927, but the poles of a larger, and persistent public debate over the efficacy of competing commercial and publicly-supported broadcasting systems were clearly in place by the mid-twenties. In the first half-decade of broadcasting the central choices had been made which constituted the "American system of broadcasting", and which distinguished American radio from the practice of broadcasting in England, the Soviet Union and most nations of Europe. When television emerged, it inherited not only the established institutions of the radio industry, but also the customary ways of thinking about broadcasting, from the early years of radio broadcasting in the 1920's.

This paper attempts an examination of some of the economic and ideological roots of the American system of broadcasting in the twenties. It seeks to reply to the technological determinism with which American broadcasting has often been interpreted, in order to emphasize the importance of the social choices made, which, rather than any natural or inevitable imperatives of technology, determined what broadcasting was to become in this country. After some observations regarding the technology and the rhetoric of the new radio industry, the argument will shift to an examination of the economic and social context of the development of broadcasting.

One of the most striking aspects of the literature of broadcasting's early years is the tone of novelty, uncertainty and improvisation, and the propensity for metaphor, which pervades it. The uncertainty and improvisation are more than rhetorical. The history of the first years of broadcasting is the story of a medium which constantly overran both the internal arrangements of the manufacturing and broadcasting industry and the external constraints of federal regulation. According to J.G. Harbord, the president of RCA, broadcasting was "the 'surprise party' of radio".[2] The dominant aim of radio research until around 1920, and the interests of General Electric and AT&T in their formation of RCA in 1919-1921, was essentially directed at the development of point-to-point communication. The general diffusion of messages — broadcasting's essential characteristic — was seen as an obstacle to the development of radio, and concern for the confidentiality of radio messages within a point-to-point system led to persistent attempts to develop beam or directional transmitting in order to minimize the spurious "broadcast" effect.[3]

Rather than representing the application of a new technology, broadcasting was an unexpected use of an apparatus developed with quite a different purpose.[4] The beginnings of commercial broadcasting in 1920 were not a result of decisive technical innovation;[5] indeed, the unanticipated development of broadcasting undermined the RCA cartel arrangements and led to a prolonged and acrimonious internal struggle within RCA, finally resolved by secret arbitration and the creation of NBC in 1926.[6]

If it was clear by the mid-twenties that the internal arrangements of the radio industry were inadequate to cope with the rise of broadcasting, equally certain was the inadequacy of the system of federal regulation. According to an interpretation of the 1912 Radio Act by a federal court in the Intercity Radio case in 1923, the Secretary of Commerce was compelled to grant broadcast licenses to all applicants.[7] Despite the ruling, Secretary Hoover continued to withhold licenses, laiming it was the Commerce Department's policy to freeze certain applications while admitting the uncertainty of its legal right to do so.[8] By the spring of 1926 the Commerce Department had over 600 license applications awaiting approval.[9] The right, affirmed in the Intercity Radio case, of the Secretary to assign wavelengths was denied in 1926 by a federal court and an opinion of the United States Attorney General.[10] In the crucial first years of broadcasting before the Radio Act of 1927 the industry was only very loosely regulated under the powers of the 1912 Act, itself designed to regulate point-to-point communication only. Central to this improvised system of regulation of broadcasting in the early twenties was a series of National Radio Conferences called by Hoover; the policies of the Commerce Department were significantly defined by a model of self-regulation established by this quasi-trade association group.[12]

The sense of novelty and improvisation in the institutions of private and public authority of the early years of broadcasting was mirrored in the general tone of uncertainty and tentativeness in the literature and the public discussion of broadcasting as a whole. The discussion had a propensity for the visionary and the metaphorical as the new industry tried to define its place as a social institution. That the rhetoric and the metaphors with which the new industry presented itself were also strategic is not surprising, However, in the absence of a clear regulatory law, and with Hoover's emphasis on self-regulation in a public context where broadcasting itself was a new and novel thing, the rhetoric of the broadcast industry may have more than an incidental importance. In fact, the radio industry's rhetoric in the early twenties offered its own version of the possibilities of broadcasting and the role of the public interest and of government regulation within them.

As we have seen, the 1912 Radio Act did not empower the Secretary of Commerce with any discretion in the granting of broadcast licenses, implicitly disallowing the question of scarcity of wavelengths in allocation decisions. Meanwhile, in 1922 alone the number of broadcasters increased from 36 to 576. [13] A survey of stations in 1924 indicated the relatively low cost of broadcasting: nearly half of the stations reported installation expenditures of less than $3,000, and 42 per cent reported annual expenses of less than $1,000.[14] In spite of the increasing number of stations, in the first years of the broadcast boom there persisted among some observers an optimism of pluralism and plenty. An editorial in the November 1922 issue of **Radio Journal** wrote:

> There will be no rest for the ether from this day to the endoftime. As for the programs, is the world not full of master artists, great orators, humourists and jazz? Of course some folks want grand opera, and some want market reports. Others want Bryan and others want jazz. But there are enough to go around, and enough stations and wavelengths to accommodate the whole works. And they are all willing, nay, anxious, to go. So endeth another care.[15]

The terms with which the manufacturing and station-owning members of RCA described the same situation, however, were quite different; the favourite phrase that the leaders of RCA, and later those of NBC, used to describe the increasing number of broadcasters was that of an unhealthy growth which "sprang up like mushrooms all over the country".[16] The RCA group in the twenties consistently argued for a system of broadcasting where the number of stations permitted would be sharply reduced: H.P. Davis, vice-president of Westinghouse and director of its broadcasting department, explained in a 1922 interview:

> I have always maintained that, like the telephone and the telegraph, the service is inherently monopolistic in character, and to get the best results, the best programs, the greatest development, the activity should be confined to two or three companies of established reputations, having the necessary facilities and incentive to develop it.[17]

Davis argued that five or six large clear-channel stations would be sufficient to serve the United States.

The favourite analogy with which the RCA-affiliated broadcasters argued the case for shrinking the ranks of those broadcasting was that of the radio waves as traffic lanes, where the slow-moving independent broadcaster held up his powerful rivals in a massive invisible traffic jam. There had been a constant tendency in the popular literature of radio to describe broadcasting as movement through the substantial, if invisible, medium of ether; this popular conception lived on decades after the existence of ether itself was refuted by Einstein and Steinmetz. Accepting the physical medium of ether, it was easy for early popular accounts of broadcasting to go on to explain: "Over our heads there streams day and night throughout the country an invisible traffic more dense than the surging motor cars and vehicles in our busy city streets,"[18] From broadcasting as traffic through the highways of the sky it was easy to consider the nominal federal regulators of broadcasting as the "young traffic cops of the air" "keeping the air traffic moving".[19] The rhetoric of scarcity, traffic lanes and patrolmen-regulators came together in Herbert Hoover's address at the Fourth National Radio Conference in 1925:

> Up to the present time, we have had a policy of absolute freedom and untrammelled operation, a field open to all who wished to broadcast for whatever purpose desired. . . We can no longer deal on the basis that there is room for everybody on the radio highways. There are more vehicles on the road than can get by, and if they continue to jam in, all will be stopped.[20]

The leaders of RCA had other uses of traffic analogies beyond the rhetoric of scarcity and the role of government regulators. David Sarnoff, at the same conference in Washington, analogized RCA's planned super-power stations themselves as powerful "national highways of the air": earlier, Sarnoff in Congressional testimony likened the proposal of a license fee for a set owner to finance public broadcasting to a "reversion to the days of toll roads and bridges".[21]   In any event, the program of the large broadcasters of a Darwinian survival of the fastest and most powerful on the traffic lanes of radio served as a good blueprint for the administrative actions of the Commerce Department, and later of the Federal Radio Commission, in consolidating the position of the major broadcasters at the expense of the educators and independents.[22]

That the rhetoric of the radio industry in the fluid early years of broadcasting was both self-serving and prophetic is merely suggestive of the underlying forces which shaped the American system of broadcasting. It is necessary to examine both changes in the economic base and some of the dominant social ideas of the period to see how they intimately affected the development of broadcasting and the broad patterns of programming in the twenties.

PART II

In the broad aspects of broadcasting — who listened, how they listened, and to what — the American experience was, from very early on, strikingly different from those of other nations involved in early broadcasting. A major distinction, often pointed out by contemporary observers, was in the pattern and extent of radio set ownership in the United States in comparison to the nations of Europe. The experience of radio audiences in England, the Soviet Union and Germany in collective public listening, cable radio and the organization of listening groups was relatively unknown in America.[23] The audience for broadcasting in this country was almost universally seen as the individual or family unit within the private home. Many factors favoured this development in the United States: the proliferation of broadcast stations, the absence of license fees, a relatively high national level of purchasing power and the widespread availability of electric power.

The   relative unimportance of group listening and the definition of the private home as the setting for broadcasting in the United States was in large part a result of the rapid diffusion of the radio receiving set. The rapid development of a large number of owners of radio receiving sets created a vast manufacturing industry to supply the new consumer product. In this regard, the radio industry was merely a spectacular example of a larger trend in American manufacturing. In 1920, only one of the twenty largest manufacturing companies produced consumer goods; by 1930, nine of thefirsttwenty firms were so engaged.[24] The performance of this rising industrial sector, according to George Soule, was crucial to the business expansion and prosperity of the 1920's.[25]   The importance of the new consumer industries was in part a response to the threat of over-production and unemployment in the

face of only modest population growth and too-inelastic demand. In the years 1900-1929, while the U.S. population rose 64 percent, the volume of manufactured goods increased 208 percent; one result, according to Roberts. Lynd was the "pressure exerted upon popular consumption habits by the sheer fact of plant capacity".[26] The attendant threat of technological unemployment caused President Hoover's Council on Recent Social Trends in 1930 to offer:

> One hope for a solution is that inventions of new products will add to employment more rapidly than the invention of labour-saving machines and methods reduces it.[27]

Sales to the consumer, moreover, presented the manufacturer with a new and expandable mass market by "making better customers of the population at large" through credit sales and advertising.[28] In 1929, Christine Frederick, in her book **Selling Mrs. Consumer,** reflected these new pressures upon habits of consumption with a definition of the new consumer obligation to practice "progressive obsolescence", a "readiness to scrap or lay aside an article **before its natural life of usefulness is completed**— in order to make way for the newer or better thing" (emphasis hers). Frederick continued:

> America's triumphs and rapidity of progress are based on **progressive obsolescence**... It is the ambition of almost every American to practice progressive obsolescence as a ladder by which to climb to greater human satisfactions through the purchase of more of the fascinating and thrilling range of goods and services being offered to-day. We obtain a sense of speed and progress and increased fullness of life as a result.[29]

The rapid development in the market for radio receiving sets in the United States was also due to a new popular attitude toward the home and home ownership. Because of a number of factors- demographic shifts favoring family formation, the effect of the automobile on residential settlement, rising wages- the twenties was a period of intensive homebuilding. Soule claims the large expansion of the housing market was crucial in pulling the economy out of the depression of 1922 and initiating the subsequent extended period of business prosperity.[30] Home ownership became both a civic virtue and a private satisfaction under the new conditions of industrialism; as Lillian Gilbreth wrote: "If we don't own our own business or control our day work, we need especially to own our own home."[31] The physical structure and the furnishings of the new home changed; spaces shrank; the amount of money spent on furniture declined for every room except for the living room where increased spending was sufficient to compensate for the other losses. Status began to be measured not in the number or size of rooms in the home, but in its furnishings and equipment.[32] In the changing function and ideology of the home radio merchandising inserted the radio receiver as an important adjunct.

The design of the radio receiver underwent considerable change as the RCA manufacturing group struggled to use their patent control to subdue the "mushroom manufacturers" who dared compete with them.[33] RCA also decided around 1923 to emphasize sales of complete sets over sales of parts and tubes; the Corporation instituted parts-to-set sales quotas on their distributors and dealers, refusing to ship parts and tubes to those who fail to sell a quota of complete receiving sets.[34] This was an attempt by RCA to squeeze out the independent radio manufacturer, but it was also part of a larger strategy to go beyond the confines of the amateur market. RCA accompanied these trade policies with the introduction of trademarks and the first mass advertising campaign in the **Saturday Evening Post,**[35] The design of receivers changed; controls were simplified in order to produce "a set that children and servants can work without trouble or difficulty."[36]

Dealers and Salesmen were warned: "By all means, don't talk circuits, Don't talk in technical terms."[37] Radio store window displays began to look like living rooms, and radio sets like fine furniture. In 1925, an observer in the **New York Times** said of a manufacturers' trade exhibition: "Radio at the show this year resembles a furniture display as much as it does an electrical exhibit."[38]

Given, in the arena of mass consumption, the emphasis on homeowning and furnishing, it is not surprising to see the radio set constantly linked to the "well-appointed home."[39] Radio Journal noted with satisfaction near the end of 1923:[40]

> Radio itself has undergone some marvelous changes with the past year. A highly alert, highly interested buying public has become convinced that radio is a necessary adjunct to the complete home, And nowhere has the complete home been brought to the perfection, the universal completeness, that is to be found in the average American home. With the public convinced that radio will complete the home, it is only a question of delivering the goods, in salesmanship and radio merchandise.

Radio manufacturers were urged by Christine Frederick to "take a leaf out of the book of washing machine, gas range, vacuum cleaner and other makers and sellers of household equipment", i.e. from those manufacturers who together defined the new consumer requirements of the modern home.[41] The alliance of radio merchandising with the consumer industry's new modern home had an importance beyond merely achieving for the radio receiver a mass market in the United States much larger than those of other broadcasting nations or defining the private home as the exclusive setting for broadcast listening. The strategy also had implications for the way in which broadcasting was used by listeners, and for the quality and content of radio programming as well.

"To sell in the home you must sell to the woman" wrote an RCA official in 1923.[42] The new, simpler-to-operate set "was a bold psychological move in the struggle to bring radio out of the attic and into the living room", wrote Gleason L. Archer, "And it worked."[43] If the radio set was to take its proper place in the complete American home, it must appeal to the housewife "the great American purchasing agent", considered responsible for 85 percent of the household's consumption decisions.[44] Christine Frederick described the shift in marketing strategy: "For a long time women tolerated radio as a man's and boy's toy. But to-day radio is far more to women than a lot of messy machinery with which men and boys love to play and clutter up the house."[45] Archer writes of the "personal scorn" the amateurs had for the new receiving set, and of the "virtual feud (which) speedily developed".[46] But by the mid-twenties the new style of radio set had, according to one amateur, reached "the parlour stage".[47]

The shift in the radio set market, vigorously pressed by RCA's trade and advertising policies, led to new assumptions of how radio was to be used by the new mass market, assumptions very different from those associated with the radio amateur. Robert and Helen Lynd wrote about the place of radio in Muncie, Indiana in 1923 around the time of the market shift away from the amateur. They wrote in **Middletown:**[48]

> Not the least remarkable feature of this new invention is its accessibility. Here skill and ingenuity can in part offset money as an open sesame to swift sharing of the enjoyments of the wealthy. With but little equipment one can call the life of the rest of the world from the air, and this equipment can be purchased piece-

meal at the ten cent store. Far from being simply one more means of passive enjoyment, the radio has given rise to much ingenious manipulative activity.

