Storied Streams of History: A Documentary Navigation along the St. Lawrence River

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ABSTRACT

Storied Streams of History: A Documentary Navigation along the St. Lawrence River

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The St. Lawrence River forms one of the most important inland waterways on the planet. It also has had a determining impact on history and the peoples along its shores. The river carries memories, attachments, and legacies flowed over centuries. This research-creation—in the form of a written thesis and an accompanying multilinear web documentary—explores the significance of place in shaping relations to history as inspired by the St. Lawrence River. The thesis combines theorizations of place from socio-geographic and philosophic study, as elaborated principally by Doreen Massey and Edward S. Casey, with theoretical and practical advancements of interactive web documentary and of the essay film from film studies. It then builds on these theories of place as event—as an agent of shifting relations through time and space—and of documentary representation by applying them to the St. Lawrence River. In so doing, it elaborates the conceptual frames of place, boundary, and navigation. These frameworks are broadened in the filming, editing, and presentation of a documentary that features the voices and insights of an artist, an adventurer, an environmentalist, a writer, a teacher and an historian who have all encountered the river and have also been shaped by it. The thesis concludes that the theories of place developed by Massey, Casey, and others can creatively blend with storytelling by the river, deepening understandings of history and ways of engaging the place-event known as the St. Lawrence.

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I would like to thank my thesis committee, for their generous time and attention, orienting the contribution a Ph.D. student can hope to make. Dr. Brenda Longfellow, Dr. Steven High, Dr. Tamara Vukov, and Dr. Matt Soar, your insights and feedback were enlightening and have spawned new reflections on how to advance knowledge from research-creation.

With deep gratitude, I thank the wonderful participants that made this project what it is: Mylène Paquette, Monique Durand, René Derouin, Martine Chatelain, Pearl Grubert, and Roger La Roche. Their spirit, wisdom, and generosity inspired this research-creation in countless ways and serve as a lasting reminder of the power of story.

Finally, to my friends and family, I thank you dearly. Your undying encouragement, care, and curiosity have been beacons of light. To my father, your help and support have meant everything. Thank you for shining the way forward, even when it was hard to see. I am blessed to have been so well-surrounded on this journey, which has taught me more about life than anything else. Du fond de mon cœur, je vous remercie de votre soutien et de votre amour.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

Preamble

I would like to begin by acknowledging that this project was conducted on unceded Indigenous territory, on the lands and waters of which the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the custodian. It is with respect to their history and to ongoing connections with the past, present, and future that I present this research-creation.[1]

As research-creation, this doctoral project comprises two elements: a written thesis, in the pages that follow, and a documentary entitled *De courants et d'histoires*, made available online.

Harmonizing and mutually instructing, reading the thesis and viewing the documentary forms a productive joint endeavour. The upcoming chapters will be appreciated more deeply with an existing familiarity with the personal stories and reflections within the documentary. Conversely, reading the thesis will help contextualize some of the ideas explored in the documentary. To balance acquaintance with the storytelling and conceptual contextualization, the suggested trajectory for reading and viewing is to begin by reading this thesis until the end of Chapter 2 (p. 55), then to explore the documentary, and then to continue reading the thesis. Much like the research-creative process itself, the thesis and the documentary are complementary and concurrent, informing one another.

The documentary can be viewed at the following url: http://courants-et-histoires.com/webdoc/

Username: courants
Password: fleuvemtlriver

[1] This acknowledgement is adapted from the territorial acknowledgement created by Concordia University's Indigenous Directions Leadership Group (2017). To read the entire territorial acknowledgement, please visit https://www.concordia.ca/about/indigenous/territorial-acknowledgement.html.

Introduction

Je suis à la recherche d'un lieu. Et souvent dans mon œuvre, le lieu détermine l'œuvre.[2]
—René Derouin

In his pensive, nearly wistful voice, multidisciplinary artist René Derouin contemplates the significance of place in shaping memory, identity, and creativity. We are sitting in his studio, in the serene, bright lower level of his house in the Laurentians. I had asked to interview him for this research-creation, which involved producing a web documentary, entitled *De courants et d'histoires*, exploring how relations to history are shaped by place, as inspired by the St. Lawrence River—one of the world's longest waterways that has been so central to the history of the continent and its peoples. As I sit listening to him, his words resonate with me in a way I cannot fully understand yet. Looking back, his reflection told the story of my research-creation: *le lieu détermine l'œuvre.*

Histories of place are important to engage and re-encounter, for they reveal connections to be cultivated, questions to be asked, and responsibilities for which to account. As a generative way to approach history and place, film provides a mediated space for varied stories of identification to be expressed. Web documentary opens up distinctive representational avenues for this expression by enhancing participation of the viewer and expanding the ways narratives are told, hence my choice of this medium for this endeavour. From the outset, like Derouin, I was searching for a place. As a settler, my search would be one riddled with assumption, guilt, and privilege—one that stumbled and ultimately transformed, along a venture that necessarily became as much inward-looking as outward. As a Montrealer, my search would bring me to the links and disconnects—the traces and elisions—that mark the complex history of a territory defined by water. *Je suis à la recherche d'un lieu*.

Spanning 3, 200 kilometres from the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence River forms one of the most important inland waterways on the planet. According to Environment and Climate Change Canada, the St. Lawrence hydrographic system, which includes the Great Lakes, drains more than 25% of Earth's freshwater reserves and ranks 16th

[2] "I'm always searching for a place. Often in my art, place determines the work of art." (my translation)

worldwide for its mean annual flow, 12, 600 m³/s, off Quebec City.[3] More than 80% of Quebec's population lives along the shores of the river and its tributaries and these supply drinking water for 50% of Quebecers (over four million people).[4]

The river was named St. Lawrence after the travels of European explorer Jacques Cartier, but Indigenous peoples always had their own names for it. For example, the Innu call the river *Wepistukujaw Sipo*. In Abenaki, it is referred to as *Moliantegok*.[5] In Mohawk, the term used for river is *kania'taratátie* and the St. Lawrence River is referred to as *kania'tarowá:nen*, where the suffix "wá:nen" connotes "huge."[6] As shall be seen later, the very names we give places informs how we relate to them and historicize them.

Beyond the significance of its geography and hydrography, the St. Lawrence River has had a determining impact on history and the peoples along its shores. It is a place enlivened by the multiple stories that continually evolve and often confront each other in its streams. At different places, it forms a daunting boundary between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. From Montreal to the middle of Lake Erie, the river was transformed into a commercial seaway that, as will be examined more later, became instrumental in how the river's history gets told, and left devastating impacts on the Indigenous peoples who live by the river.

The river carries memories, attachments, and legacies which have flowed over centuries. This research-creation sets out to explore and present some of its narratives and to learn from them.

Back in Derouin's studio, I am intrigued by his journey as an artist, one through which the place of the river, at times ineffably or even insidiously, cultivated both source and evolving path for identification and creation. One of his greatest works of art was the creation of an installation at the contemporary art museum Rufino Tamayo in Mexico City made up of tens of thousands of individually sculpted ceramic figurines, representing migrants, laid out on a vast wooden base. A few years later, he brought back the ceramic migrants to Quebec and in a symbolic artistic venture, deposited the migrants in the St. Lawrence River. Derouin grew up by the river; it

[3] "The St. Lawrence River," Environment and Climate Change Canada, last modified July 14, 2017, http://www.ec.gc.ca/stl/default.asp?lang=En&n=F46CF5F8-1%20.

[4] "The St. Lawrence River," Ministère du Développement durable, Environnement et Lutte contre les changements climatiques, accessed July 20, 2018, http://www.mddelcc.gouv.qc.ca/eau/flrivlac/fleuve_en.htm.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Thomas Deer, in conversation with author, January 22, 2016.

heartens his oldest, dearest memories. It is also the source of tragic accidents, having taken the lives of both his brother and his father. It is the reason, as he would come to see, for his perennial migrations. It is the call of return for his art.

Standing on the frozen river some hundred metres away from the Lachine rapids on a cold, windy, snowy day, Mylène Paquette—adventurer, navigator, and communicator—tells her journey of relation to water, and to the river, and how it has shaped her outlook on history and sense of being. Paquette gained worldwide recognition when she became the first person from the Americas to cross the Atlantic Ocean solo by rowboat in 2013. She also practices ice canoeing in the St. Lawrence and became a David Suzuki ambassador for the river in 2011. She expresses a visceral humility toward water that only someone who has connected with it as intimately as she has can.

Not too far away from where I spoke with Paquette, I had another encounter with a woman who has a deep affection for the river—this time, on a dock in Verdun during the summer. She is Martine Chatelain, spokesperson for the non-profit water conservation organization *Eau Secours!* She shares her love for water, her care for the river, and sheds light on how the river has been usurped by capitalism and globalization. Chatelain also grew up with the river close to her. She recalls fond memories of it and strongly identifies with water.

From a recording studio, writer Monique Durand records excerpts of her book *Saint-Laurent mon amour*, a collection of memories and short stories dedicated to the river. Touched by the prose of her opening chapters—one on her memories from various encounters with the river and the other, a meditation on the lights of the river—I had initially asked to interview her. Graciously, she instead suggested that she record herself reading excerpts from those chapters. As a storyteller, this form of participation turned out to be far more compelling.

In her apartment living room, Pearl Grubert, a retired high school history teacher, reflects on the ways she taught Quebec history to children and teenagers. Grubert was actually my father's elementary and high school history teacher. We met, incidentally, at the one-year commemoration of my beloved grandmother's passing. My grandmother and I shared a passion for stories and history. Her own story, as a Holocaust survivor who emigrated from Poland after the war, was pivotal in shaping my interest in how history is shaped by place. Her story was foundational to my M.A. thesis, which looked at documentaries that explore traumatic history by returning to the place of trauma. With her connection to my grandmother, Grubert's insight into

the importance of the St. Lawrence River in the telling of Quebec's history was moving and instructive.

Finally, at the Centre d'histoire de Montréal, by the shore of the St. Lawrence in the Old Port, where an exhibit on the enduring significance of Expo 67 is being held, historian Roger La Roche shares his passion for Expo 67 and for archiving before giving a conference on the subject. La Roche's zeal about history and his meticulous, exhaustive research and conservation process invigorated my curiosity about the relevance of the river in shaping how people historically identify with place.

The artist, the adventurer, the environmentalist, the writer, the teacher, the historian—they have all encountered the river and have also been shaped by it. The movement of their experience and memory across time and space is consonant with the river's, and the sharing of their stories in this project develops an intersubjective inquiry into the meaning of that movement. In setting out to make a documentary on history and the St. Lawrence River, with the voices of storytellers along the way, I found there was a resounding presence invoked by the river's own voices that narrativizes it as place—a locative agent of encounter, passage, force, and fluidity.

Considering the rapids, for example—the rumble of the river's voice; they have been determining of how place affects history. The Iroquois, who had long lived by the river, skillfully crossed the treacherous rapids for transportation and trade between the two shores. When Jacques Cartier and other European explorers arrived by the St. Lawrence River, the rapids curtailed their colonizing passage, leading to the appropriation of the land and water around. As settler-colonialism entrenched itself, the rapids were considered an impediment to progress, so infrastructure was developed to circumvent them, such as the Lachine Canal. When that proved insufficient for growing transit, the river was dredged and land expropriated, this time on the south shore, to construct the St. Lawrence Seaway. By the mid-20th century, the riverscape had been drastically manipulated to master its temperament. One devastating consequence was that part of Kahnawà:ke's territory was expropriated to build the Seaway and the community was disinherited of its access to the river. In Mohawk, Kahnawà:ke means "by the rapids," so not only did the Seaway physically disconnect it from the river; it dispossessed it of its namesake.[7]

The rapids' roar, then, is an ongoing testimony of the river's active role in history-telling and place-making. Doreen Massey states: "If the past transforms the present, helps thereby to

[7] Thomas Deer, in conversation with author, January 22, 2016.

make it, so too does the present make the past. All of which is really a way of saying that in trying to understand the identity of places we cannot—or, perhaps, should not—separate space from time, or geography from history."[8] The goal of my research-creation was to contribute academically and in filmmaking to exploring the identity of place as history-teller. The river mobilizes this identity, and as place, it deepens, orients, and moves the narratives of history. Positing the river as place, I built a written and visual project that engaged thinking historically about what happens not only in place, but *of* place. I chose documentary as the medium to do this because it can creatively mediate visual and aural expressions of critical thought, storytelling, and reflection. Expanding upon the essay film and interactive web documentary, my project developed documentary as a mode of place-based history-telling.

Gathering the stories of an artist, an adventurer, an environmentalist, an historian, and a teacher, with the musings of a writer, along with questionings of our impact on the river and its impact on us, *De Courants et d'histoires* took the form of a multilinear web documentary. In this form, storylines co-inhabit a representational space that elicits participation to direct their trajectory. In this way, it activates the calling of the essay film, what Laura Rascaroli describes as "constant interpellation; each spectator, as an individual and not as a member of an anonymous, collective audience, is called upon to engage in a dialogical relationship with the enunciator, hence to become active, intellectually and emotionally, and interact with the text."[9] My project has been an exercise in constant interpellation, and a manifestation of it: an interpellation by varied agencies—the river, its evocations, the storytellers—and by varied modalities—the camera lens, montage, the participatory interface. This exercise went to the heart of what research-creation is, where critical inquiry and creative treatment intersect to generate a distinct epistemology: embodied (or emplaced) knowledge born of the juncture of interrogation and experimental iterative practice.