The values of manipulative skill and ingenuity, increasingly marginalized into the compensatory activity of hobbies by changes in the nature of modern labour, applied to other aspects of early radio besides the fabrication of receiving sets by amateurs.[49] For the amateurs also listened to the radio in a different way than did radio's new household consumers, The receiving sets described by the Lynds in **Middletown** were more often equipped with headphones than with loudspeakers; the accoustical isolation of headphones itself may have helped concentrate the attention of the listener on the program. The amateur as radio listener also tended to be highly interactive; those who did not broadcast as well nevertheless frequently called or wrote broadcasters with reception reports, technical information and suggestions,[50]

One of the favourite pursuits of the amateur was long-distance reception, an intent and patient drawing out of a weak distant signal from its competing neighbours, what Herman Hettinger called the "thrill of conquering time and space". Writing in 1933, Hettinger continued: "This thrill is decidedly less than it was in the early days of broadcasting when it probably constituted the principal reason for listening."[51] The practice of long-distance reception was inscribed in the first years of commercial broadcasting in the institution of "silent night", an evening or time slot when all the radio stationsin a locality would leave the air to permit reception of more distant stations. The practice of "silent nights" persisted for a few years. a relic of the styles and values of radio's amateur past, and finally disappeared by 1927.[52]

As the Lynds had predicted in 1923 writing of radio in Muncie: "As it becomes more perfected, cheaper, and a more accepted part of life, it may cease to call forth so much active constructive ingenuity and become one more form of passive enjoyment."[53] In 1935 an Englishman reflecting on the development of American broadcasting wrote:

> The days of long-range station-getting are long past. As in the holiday game of cricket on the sands, the parents, at first looking on smilingly, presently join in and take the game out of the youngster's hand. So in radio the spectator attitude of the rest of the household toward the young "fan" has changed into that of the customer...[54]

The values of the amateur as radio listener — a certain intentness in listening, the interest in long-range reception, and a propensity for interactive listening — dropped out of American broadcasting as it was commercially developed in the twenties and persisted only in the economically and culturally marginal recreation of what came to be known as amateur radio. As one early amateur put it: "I'm still up in the attic. There are thousands more like me all over then world."[55]

Given the centrality of the housewife as the object of the marketing campaigns of the radio manufacturers, it not surprising that manufacturers and broadcasters alike created ideologically-informed versions of her listening styles and needs. The contrast of these programmed styles with those of the radio amateur as listener (seen almost exclusively as male) could hardly be sharper.

As we have seen, the design of the receiving set changed in this period, toward fine cabinets and sets which were easier to operate. One important change was the replacement of headphones with loudspeakers to better appeal to the housewife, in part since according to an RCA official, housewives would not tolerate headphones spoiling their hair styles.[56] More

importantly, the loudspeaker allowed the radio program to accompany any number of other activities in the home, from the housewife's morning chores to the family's evening activities in the living room. Thesemi-distracted attention to the radio the loudspeaker permitted, so unlike the listening style of the amateur, often struck early observers of radio as remarkable, and it distinguished the American system of broadcasting. A journalist at the time wrote: "A majority of housewives turn on the radio in the morning 'just for company' and let it rattle away with whatever comes . . . merely taking comfort in the human voice breaking the loneliness."[58] Mrs. John D. Sherman, president of the General Federation of Women's Clubs and an original member of the Advisory Council of NBC, wrote of her conviction in 1926 of radio's "importance among the facilities without which family isolation and stagnation are inevitable under modern conditions of life."[59]

The distracted housewife was seen as the object of broadcast programming as well. Broadcasters and advertisers were reminded to keep programming simple, since the listener's attention was likely to be divided, and "besides, the average women listener is neither cosmopolitan nor sophisticated. Nor does she have much imagination.[60] On the other hand, it was argued, "literacy does not figure. Mental effort is reduced to that involved in the reception of the oral message."[61] Radio programming adopted these assumptions of the distracted housewife-listener; such programming would rarely be designed to elicit, or repay, full or close attention. Rather, as Peter Dykema argued in his **Women and Radio Music,** radio, like furniture or wallpaper, "creates an atmosphere."[62]

I have argued here that some of the characteristics of American broadcasting — the mass definition of receiving sets, the private home as the exclusive setting for reception, a certain style of radio listening and some of its programming implications to a large extent resulted from particular choices of those powerful in the radio industry. That these choices and their consequences formed a system of broadcasting quite different in the United States from those of other industrialized countries reflects both the particular development of American industrial capitalism and its relatively unmediated control of U.S. broadcasting in its formative years.

The other striking, and persistent contrast between American broadcasting and the forms developed in Western Europe and elsewhere is the peculiar notion of time which radio soon developed in this country. In the United States by 1924, "weekly regularity, ease of identification, and split second timing became characteristic of radio".[63] From the earliest days, American broadcasters seemed to have been fascinated by the broadcast of time signals; the first experiments with network broadcasting revolve around the re-transmission of time signals from Arlington, Virginia, began in the earliest days of science."[64] Newspaper-owned stations in Detroit and Chicago each treated its listeners to several minutes each day of time signals from the U.S. Naval Observatory or the Elgin National Watch Company.[65]

More striking than simply the transmission of time signals themselves was the American system of carefully structuring all radio-programming by the time-clock, a system which "forced all radio music, education and drama to be submissive to the split-second."[66] A commentator in 1927 compared the time structures of British and American broadcasting: "In England the second hand of the clock is not the guiding factor, but in America it is the fretful red finger of Time which tells the performer when to begin and exactly when to stop."[67] Such tight time-structuring in the United States did have its critics however:

> American stations operate on split-second schedules which many
> foreign stations do not. This is a matter of pride to the broadcasting

industry. The fact that listeners may prefer to hear the whole song or talk, even if it runs to 8:01:30 instead of 7:59:45 is largely ignored.[68]

The contrast of the European systems, where "the length of the program is adjusted to the type of material to be broadcast" and where dead-air gaps between programs "are frequently intentional for the sake of transition", to the American system is striking not only in the levels of precision and punctuality, but in other time values as well.[69]

Radio in the United States, where "the greatest of all broadcast sins is mis-timing", was also built on the positive virtues of regularity and homogeneity of programming flow.[70] H .P. Davis, recalling his direction of the earliest years of broadcasting by Westinghouse, described his efforts at broadcast scheduling as "features so timed as to assure their coming on at regular periods every evening — in other words, as a railroad does by its timetable."[71] The segmentation of radio programming into fifteen minute units, established in America by about 1927, also presented a strong contrast to European and British systems, where the irregular length of the event or performance broadcast took precedence over such time units. In the United States, the fifteen minute program units were planned into sequences and related together, "letting the audience flow from one to another."[72] The practice of the BBC of inserting silent periods "to avoid the shock of passing from, let us say, a religious program to a dance band", as its Director of Entertainment put it, was anathema to American Broadcasters, where every second of broadcast time was to be employed, occupied and filled up. As an early NBC publication put it: "Nothing can depend on extemporaneous speech or entertainment. . . announcers . . . must know when and where and what to say. Nothing is to be left to chance."[73]

These national differences in the organization of time in broadcasting are important, for as Hadley Cantril argued in the mid-thirties, "radio further emphasizes our time habits . . . (Its time structure) doubtless has an effect on the already conspicuous habits of punctuality and efficiency in American life and will encourage such habits wherever radio penetrats."[74] Cantril, comparing the time structures of American broadcasting with those of England, Austria and the Soviet Union, concluded:

> The contrasts between these four methods illustrate the need for social psychology to consider the cultural and economic framework within which its data are found. Although human nature may be everywhere potentially the same, the ways in which it actually develops are limited by the constraints of each particular social system. The constraints become second nature to the individual. He seldom questions them, or indeed, even recognizes their existence, and he therefore takes for granted the great majority of influences that surround him in everyday life.[75]

An investigation of the cultural and economic framework within which American broadcasting developed its characteristic time structure begins with a recognition of the critical change in the nature of time in the workplace under twentieth century industrialization.

Citing the work of the British historian E.P. Thompson, Stuart Ewen summarizes: "Industrialization necessitated a different sense of time than (sic) did non-industrial modes of production."[76] An observer in the 1920's wrote of the industrial worker's new experience of time:

> Instead of beginning work at sunrise and quitting at dark and maintaining a jog-trot relieved by social interruptions of all sorts,

he starts with the whistle and quits with the whistle, working at a pace set by the machine he tends . . . The modern worker is a creature of routines. . . He is a slave to the routines which change hardly from day to day and from year to year. He knows nothing of what might be called the normal routine of life which changes from season to season with the grand cycle of the year.[77]

As the work of Thompson and that of Herbert G. Gutman emphasize, large scale industry radically re-made the time structures of agricultural and earlier industrial epochs, rearranging the structure of work over the year, through the week and, most intensively, within the work day.[78] Gutman argues that the major source of social tension in America in the first decades of the twentieth century resulted from the forced adaptation of a new industrial proletariat to such demands of the large scale factory system. He quotes from a company-produced brochure designed to teach the new industrial immigrant English; "Lesson One" entitled "General" begins: "I hear the whistle. I must hurry. I hear the five minute whistle. It is time to go to the shop. . ."[79]

It was the introduction of the assembly line which most obviously trans-formed the worker's notion of time; Morris J. Vitales, a contemporary industrial engineer wrote:

> Work on the moving belt at a rhythm and speed imposed upon the worker is preferable to work at a free tempo because it relieves the worker of the need of directing his attention to the work. On the moving belt energy is expended only on the work itself. When work is done at a free tempo, to the energy used in the job must be added that required for its volitional direction.[80]

This confiscation by management of the worker's control of the time organi-zation of a task was part of a larger appropriation of the skills and know-ledge of the industrial worker by management.[81] Frank Gilbreth, an early developer of time studies in American industry, wrote: "All the traditional knowledge is literally collected, measured, sorted and tagged and labelled. . . This fact puts the relations between worker and his employer on a new basis."[82] The new disciplines of scientific management and industrial psych-logy which emerged in the teens and twenties were instrumental in adapting the organization of tasks and the individual worker to the new industrial Order.[83] Stuart Ewen notes:

> The acclimatization of people to the mechanized work process re-quired the implementation of a time sense circumscribed by the di-visions of mechanically produced rhythms. In other words, the machine mode of production could not be stabilized until it had also been socialized.[84]

This socialization of the new time values of industrial capitalism reflected "the understanding that the social control of workers must stretch beyond the realm of the factory and into the very communities and structures with-in which they lived."[85] Writing in the **Annals** in 1916, Mary Barnett Gilson argued:

> As for the 'right' of the factory management to interest itself in the lives of workers outside of the factory, it is not only a 'right' when it affects the worker in his work, but it is a duty which is a natural outgrowth of executive responsibility.[86]

The socialization and internalization of the values of the new industrial work-place was most pronounced in the United States for many of the same reasons for which the "rationalized" workplace itself was seen as pre-emi-

nently American.[87] Antonio Gramsci described American society as one "in which the structure dominates the superstructures more immediately and in which the latter are also rationalized, a society which allowed in Georg Lukacs's words, "the commodity structure to penetrate society in all its aspects and remold it in its own image."[88]

The effect of these changes in the organization of the workplace on the forms and uses of leisure in the twenties was pointed out by Paul Nystrom in

> That the present use of leisure should be characterized by mechanization and standardization as well as by commercialization is not surprising. The most outstanding development of our age is machine production and it is perhaps only natural that the machine and its processes should dominate our leisure time as well as our working hours.[89]

This period of industrial rationalization coincided with the discovery of the problem of mass leisure.[90] A pair of contemporary sociologists wrote of the need for "a new set of social controls suitable for a rapidly changing social order", and of the fear that "serious questions are raised as to the dangers of highly urbanized societies degenerating and sinking of their own weight," in part for the "lack of adequate social control in the field of leisure-time activities."81

After this discussion of changing organization of work and leisure, one can look for the roots of the striking differences in the ways American and foreign broadcast programming were time-structured in the larger contrasts between the stages and forms of industrial enterprise and in the particular form of industrial hegemony in the United States, where "rationalization has determined the need to elaborate a new type of man suited to a new type of work and productive process".[92] The appropriation by American broadcasters of the new industrial time values of precision, regularity and uniformity reflects in part the extended struggle for social control in the society transformed by industrialization.

The larger context of the relations and values of the workplace into the private and social realms helps clarify a prominent debate in American broadcasting in the twenties: the use of radio for advertising. Historians of broadcasting frequently point out the widespread opposition to broadcast advertising in the early and mid-twenties in the popular and trade presses, and even among some prominent leaders of the radio industry. Many of the early critics of broadcast advertising were confident that the threat of its wide adoption was remote; later, when indirect, "goodwill" advertising became accepted, fears of the more pernicious "direct" advertising were also allayed. The debate over broadcast advertising in the twenties was actually about competing ideologies of the home: **Radio Topics** in 1922 warned broadcasters tempted by advertising to "remember that this advertising will go right to the home. It will invade the place where the family is enjoying the full benefits of privacy and detachment from business cares".[93] In the same year the print advertising journal **Printer's Ink** warned, perhaps not altogether altruistically: "The family circle is not a public place, and advertising has no business intruding there unless it is invited ..."[94] Writing in 1929, advertising executive Neville O'Neill looked back to 1923 and remarked of the early, "goodwill" advertising:[95]

> Those were the days when every advertiser had the manners of an Old World gentleman, and took very seriously the fact that he was a guest in the home and that the home was sacred ... This was little better than publicity.

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In an era of commodity capitalism and the massive invasion of the products and values of large-scale industry into the home, the notion of either the home, the housewife or the family as a refuge from the demands of business life gave way to one which emphasized the "grave responsibilities of the homemaker as purchaser":[96] Along with the new consumer products of American industry, there came as well its values of efficiency and rationalization, which were "brought to bear upon the design, the physical organization and even the social purpose of the American home".[97] While one contemporary champion of the new science of household management complained, "our homes are slow to take over efficiency methods of doing work or administering resources. There is still a marked lack of adjustment to the "new economic order", she pointed out that "such expressions as 'household buyer', the 'consumer', however, show that we are becoming conscious that homemakers en masse have quite important relations with other large businesses".[98] While the pressures on the ideology of the self-sufficient household had been growing for some time, Siegfried Giedion argues:[99]

> This much, however, is certain: at one sweep, mechanization penetrates the intimate spheres of life. What the preceding century and a half had initiated, especially what had been germinating from mid-nineteenth century on, suddenly ripens and meets life with its full impact ... Now, around 1920, mechanization involves the domestic sphere. For the first time it takes possession of the house and whatever in the house is susceptible to mechanization.

In the larger context of this massive invasion of the home by the products and values of industrial capitalism, efforts to exclude broadcast advertising from the home based on appeals about the home as sanctuary or refuge from American business seem anachronistic or disingenuous. The same forces and economic conditions which helped give American broadcasting its characteristic time-sense obviously weakened the force of such appeals to ban advertising from the home.

Thus, the debate over broadcast advertising in the twenties seems unbalanced in favour of those who wished to use the broadcast medium for advertising purposes. As such, radio came to represent a tool for the re-making of the home by industrial capitalism. A relic of the debate over broadcast advertising exists in the 1929 **Standards of Commercial Practice** of the National Association of Broadcasters, which divided the broadcast day into periods before and after 6:00 pm. The code went on:[100]

> Time before 6:00 pm is included in the business day, and therefore, may be devoted in part, at least, to broadcasting programs of a business nature; while time after 6:00 pm is for recreation and relaxation, and commercial programs should be of the good-will type.

The code went on to forbid altogether the broadcast of commercial announcements in the evening hours. The NAB standards were largely ignored by broadcasters and never enforced. The genteel, private, and economically self-sufficient home with which the opponents of broadcast advertising within the radio industry staked their position had in fact since disappeared under the demands of the consumer economy.

It is somewhat disheartening to discover that much of the literature of early broadcasting, in spite of its scientific and technological hyperbole and

euphoria, suffers from a more serious failure of imagination: its inability to confront in concrete terms the actual forces shaping the development of broadcasting, its powerful social consequences and realnotionsofalternatives to its control by American business. Broadcasting had its persistent critics; by the mid-twenties there was widespread dissatisfaction with the form American broadcasting had taken. More disheartening, then, is the recognition that too many of the critics of American broadcasting imagined the re-making of broadcasting by a series of technological reprieves. Both television and FM were hailed as radio's successive "second chances". This point of caution may be relevant today as the regulation of broadcasting seems about to be massively re-written by legislative "reform" while the rhetoric of technological euphoria threatens again to displace the difficult questions which need to be asked.

FOOTNOTES

1. see Erik Barnouw, **Tube of Plenty** (New York,Oxford,1975) p.60; Asa Briggs, The Birth of Broadcasting, Vol.1, The History of **Broadcasting in the United Kingdom** (London. Oxford,1961) p.7; Sidney W, Head, **Broadcasting in America** (Boston. Houghton-Mifflin, 1956) p.111; Raymond Williams, **Television:Technology and CulturalForm** (New York, Schocken. 1974) p.23,29; C.M. Jansky, "The Contribution of Herbert Hoover to Broad- casting" Journal of Broadcasting (Vol. 6 No.3 Summer 1957) p.248.

2. J. G. Harbord, "Commercial uses of Radio" **Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science** (Vol.142, March, 1929) p.57.

3. Briggs. p.33. Head quotes General Electric's Owen Young: "We had no broadcasting on our minds in 1919 and 1920" p.113.

4. Maclaurin, **Invention and Innovation in the Radio Industry** (New York, Macmillan. 1949) p.111.

5. Ventura Free Press, **Empire of the Air** (Ventura, CA. 1932) p.21; Eric Hausman, ed. **Radio Phone Receiving: A Practical Book for Everybody** (New York, D.Van Nostrand, 1922) p.176.

6. Maclaurin, p.108; Erik Barnouw. **The Sponsor: Notes on a Modern Potentate** (New York , Oxford, 1978)p.11; Gleason Archer, **Big Business and Radio** (New York, Ameri- can Historical Company. 1939) see Chapter One, esp. "RCA Godfathers Miscalculate the Future", pp 8-24. Archer's book is a close account of the internal RCA conflict.

7. for text of the Intercity decision, see Frank J. Kahn **Documents of American Broad- casting** (New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts. 1972) pp. 17-20.

8. Jora R. Minasian, "The Political Economy of Broadcasting in the 1920's" **Journal of Law and Economics** (Vol. 12 No2, October, 1969) p.396.

9. Marvin R. Bensam. "The Zenith-WJAZ Case and the Chaos of 1926-27" **Journal of Broadcasting** (Vol.14. No.4, Fall, 1970) p.431

10. see Bensam for an account of this decision; for texts of the 1926 court decision and the Attorney General's opinion, see, Kahn. pp 21-31.

10. Minasian emphasizes the improvisational and probably illegal nature of the Commerce Department's activities regulating radio until the 1927 Act.

12. see Edward F. Sarno Jr., "The National Radio Conferences" **Journal of Broadcasting** (Vol. 13, No.2, Spring 1969) and also Jansky for the role of the National Radio Confer- ences.

13. Hiram L. Jome, **Economics of the Radio Industry** (A.W. Shaw, Chicago, 1925)p.70.

14. ibid. pp.175-6.

15. editorial in Radio Journal, November, 1922, p.309. Also see Frederick Drinker, **Radio, Miracle of the Twentieth Century.** (Philadelphia, 1922) Drinker writes: "Wave- lengths unlimited . . . the variety of lengths which may be sent off 'broadcasted' is with- out number . . .due to the difference of the wave lengths, there is no conflict." p.35.

16. J. G. Harbord (President RCA) , "Radio as a Social Force" Speech at the New York Stock Exchange (New York, Bank of Manhattan, 1936) p.499; **Broadcast Advertising** (New York, National Broadcasting Company. 1929) p.17: Pierre Boucheron, "Advertising Radio to the American Public**"** in **The Radio Industry:The Story of its Development** (A. W. Shaw, Chicago. 1928) also refers to independent radio manufacturers as mushrooms. pp.260, 270.

17. interview with H.P. Davis, Radio Topics, December, 1922, p.42. See also Radio Broadcast, May. 1922, p.31 for a report of the First National Radio Conference where a Westinghouse representative argued that fifteen stations would be sufficient for the nation.

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27. **Recent Social Trends,** 9.28 Also see Thomas C. Cochran, **Social Change in America: The Twentieth Century** (New York, Harper-Row, 1972) p.82: **"**From 1900 to 1930. electrical equipment, including central power stations, urban and suburban lighting, and electrical communication, absorbed more capital than any other type of industry and rivalled railroad investment of the late nineteenth century in its relative share of the gross national product.**"**

28. **Recent Social Trends,** p.50: Soule p.148.

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30. Soule, p.113.

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MODES OF REPRESENTATION IN THE CINEMA:

Towards A New Aesthetic Model

BRUCE ELDER

SECTION I

In this article, we are concerned with two poles of stylistic possibility in the cinema: the first mode, that constituted by the demands of creating a simulacrum of reality we shall call **"The Cinema of Presentation"**; the second mode, which is constituted by the demands of illustrating a body of conceptual material we shall call **"The Cinema of Illustration"**. And that which is constituted by the demands of constructing a nexus of internal relation we shall call **"The Cinema of Construction"**.

In this essay we shall have little to say about **"The Cinema of Construction"** for although it is of tremendous importance artistically, it has remained a minority practice. Instead we shall focus on the differences between "The Cinema of Presentation" and **"The Cinema of Illustration"** and consider **"The Cinema of Construction"** only in passing, in order to highlight certain aspects of the other cinematic modes.

Let us begin with an "imaginary" example that can exemplify the differences between these two cinematic modes. Suppose an exchange between two individuals which consisted of one individual making insulting remarks to the other until he was sufficiently angered by the comments of the first to interrupt him and to make a scathing retort were to be presented in films of each of these two modes.

This exchange might be typically filmed by a Hollywood director of the

1. In fact a medium shot would probably also interceed between the long shot and close-up to suture the spatial rupture between these two sorts of shots. The use of this shot is largely irrelevant to our inquiry here, About this shot, I only wish to note that it reveals that this style involves the use of devices which minimize discontinuities so as to prevent the materiality of the form from obtruding on the viewer's consciousness.

2. A note on the concept Of authenticity as it applies to documentary film in general is in order. A recurrent topic of debate around documentary film has concerned the "objectivity" of film. In my opinion. this question has done much to stymie thinking about documentary film in general. In fact I would contend the whole question is bared on the false notion that objectivity, honesty. and truthfulness. are mutual conditions for one another.
Be that as it may, it is clear to me that the whole enterprise of cinema direct is misrepresented by these suggestions. far it was not at all objectivity which this movement aspired toward. What was at stake was not the invention of a form of cinema which effaced the filmmaker's personality. but rather a form of cinema which guaranteed that the event depicted was allowed to run its natural course with a minimum of interference on the part of the filmmaker. and that. in the film's construction no devices are used which might suggest that the event unfolded other than it actually did. This refusal to interfere in the event is what is implied by my use of the term authentic.
I should perhaps remark that I consider it a part of the honesty of cinema direct that the personality of the filmmaker is revealed rather than masked. Nor was objectivity a part of the naturalist ideal of which this movement often seems the heir.

3. To be quite strict about in the particular example Which we have cited. the "witness character" of the style (the affirmation of the presence of the camera person by the use of the hand held camera and particularly the use of rapid. almost gestural camera moves) means that the informing principle of the work are based not upon the demands of the mimesis of the real world but rather the demands of the mimesis of the observation of reality

classic era of Hollywood film (roughly 1935-1945). in the following way. The scene would probably be established by a master-scene followed by a series of close-up shots which would be cut together on the shot/reverse shot pattern.[1]

The change from shot to shot would be cued by the evolution ofthedramatic action; in one instance from our example, a cut would occur at just that moment when the dramatic centre shifts from the person making the insult to the person responding to those insults. Indeed, the change of shot from the one individual to the other might ever so slightly anticipate the second character's verbal expression of his anger, presenting us first with the angered expression, his face, and then his reply.

In the case of an American cinema-verite or a Canadian Candid-Eye film of the late fifties, a pan rather than a cut would most likely be used to articulate the shift of the dramatic centre from one individual to the other. This pan would not be co-ordinated with the shift of the dramatic centre; in fact, in all probability it would follow rather than precede the interruption by the second character.

What can be inferred from these differences in the two ways of filming the above scene? Let us consider first what the structure of the first way of filming the incident reveals. This structure depends on the partition of the passage into discrete units and the subsequent re-synthesis of this unit into a holistic form. Since the division of the pro-filmic event into units and the re-synthesis of these units into a holistic form depends upon the "architectonic of the drama" of the passage, the final structure of the passage can be understood as falling under the control of a transformative principle. This results in the rupturing of the artwork from the surfaces of reality. This rupture is effected to free the film's structure from determination by exclusively mimetic concerns; and thus, to bring it under the control of an informing principle, the character of which is determined both by the demands of articulating a certain body of concepts in concrete photographic images and sounds (the materials given a filmmaker to use) and by a set of specific historical conventions of the period in which the film was made.

In these terms, our simple example could be explained in the following way. The structure of the sequence is based upon a certain understanding of human psychology. In a certain context, the passage could illustrate that aggression is a form of protection against being humiliated. This understanding would be conveyed not only by what is sometimes referred to (metaphorically, I presume) as the "content" of the passage, it would also be reflected in the very structure of the passage. The fragmentation of the pro-filmic event, the synthesis of the resultant cinematic units, the angle from which the shots are taken, the placement of the cut in relation to the insult would all be determined (in part) by the demands of illustrating such an understanding of this piece of human behavior.

The second method (cinema verite of presenting the incident suggests something quite different. The imprecise co-ordination between changes in the camera, shifts in the dramatic centre of the event, and the use of the held camera facilitate rapid changes of field. In addition, the use of continuous sequence-shots rather than sequences involving an intricate synthesisof a number of precisely defined cinematic units is designated to guarantee the authenticity of representation;[2] events are allowed to unfold beyond the filmmaker's control. Inasmuch as this form is founded on the idea of authenticity, it can be said to be shaped by demands which are primarily mimetic in character.[3]

The fact that the pro-filmic event is not under the filmmaker's control and that the film's style is determined primarily by the demands of creating an

In this regard. it is interesting to note that Leacock, who once described c.v. as films which presented "aspects of reality" felt constrained to revise this description in such a way as to incorporate a reference to the observational dimension of the work: more recently he has described the films as films which present "aspects of the filmmaker's perception of reality."

4. This proclivity for "the revealing moment" might account in part for the admiration many Canadian Candid Eye Filmmakers felt for the work of Henri Cartier-Bresson. Further aspects of the relation between aspiration of the movement and the work of Cartier-Bresson are discussed in my article on "Candid-Eye Cinema" in Feldman and Nelson eds., Canadian Film Reader, pp.90-92.

5. There is I believe, another historical reason for this use of camera movement. Certain features of style of American C.V. film developed in part to adapt the rhetoric of the classic American narrative film to the exigencies of an uncontrolled shooting situation. Our Simple little example contains a care for Illustration The panning action we discussed appears to have been used to approximate the shot/revese shot formation which was so prevalent in the classic American film. At the same time. the fact that the panning action follows rather that anticipates the shift in the dramatic center from one individual to another suggests that the filmmaker has been embarrassed in his attempts to conform to the conventions of that cinema; his lack of control over the pro-filmic event. therefore, renders this rhetoric unattainable.

authentic (i.e. unmanipulated) depiction of reality suggests that the form of the film is not designed to illustrate an already formulated view of reality. What we see, rather, is the product of a filmmaker's exploration of reality, a reality which, inasmuch as it is not controlled, is presented as being both complex and ambiguous.

The panning and zooming movements of the camera which are so very prominent in this kind of cinema convey yet another impression. In Terrence MacCartney-Filgate's **The Back-Breaking Leaf** (N.F.B.), there is an interview with a tobacco-picker. During the course of the interview, the interviewer asks him if tobacco-picking is hard work. As the picker boasts about finding the work easy, the camera's field of view closes in on him to show his face twitching anxiously, revealing that he is not being entirely honest.

The use of camera movement to disclose a particularly revealing detail is common feature of cinema verite both in North America and in France.[4] This device is a close relative of what has been called commentative montage. The commentative use of montage involves a reference to an object which lies outside of the diegesis upon which it comments. Hence it bears evidence of being an intellectual construction. The use of a camera movement to "discover" a commentative detail (e.g. a twitching face) has quite a different signification. The lack of a cut affirms the integrity of the diegesis and provides assurance that the commentative object is part of that diegesis. This tends to naturalize the commentative detail by removing it from the intellectual realm and, placing it in the real world.

The subjective dimension or what we have called the witness character of these films ascribes to this sort of camera movement yet another significance. Within this context, the camera movements appear to be used to scrutinize the surfaces of reality to be engaged in a quest for something that will dispell the ambiguity that surrounds the real — to be searching for something which will help consolidate the filmmaker's and the viewer's understanding of that which is being depicted; that something, of course, is the revealing detail. Thus, there is established a search and discovery motif, which informs the structures of these types of films.[5]

The sense of ambiguity and uncertainty which this style of cinema so frequently suggests follows from the epistemological stance underlying this mode of cinema. This stance can be understood by comparing with that which underlies the Illustrative mode of cinema. In **"The Cinema of Illustration"**, the interplay between close-ups (which usually furnish evidence about the motivations for the character's actions), and the long shots (which usually present that action), mirrors the interaction between desire and behaviour. The relation of causality between a psychological state and the behavior which underlies it implies a coherence, of the sort that can be grounded in a conceptualization of the deeper dynamics of either context or of behaviour. It is this conceptualization which determines the use of a particular form. This form is used to illustrate a certain understanding of human behaviour and is indeed a key reason why I consider the formations of this sort of cinema to be "illustrative" in character.

The Cinema of Presentation proposes quite a different epistemic model. This model is descriptive rather than analytic in character. The more descriptive quality of this mode of cinema is nowhere in greater evidence than in the different stance this cinema takes on the use of conceptually-based structures. The more descriptive stance assumed by the Cinema of Presentation leads it to reject the use of concepts which might extend our inquiry beyond the immediately observable. In films of this mode, therefore, we simply observe character's behaviour; we are not presented with suggestions about why they behave as they do. Exponents of this position would claim to ask questions about the inner dynamics of reality and would carry us

beyond the limits of what is given to us in appearance, and so, beyond the limits of certainty and into the realms of speculation. It is because this mode of cinema adheres so resolutely to that which is given to us in appearance that one is justified in claiming that the stance assumed by The Cinema of Presentation is an empirical one.