In examining the dual consciousness of research-creation, Ross Gibson argues that a shift in knowledge—acknowledgement—occurs when the researching artist conducts an experiment: "The experimenter goes consciously and interrogatively into and then out of an experience,

[8] Doreen Massey, "Places and their Pasts," *History Workshop Journal* 39, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 187.

[9] Laura Rascaroli, *The Personal Camera: Subjective Cinema and the Essay Film* (London: Wallfower Press, 2009), 35.

knowing it somewhat by immersion and then somewhat by exertion and reflection."[10] Thinking and filming with the river took on new meaning when it was tried and tested experientially; when I found myself beholden to the current. Humbled by its force, flow, and perspective, an acknowledgement, in Gibson's sense, was produced while paddle boarding on the river, one that could not have occurred from analysis alone. The shift in knowledge was experienced, registered, and with the camera, recorded, as my body and gaze were subjected to a mobile, immersive contingency of place that enabled a new outlook on the movement of the past into the present. I could study all the books and maps about the river, but it was when I was on and in it, with the waves folding over me and the current much stronger than I thought, did it produce a visceral recognition of its power as historical mover. Looking over to the shore while being carried downstream lent a privileged view of its management—how we have tried to master the river. Passing under bridges—their closeness yet daunting structure—evoked the histories of what they join and separate. Most cogently, passing under the stoic Mercier Bridge, in its strength and serenity atop the active water, recalled the complex legacy of the standoff of 1990 during the so-called "Oka Crisis" when the Mohawk people of Kahnawà:ke blocked the bridge in protest—a legacy emanating from what Massey would characterize as the "envelope of space-time" that is the bridge over the river.[11] Travelling along the river in such proximity to its water and fluidity, with a lens that could blend expansive views with submerged views, enabled a distinct engagement with the articulations of the river as place where: "place becomes an *event*, […] a scene of personal and historical happening."[12]

The river-place as a scene of personal and historical happening was explored further through the oral history that is central to my project. Each storyteller, with their distinct experience and memories of the river, brings into presence its varied space-times. From their diverse vantage points, they bring people to a different *place*, in terms of history, impact, and legacy. Convened by storytelling, the river as place takes on more than a hydrographic, locative role; it becomes a relational historical agent. Place is determining of oral history, for it transmits

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[10] Ross Gibson, "The Known World," *TEXT Special Issue, Symposium: Creative and practice-led research—current status, future plans*, no. 8 (October 2010): 5, accessed July 30, 2018, http://www.textjournal.com.au/speciss/issue8/Gibson.pdf.

[11] Massey, "Places and their Pasts," 188.

[12] Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), xxv.

the passage of knowledge through situated narrative and subjectivity. *In situ* and mobile practices of oral history provide immersive ways to encounter situated knowledge. Toby Butler's historical audio walking tour by the Thames River (detailed later) is one notable example of such practices that underscores the power of place-based oral history to reconvene located memoryscapes. Particularly the act of listening *in situ*, Butler argues, engenders empathy and a deepened sense of place. Steven High writes that "the great advantage of *in situ* audio tours is that it forces us to slow down and listen."[13]

How then could an audio-*visual* practice of oral history that would not be viewed on site negotiate this potentiality? It is indisputable that being *in situ* is the most powerful way to experience a location and its history, but that is not always possible. The role of a documentary maker is to overcome that distance and transport people to a place they have never been or to see a familiar place in a new light. At the heart of my practice was a commitment to embolden the role of place in historical storytelling. That meant employing an approach that encourages slowing down and listening, and in my case, visualizing. For that I deployed long takes and meditative *mises en scène*. In effect, I was creating a new place of encounter where people could explore the different tributaries of the river stories on their computer screens and their mobile phones. The oral histories and *mise en scène* are ultimately gathered in a documentary situated in an online setting designed to be explored. In *Place, Writing, and Voice in Oral History*, Heike Roms and Rebecca Edwards discuss the potential of site-specific oral history to explore the relationship between "the place of narration, the narrated place, and the place of an audience's encounter with the narrated place."[14] The interaction of these iterations of place is key to expanding historical inquiry. By flowing through the situated interviews, the river, and the documentary interface, my project demonstrates how we can cultivate the relationality of history and the habitualness of place. To that effect, the making of the documentary and its multilinear formulation articulated modes of access to the river's past and its mutable presence.

This type of storytelling, convoking spatial and temporal modalities, generates a unique kind of knowledge production—one that appeals to exploratory modes of understanding that are

[13] Steven High, "Embodied Ways of Listening: Oral History, Genocide and the Audio Tour," *Anthropologica* 55, no. 1 (2013): 76.

[14] Heike Roms and Rebecca Edwards, "Oral History as Site-Specific Practice: Locating the History of Performance Art in Wales," in *Place, Writing, and Voice in Oral History*, ed. Shelley Trower (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 177-178.

contemplative, interrogating, and recurrent. In the context of ubiquitous information proliferation that tends to distance us from place, it was crucial for me to engage documented narratives for the ways they can connect us with the processes of questioning and representing. I work as a television news producer. The knowledge engendered by journalistic storytelling is one that is prompt, if not live, and at the heart of the action. Paired with a reporter, once assigned a story, the turnaround to get it to air that evening is always down to the wire. We gather voices and seek accountability from concerned parties. In a whirlwind day of production, the story captures a glimpse into the tensions and polemics that galvanize society. There is an expediency and access characterizing news that endows an immediate sense of purpose to storytelling. This is less tangible in documentary—and in research-creation, for that matter. It is what can make a news story powerful, yet that same immediacy and overview function are also limiting. The cadence of news is actually what motivated me to pursue a research-creation Ph.D. in the first place. I was compelled to approach narrative representation and dissemination in a way that fosters slowing down and listening.

My dual roles as a news producer and as researcher-documentary maker enable a unique positioning and perspective at the juncture of two different modes of inquiry. Mutually informing, they bring up generative challenges as to what comes to the foreground and what recedes when deciding how a story is going to be told. Broadcast news journalism emphasizes focused, clear, and concrete storytelling. Bringing this experience to the production of my documentary balanced some of its more evocative, contemplative inclinations. At the same time, with documentary I could expand upon the limitations imposed by the news format, where we must curb people's interventions to a few seconds and adhere to a supposed discursive equilibrium. So much insight arises from people's reflections, their after thoughts, and even their tangents—all of which can be developed in a documentary space-time that fosters rhetorical and narrative open-endedness.

Just as I brought two worlds together in filmmaking—the timeliness and exactitude of news with the more reflective and exploratory dimensions of documentary; in my thesis, I also brought together two worlds: the theories of place with the lived experiences of Montreal storytellers, as expressed in an essayistic, multilinear documentary form. I assembled a new kind of place that the reader/viewer can explore: where diverse oral histories, experiential perspectives of the river, and critical thought on history intersect. I thus embarked on a research and filmic

journey to answer some of the questions evoked by the river: What can the river teach about history? What does it mean to be connected to place and what are the consequences of being disconnected from place? How can documentary storytelling represent these questionings and how can its multilinear web form mobilize different ways of engaging the narratives produced by place?

With a creative and cross-disciplinary approach, I set out to answer these questions in three ways: First, by bringing together two main areas of thought and practice that are not usually marshalled for a common purpose. I combine theorizations of place—namely through considerations of place as event, as an agent of shifting relations in space and time—from socio-geographic and philosophic study, as elaborated principally by Doreen Massey and Edward S. Casey (and others), with theoretical and practical advancements of interactive web documentary and of the essay film from film studies. Second, I build on these theories of place and documentary representation by applying them to the St. Lawrence River and in so doing I elaborate the conceptual frames of place, boundary, and navigation. Third, I broaden these frameworks and theories through interviewing five Montrealers, whose varied and striking approaches to the river enlighten understandings of it as place-event, as well as through the filming and editing of my documentary. In turn, the assemblage of interviews and filming on the interface of *De courants et d'histoires* galvanizes storytelling as a distinct mode of production of historical knowledge.

Chapter 1 of the thesis discusses the interdisciplinary theorizations and applications of place and documentary through a literature and media review. It explores especially the theories elaborated by Massey and Casey of place as event, as having agency to historicize. It follows with an analysis of trends in the practice and theory of interactive web documentary and of the essay film, setting the ground for these filmic approaches to mobilize place-based history-telling.

Chapter 2 draws from these insights and examines the challenges and affordances of representing place-based history-telling by assessing first how the histories surrounding the St. Lawrence River have been typically framed in official public discourse; second, by looking at an Indigenous documentary that through self-representation influentially counters the colonialist imposition of dominant discourses on the river; third, by looking at a documentary that explores history in Quebec through dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people; and finally,

by addressing issues of positionality inherent to my documentary practice along the river. The chapter concludes with an outline and discussion of my methodology.

Chapter 3 builds upon the theories elaborated by Massey, Casey and others and suggests that in mobilizing the activity of relations in time and space, the river is a place-event. I posit that the building of the St. Lawrence Seaway in the river's waterscape attests to the significance of the event of place. Imposing a new direction for progress by creating an aqueous highway for transport, it expropriated Indigenous land, displaced communities, and destroyed ecosystems along the river. Moving, constitutive, and contingent, the river is thus a dynamic process of evolving social and temporal relations, determining of an uneasy historical passage. This chapter also explores another iteration of place: the etchings and erosions of historical traces. I adapt the concept of palimpsest—usually associated with written or fixed objects—to a place as flowing as the river. I propose that looking at grafting changes to the river, most notably through the construction of the Expo 67 site from the riverbed, engenders new readings on its history by taking into account the writings and erasures in its depths. Both inscribed and inscribing, the river occasions a mutable archive of sorts, rendering the preservation of history materially yet elusively. Finally, the chapter delves into the physicality of the river, eliciting the ways that embodied connection with it affectively changes our relation to the ongoing channel of the past into the present through the senses.

Chapter 4 expands Casey's conception of boundary as spatial and temporal—and like place as event—by engaging the notion of boundary both physically and representationally. By encountering the shoreline of the St. Lawrence River from different points and perspectives, I propose locating and evoking boundary as a generative experience of remembrance, through a look at Derouin's memories of the river's meaning growing up by the shore; as experience of access, by presenting the difficulties involved in accessing the river, as discussed by environmentalist Martine Chatelain and adventurer Mylène Paquette, but also through the reflections enabled by traversing the obstacles that typically prevent access to the river; and as experience of vantage point, through the visual and aural perspectives produced by filming the river from different positions along the shore. Then, in looking at the expression of this experience filmically, I analyze how the representational boundaries produced by montage and frame composition in my documentary can generate varied narrative encounters.

Chapter 5, the final chapter of the thesis, elaborates Massey's assertion that places are more than sites on a map but rather trajectories across space and time. It offers new considerations of navigation in its varied modality to explore and rethink the river's historiography. I develop these considerations first, by recalling navigation's legacy as a venture in conquest, claim, and categorization, pointing out the appropriative tendencies in colonial mapmaking and in the very words European explorers such as Samuel de Champlain and Jacques Cartier used in their accounts and in place-naming (in line with how Casey characterizes the Age of Exploration as attempts to dominate native peoples through their "deplacialization").[15] Then I interpret navigation as tour—as a process of acquainting place in movement—examining how the way the river is toured affects outlook and learning. Finally, I test how navigation as a functionality of representation in my documentary opens up streams of reflection through experimentation with continuity of narrative.

Because this is a research-creation, throughout this thesis I integrate my documentary work, both the thoughts and perspectives of the people I interviewed, as well as the theories and practice of my filmmaking. In making the documentary—as someone born and raised on the island of Montreal, intrigued by the river's evolving presence and passage—I set out to test some of the exchanges and elisions between the recording and the record of history. The river as record, persistent yet transient, is complex and commands responsibility in its recording. In Chapter 2, I discuss *Kahnawake Revisited: The Saint Lawrence Seaway* (2009), a powerful example of Indigenous self-representation dealing with the river, as well as *Québékoisie* (2013), a constructive example of shared voicing in documentary about history in Quebec. The chapter also addresses important cautions raised by Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars alike about the implications of dialogue and collaboration. This leads to a critical reflection on the kind of intervention I would be making as a non-Indigenous researcher and documentary practitioner. I recognized that where I could contribute was in developing an epistemology of place history enriched by what some Montrealers, with diverse experiences and whose stories and outlook have been profoundly shaped by the St. Lawrence, have learned from the river. Focusing on ties to (and disconnection from) the water allows a deeper questioning of the impacts on, and the vicissitudes of, being part of history *with* the river. It is a powerful illustration of Massey's

[15] Edward S. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), xii.

contention that describing, defining and identifying a place is not just geography but also "the (re)telling of the historical constitution of the present."[16]

Flowing forcefully downstream, the river takes on a decidedly linear course. Yet it is a linearity that is dynamic, that has depth, that comes across barriers, and that opens into various channels. Exploring the signification and limits of history-telling's linearity, this project developed into a multilinear web documentary. As the St. Lawrence River flows steadfastly, changing cadence, direction, and depth along the way, so too do the tellings of history. Gathering varied expressions of such tellings in a web documentary interface mobilizes the flux of place, boundary, and navigation as ways to think historically with the river. If the river's linearity is at once always there and ever-changing, what can it teach about the histories it carries? From this question emerge tensions between spatiality and temporality; between movement—of the river and of histories—and stillness; as well as between agencies—of participants, of viewers, of narrative, and of the river. Journeying across multilinearity, this research-creation proposes a mode of inquiry as venture in traversing these tensions, learning from pause and from flow the complexity and richness of encountering history in place.