SECTION II

Photography, it seems, can well serve as a kind of paradigm for the cognitive claims for mimeticism. It is hardly surprising, then, that that sort of photography which is most commonly prized is, as Susan Sontag points out[6] not Beauty but Truth. The significance of this paradigmatic role of the photographic should be further explored.[7]

We could begin by asking what it is that photography proposes as a form of cognition, Certainly, it is not anything like what has traditionally been understood as knowledge, for knowledge has always been thought to demand analysis, reflection and organization, to demand that details be sub-sumed under general explanatory principles. A photograph, however, merely presents a plethora of unsorted facts; as a form, photography provides mere ly a stockpile of impressions not at all unlike that which thoroughgoing empiricists claim constitutes the contents of the human mind. The similarity of the empiricist conception of the human mind as a theatre of impressions and the cinema as a showplace of illusions is the obvious to be missed and we know, of course, that the cine-empiricists did not miss it. It is a small wonder then that advocates of the Cinema of Presentation such as Ayfre expound a type of phenomenalism and that forms of the Cinema of Present-ation reflect this same view. To recognize that the epistemological assumpt-ions which lie behind the metaphor of cinema for the processes of conscious-ness are the very notions which Lenin attacked in his work on criticism is a very telling comment on the ideological presuppositions which underlie the Cinema of Presentation.

The empiricism which underlies The Cinema of Presentation (and which follows from the photographic) involves the idea that the range of human in-sight is severely restricted. The importance of this idea to the structure of films of the Presentational mode can be discerned by considering examples from the Canadian cinema. A rather extraordinarily large number of English Canadian documentary films trade in tensions which develop from the incompatibility between the questions which the films propose and the methods they adopt for inquiring into those questions.

There are a variety of modes of this sort of organization. All of them though, are based on initially proposing a question, a riddle or an enigma (e.g., "What was Norman Bethune really like" in Brittain's **Bethune,** or **"**What is man that a machine is not" in Koenig and Kroiter's **The Living Machine)** and then proceeding to demonstrate that the question is unanswerable, at least in strictly empirical terms. The variety of these modes of organization depend upon the different means used to demonstrate that such questions are empirically unanswerable.

One mode, for example, depends upon the use of a number of commentators who collectively present conflicting ways of thinking about the question under inquiry;[8] in such films, any strategies or any manner of organization that might provide evidence concerning the relative merits of the various viewpoints presented are carefully avoided.[9] This is done to create the impression that all forms of understanding can be reduced to opinion or belief. The relativity of truth, of course, is a lynchpin of empirical philosophy.

6. Susan Sontag, **On Photo-graphy** (New York. Farrar. Strauss and Giroux, 1977) p.102

7. The importance of this in-guiry io testified to by the fact that the arguments advanced by both Bazin and Kracauer in favour of the "Cinema of Pre-sentation" were founded on ideas about the nature of the photographic image.

8. An example of a film of this mode io Brittain's **Never a Backward Step.**

9. This refusal to consolidate the narrating voice into one single person gives this text a kind of openness which is typ-ical of much recent film-making.

A related form of organization depends upon casting the film's narrator in the role of a **historian,** i.e. a person who sifts through historical documents of various sorts (diaries, journals, historical relics, newspaper reports) in an attempt to discover a key to answering the problematic upon which the film is based.[10] What such films usually end up demonstrating is that the facility which guides the evidential character of the document renders them inaccessible to any such inquiry. Questions that are involved in the film's problematic are demonstrated to be unanswerable in empirical terms.

A third form, similar in many respects to the above, is based on the attempt to use photographs as a means of deciphering the past.[11] Films of this mode rely on the assumption that the iconography of the photographic image is a product of the particular time during which it was made[12] and hence, that an understanding of the nature of that iconography will disclose the peculiar quality of that time. These films generally conclude by demonstrating that the past which is embedded in the photograph is obscured by the forcefulness with which the photograph asserts itself as belonging to the present. The clues to the past lie more in the absences which the photography more in the unpresented events which condition[13] the making of the photograph- than in the abundant and precise detail that constitutes the major attraction of the photograph. Thus, it is films of this mode which most clearly present the limitations of empiricism for they typically culminate in the discovery of a dilemma which subverts not only the programme of inquiry these films initially undertake, but also the very form of cognition which a photograph proposes.[14]

Here another of the characteristics of The Cinema of Presentation comes clearly into view. Some of the films of this mode exploit the photographic image's richness of detail to evoke a feeling of nostalgia, others exploit the temporality which is inscribed in a photograph to evoke a feeling of loss. In either case, the films merely trade in the emotions elicited by these features of a photograph. Structures which might organize and reveal those material features of the photograph which elicit these feelings are seldom, if ever, developed.

SECTION III

Since the lack of such structures is a defining characteristic of The Cinema of Presentation, some inquiry into this matter should be conducted. We shall pursue this inquiry by contrasting films of this sort with a pair of works from The Cinema of Construction, Michael Snow's **One Second in Montreal** and Hollis Frampton's **(nostalgia).**

These works too are based on similar ideas about the still photograph or more exactly the still photograph as it is incorporated in a film. But what sets these films apart from those which we have been discussing is that these works use those material features of the image which they explore to provide the foundation for the film's structure. In **One Second in Montreal,** it is the temporality which is inscribed in the filmic image on which Snow concentrates and the formal construction of the piece depends entirely on Snow's understanding of temporality in film. Snow rephotographs a number of still images — all of which are marked by a poverty of formal intricacy and by a consequent richness of allusion to events beyond the spatial and temporal frame of the photograph-. and transposes them to a film in which each in turn is held for a long period of time. As in the case of Warhol's films, the prolonged, non-moving image is used to deflect attention to the material processes of recording and projection. to the flow of the celluloid strip through the projector, and thus to the film's temporality. This awareness of the flow of time, along with the photograph's allusions to events going on outside themselves make us anticipate the event which might succeed the event depicted. In this way then, the form of the film derives from one of the features of the narrative.

10. Donald Brittain's **Bethune** and **Under the Volcano** are examples of films of this mode.

11. Examples of films of this mode are Colin Low's **City of Gold** and Koenig's **The Days of Whiskey Gap.**

12. Perhaps the best example of a work of art which is constructed on this assumption is Michael Lesy's photo book **Wisconsin Death Trip.**

13. Often. this feature of a single still photograph is used to evoke a sense of absent narrative. Atget's photographs of empty streets are good examples of a case in point.

14 It should be noted that there is a sort of self-reflexivity inherent in all these modes of organization that here reacher its apogee. In ail carer, there films comment on the limitation of that empiricism which provider that form. In this case though that self-reflexivity is doubled by another, namely the reflexive reference to the film's assumptions about the nature of photographic iconography.

In a similar vein, Hollis Frampton's **(nostalgia)** confronts the fact that a narrative involves structures of anticipation and recollection. In this work, a series of twelve still photographs are presented, accompanied by a sound track which comments on the succeeding photograph in the series. This displacement of the verbal description of the photograph evokes a forward-and-backward-looking activity of mind as one is forced to anticipate the image as the image is presented. This forward-and-backward-movement, of course, alludes to the form of the narrative. Moreover, the descriptions themselves serve to link this narrative form to features inherent in the still photographs themselves since collectively the descriptions present a catalogue of ways of **"**reading**"** a photograph, many of which are based on the narrative. The tentativeness of the descriptions suggested by the fact that they are presented as conjectures or as incomplete and faltering recollections reveals the insuperable difficulties of recovering the past.

15. This explains why many exponents of the Cinema of Construction prize those works in which strategies which foreground the material properties of their work. **It** is not because such films in revealing the process by which their meaning is produced they repudiate the politically dangerous practice of disguiring their mode of operation but rather that such films acquire as added complexity by bringing additional features of the work unde formal control.

What I wish to make clear through these descriptions is that the characteristic differences between The Cinema of Construction (of which Snow and Frampton are exponents) and "The Cinema of Presentation" (which the Unit B of the National Film Board practiced) revolves around the difference between using the material features of the cinema **as the basis for the film's structure. City of Gold,** for example, simply uses photographs of the past to evoke the sentiments of nostalgia, mystery and contemplation. **One second in Montreal** or **(nostalgia),** on the other hand develop structures which formalize the features of the work which evoke those sentiments. Thus, "The Cinema of Construction" takes what in "The Cinema of Presentation" is unconscious and unformed raises it to the level of consciousness and brings it under formal control.[15]

16. Koenig and Kroiter's *The* **Living Machine** and Colin Low's **Universe** are examples of this mode

17. Peter Harcourt. "The Innocent Eye" in Feldman and Nelson. eds., **Canadian Film Reader** (Toronto, Peter Martin Associates/Take One. p. 72).

To return to our main argument, there remains one final formoforganization which is based on the demonstration of the inability of photographic and cinematic imagery to provide the key to answering certain questions. This form depends upon raising questions about fundamental aspects of our social and political existence.[16] Such films develop a sense of mystery as the empirical tools which the filmmakers employ fail to unravel questions they set out to untangle. From this failure, a quality of mystery results. It is this quality of mystery which, I believe, Peter Harcourt was responding to when he spoke of Unit B films as possessing **"**...the quality of suspended judgement, of something left open at the end, something undecided.**"**[17]

When considering this form, one is again struck by the fact that this way of organizing a film simply exploits the capacity of a certain characteristic of the photographic image, namely its resolute facticity, to evoke a certain emotional effect.

Certain other characteristic differences between The Cinema of Illustration and The Cinema of Presentation remain to be commented upon. One of these differences is that The Cinema of Presentation makes much more extensive use of the moving camera. In part, of course, this is due to its use of the long take; the moving camera provides for variety without a change of shot. In fact, the system of change of point-of-view within a single long take sometimes imitates the system of the change of shots in classical cutting but without fragmenting the naturalistic unities of time and space.

The use of the moving camera holds other advantages for the Presentational mode of cinema. For one thing, the use of the moving camera serves to extend the lateral space of an image. We have seen that such devices as the cropping of objects at the frame edge or the use of an open compositional form which negates the use of boundary are devices that serve to suggest a continuity between the space of the image and the space of the surrounding world. The use of the moving camera sometimes serves similar ends for the moving camera continually implies the space that it leaves behind and the

space that it moves towards. When watching a moving camera shot, we are acutely aware that the frame is simply a mask that isolates a small portion of space from the larger space that it is being moved across.

Another prevalent feature of The Cinema of Presentation is the use of what many film historians and film critics rather loosely refer to as composition in depth (deep-focus, i.e. the use of a broad span of critical focus with key compositional elements distributed across the entire span.) Composition in depth is simply a photographic device which enables similar compositions to be used in film, and for similar reasons. The resultant multiplicity of compositional elements within a single frame can also be understood as a form of response to the reduction in the complexity of internal relations which could be a consequence of the refusal to employ anti-naturalistic montage formations. The use of an elaborate mise-en-scene re-established a new category of complexity to take the place of that which had been eliminated; relations failing in this category, however, have the advantage, from the naturalistic point of view, of not violating the integrity of real space and time.

Much the same point can be made in regard to the narrative structures which characterize The Cinema of Presentation. Like the montage formations of The Cinema of Illustration, the narrative structures operate to create a tightly-knotted web of internal relations within a single, highly-focused intrigue This quasi-abstract structure is less highly developed and as a result the film's complexity depends on the intricacy of the interrelation between its multiple plots rather than on the complex structure of a single plot.[18]

One final contrast between our two modes of cinema is the contrast between the rhythm and phrasing characteristic of each. Even though the styles of both kinds of cinema are characterized by strong rhetorical continuity, settled phrasing and a minimum of dislocating effects which might disturb, the flow of energy transports one through the work. There are, nonetheless, discernible differences in the qualities of rhythm and phrasing which distinguish the two kinds of cinema. In The Cinema of Illustration, each scene is usually resolved into a number of discrete units; this means that its rhetorical style involves frequent, highly accented rhythms. This is usually used to create rhythmic figures which, like verse rhythms, involve regular, repeated units of accent and rhythm. The phrasing characteristic of The Cinema of Illustration also involves highly organized internal relations which are frequently based on patterns of repetition and symmetry; indeed, even the common long-shot/close-up/reverse-close-up formation involves symmetry and mirror-phrasing.

In The Cinema of Presentation on the other hand, scenes are not resolved into as many discrete units. As a result, accents recur less frequently. This recurrence therefore is not as amenable to being patterned. As a result, the rhythms typical of The Cinema of Presentation are more like prose rhythms than verse rhythms. Much the same can be said of the phrasing typical of this sort of cinema. The fact that the rhetorical units are much longer means that there is a much less frequent use of patterns of symmetry and repetition in the phrasing.

One feature which all four of the modes of organization have in common is that they employ forms which contain an epistemological problematic. Indeed, they incorporate a rather Kantian turn of thought, for they reveal the radical limitations of knowledge in order to open the doors to belief. The **ethos** of these films, then, involves an image of man as enormously limited in his powers to understand the cosmos, bewildered and sustained by faith alone. Though few would deny that this is not a very progressive image, it is most definitely one that has been expressed ,and indeed implicitly condoned, not only of a goodly number of English Canadian Documentaries, but many films of the Presentational mode in general. ○

18. Both the mise-en-scène and narrative then achieve complexity through the use of multiplicity of elements rather than through the mathematical precision of their arrangement of smaller numbers of elements It is worth noting that full complexity of the relations between a multiplicity of elements can be realized only when the classical principle of the subordination of all the elements under a single. dominant element is eshewed in favour of the principle of equivalency of various elements
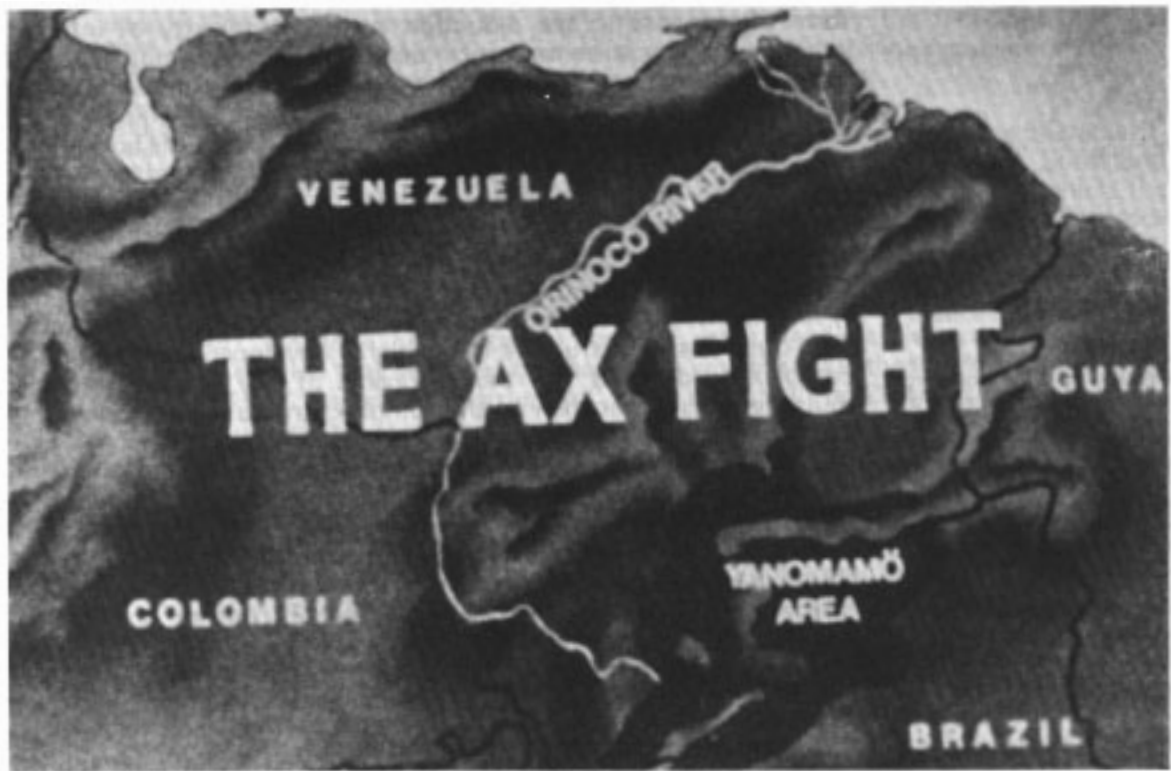
mapping anthropology on film

HART COHEN

The Ax Fight,[1] an ethnographic film by Napoleon Chagnon and Tim Asch, is a remarkable attempt to confront directly the issue of explanation in anthropology through ethnographic film. **The Ax Fight** differs from most other ethnographic films produced thus far because it introduces not only a description of the event (the ax fight itself), but also uses techniques specific to the cinematic apparatus which aid the viewer in understanding the causes of the event. In so doing, the filmmakers attempt to make explicit a part of the organizational structure of filmmaking: the process of starting with unedited footage through the designating of specific themes and information to be communicated to the final cutting of the edited version. The filmmakers also attempt to reveal the process of constructing an anthropological explanation by distinguishing sharply between description and explanation. By presenting both the non-edited and edited versions of the ax fight the filmmakers attempt to show how models of explanation mediate the cinematic representations and organization of the original event.