On this journey, I have relied on the construct of place as process, as continually becoming, in which spatial and temporal dimensions are co-constitutive of its character. For Casey, place is an event, "not as space, but in time and history."[17] By considering the event of place, I posit the river as historical storyteller. Not merely a fluid site or geographic reference point, "in time and history" it narrates the contested foundation stories of cities like Montreal and it chronicles the impacts of development, often at its detriment. Massey explains how place is not separate from history; rather it formulates "social relations through time."[18] I argue that the St. Lawrence River enacts this notion of place, where and when its water and force shape the varied and at times dissonant ways riparian people develop senses of identity and "social relations." Massey also discusses the potential of a "'radical' history of place" by invoking "many histories, and many spaces."[19] I demonstrate how the river recounts and re-enlivens the experience and memory of people, such as the ones interviewed for this project, who shed light on the "many

[16] Massey, "Places and their Pasts," 190.

[17] Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World*, xxv.

[18] Massey, "Places and their Pasts," 188.

[19] Ibid., 191.

histories" unfolding with and by water. Willful yet vulnerable, immensely present but often forgotten, the river summons engagement with this unfolding. By way of documenting this storytelling through recorded testimony, contemplative filming, and multilinear assemblage, I show how web documentary forges junctures of representational and narrative encounter to engage historiographically with the event of place.

Chapter 1

Literature and media review

As research-creation, this project has been a continual interplay between the documentary production cycle and analytical writing. I expand upon and combine theories of place from the fields of socio-geography, history, and philosophy with insights into interactive documentary and essay films to deepen understandings of the river and its representations. The co-constitutive research and creation streams of this process, with their affordances and especially their challenges, serve to question the potentiality and limitations of historiographic representation in a fast-evolving documentary ecology. It is by channeling cross-disciplinary considerations of place and representation that this project contributes to the production of knowledge in communication studies, both situating and testing the techno-creative and epistemological implications of mediatic expression in a field as expansive as it is convergent. Before embarking on a journey through the stories of the St. Lawrence River, this chapter provides a literature and media review.

With the St. Lawrence River being the point of departure for my research-creation, water was the source of my outlook. I was guided first by the volume *Thinking with Water* (2013), a collection of contributions by critical thinkers, artists, and poets across the humanities, social sciences, and arts that invites eco-cultural and socio-political perspectives on water. As its title indicates, it mobilizes our relation to water as a way to reframe ways of knowing. It calls into question the ways in which thinking of or about water reinforces "the assumption that water is a resource needing to be managed and organized."[20] In thinking *with* water, the collection honours water as an epistemological collaborator and transporter: "thinking with water asks that we deterritorialize *how* we understand where we live and that we consider ongoing relations with others—whether these relations join us to other locations, other beings, or other events and spacetimes. Understanding waters in place helps us to engage with waters and places as mutually

[20] Cecilia Chen, Janine MacLeod, and Astrida Neimanis, "Introduction: Toward a Hydrological Turn?" in *Thinking with Water*, eds. Cecilia Chen, Janine MacLeod, and Astrida Neimanis (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013), 3.

transforming and transformative phenomena."[21] This relational way of thinking brings a deeper consideration of the mutability of place in time and our role in that change.

This way of thinking was invigorated and channeled when I discussed it with my supervisor and internal examiner, Dr. Matt Soar, who suggested the framework of thinking with *river*. This marked a pivotal point, an ontological shift toward the implications of not just the wateriness and fluidity of place, but its distinct history-telling qualities as a river: its directionality, demarcation, and its linearity. A river—especially one as mighty and storied as the St. Lawrence—flows resolutely, carrying its own course of agency. Thinking with river compels renewed attention to the meanings of emplacement, as determined by the river's force, but also of our impact on that flux, and therefore our accountability toward it.

Inquiring into the signification and limits of history-telling, as situated in the St. Lawrence River, my literature and media review consists of engaging theorizations of place in several disciplines of critical social theory, history, geography, and enviro-phenomenological philosophic thought, as well as surveying scholarly and mediatic developments of interactive documentary and the essay film in film studies.

Theorizations of place

This research-creation builds upon spatio-temporal theorizations of place that tend to its dynamism and agency by inquiring into history-telling and the relationality of representation and situated experience. Conceptualizing place through "space-time" organization, i.e. through the relations incumbent to socio-historical interaction, configures place as a distinct articulation of that correspondence.[22] As elaborated by feminist geographer Doreen Massey in the field of critical geography, construed this way, place resists essentialization and participates in the negotiation of social relations in time. To that end, place reorients socio-historical thought toward relational presence, inhabitance, and locative accountability, as philosopher Edward S. Casey demonstrates by reasserting the significance of place in the social sciences and humanities. This reorientation is emphasized by tending to place's materiality, texture and locality in the everyday,

[21] Cecilia Chen, "Mapping Waters: Thinking with Watery Places," in *Thinking with Water*, eds. Cecilia Chen, Janine MacLeod, and Astrida Neimanis (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013), 275.

[22] Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1994), 5.

which Dolores Hayden cultivates by joining urbanism and oral history. In so doing, the role of place is mobilized in the formulation of storytelling. In this role, place becomes praxis, pointing to the ways it invigorates societal movement, recognition, and approach—an interpretation Michel de Certeau expounds by calling attention to the everyday in social theory. Considering the practice of place and its agency as storyteller changes the epistemological terms of spatiality. For example, the implications of the body's emplacement on perspective and positioning endows spatiality with a sensorial quality, as Yi-Fu Tuan explains by bridging humanism and geography. Moreover, processual and dialectically renewed through social relations, the production of spatiality is imbricated with that of history. In this structuration, Edward W. Soja reaffirms spatiality in critical social thought as constitutive of society. Constitutive of history as well, spatiality continually takes place and makes place—what interdisciplinary historian Philip Ethington suggests. In this context, reflections on the St. Lawrence River, be they personal, memorial or historical, inevitably articulate, and are articulated by, place. The narrativization of these reflections in a documentary, whether through the recording of testimony, filming or editing, takes on spatial dimensions and in turn renders new considerations of place.

In her writings *Space, Place, and Gender* (1994), "Places and their Pasts" (1995), and *For Space* (2005), Massey made a radical intervention in the field of geography, challenging hegemonic politics of place as static and finite toward a progressive understanding of its underlying fluid contingency: "it may be useful to think of places, not as areas on maps, but as constantly shifting articulations of social relations through time."[23] Her elucidation of space as a dynamic process of relationality as opposed to a passive surface on which activity is played out is key: "If time unfolds as change then space unfolds as interaction. In that sense space is the *social* dimension. Not in the sense of exclusively human sociability, but in the sense of engagement within a multiplicity. It is the sphere of the continuous production and reconfiguration of heterogeneity in all its forms—diversity, subordination, conflicting interests."[24] In this elaboration, the St. Lawrence River may be conceived for its active role in the negotiation of such complexities—its diversity, subordinations, conflicting interests, and investments over time. In thinking with river, I apply the spatial production of heterogeneity, as transformative and transforming, to the St. Lawrence, and posit the river as place. In its fluidity and mutability, the

[23] Massey, "Places and their Pasts," 188.

[24] Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: SAGE, 2005), 61.

river as place does not merely harbour pre-determined identities, but rather mobilizes the practice of their making in space and time. Massey's integration of space and time in the study of place is crucial to understanding how the shaping of these identities is narrativized: "The description, definition and identification of a place is thus always inevitably an intervention not only into geography but also, at least implicitly, into the (re)telling of the historical constitution of the present."[25] Throughout this research-creation, I expand on Massey's conceptual space-time concurrency in different ways: I argue that regarding the river as palimpsest shows how the historical constitution of the river's present is continually retold. I also demonstrate how the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway and the contested views of its impact show how place is a constantly shifting articulation "of social relations through time."

Following in this vein, this research-creation extends the ideas of Casey in *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (1993) and *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (1997) by deploying them through an experiential engagement with place and media practice. From a phenomenological perspective, Casey's work re-asserts in philosophical study the relational implications of human experience on place—and on their representations. In *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*, he traces the centuries-long marginalization of place by the totalizing dominance of space in Western thought and practice: "Western philosophers and scientists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries assume that places are merely momentary subdivisions of a universal space quantitatively determined in its neutral homogeneity."[26] He critiques the employment of space as an imperialist platform, whereby its all-encompassing reach serves the universalist drive of Christian indoctrination and colonialist expansion. He characterizes the Age of Exploration as "an era in which the domination of native peoples was accomplished by their deplacialization: the systematic destruction of regional landscapes that served as the concrete settings for local culture."[27] His analysis instructively cautions against interpreting space as an unproblematic concept. Space, as expansive and mappable, has implications of dominion and expropriation. In this context, Casey bemoans the reduction of place to "pure position, or bare point, simply located on one of the XYZ axes that delineate the dimensionality of space as construed in Cartesian analytical

[25] Massey, "Places and their Pasts," 190.

[26] Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*, 134.

[27] Ibid., xii.

geometry."[28] Already disempowered by the ontological superintendence of space, place, for Casey, is rendered calculable and thus turned into site. This formulation thus enabled "the creation of metrically precise maps of the earth construed as a global scene for sites of discovery and exploitation."[29] Applying this evaluation to the St. Lawrence River, I critically examine its colonialist representations in maps, European explorers' accounts, and ensuing toponymic conventions. These representations reveal the historical usurpation of the river-place as an arena to organize, through which to stake claim.

If place has historically been subjugated by the dominant powers that appropriate across space, Casey alternatively presents a definition of place as inhabited, lived, as beyond a mere container or coordinate of space: "place becomes an *event*, a happening not only in space but in time and history as well. To the role of place as facilitative and locatory we need to add the role of place as eventmental."[30] From this definition, I experiment with how oral histories shared along the river and how a documentary practice that engages its physicality cultivate the conceptual and representational sense of place as an active agent in forging understandings of our "being-in-the-world."[31]

Integral to deepening understandings of our being in, and with, place is recognizing its multivariate iterations of ways of knowing. In *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (2005), urban historian Dolores Hayden navigates the complexity of women's history and ethnic history in Los Angeles, studying the work of a non-profit corporation she launched that explores the social history of urban space through experimental, collaborative projects by historians, designers, and artists. Her study demonstrates that "storytelling with the shapes of time," by acquainting the various "forms and textures" of the city, connect people with urban landscape history.[32] These acquaintances constitute a formative process of relation, for, as Hayden contends, "the places of everyday urban life are, by their nature, mundane, ordinary, and

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[28] Ibid., 199.

[29] Ibid., 201.

[30] Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World*, xxv.

[31] Ibid., xvii.

[32] Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1995), 227.

constantly reused, and their social and political meanings are often not obvious."[33] I consider how the river, despite its geographic and rhetorical prominence, is often treated as a mundane, overlooked place of everyday life. Stories cultivate renewed attention to and care for place: "They are drawn from our experiences and the incremental accumulation of the experiences of others. They develop as a way of understanding the world."[34] As process, storytelling makes meaning out of the habitual, the personal, and location, and brings it into public history. In *Storytelling: Critical and Creative Approaches* (2013), Jan Shaw characterizes stories as fluid streams, with the flow being "the morphing and changing of stories, the potential of stories, the narratability of stories."[35] Returning to the St. Lawrence, this research-creation engages its narratability to connect readers and viewers with urban riverscape oral histories, by navigating the forms and textures of its watery place.

Philosopher, theologian, and historian Michel de Certeau's *L'Invention du quotidien 1, Arts de faire* (1980) provides contemplative avenues to actualize the potential of narrative flows. Intervening in what de Certeau considers social theory's focus on the structures that govern modern condition, *L'Invention du quotidien* sheds light on the creativity and tactics practiced by people in everyday contexts. Subverting the hegemonic implementation of space denounced by Casey, de Certeau argues that through creativity and tactic, space is temporalized as well as takes form in the movements deployed and oriented through it, whereby ultimately: "*l'espace est un lieu pratiqué.*"[36] (*space is a practiced place*).[37] Space is conceived as being produced by engaged place. Furthering this conception to the documentary treatment of the river, this project examines how the river-place is practiced and historicized when people encounter its shoreline and travel in its current, but also how web documentary, through its interface, also becomes a mediated space for place to be engaged through narrative exploration.

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[33] Ibid.

[34] Jan Shaw, "Introduction Story Streams: Stories and their Tellers," in *Storytelling: Critical and Creative Approaches*, eds. Jan Shaw, Philippa Kelly, and L.E. Semler (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 2.

[35] Ibid., 8.

[36] Michel de Certeau, *L'Invention du quotidien 1, Arts de faire* (Paris: Union générale d'éditions, 1980), 208.

[37] Steven F. Rendall, trans., *The Practice of Everyday Life*, by Michel de Certeau (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1984), 117.

Humanistic geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, who defines the experience of space "as having room in which to move,"[38] distinguishes space and place more reductively than considering the interrelation of their practice and engagement: "Enclosed and humanized space is place. Compared to space, place is a calm center of established values."[39] I do not agree with such a bounded and anthropocentric conception of place or with such an indiscriminate notion of space. From conversations with participants in my project, from my experience filming and being on the river, as well as from working through digital space, the constructs of spatiality and place have revealed to be more mutable than what is allowed from that kind of circumscription. However, Tuan's attentive study of the body's position and orientation in space in *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* (1974) and *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (1977) is helpful in situating relationality in place-based historiography. I apply his elaboration of spatial embodiment to the formulations of senses of place, as shaped by the river. The stories of people like adventurer Mylène Paquette, for example, show how physical emplacement in the vastness and force of water enacts perceptual changes toward identity and belonging and reckons the imbricated positioning of oneself with its history.