In terms of its explanatory model, the film appears to utilize current theory of social scientific explanation.* The film shows an event, an ax fight, in which the participants have a "uniform" association with each other, that is, the particular kinship categories to which they belong; the prescriptive marriage rules to which they must adhere. These uniform associations explain in a partial way the relations between the participants in the ax fight. In Robert Brown's terms, these uniform associations are "generalizations pressed by law-like explanations"[2] The causes of the fight however, are also located in the past to a temporal succession of events. These integrate demographic, kinship, and alliance structures as they provoke successive stages of conflict. Again, in Brown's terms, these are "laws of temporal succession; laws that connect earlier causes with later effects."[3] In this manner the film incorporates earlier conditions with uniform generalizations in order to give a complete scientific explanation of a specific event.

The epistemological assumptions of Brown's position contextualizes the particular theory of explanation that is used by **The Ax Fight.** To criticize **The Ax Fight** as an anthropological film however, is more difficult because the epistemological ground for the film, that is, the way in which the film and its relationships (audience-film-producer-etc.) are said to produce knowledge is extremely complex.[4]

I propose to examine **The Ax Fight** as both a **multiple text** and an **inter-text.** As a multiple text, **The Ax Fight** includes within itself several sub-texts, for example, it contains the opposition text/commentary which aids in the film's strategy as it tries to construct a convincing explanation. As an inter-text, the film interacts in an important way with other films (the other films which constitute the the Yanomamo series[5]) and texts for example, Chagnon's written ethnography of the Yanomamo.[6] This approach is not intended to give a 'complete scientific explanation 'of the film; nor can it account for the multiple meanings and effects which any one film can have for its audience. My analysis will attempt to specify how **The Ax Fight** is structured cinematically, that is, the relation of certain codes of exposition* in the film to various **modalities of the visible** (which correspond to 'observational film'[7] genres, but which are all contained within the structure of **The Ax Fight).** My analysis will also examine the attempts in the film to link the Yanomamo fighting with the Yanomamo social structure in its efforts to explain the causes of the ax fight.

The Ax Fight is able to generate the feeling that it is spontaneously self-reflexive in its search and discovery through film for the causes of the event. My analysis intends to demonstrate that the film is much more contrived than it appears to be; and that it presupposes, cinematically speaking, more than it makes aware to viewer. My argument will be, then, that it fails in its attempt to incorporate a self-reflexivity in its presentation of an anthropological explanation through film.

1. **The Ax Fight,** Chagnon and Ash, Penn. State University, 1973. Distributed by Documentary Educational Resources.

2. R. Brown, **Explanation in Social Science,** London. H.K.P., 1963, p.193.

3. Ibid., p.193.

4. Indeed it is contentious to state that 'film producer knowledge' at all: it is necessary however. for film criticism to presume an audience and to define a corpus (e.g., sequences, frames) the relationships of which produce a form of knowledge. Because **The Ax Fight** is itself separated into sequences of text and commentary, I have analyzed the film in terms of these same divisions.

5. For the full list of films which make up the Yanomamo series see appendix 'g' in Chagnon, **Studying the Yanomamo.** (Holt, Rhinehart, and Winston: New York. 1968).

6. N. Chagnon, **Yanomamo, The Fierce People,** (Holt, Rhinehart, and Winston: New York. 19681.

7. By observational genres I am referring to films which utilize cinéma-vérité (sync. and indirect address), educational and research film. ethnographic, classic, documentary and newsreel.

DIRECT ADDRESS		
	SYNC	**NON-SYNC**
Narrators	Voice of authority	Voice of God
		Images of illustration
Characters	Interview	Voice of witness
		Images of illustration
INDIRECT ADDRESS		
	SYNC	**NON-SYNC**
Narrators	–	–
Characters	Cinema Vérité	Voice of social actors
	(Voice and Image	Images of illustration
	of social actors)	

*The codes of exposition of documentary film are developed in an essay by Bill Nichols, 'Documentary Theory and Practice', in Screen, 17.4, (winter 1976/77). In this article, Nichols outlines differing expository strategies utilised by documentary film.

The Structure of The Ax Fight: A Sequential Analysis.

The Ax Fight may be divided into four sequences 8:

(1) The first sequence is an 'unedited' version of the events just prior to, including, and just following the ax fight itself.

(2) The sequence is composed of several seconds of black leader (no images) with the voice-over conversations of the filmmakers/anthropologists discussing the event.

(3) The third sequence includes a two-part explanation process:

(3a) The first part uses stop action and slow motion footage of the fight to highlight key moments and to isolate and identify participants in terms of their kinship relations.

(3b) The second part uses kinship diagrams to demonstrate alliance patterns and cleavages between the lineages (descent groups) of the Yanomamo and the conflicts that had been generated just prior to the outbreak of hostilities represented by the film.

(4) The fourth sequence is an edited version of the ax fight.

8. This does not refer to Metz's notion of sequence ("A coherent syntagm within which the 'shots' react—semantically— to each other), but to the broad divisions of text commentary evident in the film itself.

8a. This emphasis on un-edited material has historically constituted the value of a documentary, that is, as measured by its content. "Craft and style are useful and important but the excitement exists just as much when one looks at the uncut workprint . . . it is an aesthetic of content that drives the documentarian." Henry Breitose quoted in Nichols, op. cit., p.34.

As stated earlier, the four sequences correspond, in a general way, to the production process of a completed film product of which only the edited version is usually available to the audience at large.

Sequence 1 - The Unedited Version:

The inclusion of the unedited sequence appears to be more important to the filmmaker's intentions concerning the process of constructing an explanation than the process of constructing a film. The unedited version provides the "raw data" which the filmmakers later use for purposes of interpretation and re-editing. It is equivalent to a level of **"pure cinematic description"** and therefore implies a more innocent and less mediated form of representation than that provided by the usual edited versions of completed films. The presence of the unedited version in the film makes the claim for an initial stage of observation in the field. These observations, although mediated by the camera's eye, function as **"raw data"** in the fieldwork sense of the term.[8]

In an article which documents the debate on "raw data" in anthropology, Judith Ennew poses the problem in the following way:

> The implications for social anthropology are not that the strategies of fieldwork observation should necessarily be changed, but that the data obtained should not be simply ordered or collated, and treated as items in theory construction. On the contrary, ethnographic data should be "read" in the light of **specific theoretical constructions** which are independent of any concrete inquiry.[9]

9. Judith Ennew, "Examining the Facts in Fieldwork: Consideration of Method and Data," **Critique of Anthropology,** (No. 7, Autumn, 1976), p.44.

In **The Ax Fight,** the unedited version presents the event of the ax fight (as stated in the film) "as the cameraman saw it through the lens of his camera". This material is then (using Ennew's terminology) "ordered, and treated as items in theory construction", in the latter parts of the film which emphasize explanation (sequence *3).*

To follow Ennew's recommendation (to read the data in the light of specific theoretical constructions). the images produced by the technology of the camera and the technical practice of the cinema must be "read theoretically" In relation to **The Ax Fight** this entails rejecting the filmmakers' claim that the unedited version can constitute **"raw data"**, Instead, it can be pointed out that **The Ax Fight** has conflated several logical types by equating the **"**real**"** Yanomamo with the **image** of the Yanomamo and further, with a categorical (kinship) definition of the Yanomamo in an ethnography which seeks to explain their behavior.

The Ax Fight dissolves these differences by means of conflating the **visible** with the **empirical:** and it accomplishes this by paradoxically showing more of the filmmaking process than is normally permitted by conventions of realism in the "observational" cinema. This is because the film image is normally an isomorphic part of the whole of the filmmaking process — it is the visible representation of an invisible film technology which produces it. **The Ax Fight** presents images which are brought forward to represent (make visible) a part (the unedited stage) of that invisible filmmaking process. The end result, however, is that the film reinforces the visible's equivalence to the real: makes the visible even more dominant by **recognising** it as being in a more rudimentary state than normally found in the final edited versions of most films. Rather than disturbing the conventions of realism, the inclusion of the unedited version promotes realism. This is because the film has not shown those aspects of the invisible technology which would jeopardize the representation of the real, for example. laboratory techniques, black between frames, chemical processing, negative film, the cuts and joins of editing. It chooses instead to show the visible part of the technology (camera, shooting crew) which is not generally revealed to audiences. The negative effect of the unedited version on the representation of the real is therefore minimal; the film, however, can successfully present the empirical basis for the later assimilation of the unedited images into an explanation of what they represent. What is **visible** in the unedited version is, as the filmmakers intend, equivalent to the **real:** but whereas in other ethnographic films "I see" is equivalent to "I understand**"**, in **The Ax Fight's** unedited version "I see" is equivalent to **"**I don't understand**"**. Both viewpoints equally place a confidence in the visible (somewhat blindly), but for **The Ax Fight,** the presentation of the unedited version is a means towards an end: It is the creation of an empirical field for the purpose of explanation made possible by the equivalence between the empirical fact of the Yanomamo, the image of the Yanomamo, and the ethnographic context of the Yanomamo as constructed by the anthropologist. The making equivalent of these three elements is a problematic presupposition of the film which it never recognizes.

* * * *

Sequence Two: Black Leader/Voice Over

The second sequence is composed of several seconds of black leader with the voices of the film crew and anthropologists discussing the footage they had just filmed of the ax fight. After a series of excited exchanges, one of the members of the research team offers an explanation of the ax fight (on the basis of an informant's information) attributing it to the breakingofan incest taboo. This explanation is later rejected by the filmmakers.

In attempting to "make sense" of the unedited footage, the film conveys the impression of a spontaneous reflection and discovery of explanations on the part of the research team. This is accomplished by radically altering the **mode** of address of the film. Whereas the first sequence (with sync sound and lack of narration) **indirectly** addresses the audience as third person or "witness", the second sequence, through the elimination of images effectively tells the viewer to go elsewhere for information. Simultaneously the sound track provides this information and the emphasis is entirely placed on the conversation of the film crew. This is again an **indirect** mode of address, but one that is maintained exclusively by the sound track.

This manner of highlighting certain channels for the transmission of information allows the film to gratify (deceptively) the viewer's desire for an explanation. Following this insertion of the wrong information (which at first listening appears adequate), the film immediately repudiates it in favour of its own extended account of the causes. As in the first sequence, the film appears to embrace a self-reflexive mode of address, but is actually less interested in cinematic reflexivity while strategically preparing its own exposition of the explanation. By emphasizing the soundtrack in which the spontaneity of the voices transmits a sense of authenticity, the film effectively traps the viewer in a false explanation. This not only prepares the way for the "truth", but also deflects the emphasis of the film away from a temporal succession of events represented by images, to a conceptual exposition of an explanation developed by the soundtrack.

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Sequence Three: THE EXPLANATION

The third sequence begins with a series of titles which state that first impressions may be mistaken (when attempting to explain something in anthropology); that the explanation for the ax fight is more complex than the one derived earlier from the anthropologist's informant.

This opens the space for the film to offer its own explanation of the event by linking Yanomamo fighting rules with Yanomamon social structure. The argument of the filmakers is clear: The information gained from the informants may often be subject to distortion, but the film's explanation offers 1- empirical evidence (filmed images of the participants "living out"

their kinship relations), 2- a theory of kinship structure and 3- historical evidence for the causes of the fight. The film, then, can make sense of a series *of* events by offering a superior, i.e. a more complete and scientifically correct anthropological explanation than the one given earlier in the film.

Sequence 3a) Freeze-frame and slow-motion

The first part of the explanation re-views the original footage and designates, by means of freeze-frames and slow-motion techniques, the kinship relations of the participants in the fight. Particular emphasis is placed on the stages of escalation and de-escalation of the violence (usually associated with choice of weapons, e.g., the use of the ax or machete instead of a wooden club or bow) and the rules which guide the particpants' actions, their moves and signals. This part of the film isolates the motives and strategies of certain individuals in relation to their assessment of the situation. The escalation of the violence is seen as a series of moves which are determined by a participant's assessment of how serious the fight is. He/she then chooses the appropriate weapons or strategic position (e.g. in alliance) which then escal- ates or de-escalates the violence depending on the reaction of his/her opponent.

For example, in an early point in this sequence, the filmmakers utilise slow- motion to show **Mohesiwa** sticking his bow in the ground and taking a club from his sister, **Nakahedami,** after being struck in the forearm by **Uuwa.** After chasing Uuwa with his bow, the two fighters are joined by their kinsmen and the encounter comes to a stalemate. **Uuwa** ceases to retreat, but refuses to escalate the fight. Mohesiwa, realizing this, de-escalates the fight by switching from a bow to a club. *(It may also be seen as an escalation in that the club is longer than a bow, the net result, however, is the same: the achievement of a balance of power and therefore a stalemate.)* When the standoff between the opposing kinsmen broke up, the women continued shouting insults, a further de-escalation of the violence. *(see accompanying photographs)*

In the above sequence, the filmakers emphasize the strategic testing and power-balancing games which characterize **Yanomamo** fighting rules. The film also takes care at this early stage to designate kin relationships; to ensure that the viewer, who has no sense of these relationships during the initial viewing of the unedited version, identifies the participants in terms of these kin relations. The film emphasizes the role of kin relations in regulating and escalating· that the interplay Of **threat** and the **response to threat** takes place between groups as much as it takes place between individuals. When two persons threaten one individual, this individual will inevitably be helped by a kinsman/woman to defend him/her self. The entrance and exit of various participants also escalates or de-escalates the fight.