The definitions and characterizations outlined above point to the influence, depth, and contingency of place as storyteller. By studying and experiencing the river as both storied and an agent of storytelling, I develop ways of approaching history by furthering a practice of place. Beyond looking at the history of places, I contend that history implicates place as determining of its telling. Through this construction, the spatial and temporal must be considered as partnered actants.

In *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (1989), Edward W. Soja critiques the long-standing privileging of temporal and historical analysis over spatiality in social theorization. The typically physical view of space, he argues, renders all spatiality with a sense of objectivity, inexorableness, and reification.[40] The reassertion of space in critical thought envisioned by Soja does not demand the subordination of temporality, but rather sees the spatial and the temporal as co-constitutive of social relations: "The production of

[38] Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 12.

[39] Ibid., 54.

[40] Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989), 79.

spatiality in conjunction with the making of history can thus be described as both the medium and the outcome, the presupposition and embodiment, of social action and relationship, of society itself."[41] Interpreting social relations as "simultaneously and conflictually space-forming and space-contingent"[42] engages an historical understanding of place as interactive.

By extension, Philip Ethington questions the temporality of history: "The past cannot exist *in* time: only *in* action. History is not an account of 'change over time,' as the cliché goes, but rather, change through space."[43] Spatializing history in this way allows for an interrogation that commits the present. He follows, "every past is a place (emphatically in the present tense because the past is always present). All action and experience *takes place*, in the sense that it requires place as a prerequisite, and *makes place*, in the sense of inscription."[44] From this perspective, historical reflections of the river frame it not as a mere backdrop upon which events happened, but implicate us in its present and presence, so that our understanding of its past is shaped by our continually evolving relation to its fluid spatiality—engendering, in effect, a place history.

Film studies

In experimenting with a reflective filming approach to create a web documentary that represents place history, I grounded my production and filmic analysis in the theoretical and practical advancements of interactive web documentary and the essay film. In the increasingly convergent mediascape that surrounds us, where virtual and physical reality conflate more and more, the development of media practices like interactive web documentary evolves the means of communicating and sharing narratives of lived experience. By negotiating mechanisms of participation by the viewer as part of its delivery, interactive web documentary creates points of access that have changed the terms of how representation and storytelling meet—through a mediated spatiality that engenders action and choice. Vulnerable to its own rapid evolution,

[41] Ibid., 127.

[42] Ibid., 124.

[43] Philip J. Ethington, "Placing the Past: 'Groundwork' for a Spatial Theory of History," *Rethinking History* 11, no. 4 (December 2007): 466. DOI: 10.1080/13642520701645487.

[44] Ibid., 483.

however, interactive web documentary production has often proven unable to keep up with the networked technological advancements that structured it in the first place. As a medium—or mediatic domain—it is at once emergent and ephemeral, emblematic and transient.

It is in this context that I developed my documentary. Aware of interactive web documentary's susceptibility to socio-technical obsolescence, I tested the potentiality of its modality—the rendering of documented narrative through an explorable interface—where representational space becomes practiced place.

Interactive web documentary

While its mode and structure are variable, interactive web documentary has been inclusively defined as "any project that starts with an intention to document the 'real' and that uses digital interactive technology to realise this intention."[45] Still, there is ongoing debate among media scholars and practitioners about the nature of interactivity itself. While the type and level of interactivity vary according to its infrastructure, interactive web documentary offers the possibility of gathering diverse representational modes through an interface that encourages (and even demands) exploration, thus transforming the unfolding of the narrative.

As a key defining feature of interactive web documentary, interactivity must be fleshed out for its potential and its limits. Interactivity raises new polemics in documentary in terms of viewing experience, narrative, and representation, for it operationally changes the way documentary is created and received. In this sense, interactive media scholar and practitioner Sandra Gaudenzi aptly defines interactive documentary as fundamentally relational, contingent upon what she considers are the transformations that develop from the interaction between the individual and the documentary's interface, database, and network: "Interactivity is seen as native, as constitutive of the digital artefact. The user is not "observing" the digital artefact, not "controlling" it, but "being transformed" by it."[46] While Gaudenzi's qualification of interactivity as a process of mutual transformation may be strong to apply to interactive documentary in general, it is nonetheless pertinent to consider interactivity's structure of participation as

[45] Judith Aston and Sandra Gaudenzi, "Interactive Documentary: Setting the Field," *Studies in Documentary Film* 6, no. 2 (2012): 125. DOI: 10.1386/sdf.6.2.125_1.

[46] Sandra Gaudenzi, "The Living Documentary: From Representing Reality to Co-Creating Reality in Digital Interactive Documentary," (PhD Diss., Goldsmiths, University of London, 2013), 75.

changing the functionality of the representation of the documented world. This is especially resonant with interactive documentaries that deal with place history, for the spatialized narrativization and invitation to participate inherent to the interface activate new trajectories of access to the representation of those places.

For example, *The Block: Stories from a Meeting Place* (2012) is an Australian interactive web documentary that maps a historical tour of an Indigenously-run housing precinct in Redfern, a neighbourhood of Sydney, known as 'the Block,' through the stories of its residents before they were dispossessed of it in 2010. *The Block* welcomes navigation through a street view interface of the neighbourhood in which the exploratory actions posed by the individual engaging with the documentary influence the unfolding of the lived reality that is represented. Upon clicking on a given icon with a resident's biography, one of the many stories of the Block is told and situated geographically. After clicking on a resident's icon, one can return to exploring the streets, access a map of the block, go to the history timeline or participate in a discussion forum. In this way, interactivity activates a positioned exchange where the exploratory decision of the individual directs a narrative response from the interface.

Actions like clicking, browsing or typing, which are required by many interactive web documentaries such as *The Block* to activate their storylines, constitute a substantial part of their interactivity. However, it is often argued that while interactivity assumes some form of reciprocity, actions like clicking, for example, are merely reactive as opposed to interactive: "This kind of reaction-as-interaction remains largely one way, not really altering a somewhat passive experience."[47] This point serves a needed temperance of the reciprocal potential of interactivity. But although many of the actions commanded by an interactive web documentary are reactive, I argue that participation in the unfolding of a documentary engenders a dynamic experience nonetheless. By clicking, viewers of a web documentary, such as the one I created, are making choices—albeit within certain confines—about which paths along the journey they want to take.

As another point of contention, documentary theorist Kate Nash and others caution that equating interactivity with physicality runs the risk of inviting a false dichotomy in the study of documentary reception, one that denies spectatorship physical engagement and excludes mental

[47] Dale Hudson and Patricia Zimmerman, "Mapping Open Space to Visualize Other Knowledges," in *Thinking Through Digital Media: Transnational Environments and Locative Places*, eds. Hudson, Dale and Patricia Zimmerman (New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2015), 58.

dimensions of interactivity.[48] Conceptualizing the physical and mental forms of interactivity as extensions of one another, as new media scholar Lev Manovich suggests, is helpful in nuancing such eclipsing distinctions. For instance, clicking on a hyperlink or following a path in an interactive web documentary can be seen as the materialization of the mental processes of association or reflection that are stimulated while watching a non-interactive documentary on a screen. This begs the question: if these physical actions merely externalize the cognitive mechanisms activated by a cinematic documentary, then what qualifies the interactivity of interactive web documentary? I contend that the behavioural action that follows the mental processing of a documentary intervenes in its communicative exchange. Participation with the interface changes the terms of the documentary's articulation and directionality. In *Entre cinéma et jeux-vidéo : l'interface-film* (2009), Marida di Crosta argues that this participation activates what she calls the narrational space (*l'espace narrationnel*), whereby the viewer's action participates in piecing together the narrative: "Ce geste participe donc au travail d'agencement syntagmatique des unités du film, opération d'interconnexion des fragments fondamentale tant sur le plan cognitif que narratif prise en charge au cinéma par le montage"[49] ("This gesture therefore participates in the syntagmatic arrangement of the film's units, a fundamental operation of interconnecting fragments on a cognitive and narrative level—an operation taken on by montage in cinema" – my translation). That is why I maintain that by clicking or dragging or browsing, the viewer is actively making a choice within a story, which will provide different reception experiences of it. Hyperlinks and branching narratives made available to follow in interactive web documentaries also encourage the viewer to take position within the digital mediation of the lived reality.

In this way, layering and fragmentation across digital mediation can generate new means of considering relations to place history. Representational space and conversely, spatial representation, are complicated by these modalities. *Welcome to Pine Point* (2014) is a case in point. It is an NFB web documentary that explores memory and place through the archival remnants of the eponymous town in the Northwest Territories that was abandoned after the mine

[48] Kate Nash, "Clicking on the World: Documentary Representation and Interactivity," in *New Documentary Ecologies: Emerging Platforms, Practices and Discourses*, eds. Kate Nash, Craig Hight, and Catherine Summerhays (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 54.

[49] Marida di Crosta, *Entre cinéma et jeux-vidéo : l'interface-film* (Bruxelles: Éditions de Broeck Université, 2009), 137.

that created it shut down. The town was gutted in 1989, leaving barely any material or geographical trace of its short history. The idea for the web documentary came from Michael Simons, who briefly visited the town when he was nine years old for a hockey tournament. Decades later, he came across the website Pine Point Revisited, created by a former resident, which catalogues photographs, videos, and artefacts contributed by former residents. Based on this website, *Welcome to Pine Point* narrativizes these archival objects in a stylized form. The small town's past, now erased in the physical world, thus gains mnemonic visibility and retrieves emplacement, virtually at least.

Animated drawings and digital imaging are layered with yearbook photos, personal footage of town activities, aerial photography of the town, official legislative documents, and a mining industry film, creating an immersive legibility of Pine Point's place history. The various juxtapositions and superimpositions of these archives and imagery are animated in a digital scrapbook form, pointing to an important characteristic of the documentary's articulation, one that recalls debates over interactivity and linearity: it principally reads as a book, offering a fairly linear narrative. The viewer is propelled forward in the story horizontally by clicking on the "Next" tab on the right-hand side of the screen, which leads to a further page of the scrapbook. In this sense, access to the fragments of neglected history is provided with limited interactivity. As Michael Simons stated in an interview, "coming from print, part of the process for us was minimizing the interactivity to only those elements that serve to forward the narrative."[50] Indeed, there are minimal interactive cues and the ones in place propel a linear flow. However, the spatial layout of a given page enables varied penetrations into fragments of the narrative.

These explorations are enabled by what new media theorist Lev Manovich describes as "spatial montage." Whereas cinematic montage typically refers to the different ways images or shots are juxtaposed sequentially, spatial montage formulates the layout of different images appearing on the screen at the same time.[51] The boundaries forged by spatial montage delineate the screen, engendering a multiplicity and even a simultaneity of narrative spaces to view. As will be discussed in Chapter 4, Kristen M. Daly's analysis of the implications of cinema's evolving form due to digital technology points to the new modes of engagement produced by this kind of

[50] Carolyne Weldon, "Welcome to Pine Point: An Interview with The Goggles," *NFB/Blog*, February 3, 2011, http://blog.nfb.ca/blog/2011/02/03/welcome-to-pine-point-an-interview-with-the-goggles/.

[51] Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 2001), 322.

screen layout that involves "multiple windows, algorithmic and architectural mise-en-scène, and a combination of text, information and audiovisual immersion."[52] Multiplicity and simultaneity force a process of selectivity on the part of the viewer. As the narrative animates different parts of the screen, montage in time gives way to montage in space. The spatial montage in *Welcome to Pine Point* enables pauses in the unfolding of the narrative through which one may read further into a singular story or an official record, click through a photo album, watch a former resident's video, or select archival footage of the town. Navigating the digital scrapbook, then, engages the multivariate materials and media that invite historical visits to place.

Assuredly, the documentary I developed does not relay the sophisticated spatial montage that animates varied media in *Welcome to Pine Point*. Nevertheless, it activates choice in the unfolding of the narrative on spatial terms. One is compelled to follow a particular linearity, as prompted within the framing and the spatial composition of the screen. Gilles Deleuze's thoughts on framing in part one of his cinema study series, *L'Image Mouvement* (1983), are relevant here. He posits framing as a system that is inherently dividing as well as determining of what it communicates to outside its bounds.[53] Conceived this way, the connections between framing and screen composition convey the notion that representational space is not just a surface, but is itself storied, a topic explored more fully in Chapters 4 and 5. It is through the frame of storying place and place-ing story that my documentary spatializes meditations on history as influenced by the St. Lawrence River.

Storying place as inspired by waterways is engagingly negotiated through narrative and geo-location in *Ringbalin River Stories* (2010), an Australian interactive documentary mobile application. It journeys across the Murray Darling river system by telling the stories of the Indigenous peoples who live along its shores and by following the Ringbalin, the pilgrimage they undertake to celebrate and save the river. After the introduction, a map of Australia is laid out with points along the river system, marking entry places to follow the story of an Elder or a juncture of the Ringbalin. The stories of Elders and the narrative of the Ringbalin unfold in video capsules, through compelling imagery, testimony, and storytelling. The added value of interactivity for each of these place narratives provides the option to access a text-based

[52] Kristen M. Daly, "New Mode of Cinema: How Digital Technologies are Changing Aesthetics and Style," *Kinephanos* 1, no. 1 (December 2009): 3.