For example, in the sequence cited above, which is the earliest confrontation documented in the film, a fight is started between **Mohesiwa** and **Uuwa.** Almost immediately, however, they are joined by **Yoinakuwa, Kebowa,** and **Kaabowa** (on **Uuwa's** side) and **Torawa** (who joins **Mohesiwa). Yoinakuwa, Kebowa,** and **Kaabowa** counter **Mohesiwa's** threat to **Uuwa; Torawa** counters the threat posed by **Uuwa's** three kinsman. *(see accompanying photographs)* The effect is a stalemate and a de-escalation. According to Chagnon, in state- ments made in his written ethnography, escalation and de-escalation frequently takes place in this manner:

> In brawls such as these, many individuals join in the fighting just to keep the sides even; if a group is badly outnumbered, they will be joined by friends whose sense of fairness stimulates them to take sides, no matter what the issue is.[10]

10. Chagnon, op. cit., p.119.

The intention of the film at this stage of the explanation is to reveal the rules of Yanomamo fighting. These rules are only manifest when the violence of the fight escalates or de-escalates. This is partly determined by kinship alliances (as shown in the film) but escalation may have few limits if the opponents wish to offer fresh challenges of greater violence. Yanomamo fighting rules are, in effect, regulatory constraints which try to prevent the occurrence of homicides. The film emphasizes two such regulatory institutions: (1) the headman (2) kinship organization. At a crucial point in the Confrontation, the film shows a headman who, as the film states, has the power to constrain the participants (although he is unarmed). In relation to the extreme violence, however, the film is unable to show how the headman, with virtually no show of threat or emotion, can constrain the participants.

When **Torawa** and **Kebowa** face each other with axes, the fight is relatively stable. No further escalation is possible without bloodshed. At this point, however, **Nanokawa,** the headman, makes his presence felt by appearing on the scene without any weapons. His constraining effect, however, is only temporary as **Kebowa** takes a swing at **Mohesiwa. Torawa (Mohesiwa's "**brother**")** attempts to retaliate to hit **Kebowa,** but his ax is grabbed by **Yoroshianawa (Mohesiwa's** sister). **Totawa,** disarmed, flees to the periphery of the struggle to retrieve yet another ax and this time returns with an even greater threat: The ax turned with the sharp end in the attacking position. **Torawa's** previous challenges had been called as bluffs and once again he is easily pulled away from the confrontation. This time, however, **Kebowa,** with no need to fear **Torawa,** takes a two-handed overhead swing and strikes **Torawa** to the ground. **Torawa's** kinsman intervene and protect him while **Nanokawa,** the headman, also intervenes at this point keeping the two groups apart. Because the headman does not have a visibly strong effect in mediating the fight in the film, his real constraining power must be gleaned from Chagnon's written ethnography:

> only the headman is considered to be in a position to kill "legally".[11]

Chagnon implies that **Nanokawa** could have killed either **Kebowa** or **Torawa** if they had not stopped fighting. In addition, Chagnon reports that after the fight, **Nanokawa** ordered **Uuwa** to leave the village indicating that there are real penalties that fighters may incur if they escalate a fight to dangerous levels.[12]

The lack of the film's visibility with regards to the headman's role is compensated for in part, by the exchange in mode of address. Whereas sequences 1 and 2 use an indirect mode of address, sequence 3a) uses a direct mode of address: a voice-over narrator ('voice of God') with images of illustration (in this sequence, the characters and action are re-viewed in slow-motion for the audience).

Because the film could not "empirically" (visually) demonstrate the effect of the headman's actions, it emphasizes the regulatory role of the headman in a conceptual manner, through a narrator's explication (soundtrack). Thus the film strategically chooses a mode of address directly related to its expository needs. The mode of address is continued in the sequence which follows (3b) in which the explanation (history of kinship relations) is fully developed.

Compared to the extensive written material on the topic of the headman, the film has inadvertently lessened the importance of the role of the headman as a regulatory agent and privileged the regulatory nature of kinship. This may indicate the extent to which a film of this sort must be informed with the more detailed written ethnography of the anthropologist in order to constitute the complete explanation it desires.

It also reveals, however, that the formal structure of ethnographic film is not an incontestable product frozen by the realistic power of the images. It is rather a semiotic system which generates meaning through a continuous strategic selection, on the part of the filmmakers, of relevant devices which are intended to further the arguments and claims of the explanation.

Sequence 3b): The Ideal Model of Kinship

The second part of the explanation reveals the extent of the film's commit-ment to a complete explanation of the event. In utilising kinship diagrams, the film continues in its departure from the visible (hence empirical) world of the Yanomamo and the indirect mode of address of its expository code. Instead, the film presents the **invisible** structure of the Yanomano's social organization by mapping their kinship relations, demographic and alliance patterns over time. The mode of address is direct with voice-over commentary (narrator- 'voice of God') relating the history and structure of the conflict which culminates with the event of the ax fight. The tone of this segment is entirely pedagogical and addresses students and professionals in anthropology who can understand the scope and detail of the kinship explanation.

11. Chagnon, Op. cit., np.

12. ibid.. np.

13. Chagnon, op.cit., p.73.

14.* Levi-Strauss, **The Ele-Mentary Structures of Kin-ship,** Boston: Beacon, 1969). P 146.

The kinship explanations used in this sequence of the film attempt to link the earlier observations of Yanomamo fighting with Yanomamo social structure. The film shows the Yanomamo village and lineage structure emphasizing a tri-sected organization in which three lineages must live in two villages. This effectively places one lineage in the middle of ensuing conflicts. The film demonstrates that the history of this structure shows continual cleavage in this lineage generated by conflict over alliance and competition with the other lineages. The film traces the ax fight to this past series of cleavages and conflicts by identifying the opponents who fight one another in terms of kinship (lineage) alliances. The film argues that it is in the fighter's interest and perhaps at times his/her obligation to start or join a fight *(or stay out of the fight as was the case with Mohesiwa)* such as the one documented.

Despite extensive diagramming of the kinship system, (which are the obvious theoretical constructions of anthropologists) the kinship categories are a **given** in the film, used to designate a fighter's motive in either alliance or competition with another fighter. Further, the marriage prepscriptions of the Yanomamo are not explained. As can be gleaned from Chagnon's written ethnography, these rules provide the structural basis for competition (for women) among the lineages and which would most likely lead to alliances and cleavages among them.

The Yanomano practice bilateral cross-cousin marriage. According to Chagnon, a man must marry a woman whom he calls **SUWABIYA,** a category which includes his matrilateral and patrilateral cross cousins, and their children. Bilateral cross-cousin marriage is a prescriptive form of marriage among the Yanomamo — a form of marriage which predominates statistically and ideologically.[13] The ideal model of a restricted exchange[14] involves the exchange of sisters of men in one group for the sisters of men in another group. The men of one group give sisters and receive wives as do the men of the other group. Each man marries his mother's brother's daughter who is also his father's sister's daughter.
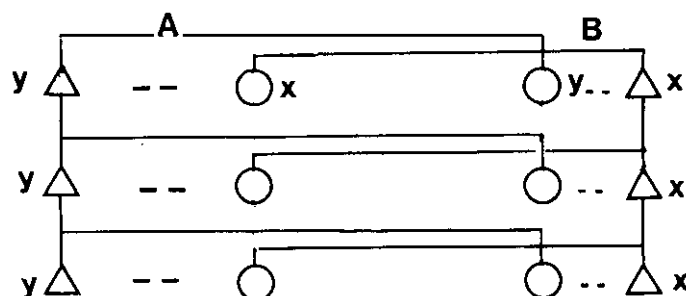
Ideal model of restricted exchange (bilateral x-cousin marriage) *

The Yanomamo marriage system resembles this form of restricted exchange but is made more complex because (a) there are usually more than two lineages involved in marriage exchange and (b) there are usually two or more men in each lineage in each generation.

Chagnon's ideal model of Yanomamo marriage reflects this system of exchange involving three groups. The following diagram is a simplified version of Chagnon's model.[15]
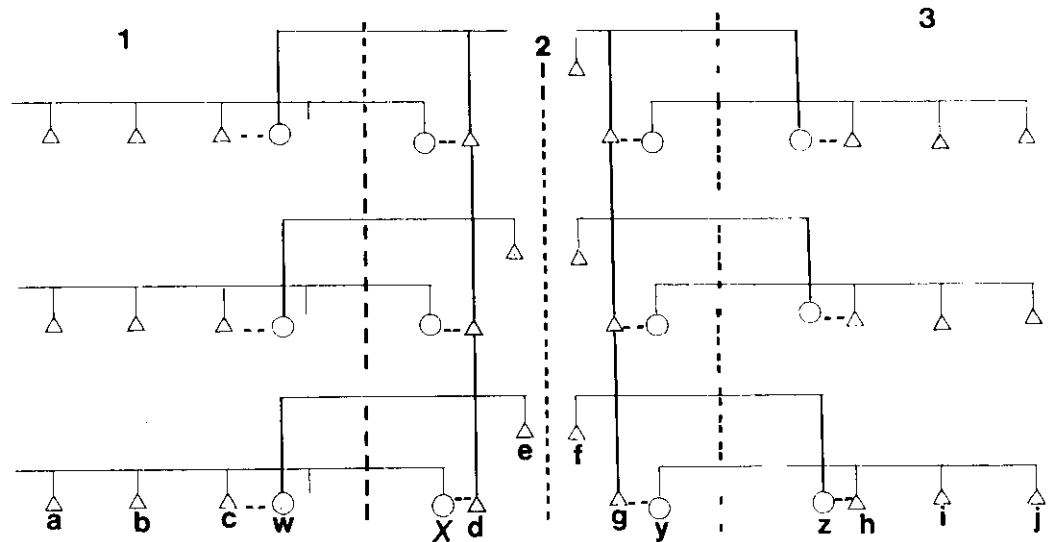
From the above diagram there are evident two classes of competitors:

(1) brothers
(2) men from unrelated lineages exchanging women with the same third lineage.

For example, brothers a, b, c, of lineage I compete for mbd/fzd 'w'. As well, the men of lineage I compete with the men of lineage III for the women in lineage II (men a, b, c, of lineage I can marry 'w' or 'z' as can men h, i, j, of lineage III). By contrast, the men d, e, f, g, of lineage II cannot marry either 'W' or 'z' because she is called "sister". Although only c is married to 'w' a, b, and c, call d and e **shoriwe** (brother-in-law). Parallel to this, the men of lineage III (h, i, j,) call 'w' **SUWABIYA** (wife) and call d and e **shoriwe.**

Thus the men of lineage I and lineage III are competitors for the women of lineage II, and the men of lineage II are allies (as brothers-in-law) with the men of both I and III. Thus lineage II experiences severe conflict and cleavage because of the contradictory allegiances it must hold. It is upon this basis that Chagnon demonstrates, through the Yanomano's historical problem of demography (three lineages living in two villages), why specific individuals ally themselves for and against other individuals and why other men attempt to mediate the dispute.

The mapping of kinship and social structure in the film provides the categories which organize the ax fight from a seemingly unstructured brawl into a strategic, rule-governed ritual. The success of the filmmaker's strategy ultimately depends upon the acceptance that filmed images of the Yanomamo social reality can be organized by an ideal model of Yanomamo kinship to provide an explanation of their behavior. The actual fighting (surface behaviour) is shown to be rule-governed (rules of escalation) and this is further explained by the more "profound" rules of social structure to which a history of the conflicts are attributed.

This constitutes the completed explanation of the event. All that remains is for the filmmakers to show the final edited version of the film.

The question arises, however, as to why this should be necessary if the audience has already seen and received an adequate explanation of the as fight.

Sequence 4: The Edited Version

The edited version of the ax fight is the last sequence in the film. It stands as a comparative statement on the construction of a film, that is, it is viewed in terms of the sequences which precede it: the unedited footage of the ax fight and the theoretical and editorial preferences of the filmakers.

The edited version of the ax fight would normally have been the only version that audiences would have experienced at a film performance. Its inclusion in this film is to allow the audience to compare the unedited version with the edited version and in this way be made aware of the editorial choices of the filmakers.

The inclusion of the edited version, however, poses a morecomplexproblem, one that places into question the earlier claims of the film to equate the visual with the empirical. With the inclusion of the edited version, the filmakers are making clear that what an audience normally experiences as empirical reality is a highly contrived and organized version of that reality; in this sense the unedited version is something quite different from the normal experience of empirical reality through film. The unedited version (sequence one) **looks** more spontaneous and therefore more authentic when represented as such, however, it is incomprehensible because it no longer corresponds to an audience's expectation of how reality is depicted in film. Thus, in terms of film, the representation of reality has no empirical equivalent to "what's really there**"**, but only to the traditional modes of film representation which an audience has learned to de-code.[16]

16. "We know that it is necessary to be trained to recognize the photographic image. We know that the image which takes shape on celluiod is analogous to the retinal image but not to that which we perceive." U. Eco, Articulations of the Cinematic Code. in Nichols, **Movies and Methods.** U. of California, p.423-430, 1976.

17. This is made explicit by Willer and Willer in a diagram which shows the logic of empiricism as a cause-effect relation between two observables. Willer and Willer, **Systematic Empiricism: Critique of a Pseudo-Science:** (Englewood Cliffs) New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1973.

in effect, the ax fight has never been shown; instead, the film **The Ax Fight** presents different **modalities of the visible** which are edited to represent different ways of organising the event for the purposes of explaining it. This places into crisis the filmmakers' conflation of the empirical with the visible because the empirical is always a connection between observables which states in a general way **what** has been observed.[17] It can never be a modality of the real, it must be **the** real. What has been observed in this case, however, is dependent on how the theoretical dispositions of both the filmmakers and the audience. Despite its intentions, the film has managed to demonstrate that there is no one empirical reality that can be made explicit through a cinematic representation.

The following table shows that the film corresponds its mode of the visible and mode of address in the expository interests of providing a complete explanation. This correspondence is a cinematic strategy which ultimately minimizes a self-reflexive relationship to the film and maximizes the argumentative effect of the film's explanation to its audience.

SEQUENCE	MODALITY OF THE VISIBLE	MODE OF ADDRESS	STAGE OF EXPLANATION
Sequence 1 Unedited Version	'Pure' visible	Indirect, Sync Sound Cinéma Vérité	No Explanation Offered
Sequence 2 Black leader & Voice over	'Non'-visible	Indirect, Non-sync Voices of Anthropologists as Social Actors	Wrong Explanation Offered
Sequence 3A Stop-action Slow-motion	'Sur'-visible	Direct 'Voice of God' 'News' format	Detailed Observation Offered
Sequence 3B Kinship Diagram	'In'-visible	Direct, Non sync 'Voice of God' Images of Illustrations	Theoretical Explanation Offered
Sequence 4 Edited Version	Visible Norm	Indirect Sync, Cinéma Vérité	No Explanation Offered (already given)

In sequence (1) the modes of the visible is purported to be in a "pure" state (i.e. the relatively least unmediated by editing choices); the mode of address is indirect, i.e. the audience is included (positioned) as "ideal witness", and no explanation is offered. It is this sequence which provides the basis for later equating the visible and the empirical.

In sequence (2) there is no visibility whatsoever. The audience, however, is included indirectly once again as witness to the soundtrack (a discussion between the filmmakers/anthropologists). which as stated earlier, gives the wrong explanation.

In sequence (3a), the images presented through stop-action and slow-motion are the most obviously "un-real". Their obvious manipulation allows a detailed explanation of the event to take place. The filmmakers begin their explanation by connecting observations of sequence (1) to fighting rules and kinship categories which are identified with the aid of the stop-action and motion techniques. It is also at this stage that direct address is introduced to aid in the exposition of the explanation.

Sequence (3b) presents the "in"-visible — a model of Yanomamo social structure. The observations of sequence (1) and the detailed descriptions of sequence (3a) both contribute to an empirical definition of the event. These

empirical observations are then mapped within the pre-set pattern of kinship relationships, the history of which becomes the locus for the conceptual; the mode of address is direct as the narrator clarifies the meaning of the kinship diagrams.