[53] Gilles Deleuze, *L'Image-Mouvement* (Paris : Les Éditions de Minuit, 1983), 26, 28-29.

biography of each Elder, a photo montage, a description of the surrounding areas or a return to the map.

As *Ringbalin River Stories* shows, the structure and representational layout of interactive documentary storytelling fosters movement across different narratives. Traveling through their stories involves choosing pathways and exploring. The narrative thus unfolds not sequentially through cuts and transitions, but spatially, through movement and layering. Here, navigation must be performed in order for the documentary to be activated, since its narratives are not deployed by the singular action of pressing 'play.' Rather, exploration through the terrain of the documentary is required, selection choices can be made, hyperlinks can be followed, and texts may be read.

In Chapter 5, I explore de Certeau's analysis of the ways space is practiced by the vectors of movement that cross it, to relay that the digital space of web documentary is animated by chosen trajectories.[54] These trajectories are prompted by the participatory agency of various actants, whether human or code. Interactivity shapes the agency of the human actant who experiments with the documented reality. Gaudenzi qualifies the human actant's agency as that of a "doer." As opposed to the traditionally named "viewer" of a non-interactive documentary, she, along with most interactive documentary scholars, use the term "user" to better describe the viewer's action toward the documentary. As a way to negotiate the agency of "user" and "viewer," I propose the term "navigator" since it encompasses all the cognitive and behavioural actions commanded by interactive web documentary. Navigation involves looking, exploration, and movement, all of which are relied upon when engaging an online, digital media platform. The term "navigator" will be employed henceforth to designate the individual engaging with web documentary. Given the nautical theme of my web documentary, "navigator" furthermore aptly evokes the narrative engagement it elicits.

Here, I do not aim to glorify participation over viewing; rather, I seek to point out how interactive web documentary is transforming what was previously the reception of modes of representation into an intersubjective involvement with documented experience. It is the participation of the navigator that activates the documentary on the digital interface, which in turn invites further action to explore the meaning of the documentary's truth claim. For example, in *The Block* and *Ringbalin River Stories*, the insights afforded by the documentary stories are made

[54] de Certeau, 208.

possible by the navigator's exploration of the streets of the Block or the Murray Darling river system, as prompted by the map interface. Varied readings of history and geography materialize as navigators engage with the platform.

Such participatory possibilities are inevitably framed by the design of the interface. In designing the interface of my documentary, I was guided by the idea of navigation as a way to move through and across representational spaces and linearities. I am careful, however, not to qualify the interface as non-linear, as interactive documentary is often problematically equated with in order to distinguish it from non-interactive documentary. On the one hand, even if a documentary is not constructed on an interactive platform, it is not necessarily linear. Patricio Guzmán's essayistic film *The Pearl Button* (2015) (which will be discussed later), for example, follows different storylines woven together not in an expressly linear fashion, but rather by their common relation with water. On the other hand, interactivity does not automatically breed non-linearity. *Ringbalin River Stories* follows the journey of the Ringbalin along the Murray Darling river system and while there is no mandatory starting point and it can be navigated in different directions, the documentary flows along a given path.

As media artist and documentary maker Florian Thalhofer points out, "in a lot of web-docs I see this linear way of thinking. The viewer has this option or that option, but these options are really pathways that have been pre-thought and planned by the author."[55] Thalhofer rather suggests qualifying emergent practices of storytelling as multilinear. My documentary, *De courants et d'histoires,* for instance, would be more accurately described in this way, as multilinear. It does not formulate a narrative maze or randomness; it is linearly processed. The difference is that its linearities are represented and activated through spatiality and links.

Multilinearity is no new feature of cinema. As a relational medium, cinema brings fragments together in complex visual, aural, and narrative relations to form closed sets of cinematic storytelling, but as media scholar Adrian Miles points out, "what is novel in multilinear interactive systems is the maintenance of these relations as open sets after the fact of

[55] Kate Nash, "An Interview with Florian Thalhofer, Media Artist and Documentary Maker," in *New Documentary Ecologies: Emerging Platforms, Practices and Discourses*, eds. Kate Nash, Craig Hight, and Catherine Summerhays (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 193.

'publication.' "[56] In other words, multilinearity structurally enables the possibility of initiating a variety of connections not just during the creation process but also while it is engaged by navigators.

Here, a nuance to the systems that enable these connections to be made—that construct and network multilinearity and interactivity—must be addressed. *Ringbalin River Stories* is an app exclusively for iPhone or iPad available on Apple's iTunes. Its accessibility is therefore circumscribed by the use of proprietary software and by the fact that it requires a high-speed internet connection, neither of which is universally available. Therefore, its outreach operates within the limits imposed by the digital divide. Another significant imposition on access concerns longevity. Many web documentaries rely on software and coding that is continually updated, which means that without backward compatibility, they may become inaccessible or outright obsolete.[57] For example, several are still based on Flash, a once mainstream streaming software, and therefore do not automatically run since, firstly, systems must have Flash installed, and secondly, even if Flash is installed, most browsers deactivate the plug-in, making it more tedious to play the documentary. Incidentally, *Ringbalin River Stories* started out as an interactive web documentary, but now the website no longer exists. In this sense, the very accessibility promised by digital, online platforms is itself subject to technological change and costs that curtail the documentary's shelf life and in turn, its lasting impact.

As *The Block* and *Ringbalin River Stories* demonstrate, interactive web documentary forges meeting grounds where stories are searched for, viewed, listened to, supplemented, and possibly interrupted, stimulating ways of learning through a sense of active involvement. This epistemic agency is reinforced by the mobility and explorability of these meeting grounds, whereby both their online nature and their interactivity enable them to be freely navigated as well as returned to at any time. At the same time, interactivity's functionality and promise of accessibility live in a vast online context of ubiquitous knowledge creation and are predicated upon a fast Internet connection and technologically advancing software.

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[56] Adrian Miles, "Interactive Documentary and Affective Ecologies," in *New Documentary Ecologies: Emerging Platforms, Practices and Discourses*, eds. Kate Nash, Craig Hight, and Catherine Summerhays (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 69.

[57] Matt Soar, "Making (with) the Korsakow System: Database Documentaries as Articulation and Assemblage," in *New Documentary Ecologies: Emerging Platforms, Practices and Discourses*, eds. Kate Nash, Craig Hight, and Catherine Summerhays (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 158.

In creating my web documentary I recognized its limited level of interactivity. Clicking and browsing through the interface constitute the only actions that can be posed to prompt a response from the interface. It therefore draws from certain actions that animate the interactive web documentary form, but is not strictly defined as an interactive documentary itself. The project was less an attempt to exploit the full potential of the functionality of interactivity, and more of an experiment with the representational avenues made possible by the openness and varied flows of its operations. In developing the documentary, I also contended with the potential obsolescence imposed by the evolution of interactive platforms. I built mine using Klynt, an HTML5-based platform that enables it to run well in the current context of online playability, but I concede to its inevitable vulnerability to the changing technology behind coding.

Despite this vulnerability, fast-evolving forms of documentary like this one are revealing as digital artefacts, adapting to the changing modalities of an increasingly communicating, screened, and mobile mediascape, by bridging participation, narratability, and the representation of lived experience.

Essay film

In navigating relational modes of documented storytelling, I turned to a documentary approach that privileges critical awareness and self-reflection in regard to history, encouraging representational strategies that seek to question rather than validate. Important in this formulation of documentary is an ontological consideration of documentary's phenomenological potential. As Vivian Sobchack points out: "The term *documentary* designates more than a cinematic *object*. Along with the obvious nomination of a film genre characterized historically by certain objective textual features, the term also—and more radically—designates a particular *subjective relation* to an objective cinematic or televisual text. In other words, documentary is less a *thing* than an *experience*."[58] Exploring documentary's relational and experiential potentiality was at the heart of my project. To do so, I was influenced by the essay film.

Drawing from the literary essay, and courting with documentary and experimental film, the essay film expresses a subjective reflection on a reality mediated by image and sound, seeking to interpolate the viewer within that reflection. Recalling the essay's roots, José Moure,

[58] Vivian Sobchack, "Toward a Phenomenology of Nonfictional Film Experience," in *Collecting Visible Evidence*, eds. Jane M. Gaines and Michael Renov (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 241.

in *L'essai et le cinéma*, elucidates the experimental, evaluative, and contemplative function of the essay film:

> Comme si dans le recours au terme *essai*, il y avait l'affirmation d'une filiation (l'origine du mot *essai* est littéraire, comme serait littéraire la notion même d'essai au cinéma), et la volonté de s'inscrire dans une tradition nourrie de scepticisme : celle de l'essai littéraire, d'une forme de pensée qui, comme l'étymologie du mot *essay* le suggère, s'exerce comme pesée, mise en balance, examen, épreuve, expérimentation, tâtonnement, expérience du monde, de vie et de soi.[59]

Through these modalities, Moure situates the essay film as negotiating its boundary with documentary, which he similarly defines as a non-fiction genre that is a reflection on reality by means of images and sounds.[60] But where in documentary this reflection is based on the presumption of a transparent mediation of a given reality, in the essay film, Moure contends, "le travail filmique se produit non à partir d'une réalité, mais à partir de matériaux sonores et visuels dont la structuration ou combinaison non seulement laisse visibles les traces d'un processus de pensée, mais les incorpore à la texture même du film et joue sur leurs tensions."[61] In this way, according to Moure, the essay film situates itself and the viewer in a space where realism is only part of a broader discursive strategy. There is, at this threshold, between documentary and essay, between reflection and representation, a generative negotiation at stake—one that interpolates the filmmaker, the profilmic, and the viewer in a co-construction of meaning. Significantly, for editor and theorist Dai Vaughn, this interpolation, and particularly the viewer's interpretation of the profilmic, is actually what defines documentary. For Vaughn, documentary is a mode of response: "What makes film "documentary" is the way we look at it; […] To see a film as documentary is to see its meaning as pertinent to the events and objects which passed before the

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[59] José Moure, "Essai et definition de l'essai au cinema," in *L'essai et le cinéma*, eds. Suzanne Liandrat-Guigues and Murielle Gagnebin (Seyssel: Éditions Champ Vallon, 2004), 25;
"It is as though recourse to the term *essay* conveys the affirmation of lineage (the origin of the word *essay* is literary, as is the very notion of essay in cinema) and the will to follow in a tradition of skepticism: that of the literary essay, of a way of thought, which, as the etymology of the word *essay* suggests, operates as weighing, balancing, review, test, experiment, trial and error, experience of the world, of life, of oneself." (my translation)

[60] Ibid., 36.

[61] Ibid.;
"The cinematic work is produced not from a given reality but based on aural and visual materials whose structuration or combination not only leaves visible the traces of a thought process, but incorporates them in the very texture of the film and plays off their tension." (my translation)

camera: to see it, in a word, as signifying what it appears to record."[62] In this structuration of meaning across the rhetorical boundaries of documentary and the essay film lies the representational potential to question and reencounter the mimetic places toward which we are called upon to orient ourselves.

Patricio Guzmán's essayistic *El botón de Nácar* (*The Pearl Button*) exemplifies this potential. The film approaches the genocidal history of Chile through the deep-rooted and multifaceted connection between people and water. Evocative in the film's subjective address is that it is interlaced with meditative visual and aural reflections, thus producing a choric, interpolative enunciation. The opening sequence of the film conveys this effect. The film opens with a quote from poet Raúl Zurita, "Todos somos arroyos de una sola agua," which means "we are all streams from one water." This musing sets the tone for the film's broader reflection on the ways water connects us all. Following an introductory narration over an isolated shot of a piece of quartz withholding a drop of water, the narrator then situates Chile by describing the waters that define it over an attentive, patient, and stunning aerial tracking shot of the country's geography. The shot continues for a captivating seventy-three seconds after the narrator's last line, creating the visual and aural space for the viewer to ponder and join in the film's contemplation of water's spiritual and historical significance. The openness and the silence of this representation allow the imagery to speak for itself. As essay film scholar Laura Rascaroli points out, "the essay must embrace openness and uncertainty; it must leave questions unanswered, and accept and nurture the ultimate instability of its meaning."[63] *The Pearl Button*'s opening sequence tends to such a mode of address. The border between narration and evocation, between imagery and reflection, dissolves into meditation, defining the inflection of the rest of the film. Following in this vein, the film palpably transmits a sense of place, by conveying the senses of water: it translates the languages of water, echoing its sounds—from the daunting cracks of glaciers to the harmonies of the rivers to the clapping of rain drops; it penetrates its forms, through the enclaves of solid ice, the blanketing view of snow and hail; and it rides its movements, indulging its textures through the immersive interplay of extreme close-ups and expansive wide shots. For the viewer and listener, the film is an experience of water-place.

[62] Dai Vaughn, *For Documentary: Twelve Essays* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999), 84-85.

[63] Rascaroli, 84.

In my project, I took the essay film's reflective and meditative engagement with image and sound and merged it with place-based storytelling. I took my camera to the shore, by the rumbling current, atop the formidable ice or plunging it into the water—letting it record with patience and attention the dynamism and tranquility of the river-place—in order to mediate place history with a sense of observance and interpolative locationality.