Sequence (4) presents the visible as an audience normally experiences it; it is edited in terms of narrative,[18] pacing, lens focus, etc. No further explanation is offered and the mode of address returns to an indirect exposition using a cinema verite style.

In terms of this structure, the strategy of the filmmakers may be identified in two complementary stages. The use of the direct mode of address when presenting their explanation of the event gives the filmmakers a rhetorical advantage. It allows them to make specific statements to the audience in a pedagogical manner. This mode of address in the sequences which offer the explanation are only effective, however, in relation to the prior establishment of an empirical experience for the audience in Sequences 1 and 2. This is attempted using an indirect mode of address and a cinema verite style to generate the feeling of spontaneity and authenticity. The strategy of the film, then, is directed towards making the audience accept its explanation for the event based on the film having earlier "captured" the spontaneous empirical facts of the ax fight. The film then constructs the appropriate mode of address to fit the modality of the visible it wishes to represent with the stage of the explanation it wishes to advance.

The structure of the film also reveals two distinct levels of operation of the film as a text. In terms of the event, the ax fight is the empirical level of the film- a spatio-temporal index of the real. The second level of operation is that of the explanation of the event. Using specific expository codes, this conceptual level logically orders the image-sound relationship to both invoke and gratify the desire for explanation (knowledge).

This suggests that rather then exposing itself in terms of its textual layers, the film internalizes its own semiotic process for the purpose of maintaining a conventional anthropological explanation.

Notes and Reviews

WOMEN IN FILM NOIR, edited by E. Ann Kaplan. London: British Film Institute, 1978. 129 pages.

In **The Savage Mind,** Claude Levi-Strauss proposes that a distinctive feature of human consciousness is its impetus to "classify" the external world according to particular conceptual schemas, thereby imposing meaningful order on perceptual reality. A cursory survey of recent debates on **genre** study within film theory and criticism seems to indicate that this classifying urge is the only common ground shared by film scholars and critics who have turned their attention to this critical methodology. When the more practical task arises of delimiting the bases upon which any given film can (or cannot) be classified under a **genre** rubric, a plethora of criteria is proposed.[1]

One contested ground is whether the recurring sets of conventions which constitute a **genre** and generate audience recognition derive primarily from thematic preoccupations or the deployment of certain formal devices. The former tendency argues that the **"common denominator"** of a part-icular **genre** consists of a standard repertoire of thematic motifs or stock situations the articulation of which employs a corresponding stock of cinematic devices. The latter approach gives greater weight to the detection of certain pro-filmic (characters, settings, etc.) and filmic (mise-en-scene) codes in establishing a film's status vis-a-vis a particular **genre.** Debate eventually settles upon whether **genre** production is primarily effected by foregrounding thematic or formal codes.

A second area of dispute concerning **genre** follows closely on the heels of the preceding debate. Classificatory attempts often take place from diametrically opposed positions. On the one hand, there are film critics and scholars who categorize certain films under **genre** headings in accordance with what are understood as **objective** cinematic structures. It is often pointed out that this "objectivist" determination of **genre** runs the risk of imposing categorical constructs on films (and their audiences) from the "privileged" position occupied by those who "study" film. The most telling failure of this mode of classifaction is the frequent fact of non-correspondence between such **genre** definition and audience recognition. Very simply, the sets of conventions which critics locate as identifying a certain **genre** may not be those perceived or acknowledged by film audiences. As Andrew Tudor notes: **"**Structures do no 'leap out' from the subject matter...they are at least partly imposed by the consciousness of the observer.**"**[2]

The opposing tendency, then, shifts the onus of **genre** definition onto viewers, who, sharing a **"**common cultural consensus**"** are expected to derive a common set of meanings from a given film, and in this shared recognition proclaim a film to be fundamentally similar to others or not. This more subjectively-defined, "hermeneutic" approach affirms that **"(g)enre** is what we collectively believe it to be."[3]

1. For a sampling of there de-bates see Andrew Tudor, **"Genre** and Critical Methodo-logy", and Richard Collins. **"Genre:** A Reply to Ed Bus-combe" in Bill Nichols (ed.), **Movies and Methods,** University of California Press, 1976; Ed Buscombe, "The Idea of **Genre** in the American Cinema**",** **Screen,** Vol. 11, no. 2 (1970); Marc Vernet, **"Genre",** and James Damico, **"Film Noir:** A Modest Proposal". in **Film Reader** 3, 1978.

2. Andrew Tudor. ibid. P. 125.

3. Ibid. p. 122.

4. While this concept is rife throughout Marx's writings. it is most succint in the following passage: "Just as our opinion of an individual is not bared on what he thinks of himself. so can we not judge of such a period of transformation by ita own consciouness", "Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy", Robert C. Tucker (ed.), **The Marx-Engels Reader,** W.W. Norton & Ca.. N.Y. 1972. p.5.

However, Marx's warning that we cannot simply judge an age and its constituents on the basis of its own self-understanding[4] seems appropriate to this latter method of **genre** classification. At the very least, any method of **genre** classifaction must be able to account for its own logic of differentiation and specify those conditions (socio-economic, psychological, cinematic, etc.) which structure audience expectation in order to account for the satisfaction (or not) of this aroused expectation. What is called for, it would seem, is an approach to **genre** study (and film theory in general) which maintains a dialectic between objectivist/ subjectivist, structural/hermenuetic methods of interpretation,

WOMEN IN FILM NOIR, a recent BFI publication issued in conjunction with the 1978 Edinburgh Film Festival, does not make its primary task an analysis of **film noir** as genre, nor does it comment extensively on the problems such an endeavour **might** encounter. **Genre** definition (with one exception) is generally limited in this collection to the notion of "recognisable conventions" in thematic, narrative and iconographic elements. This lack of rigour with respect to the theoretical problems of *genre* specification constitutes a source of weakness in the monograph as a whole. To discuss women in any **genre** without initially paying heed to the controversy over **genre** classification is misleading insofar as it presupposes a consensus on concepts, methodology and the very nature of the object under study, which does not yet exist. Nonetheless, the theoretical importance of the monograph **WOMEN IN FILM NOIR** lies elsewhere.

As E. Ann Kaplan notes in her introduction, what initially draws the attention of feminist film theorists to **film noir** is the centrality of women and, specifically, women's sexuality to the unfolding of the **film noir** world. The shared point of departure of each essay in the collection is the supposition that the visual, narrative and iconographic conventions of **film noir** have a significance extending beyond the question of **genre** status, to that of the ideological function served by the placement and displacement of women within these conventions. In formulating the specific **interplay** between film noir and the dynamics of patriarchal culture, **WOMEN IN FILM NOIR** opens **genre** study to feminist analysis.

At the same time, since the authors draw upon varying methodologies (psychoanalytic, semiological, sociological, etc.) for their respective analyses, a close reading of this work will likely reveal points of tension and contradiction among them. Though again, regrettably, the monograph does not address the problems for feminist film theory raised by these methodological preferences, the result is not a tolerant political pluralism. There is a central theoretical thread which unifies the collection as a whole and informs the political perspective of each article. The recurring problematic concerns the larger project of examining the relation of **film noir** to the dominant mode of cinematic production and can be posed thus: Does the mode of representation employed by **film noir** deny like the self-effacing "classic text" the ideological tensions and contradictions immanent in the social order? Or, are the cracks and fissures apparent at the visual/narrative/iconographic level which permit "another" reading of the film text, one which is potentially subversive?

Christine Gledhill's opening essay problematizes this issue which is of decisive importance to the development of feminist film criticism. Gledhill distinguishes between two different approaches to the study of women in film. One engages as critical criteria the extent to which a film achieves a "realistic" portrayal of women, presenting their personalities, situations and relationships "as they really are". The struggle to be waged is deemed to be primarily one against stereotyping, objectification, or

the absence of "positive" female roles and characters. The transcription of reality **onto** film is not taken to be inherently suspect. By contrast, as Gledhill says, the project of the film criticism denies the existence of a directly apprehended reality transmitted by a neutral cinematic apparatus. "Reality" is itself historically-constituted as a material and phenomenal level by socio-economic forces, and any attempt to render this reality must necessarily be subject to these same socially-produced forces. Neither does this emerging tendency in feminist film theory see the product of artistic practice as a discrete object awaiting the "correct" analysis, but rather as a text — "a social space through which various languages (social, cultural, political, aesthetic) circulate and interact."[5] Textual interpretation is therefore contingent upon specifying the nature of this interplay. Gledhill articulates this shift in critical inquiry as a move away **"from the interpretation of immanent meaning to the interrogation of the production of meaning."** The manner in which meaning is produced by cinema's particular mediation of reality, and the ideological basis of the filmic mode of representation must form the basis of further feminist analysis.

5. Feminism and Film: Critical Approaches", **Camera Obrcura,** no. 1, 1976. P. 5.

6. An earlier appropriation of the cocept of 'discourse' for feminist purposes can be found in Claire Johnston (ed.), **The Work of Dorothy Arzner,** BFI. 1975.

One consequence of Gledhill's reformulation of the critical project now facing feminist film theory is the positing of the presence of a **"women's discourse"**.[6] While reprimands about using the term **"discourse"** loosely greeted the **"**Women in **Film Noir"** panel at Edinburgh, the following tentative clarification offered by Gledhill holds the promise of opening new avenues of exploration:

> "A discourse is shared by a socially constituted group of speakers or particular social practice, provides the terms of what can or cannot be said and includes all those items, aesthetic, semantic ideological, social which can be said to speak for or refer to those whose discourse it is."

Though many discourses are presented in the film text, it will be a major task of film analysis to unearth the gender and class-based discourses through which power relationships are inscribed.

In the remainder of her article, Gledhill attempts such an identification of the structural features of **film noir** (plot devices, characterizations, and visual styles) which produce gender specific discourse. For Gledhill, the progressive moment of **film noir** is the occasional eruption of the female discourse which "denaturalizes" the dominant discourse of the film text, and threatens (if only momentarily) the patriarchal hegemony upon which the latter is based.

Sylvia Harvey continues the inquiry into the specific place occupied by **film noir** women in the production of meaning. Harvey locates film noir's specificity in its visual style and mise-en-scene, which express the concerns of a social order in crisis. The tension, unease and disequilibrium evoked through **film noir's** iconography (frame compositions, lighting, camera angles) offer visual evidence of the instability provoked by such structural changes in the socio-economic order as the influx of women into the labour force. Harvey maintains that these tensions and frustrations congeal in **film noir** at the thematic level, in the representation of the family. The family plays a major role in reproducing the economic, social and ideological conditions which secure the existence of patriarchal capitalism (Engels). As women are the primary agents for the execution of certain tasks essential to this order, (including biological reproduction, socialization and domestic labour), their continued acquiescence is imperative. A refusal of the domestic role, and the sexual submissiveness entailed, signals a transgression against patriarchal control. **Film noir** women, who display both a lack of investment in domestic relationships and an assertion of sexual independence, constitute the dilemma around which the narrative and visual motif unfolds. As Harvey notes **"**women are accorded the function of an ideological safety valve, but this function is ambivalent.**"** **Film noir** women embody the potential fulfillment of desire not possible under the familial conditions of

patriarchal capitalism, yet are seen to simultaneously invite the severe retrib-
ution which is portrayed as the inevitable outcome of non-conformity to
traditional roles. Thus, the family structure is initially challenged, only to be
reaffirmed as a necessary mainstay of individual and social stability. However,
the fact that transgression against the patriarchal family is even posed by
the suggestion of its absence, points to the presence of bursting seams in the
social fabric. In its "excess of meaning", Harvey locates **film noir's** potential
to sow the seeds of counter-ideologies.

Gledhill's introduction of the notion of a **"female discourse"** which occasion-
ally breaks through the surface of a dominant male discourse is given some
empirical content by Janey Place. In an analysis based on frame enlargements,
Place contends that while the final intention of **film noir's** thematic and visual
depiction of women is to secure male control of female sexuality, the very
intensity evoked by the imagery of a sexually powerful and independent
woman occasionally subverts this containment. The female protagonist of
film noir transcends her inevitable demise through the visual impact she
achieves with audiences accustomed to the controlled images and submissive
roles offered by most filmic representations of women. This study of the
interaction between image and audience is an important contribution to the
structural/hermeneutic dialectic recommended earlier, though Place herself
argues against applying **genre** analysis to **film noir.** Because **film noir's** theme
and style articulate particular historical conditions of the US. in the 1940's
and early 50's Place argues that it is more accurate to see it as a **"movement"**
similar to German Expressionism, Italian Neo-Realism, etc. By contrast, **genre**
classification should be reserved for thematic concerns and iconographic
styles which can be expressed across time, space and varying ideologies.
While Place's distinction between "movement" and **genre** promises to rescue
genre classification from conceptual imprecision, the continual **recycling** of
film noir themes and styles (c.f. Daniel Schmid and Fassbinder) appears to
undermine the historically specific nature which she would attribute to it.
Drawing upon Bachofen's claim that analysis of myth yields evidence of an
overthrow of mother-right by father-right, Pam Cook sees an identical func-
tion operative in **Mildred Pierce,** where the visual conventions and narrative
structure of **film noir** establish and maintain a hierarchy of a male discourse
over the female. With a similar film/spectator orientation as Janey Place, Cook
notes that devices such as light and shadow contrast, and the deliberate with-
holding of the reverse shot predispose the audience to identify the female
protagonist as the   site of the film's   duplicity and accord the male figure pri-
vileged knowledge of the nature of the enigma. However, testimony to the
struggle between male and female discourse for the controlling voice of the
film extends beyond **film noir's** own coding devices to the interplay between
two sets of generic conventions. Of particular analytic significance is Cook's
observation that the female discourse of the film draws noticeably upon the
visual conventions of melodrama (even lighting, stable camera angle) and its
subject matter (the ideological contradictions of patriarchy as manifested
through family relations). By contrast, the male discourse remains within the
visual and thematic parameters of the "classic" **noir** style, through which it
asserts the superiority of the patriarchal "metadiscourse". As the **film noir**
narrative moves the spectator from a suspended state of "misrecognition" to
the resolution of the enigma, its structuring activity eventually suppresses the
female voice and invests the power of Truth in the surrogate representative
of patriarchal law. Cook proposes that the very movement of the text re-
capitulates the psychic preconditions for the resolution of Oedipal conflict:
the repression of motherhood and submission to the authority of the
patriarchal father.

 E. Ann Kaplan also counters the view of male hegemony and the necessary
containment of the female voice. Through his manipulation of **film noir**
conventions, Fritz Lang's **Blue Gardenia** is seen to articulate a separate male
and female discourse, whose structure provides considerable space for an

internal critique of forms of patriarchal domination.

Richard Dryer's article shifts the emphasis of the collection slightly to take up the corresponding problematic of **film noir's** treatment of masculinity. Just as the representation of **film noir** women serves in the final analysis, to soothe the anxiety evoked by uncontrolled women, insecurity around defining masculinity characterizes the depiction of male **film noir** heroes. In contrast to the traditional method of ascribing and celebrating clearly circumscribed male attributes, Dryer's thesis is that **film noir** defines masculinity negatively — that is, in terms of what the hero is not. As the male protagonist wades through seedy territory and encounters characters (homosexual or female) whose abnormality is unequivocally suggested, notions of what constitute "normal" masculinity take clearer form. Moreover, the audience is invited to make the association between abnormality and the unfathomable. What cannot be comprehended, must necessarily be evil. In a patriarchal context, this equation is extended to include women and homosexuals, whose behaviour is at odds with social norms. When these conventions are reversed to throw doubt on the "normality" of the hero, as Dryer maintains is the case with the film **Gilda,** the inadequacy of traditional gender definitions becomes even more acute. It attests to the strength of patriarchal culture, concludes Dryer, that **film noir** could expose such gender anxiety, yet ultimately recuperate its subversive significance.

Claire Johnston analyses **Double Indemnity** as a **sub-genre** of the detective **genre** indebted to **roman noir** conventions. The distinguishing feature of the **roman noir** text is the presence of two narrative codes- the code of the detective story which structures the enigma, and a first person narration relating a memory of past events in the filmic present. In **Double Indemnity** these two narrative discourses function to produce a split relationship to knowledge. The first person narration professes to tell the truth about the order of events and corresponding role of characters, but is supplanted by a visual discourse whose manner of functioning guarantees it a more privileged position as the bearer of Truth. According to Johnston, the visual discourse achieves its end by locking the spectator into a particular sense of identity congruent with the camera's point of view. As the **"laws"** of patriarchy speak through this visual discourse, the ultimate resolution of the enigma is credited to its version of reality. In the case of **Double Indemnity,** the enigma is Oedipally based, marking the struggle between male desire and castration fear. When the first person narrator confronts this Oedipal dilemma and wavers, the superior forces of the patriarchal discourse step in to construct the terms of its resolution. Johnston argues that women are instrumental in forcing this Oedipal struggle to the surface: "As locus of lack/castration, as the site where radical difference is marked negatively, 'woman' is the pivot around which the circulation of male desire is played out in the text, and it is this process of circulation of desire which fixes the representation of women in the text". Johnston supports this claim with a detailed textual analysis of **Double Indemnity.** The **femme fatale** provokes the male protagonist to give expression to his repressed homosexuality in defiance of patriarchal law, but his rebellion is ultimately undone by his relation to another woman who represents an acceptance of castration and submission to the symbolic order.

7. c.f. E. Ann Kaplan, "Aspects of British Feminist Film Theory: A Critical Evaluation of Texts by Claire Johnston and Pam Cook': **Jump Cut,** no. 12/13

8. This aspect receives brief discussion in "Women and Film: A discussion of Feminist Aesthetics", Special Feminist Issue. **New German Critique.** no. 13, Winter 1978.

It is worth mentioning here that Johnston and Cook, whose work has been seminal to the development of Marxist feminist film theory, have also been criticized for their tendency to accept uncritically certain phallocentric and/or ahistorical premises of the Freud/Lacan perspective.[7] In particular, the function of women as signifier of a "lack" is held by feminist critics to privilege the position of the male spectator.[8] This point, and others related to the applicability of psychoanalytic categories to film study must continue to be debated. It is to Johnston and Cook's credit that they continue to provide much of the theoretical substance with which to do so.

Christine Gledhill's essay on **Klute** provides the collection with an appropriate conclusion. Gledhill's contention is that **Klute** combines the conventions of film noir with the fictional and stylistic conventions of the European art film. The result is the articulation of two traditions which **"**produce...a structure in which the problem posed by Women's Liberation is displaced onto the 'trouble' the female image constitutes for the former — the **film noir —** only to be recuperated and resolved in terms of the moral perspectives of the latter — the European tradition.**"** Gledhill analyzes Klute to identify the structural devices which are harnessed to current "liberated" rhetoric. The modern day **noir** thriller in fact dilutes the subversive potential of classic **film noir** conventions by introducing investigative structures and forms of thematic organization which extend male control over the representation of women to even further reaches. Even the female discourse which surfaced in spite of the dominant male discourse of 40's **film noir** is now easily accomodated in the guise of a liberalized discourse which disclaims any partisan position.

This concluding note seems rather pessimistic. However, **Women in Film Noir** stands as evidence that feminist film theory is developing the critical tools to expose the basis of patriarchy's current fears. It shows us how long-standing inconsistencies in the patriarchal model of woman are foregrounded in the representation of women in film.

Reviewed by NANCY WOOD

HELP US MAKE A FILM ABOUT WOMEN FIGHTING INCO

The strike at **INCO** Ltd. in Sudbury is now in its seventh month. This strike by Local 6500 of the USWA is fast becoming one of the most important struggles in Canadian labour history. The 11,700 member local has fired the imaginations of rank and file unionists throughout the country.

One of the most important facts in this struggle is the active role that the worker's wives have assumed. Traditionally wives have borne the brunt of labour disputes. Strikes actually increase their workload as they struggle to make ends meet on the meagre food vouchers, ward off angry bill collectors and cope with disoriented husbands. Often they are uninformed of the process of collective bargaining and of the issues in the strike. Frustration and lack of knowledge in the past have been used by the Company to pressure the Union into premature settlements.

But in the Sudbury strike, the wives of strikers have come to see Company policies as the major threat to their own security and the happiness of their husbands and children. Using the skills and experience they have gained as wives and mothers, they have helped to create an incredible community solidarity. An enormous Christmas party for 10,000 children, clothing depots, a community-wide bean supper. a chorus to sing union songs. a telephone tree, the "you have a friend" crisis committee, family pickets at plant gates and a children's comic book called "What is a Strike" are some of the weapons they have used.

Their active role in this strike has won them a long overdue respect from their husbands, the community and the women's movement for the role they have always played in managing tensions and building the social fabric of the community. It has given them new confidence in their own abilities and experience in organizing public speaking and in trade union affairs that they had not previously dreamed of having.

We want to make a film about these women and their role in the strike.

The fifty minute film is to be made as a collective effort by some Sudbury women and some Montreal Filmmakers (Martin Duckworth. Joyce Rock, Sophie Bissonnette). We have applied to the Canada Council and the Quebec Film Institute for some funding but almost $20,000.00 has to be raised from private sources.

We need your help to make this film.

Donations, which are tax deductible, should be sent to:
"Development Education Centre"
Wives Supporting the Strike Film Fund
121 Avenue Road
Toronto, Ontario, Canada   M5R 2G3

For more information please contact:
Joan Kuyek
260 Edmund Street
Sudbury, Ontario, Canada   P3E 1M2   (705-675-3211)

"A HEALTHY CASE OF CRAZINESS (?)"

by William Roberts

OUTRAGEOUS

D: Richard Benner, sc: Richard Benner, based on "Butterfly Ward" by Margret Gibson, ph: Jim Kelly, ed: George Appleby, sd: Doug Ganton, a.d.: Karen Bromely, m: Paul Hoffert, l.p.: Craig Russell, Hollis McLaren, Allan Moyle, Richert Easley, David McIlwraith, Helen Shaver, Andrée Pelletier, Jerry Salzbert, Helen Hughes, Martha Gibson, John Saxton, Rusty Ryan, pc Bill Marshall, Henk Van Der Kolk, assoc. p.: Peter O'Brian, p.c.: Film Consortium of Canada Inc., 1977, col. 35 mm, running time: 100 minutes.

What could make a Canadian film about the particular love between a frantic schizophrenic girl and a visually representative schizophrenic female imper-sonator a cult hit? A miracle perhaps, but a "miracle" in a particular sense of the word, one which specifically signifies a sudden or multiple transformation of nature with all its attendant audience fascination.

This is the heart of *Outrageous,* the only Canadian film to open in New York last year, in the fashionable East Side's Bloomingdale belt. (Not to mention the fact that at the time *Outrageous* T-shirts were doing a brisk business out-side in the waiting theatre queues, and that on August 17, 1977, the film made Variety's **"50 Top-Grossing Films"** list.) The spectator sits amazed by protagonist **"Robin's"** proliferating female forms. Commencing with the title, the film works as a kind of delicious terror, richly textured with the ritual signs of sex, eroticism, and conjuration. But more on that later.

This is a film *seriously* saluted by critics north of the 49th parallel for its **"honest portrayal"** of Canadian currency, the Toronto landscape, an indigi-nous streetcar scene (which was originally scripted to occur in a banal laundromat), Starvin Marvin's infamous Yonge St. burlesque parlour, a crack about Air Canada flight bags, Canada Council art grants, and of course — snow, With such a revolutionary arsenal of Canadiana, *Outrageous* has been embraced as **"**acknowledging, rather than disguising, that it is a contemporary Canadian film.**"** *(Cinema Canada,* no. 41, p. 18)

What is also much celebrated is the seeming cinéma vérité rawness of the film: **"**One thing I perversely liked about the film was its really tacky visual quality; not amateur night tacky, but also not high-gloss varnish on the screen which most Canadian films seem to have.**"** *(Take One,* March, 1978, p. 26) Ahem!

And of course there is the "audacious" subject matter. A veritable circus of sub-culture caricatures. A black drag queen, who not once but twice seduces the spectator with an energetic routine done to the song **"**You Can Set the World on Fire"; "Marvin," a neurotic obsessed with placing Sino-Soviet citizenry in concentration camps; **"Perry"**, who valiantly mimics Karen Black's *Airport* appearance *or* a roller skating nun belting Ave Maria; and of course our hero/heroine "Robin" who, as a homosexual hairdresser bored with coiffing women's egos, turns to female impersonation in Toronto, where the only existing female impersonators are apparently women. Lastly, and often least, we have "Liza", our psychological albatross who continually finds herself in the significant physical entrapment of corners as she seeks relief from her **"Bone Crusher"** phobia, or is otherwise filmed as alienated, gratis the myriad or doors and open spaces which underline her predicament.

However, despite this apparent lauding of the Gay Toronto and New Mark marginals, the film is essentially and fundamentally conformist. A few altern-

ating particles of homosexuality and madness, fused by parallel montage and highlighted by the hyped audacity of it all, does not constitute a cinematic or moral insurrection. The film subverts nothing and mounts no barricades, but rather capitulates and delivers itself whole-heartedly to the prevailing Moral Order. The few brave strokes of any consequence are lost in "Robin's" entrepreneurial drive to make it big.

Such films are now commonplace. Acting as vaccines of the imagination, these plastic inoculations sanctify the status quo, revealing it as ready to accept, if even reluctantly, such lack of civil decorum, This free enterprise indulgence is qualified by but one proviso, a religious conversion to material accumulation and fascination. All outrage must simply be packageable and marketable.

"Le travail" of this film text is precisely the bourgeois fixation with the object in disguise, with the artificial, with the affluent and shimmering vestiary as constituting personality. "Robin" runs the full gamut of adorn ment, gleefully surrendering to the bourgeois rites of furs, fans, and feathers. This piquant transvestite body, enveloped in luxurious objects, and commu nicated within the pre-hypnotic cinematic state, is an irresistible "must-see" equation.

The transparent *Outrageous* is but a reverant litany to the "Big Apple" ethos where the thrill of technique obliterates substance, where imitation crushes originality, much as this style of cinema obscures, even deforms, reality **"Robin"** commands the film as our convert to rugged individualism, taking haughty refuge in the science of clothes and falsification. With all due "disco" probity, the garments and sheen replace the pith and marrow. With the substance vanquished, the thrill of the spectator is that of witnessing the previously "kinky" and perverse submit to the Moral Order, subscribe to the public mentality, become familiar, and in doing so — entertain us.

It is a celebration of the co-opted and a realization that, like the film itself "no Canadian act makes it here (Toronto) without the U.S. seal of approval," to quote one of Robin's confreres. As within the récit of the film "Robin" must sell in New York as a condition of Canadian success, "Canadian" *Outrageous* received home distribution only after blitzing New York's East Side.

Nothing is left to chance. Even "Robin's" face signifies the "face-object", deprived of any attribute other than its plasticity, constantly transforming and giving rise to an exploitable if mystical sense of the transcendental. Sexually undefined, **"Robin's"** ambivalence prods the imagination, hastens its seduction with this lack of static differentiation. The "face-object" is not a mask but rather a commercial summation of all masks. In this outsider world of madness and homosexuality, **"Robin's"** facile impersonations charm the spectator with their unconscious universality. They represent the profitable reconciliationof multiple icons in a single medium, the subversion and reproducibility of the original which characterizes the psycho-econo mics of copy proliferation and acquisition at the expense of any essential or creative comprehension.

Outside of an internal textual analysis of the film, there exists a prima facie example of such product multiplication triumphing over more intimate con- siderations. As a partial response to those critics enamoured with the inten- tionality of the visual quality, the film's director of photography, Jim Kelly, volunteers this insight: **"**The blow-up is atrocious because adequate time was not spent in the lab. I assumed that, based on what we talked about the blow-up would be changed. I learned later that because of the producers' rush to make sales and so forth, they didn't have the time. As it now stands, I think it is a horrible thing. I didn't go to the gala or anything. I just wasn't

going to sit through it; it was just too upsetting. It's unsatisfactory in terms of the colours and the tonality. Besides, the cropping they did badly affects my composition. . . no cameraman sets a shot in which the actor's head pops out of the frame! The producers had no real respect for the film medium . . . they decided without consultation, that a poor blow-up would not affect sales." There is chameleon magic at all levels.

As Roland Barthes claims, a miracle is always a sudden transformation of nature, and with *Outrageous* spectators are amazed at the sight of madness and marginals cinematically intercut, fascinated at the spectacle of "Robin's" proliferating forms, and titillated at the pleasure and reverie of detecting (and forgetting) the connections between the original (the objects of the impersonation) and the plurality of effects.

These multiple effects italicize the scope of man's potential transformations of self and nature, thus giving the audience the pleasurable measure of the individual's inherent power. It is a most politically liberal concept indeed, but not politically revolutionary.

Politically reactionary is that cultural code of the film least brought before critical scrutiny. *Outrageous* is a free-wheeling mockery through feminine nature. It is a cinematic, theatrical, and cultural euphoria of taunts at prestigious female successes of the spectacle. Women are impersonated by a man who plays at a superior summation of all their talents. "Robin" plays at being women; he is the coordinating Muse. But the objects of the delirium are the women — their vaunted vanities and flaunted frailties.

The price of a feminine mutiny from the hearth and departure from strict motherhood, is this novel bohemian ridicule by a homosexual male. It is still a male world, gay or not, pressing in on all traces of the feminine, constituting it, humouring it, and finally slapping it with the insult of easy reproduction. (All true women in the film are either bitches, stupid, or incapable of reproduction.)

Outrageous is anything but a Canadian work of cinematic revolt. It is, however, cultural evidence of the insidious subtlety of the American marketing marvel. Toronto is the most American of Canadian metropolises (its lone distinguishing characteristic from other American centres is that it is overseen by the shortest mayor on the continent) and this film succeeds only as the Canadian Little Apple's homage to its southern mentor. *Outrageous* is a film busy with the salvation of an imported status quo, with a comic acceptance of New York acculturation. By revealing its fringe idiosyncracies and blemishes, i.e. the cold treatment of insanity and the self-persecution of stereotyped homosexuals, the film renders the prevailing system quite "naturally" imperfect but tolerant. The often humouristic confession of a little sexual persecution, individual alienation, and cultural colonization immunizes the audience from an acknowledgement of any fundamental brutality in the present arrangement.

Craig Russell, the *Outrageous* centre-piece, recently quipped during his nightclub routine that "Sex is only a matter of lighting." One might also assert that the critical and popular attraction of *Outrageous* is dependant upon equally superficial phenomena. ◯

CINÉ-TRACTS

BATISSE
Ouimetoscope
31 Aout 1907.