Chapter 2

Telling the river's stories

Les gens disaient on ne peut plus revenir au passé. Moi je pense qu'on peut y revenir, d'une façon moderne, en changeant certaines habitudes de vie puis en étant moins pressés. C'est peut-être ce que l'eau nous apprend—aller au fil de l'eau, suivre le courant—c'est peut-être ça.[64]
—Martine Chatelain

Orientation and compass

Drawing from the review of conceptions of place across several disciplines and of developments in film studies and documentary practice, this chapter questions the implications of how histories get told and outlines my methodology.

I set out to examine some of the notable ways the history around the St. Lawrence River has been framed by official public discourse; how an Indigenous documentary production challenges the colonialist frame of official discourse; and how dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people is formatively expressed in a Québécois documentary about journeying through place history. Then, I evaluate issues of positionality as the person behind the camera to situate the connections to, and tellings of, history as shaped by filming the St. Lawrence River.

Official line of discourse

In the context of the settler-state—a society founded by the imposition and normalization of a settling group's power and sovereignty over Indigenous peoples[65]— exploring historical relations to place with the St. Lawrence River through documentary is complex and contested. It calls for recognition that official discourses of history tend to represent the history surrounding the river as an archaeologically, institutionally, and empirically validated *fait accompli* that

[64] "People say we can't go back to the past. I say we can, in a modern way, by changing some habits and by being less rushed. That's maybe what water teaches us—to go with the flow, follow its current—that may be it." (my translation)

[65] John G. Reid and Thomas Peace, "Colonies of Settlement and Settler Colonialism in Northeastern North America, 1450-1850," in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, eds. Edward Cavanagh and Lorenzo Veracini (London: Routledge, 2016), 80.

naturalizes dominance and control as ways of being. Strikingly, museums such as the Stewart Museum on Île Sainte-Hélène and the Pointe-à-Callière Archaeology and History Museum; archives like the City of Montreal archives and the Bibliothèque et archives nationales du Québec; as well as touristic activities, put forth a colonialist account of settlement and growth that promotes a storyline of progress and development. Absent from the story is the recognition of territorial theft and cultural genocide. Visits to museums by the shore of the river demonstrate the reproduction of this kind of historical narrative. Colonial maps and paintings, accompanied by descriptive captions, reinforce the foundation story that European explorers and settlers arrived through the river, engaged in fair negotiations with Indigenous chiefs, and alternatively, fended against attacks by "violent" Iroquois groups, to ultimately establish cities like Montreal via the shore of the St. Lawrence.[66] Through such narratives, the settler-state suppresses from public discourse the contradictions that would render its dominion and exploitation visible. Rather than perpetuating this self-effacing logic, the histories that get told should recognize the undoubted brutality with which the river and its adjacent lands were taken over, acknowledging the incongruities therein.

Indigenous self-representation: *Kahnawake Revisited: The Saint Lawrence Seaway*

One incisive intervention in the dominant histories of place that get told surrounding the river is the 2009 Mohawk documentary *Kahnawake Revisited: The Saint Lawrence Seaway*, a two-part video series directed by Kakwiranó:ron Cook. Funded by the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke, the series was initially distributed on the Council's website (although the link is currently not accessible). It is also distributed on YouTube. Produced in Kahnawà:ke, by Mohawk people, and showcasing their voices, it powerfully counters the official progress-focused discourse of developments imposed on the river. In the documentary, residents of Kahnawà:ke discuss the devastating impacts of the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway on their land, lifestyle, and history. Kahnawà:ke has been disinherited of its access to the river since the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1959. The Seaway was built to prioritize maritime commercial transport along the St. Lawrence River and it cut through Kahnawà:ke's territory, expropriating the community's long-standing, profound relationship with the river.

[66] Such descriptions of the settlement history of Montreal by the river can be found in the Pointe-à-Callière Archaeology and History Museum.

Gathering testimonies from members of the community, who share their cherished personal or transgenerational memory of life by the river, of the livelihood provided by the river, and of the sense of community that was defined by it, this documentary disrupts the settler-state's reinforcement of acceptation that history seamlessly passes over place. Instead, the oral history articulated in this documentary voices the silenced consequences of the settler-colonialist enterprise; the vicious and insidious ways the Seaway uprooted Mohawk people's way of life. As Taiaiake Alfred, professor of Indigenous Governance and Political Science at the University of Victoria from Kahnawà:ke, states in one of his interventions in the film, "what is it to be Mohawk? Everything is related to land and territory. You can argue about everything else. You can argue about religion; you can argue about economics; you can argue about politics; but, you can't really argue about the land and us being from it. That's it. And so, building a community around that relationship, to me, is the best way to counteract colonialism." Interventions such as these in the documentary defy the settler-colonialist cooption of the Seaway as champion of progress.

In his critical examination of the politics of representation in Canadian and Quebec cinema, Bruno Cornellier posits that representation is less the reflection of already existing power relations, but rather is a constitutive part of a regime of knowledge that constructs the power relations structuring the settler-state society.[67] Through this mechanism, representation enables the colonialist imperative to transform ruptures and alterity into a linear sequence of events and to render difference and the "other" into a manageable, knowable object.[68] *Kahnawake Revisited: The Saint Lawrence Seaway* communicates resistance to this naturalization. As Olympic gold medalist in kayaking and engaged member of Kahnawà:ke Alwyn Morris recounts in the documentary,

> I remember going down at Hook's Point there. Hook's Point, what did we do? Every spring, we went bullhead fishing. Every spring. It was a rite of passage for many. Go bullhead fishing. Well today, regardless of the mud flats that are there, you can't go fishing out of here now. There's no way. It's become so inundated with really toxic filth. Bottom line: That sediment now is there. How do you pull that sediment without creating a bigger problem? If this thing chokes out here and there's nothing here, not only will we have been dissociated from the river in my parents' generation, but in my generation,

[67] Bruno Cornellier, *La « chose indienne » : cinéma et politiques de la représentation autochtone au Québec et au Canada* (Montréal: Éditions Nota bene, 2015), 33 (footnote).

[68] Ibid., 27.

> we're even being dissociated from what we had growing up as a kid as a direct result unfortunately from the seaway going through. If the seaway hadn't gotten through, the waterway would be flowing, it would be full of life.

Communicating Mohawk knowledge and experience on its own terms, *Kahnawake Revisited: The Saint Lawrence Seaway* forcefully disrupts the appropriative and colonialist representations of place-based histories prevalent in official settler-state discourses. In *The Fourth Eye: Māori Media in Aotearoa New Zealand* (2013), editors Brendan Hokowhitu and Vijay Devadas articulate the Fourth Eye as the various, complex ways Indigenous peoples engage media to express Indigenous experiences and re-envision and transform existing power structures.[69] In attributing Fourth Media as the media controlled by Indigenous peoples in settler-states, Hokowhitu emphasizes the importance of sovereignty: "Mediated Indigenous sovereignty is defined here as the determination of Indigenous peoples to represent and perceive their epistemic knowledge through the media as they deem appropriate, meaningful, relevant, and valid."[70]

Possibilities for dialogue: *Québékoisie*

Considering the importance of mediated Indigenous sovereignty, as exemplified by *Kahnawake Revisited: The Saint Lawrence Seaway*, is it possible for documentary to capture a productive dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous voices? As shall be discussed shortly, attempting dialogue can be fraught with the risk of appropriation and unintended negative consequences. But the 2013 documentary *Québékoisie*, directed by Olivier Higgins and Mélanie Carrier, shows that, handled with care and understanding, dialogue and mutual exploration has potential.

The film conveys varied relations to place history and belonging along Indigenous-settler lines that are represented for their complexity and open-endedness. *Québékoisie* follows the journey of Higgins and Carrier, who, after cycling across the far reaches of the world to come to

[69] Brendan Hokowhitu and Vijay Devadas, "Introduction. Fourth Eye: The Indigenous Mediascape in Aotearoa New Zealand," in *The Fourth Eye: Māori Media in Aotearoa New Zealand*, eds. Brendan Hokowhitu and Vijay Devadas (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), xv.

[70] Brendan Hokowhitu, "Theorizing Indigenous Media," in *The Fourth Eye: Māori Media in Aotearoa New Zealand*, eds. Brendan Hokowhitu and Vijay Devadas (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 113.

know the stories of peoples from distant lands, realize they are unfamiliar with the history of their own homeland and of the complex relations between its first inhabitants and the people who became Québécois. They therefore decide to ride along the north shore from Quebec City to Natashquan. Their encounters along the way in different First Nations communities are interspersed with the reflections of anthropologist Serge Bouchard; with the journey of Marco Bacon, an Innu man who travels to Normandy in search of ancestors; as well as with the story of Francine Lemay, the sister of Corporal Lemay, who was killed during what is commonly referred to as the "Oka Crisis" in 1990: a land dispute between the Mohawk people of Kanehsatà:ke and the city of Oka, Quebec, that wanted to expand a golf course onto land that included a sacred Mohawk burial ground, which escalated into an armed standoff between Mohawk protesters—along with their Indigenous supporters from across North America—and the Canadian armed forces and Quebec provincial police. Each of the participants' stories in *Québékoisie* raises questions about the complex history of Quebec whereby the person speaking acknowledges his or her pre-conceived notions or even previous ignorance and shares his or her journey of identification with, and deeper understanding of, history as it relates to place and territory.

The documentary affords the narrative space for such enunciations of self-location to unfold. The frame of the journey or route lends itself well to this unfolding. In fact, early on in *Québékoisie*, over travelling shots of the road on the shore of the St. Lawrence River, anthropologist Serge Bouchard reflects on the profound significance of the road—the path, the route—to the human spirit as it relates to storytelling: "Les plus grandes philosophies font toujours référence à un chemin, donc à une voie, donc à une route. […] Tout le monde sacralise et mystifie les routes. […] Pour une raison ou pour une autre, nous autres on réussit pas à faire ça. Pourquoi on réussit pas à mystifier nos routes? Nous, qui sommes de tradition orale puis des grands conteurs, on a dévalorisé le conte au profit de la modernité." In addressing this sense of disconnection, *Québékoisie* recalls the complexity of the route—in its varied linearities, obstacles, and elisions—as transporter of concomitant and sometimes divergent voices.

Cautions about engaging dialogue

Québékoisie effectively achieves constructive dialogue, but its success points to the need for caution in dialogue in filmmaking between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

Navigating society's concomitant and divergent voices through constructive dialogue and collaboration is an ethically charged endeavour, one that has been carefully heeded by Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars and practitioners alike. Alison Jones' probing appraisal of collaboration as a white scholar working with her Māori friend and colleague Kuni Jenkins in their chapter "Rethinking Collaboration: Working the Indigene-Colonizer Hyphen" in *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies* (2008) elucidates the role of pause before directly attempting to forge dialogue as an end onto itself and the need to critically question one's embedded assumptions that sustain its implicit structure of dominance:

> Interrogating the logic of (my own) White/settler enthusiasm for dialogic collaboration, I consider how this desire might be an unwitting imperialist demand—and thereby in danger of strengthening the very impulses it seeks to combat. I do not argue for a *rejection* of collaboration. Rather I unpack its difficulties to suggest a less dialogical and more uneasy, unsettled relationship, based on learning (about difference) *from* the Other, rather than learning *about* the Other.[71]

The complex, charged marker of that "unsettled relationship," the hyphen—and the crux of their chapter—commands an examination of collaboration, impasse, resistance, and positionality. Jones posits the hyphen as a site where difference should be recognized and respected.[72] Recognizing and respecting difference entails honestly interrogating the terms upon which dialogue is desired. It means acknowledging the embedded assumptions of epistemological prerogative.

In *Unsettled Expectations: Uncertainty, Land and Settler Decolonization* (2016), Eva Mackey critically analyzes what land disputes and alliance-building in Canada and the United States teach about the potential and challenges of Indigenous-settler relations. Mackey argues the need for settlers to confront what she terms "settled expectations." These expectations, Mackey contends, derive from an ontology of entitlement, as perpetually validated by laws and liberal notions of property.[73] Challenging settled expectations necessitates recognizing that their

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[71] Alison Jones and Kuni Jenkins, "Rethinking Collaboration: Working the Indigene-Colonizer Hyphen," in *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies*, ed. Norman K. Denzin et al. (Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore: SAGE, 2008), 471.

[72] Ibid., 480.

[73] Eva Mackey, *Unsettled Expectations: Uncertainty, Land and Settler Decolonization* (Halifax and Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 2016), 190.

construction is based on upholding certainty. The expectation is that "the not-known is understood in terms of the still-to-be-known or the potentially-knowable—a notion that has radically underpinned the impetus for exploration and colonization."[74] This contention urges settlers to account for our assumption of access to knowability and to respect the boundary between our desire to know and knowledge—knowledge that may require care and custodianship in ways we cannot understand.

Responsibility toward knowledge and its sharing has important implications. As Mi'kmaw educator and author Marie Battiste pointedly remarks in her chapter in *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies*,

> the main principles for research policy and practice must be that Indigenous people should control their own knowledge, that they do their own research, and that if others should choose to enter any collaborative relationship with Indigenous peoples, the research should empower and benefit Indigenous communities and cultures, not just researchers, their educational institutions, or Canadian society.[75]

Giving back to the community, as Margaret Kovach elaborates in *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts* (2009) entails understanding what is useful for them and creating and sustaining a relationship that spans the different steps of the project.[76] Such a relationship grows from respect and trust, built over time. This enables an ethic of reciprocity that honours local stewardship of knowledge and holds to account the collaboration's beneficial output.

In regard to expectations of collaboration, assumptions of access to knowability, and concerns over mutual benefit, as a researcher and practitioner I learned firsthand from the challenges of seeking dialogue. For this research-creation, I initially wanted to focus in part on the river as enacting a metaphor of both frontier and passage for Indigenous-settler relations. The river has been a site of contest and communication; it has carried colonization as well as resistance. Importantly, it has been a source of livelihood and identity for many people who live

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[74] Jones and Jenkins, 481.

[75] Marie Battiste, "Research Ethics for Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage: Institutional and Researcher Responsibilities," in *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies*, ed. Norman K. Denzin et al. (Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore: SAGE, 2008), 501.

[76] Margaret Kovach, *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 82, 149.

its shores. To adequately address the complexity of the history and the many kinds of stories that have played out in its path, I set out to learn about the experience and perspective of Indigenous peoples who have a long historical connection with the river, specifically the Mohawk people of Kahnawà:ke. Over the course of several months, I met with knowledge holder and cultural liaison Thomas Deer at the Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Centre in Kahnawà:ke and learned about place-names, the Mohawk language, Iroquois history, and Kahnawà:ke's profound relation with the river. I attentively read chapter 9 of the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, *Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada*; I attended lectures and read on Indigenous methodologies; and consulted with Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics—all of which premise respect and trust as fundamental guiding principles.

After this initial period of research, I sought to formally interview Deer, with whom I had developed trust, as part of a potential research-creation project on the river. To conduct an interview with someone from a First Nation reserve, the university's ethics protocol requires additional consent, such as group consent or consent from community leaders. Seeking to obtain this consent, upon consultation, I turned to the Language and Cultural Centre in Kahnawà:ke, which caters to research inquiries. I reached out several times, but never received a response for my request. After a few weeks, and again, upon consultation, I next approached the Long House, but was told it did not have the time, nor would it be a priority, to process my request—understandably. I was then referred to the Band Council, which delivered a filming permit that contained an exorbitantly expensive insurance policy. I was told that this permit qualified as community consent. I returned to the ethics office with this information, but was told this could not count as community consent and it was not possible for the university to cover the insurance policy.

Faced with these barriers, I had to confront the terms on which I was seeking dialogue in the context of pursuing a Ph.D. The reality is that I had a limited timeframe in which I was developing my project. I could try finding other Indigenous individuals to speak with, but that would also mean imposing my research timetable and interests on people who might have other priorities and timing issues, furthermore undermining the process of establishing trust to ensure respectful reciprocity. More fundamentally, the impasse I faced pointed to a basic issue at stake in research and in documentary: the Mohawk knowledge and experience shared through dialogue

would supply expertise to my project, but my project would not necessarily benefit the community from which the knowledge stemmed (mutual benefit being a crucial tenet of respectful research methodology, as outlined by Battiste and Kovach, among others). This imbalance strikes at the core of the cautions discussed above: the need for scholars, researchers, and practitioners to probe the assumption of privilege and access to knowledge, and to carefully re-evaluate when the conditions for dialogue are not always appropriate for it to be mutually beneficial.

My research also showed me that other writers and scholars faced obstacles in soliciting Indigenous collaboration. In their introduction to the volume *Thinking with Water*, the editors discuss the humbling experience of seeking dialogue on concerns over water. They explain how their initial call for contribution did not elicit proposals from Indigenous writers and artists. With an honest appraisal of possible reasons for the lack of participation, including, importantly, skepticism by Indigenous scholars to partake in a settler-framed project, they admit: "It became clear that meaningful intercultural collaboration on water issues could not be simply conjured by our good will as editors."[77] In line with this admission, I came to realize, as did the book's editors, that there were limitations to the best of my intentions. I critically questioned how else I could contribute to the exploration and understanding of the river's stories.

Turning the Camera Around

I took a step back and paused upon the river's shore. I contemplated its flowing water as a place to practice self-location. From this stillness, the river invoked an examination of my vantage point from Montreal and the mechanisms that uphold this perspective—ignorance, entitlement, appropriation.

As described above, when it comes to documentary history-telling of the river and of place in Quebec, there have been powerful voices of Indigenous people as heard in *Kahnawake Revisited: The Saint Lawrence Seaway*; and there has been productive dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, as seen in *Québékoisie.* Where I could contribute was in focusing the lens of my research and of my camera on what can be learned by applying place theory to the St. Lawrence River.

[77] Chen, MacLeod, and Neimanis, "Introduction: Toward a Hydrological Turn?," 7.

Addressing positionality in this context means acknowledging that even though I set out to film from the shore, I could never truly embody what Māori Fourth Cinema theorist and filmmaker Barry Barclay calls the "Camera Ashore." Barclay's image of the distinction between Indigenous and settler-colonial media is resonant: "The First Cinema Camera sits firmly on the deck of the ship. It sits there by definition. The Camera Ashore, the Fourth Cinema Camera, is the one held by the people for whom "ashore" is their ancestral home."[78] This probing assessment pushed me to recognize the implicit blind spots of the ship's perspective and of the privilege of a home ashore, one that is not ancestral, but rather granted only by the dispossession of another people.

Of course, turning the camera to critically reflect on positionality from the deck brings inevitable hazards, namely it runs the risk of reaffirming the centrality of the settler or conversely, resting on the acknowledgement of location as a means to absolve accountability toward others. In *Who Can Speak?: Authority and Critical Identity*, Linda Martin Alcoff observed in 1995 what still holds powerfully true today: she cautions against the position of retreat presumably authorized by self-location because "it assumes that an individual *can* retreat into her discrete location and make claims entirely and singularly within that location that do not range over others and, therefore, that an individual can disentangle herself from the implicating networks between her discursive practices and others' locations, situations, and practices."[79] Self-locating cannot be constructive if it bars itself from the consequences of its directionality. Location is not an insular discursive modality. Alcoff continues, "we must also interrogate the *bearing of our location and context* on what we are saying."[80] With this in mind, I recognize the risk of falsely conflating the recognition of one's location with a kind of hideaway for positional ethics. I therefore place myself in cognizance that it does not disavow the settler privilege with which I speak, write or film. I locate my research and practice within an epistemology of place that questions settler-colonialist appropriations of its history, rendering visible the bounds of my location's bearing.

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[78] Barry Barclay, "Celebrating Fourth Cinema," *Illusions* 53 (Winter 2003): 10, quoted in Brendan Hokowhitu, "Theorizing Indigenous Media," in *The Fourth Eye: Māori Media in Aotearoa New Zealand* Brendan Hokowhitu and Vijay Devadas, eds. (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 115.

[79] Linda Martin Alcoff, "The Problem of Speaking for Others," in *Who Can Speak?: Authority and Critical Identity*, eds. Judith Roof and Robyn Wiegman (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 108.

[80] Ibid., 113.

Not being in a position to responsibly share in a representational dialogue of the St. Lawrence River's place history with Indigenous participation, self-locating means addressing, with a critical, inquisitive, and open eye, settler ways of relating to place history—looking at how to "unsettle"[81] them. In her account of the residential school systems, Paulette Regan asks: "How can we, as non-Indigenous people, unsettle ourselves to name and then transform the settler—the colonizer who lurks within—not just in words but by our actions, as we confront the history of colonization."[82] Unsettling the settler, as prompted by the title of her book, calls for disrupting the comfort of settler privilege and deconstructing the illusory historical narrative of benevolence and shared nationhood, which in turn simply upholds that privilege. To do so, Regan compels settlers to approach history and relations with Indigenous peoples with humility, vulnerability, and the willingness to disturb assumptions of dominance—as denied or guilt-ridden as it may be. Regan calls for accrued emphasis on understanding settlers' own experiences as descendants of colonizers.[83] She recognizes that by making settlers the subject of her study, she may reify existing privilege, but the humility and accountability with which she articulates her positionality convey the disruptive, unsettling potential of self-location.[84] Returning the gaze onto ourselves, then, demands understanding and assessing, first, our story as settlers—our privilege, our complicity in colonization, and how we learn from this history. Regan suggests: "So we must begin from where we are, not from where we want to be, remembering that decolonization is a lifelong struggle filled with uncertainty and risk taking."[85]

I thus began from where I was: I came to see that embracing the inherent vulnerability of location could generate new forms of responsibility toward it. Indeed, the vulnerability from sometimes feeling out-of-place in effect deepened the exchanges with the participants in my documentary, whose unique way of relating to place history, as artists, adventurers, environmentalists, writers, teachers, and historians came to nuance habitual assumptions. At

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[81] Paulette Regan, *Unsettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 13.

[82] Ibid., 11.

[83] Ibid., 34.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Ibid., 217-218.

times lost, at times connecting, that fluidity commands the responsibility to continually question location, even, or perhaps especially, within the confines of the deck.

Our place, then, is uncertain—and that is a good thing. It is not an abandonment of the scholarly pursuit of understanding—it is at its very core. It is through an honest, critical appraisal that we can begin to unthread the seamless line of continuity put forth by official discourses of place history, nuancing these in order to look more carefully into *relations* to place history.

Equipped with a deepened understanding of place theory and of positionality, I thus used my camera lens to focus on five diverse storytellers to gain new perspectives on history through experiences of the river as place-event: the artist, who brings the river into collective memory; the adventurer, who navigates its storied waters; the environmentalist, who pays attention to its mutability over time; the teacher, who recalls its determining impact on society; and the historian, who archives its evolving stories. Their five perspectives, informed by my questioning and how I structured and compiled their stories, led to a distinct understanding of place as applied to the St. Lawrence River.

Methodology

As a research-creation, the methodological design for this project meant crafting it through an iterative and synchronous process, whereby the research and the creation trajectories continually informed each other and the various creation avenues also spoke to one another. I took several steps that were specific to both the writing and the filming of this project.

For the writing of this thesis, the research involved firstly, situating developments in philosophic and socio-geographic theorizations of place as well as engaging advancements in documentary and essayistic cinema that cater to reflective and multilinear modes of representation; secondly, assessing the ways official discourses of history around the St. Lawrence River are transmitted by visiting historical museums along its shores and taking a boat tour on it; thirdly, researching municipal, provincial, and federal archives for maps of the river as well as for legal documents pertaining to its regulation; and finally, searching through newspaper archives for headlines and articles of momentous events that changed the river in a significant way, namely, the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway and the construction of the islands for Expo 67.

The creation of the accompanying documentary in this project entailed firstly, conducting interviews with adventurer Mylène Paquette, artist René Derouin, environmentalist Martine Chatelain, retired history school teacher Pearl Grubert, historian Roger La Roche as well as obtaining audio recorded excerpts from writer Monique Durand; secondly, filming the river from a variety of locations, perspectives, and times of the day and of the year in order to develop a reflective and experiential filming process; and finally, editing the interviews and recordings of the river into video segments which I then placed in an interactive web platform. The development of all these video segments also developed iteratively, as the production process of each was itself a journey, and it later required finding points of connection or even separation between each, influencing their formulation in the web documentary interface.

Approach to inviting potential participants

The participants were sought on the basis of gathering different people's memories, perceptions, and experiences in connection with the river in order to relay varied avenues for reflection. I conducted initial research of people who I thought had a particular kind of engagement with the river. This research and the subsequent invitations to participate progressed adaptively to unpredictable issues of availability, breaks in correspondence, and delayed responses. The recruitment process therefore involved inclusion on an exploratory basis. To this end, inclusion of some participants borrowed in part from the method of snowball sampling, which uses a small set of initial participants to nominate other potential participants.[86] In one case, for instance, a museum declined my invitation to participate, but referred me to a writer who had just completed a collection on the river. With this referral, I contacted writer Monique Durand, who accepted my invitation.

Since I did not previously know the participants personally or professionally, the recruitment process necessitated adaptability and openness. This sometimes involved referrals and chance meetings that led to continued conversations and in turn, to invitations to participate. In the end, there were some people with whom correspondence fell through, one person whose schedule did not permit, an institution that declined, and an organization that never responded.

[86] David L. Morgan, "Snowball Sampling," in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, ed. Lisa M. Given (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2008), 816. DOI: 10.4135/9781412963909.

The people who did participate (with the exception of Monique Durand with whom I did not conduct an interview) were asked to answer questions in a semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interviewing has a flexible format and is usually organized around an interview guide, rather than a set sequence of standardized questions meant to be asked of all interviewees.[87] Semi-structured interviewing is characterized by a more informal style that lends itself to a narrative approach. For my documentary, participants were asked open questions, i.e. questions that offer a wide reflective context for the participant to formulate answers and give his or her perspective, understanding or experience. Open questions also lead to follow-up questions that engage more deeply the participant's answers.

The interviews were video-recorded in a place that was site-specific to the participants' narrative. The goal was to situate their storytelling in a location that is evocative of the history and memory they are communicating. This approach is in line with the practice in oral history of "*in-situ interviews.*"[88] For adventurer Mylène Paquette, we recorded her interview on the frozen river not far from the Lachine Rapids near where she lives. Artist René Derouin's interview was filmed in his art studio in his home. The interview with environmentalist Martine Chatelain took place on a dock on the river in Verdun near where she lives. For retired history teacher Pearl Grubert's interview, the camera was in her living room. Finally, historian Roger La Roche's interview was shot in a museum exhibiting the heart of his research.

Approach to Oral History

Interviewing in this research-creation sought to relay individuals' knowledge and experience to gain insight about the past and its relevance in the present. It deploys the oral history part of my method, a process which is "both the act of recording and the record that is produced."[89] The accounts formed through this process invite different readings into history, away from the official record's authoritative stamp, by cultivating the sense of relationality

[87] Lioness Ayres, "Semi-Structured Interview," in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, ed. Lisa M. Given (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2008), 811. DOI: 10.4135/9781412963909.

[88] Heike Roms and Rebecca Edwards, "Oral History as Site-Specific Practice: Locating Performance History in Wales," in *Place, Writing, and Voice in Oral History*, ed. Shelley Trower (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 181.

[89] Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 2.

forged by people sharing their perspective and context. As Paul Thompson, pioneer in the social sciences of oral history as research methodology, puts forth: "Oral history is a history built around people. It thrusts life into history itself and it widens its scope."[90] To bring life into history, oral history functions with subjectivity and narrative at its core. In *Oral History Theory* (2010), Lynn Abrams ascribes to subjectivity "the constituents of an individual's sense of self, his or her identity informed and shaped by experience, perception, language and culture,"[91] and to narrative, "the way people use language to communicate experience, knowledge and emotions."[92] It is precisely these defining features that make oral history an interesting way to approach the St. Lawrence River through documentary because they articulate particular perspectives that shape people's *relationship* with history.

In this way, the record produced serves less as evidentiary stock, but rather mediates ways of interpreting and identifying. As leading oral historian Alessandro Portelli purports in his 1979 foundational essay: "The first thing that makes oral history different, therefore, is that it tells us less about *events* than about their *meaning*."[93] Through the prism of subjectivity and narrative, the person who is being interviewed—who is delivering oral history—thus expresses an alternative way of accessing history by conveying some of the impacts and considerations from the past's continuity into the present. The goal for interviewing people who have a particular relation to the river in my project was therefore to elicit the meaning they make of the events shaped by the river, and in turn, inspire further reflection on its history as their narrative is heard and viewed in the documentary.

A compelling audio project in London captures well this function of oral history through the distinctly ephemeral essence of a river's narrative flux. *Memoryscape: voices from the history of the Thames* invites people on sound walks to experience the history of the River Thames by listening to the recorded memories of inhabitants while walking along its shore. This oral history

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[90] Paul Thompson, *Voice of the Past: Oral History*, 3rd ed. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 25.

[91] Abrams, *Oral History Theory*, 54.

[92] Ibid., 109.

[93] Alessandro Portelli, "What Makes Oral History Different," in *The Oral History Reader*, 3rd ed., eds. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 52.

is the result of cultural historian Toby Butler's "drifting experiment" along the river. [94] He created a float and spent weeks following its ride downstream, pausing wherever the float happened to strike the bank to interview someone about their relationship with the Thames. Beholden to the current, and the stories therein, this project shows the power of listening to the unassuming histories that come to define people's link to the riverscape.

To that effect, interviewing narrators (a term also employed to refer to the people who are being interviewed in oral history)[95] *in situ* was relevant to my method, for it explored how place and oral history are co-constitutive of knowledge creation. On the one hand, oral history cultivates understanding of how people come to engage place and be changed by place, while on the other hand, place translates the experiential influences on their narrative.[96] The situatedness of the narrators in this research-creation thus aimed to summon the interlocution of place and the telling of history, as convened by the river. Their reflections and testimonies are not meant as empirical evidence; rather, they draw attention to the flows of narratability of place history itself. As Shelley Trower contends in *Place, Writing, and Voice in Oral History* (2011), "oral history can help articulate how people experience places, can change perceptions and understandings of places, and can possibly even generate activities that physically change places."[97] The prominence of the participants' narratives in my documentary and the inclusion of their insights and experiences in this thesis attest to the significance of storytelling to make meaning from the places of habitual encounter. The presentation of the participants' oral histories *in situ* and mediated by the river's presence affirms the unique knowledge production of their storytelling.

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[94] Toby Butler, "Memoryscape: voices from the history of the Thames," Memoryscape, accessed June 18, 2018, http://www.memoryscape.org.uk/Drifting.htm.

[95] Mary Kay Quinlan, "The Dynamics of Interviewing," in *The Oxford Handbook of Oral History*, ed. Donald A. Ritchie (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 26.

[96] Shelley Trower, "Introduction," in *Place, Writing, and Voice in Oral History*, ed. Shelley Trower (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 2-3.

[97] Ibid.

Approach to filming the river

Filming a documentary that explores the potential of mediating relations to place history involved experimenting with cinematography. Influenced by the essay film, I adopted a reflective and situated filming method conducive to meditation on relationality. The essay film's grounding in reflectivity and subjectivity is mirrored in the way I cinematographically engaged place narratives along the St. Lawrence River. I experimented with such a practice by visiting the river during different seasons from various vantage points along its shore in Montreal; from Île Sainte-Hélène and Île Notre-Dame; from bridges; from a tour boat; from a bicycle; on a paddle board gliding downstream; from the shores of la Pocatière and Rivière-du-loup while traveling to Newfoundland; and from the ferry from Nova Scotia to Newfoundland. All of these locations at different times during the year enabled the production of pensive shots that listened to ambient sounds and captured the textures of the weather and the river.

This filming approach was principally carried out through the use of the long take as well as through an experiential filming practice that enabled mobility by, and immersion in, the water through the use of a GoPro camera. The use of long takes fosters generative stillness. Practicing presence by the river and observing its current sensorially emplaced me where I could contemplate questions of access, boundary, connection, and movement, thus enabling an affective encounter with the river as a means to meditate on the histories it carries—in essence, to think *with* river. Guided by *Thinking with Water,* I situated the camera in varied relations to the river, experiencing its diverse articulations of place and perspective. What does the shore enable one to see and what does it teach about gaze? Through this situatedness, I developed a meditative observational method. By inviting the river to inhabit perspective and letting perspective be imbued by the river's fluid presence, observational meditation provided the visual resonance for reflection based in encounter.

Alternatively, filming with a GoPro while in movement along, on, and in the river fostered encounters in fluidity and proximity. I experimented with how mobile views as well as drifting and submerging views on and in the water can afford different perspectives and an appreciation of the river's agency.

Approach to integrating archival material

The types of archives used in the documentary are excerpts from laws regulating the expropriations during the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway and newspaper headlines about Expo 67 and the Seaway that signaled changes to the river's waterscape. The law excerpts were deployed as stand-ins for official discourse of the settler-state against which a critical examination is expressed. I cited the law directly to demonstrate the harshness and imperialism inherent to settler-colonialist claims on the management of place. Finally, the newspaper headlines were integrated as narrators. During the sequences that explore the construction of Expo 67's site or the impacts of the St. Lawrence Seaway, for example, they punctuate the representation of those narratives.

Approach to developing the web documentary

In order to populate the web documentary with content, all the audiovisual recordings of the river and the interviews needed to be packaged and edited into sequences and then exported to an interactive platform where another level of assembly and montage was required: interfacing the web documentary. Gathering the sequences on the interface was an iterative process of trial and error, where my methodological design had to take into account how different forms of representation could flow into, emerge from or part from one another.

All 17 sequences of *De courants et d'histoires*, whether an interview or a reflection on the river, have their own place as well as their connections with one another. Each of these elements represents a linearity—a historiographic stream—and links are enabled between them, thus producing a multilinearity of historical narratives. Together, they animate the inquiry on our continually evolving encounter with the river's history. Their gathering on the interface and the connections among them experiment with narrative linearity as multiple, concurrent or even interrupted. Here, participation from the navigator had to be factored in to the reception experience. This meant negotiating the layout of the documentary between granting navigational prompts and controls, at one end, and delivering a more expressly narrative experience, at the other. Just like the river, then, the layout summons as much a need for situated awareness as for letting go, with storylines unfolding variably in its crossing.

The interactive platform I chose to work with is Klynt, a downloadable and affordable platform that is operationally manageable. Since I am not a programmer, I am insufficiently versed in the technical language required to run a platform governed by complicated coding structures. Klynt has a complex enough infrastructure to create innovative and engaging projects, but it does not necessitate coding knowledge.[98] It is structured through a storyboard back-end designed as a mind map, enabling a spatial conceptualization of narrative representation when building the documentary interface. Seeking to explore the spatial quality of representations of place, I was interested in Klynt's versatility in narrative layout that is conducive to the multilinear goal of my project.

Testing the signification and limits of historical telling's linearity, the narrative layout of *De courants et d'histoires* gathers participants' stories and reflections on the river's history. It begins with an opening sequence that leads to a main navigational screen, which brings together the stories of Mylène Paquette, René Derouin, Martine Chatelain, Pearl Grubert, and Roger La Roche, each composed of interviews conducted with them, as stand-alone video sequences. It also includes four main themes: the manipulation of the river; the river as palimpsest; access to the river; and reflections inspired by the river. Each theme in turn has two streams to allow the navigator to explore the topic more fully.

- The manipulation theme critically assesses the river's instrumentalization and expropriation in two ways. A short video looks at how the river has been used as a resource to serve us. A second video segment looks at the consequences of the construction and continued use of the St. Lawrence Seaway.
- The palimpsest theme explores two paths of the river as palimpsest, uncovering how its bedrock has literally been transformed, inscribing layers of histories in its current. In one segment, we follow René Derouin's artistic journey of depositing his work on collective memory into the river. A second video about Expo 67 looks at the engraving of the river's history and the massive changes with the construction of the islands for the world exhibit.

[98] There are other platforms that cater to interactive modalities through an intuitive operational system. Korsakow is a notable example. Korsakow films are founded upon a keyword authoring system that resists a fixed, singular narrative path. The sequencing of narrative elements (called SNUs: Smallest Narrative Unit) is database driven. The resulting display is of a main SNU, accompanied by database-selected previews of other SNUs to be chosen in order to advance the viewing of the web documentary. This kind of action-response with the interface produces a non-linearity of narrative representations, both stylistically and discursively, premised on selective randomness. In this way, its structure remains sequential.

- The access theme includes a discussion of the difficulty of accessing the river formulated by Mylène Paquette and Martine Chatelain, and another that looks at the impact of Expo 67 on access to the river.
- Finally, the reflections theme comprises a voice-over by writer Monique Durand of selected excerpts from her collection of prose on the river and a personal reflection by me along the shoreline, thinking about relating to history by the river.

In terms of duration, the interview sequences range from eight minutes to thirteen minutes and the themed reflection sequences range between two minutes and seven minutes. Determining the length of the sequences was based on three factors: honouring the integrity of the story that each of the participant generously accorded; conversely, acknowledging typical viewer disengagement from videos watched online after a few minutes only; and cultivating the potential of the platform to gather segments disparate in duration and form. Aware that browser analytics indicate navigators' limited online attention span, I nonetheless consciously designed the sequences, specifically the interviews, to let the storytelling unfold more freely, giving place to the anecdotes, reflections, and details that deepen the meaning of stories. In total, the combination of the interviews and the themed reflections adds up to approximately ninety minutes. The documentary, however, is not organized sequentially, therefore it is not necessary to view it in its entirety in one sitting. In fact, it is designed in a way that permits crossings, interruptions, and returns.

Conversely, continuity was a determining factor in another structural element of the documentary: language. On the basis of preserving formal flow, I decided not to subtitle the participants' narrative or to duplicate and translate the texts on screen that narrate parts of the themed reflections. With the exception of Pearl Grubert, every participant is francophone. I opted to develop it in the language of the majority of its interlocutors, while leaving Pearl Grubert's interventions in English, favouring fluidity of expression. Subtitles can be distracting—by their very nature, they draw even the bilingual viewer's eyes to the words on the screen instead of looking at the people talking or the visuals in the frame. Considering the documentary's focus on place-based narrative and oral history, the priority was to visually and aurally highlight the import and details of place and storytelling. Subtitles would detract attention from the representational strategy of engaging place and storytelling. Instead, written translations (and

description, in the case of Monique Durand's participation, which consists of excerpts from her French-only published prose) are made available to accompany the interviews and themed reflections. The translations are accessible in PDF form by clicking on one of the tabs in the footer, at the bottom of the screen.

Recalling the essayistic film as a process of observation, experimenting, and experiencing, this research-creation has been a journey through the exploration of limits and the limits of exploration. As an exercise in fluid reflection, its aim is to invite growing openness and awareness to the process of interrogation—especially questioning ourselves. Like all meaningful journeys, one needs profound unlearning in order to progress to deeper learning.

In his account of the production of knowledge through creative research, professor of Contemporary Arts at the University of Sydney Ross Gibson notes "Acknowledgement—the shift in knowledge—is instigated when the researching artist conducts a productive and purposeful *experiment*. Etymologically, to experiment and to experience are closely related."[99] Gibson elaborates the pressure points between research and creation that give rise to the shift in knowledge. At times these pressure points are deflating, for they signal limitations. But from this deflation grows a reckoning of how the limits and failures beset by experimenting can be transformative teachers. They invigorate a re-examination of process, sometimes taking a step back, and recognizing the fluid experience of acknowledgment. Ultimately and inevitably, it is through the ebbs and flows of knowledge that researching and creating bring about new sets of questions about how to research and create.

At this juncture, I invite the reader to begin navigating *De courants et d'histoires* and become acquainted with the stories therein, before journeying further to the following chapters.

[99] Gibson, 5.

Chapter 3

Place: The river as event, as palimpsest, and the flow of senses

En contact avec cette nature-là, l'abondance de la nature, le grand fleuve, l'eau à perte de vue—ça me rappelle qui je suis, ça me garde en contact avec mon essence, puis ça me rappelle mon humilité.[100]
—Mylène Paquette

Looking into history through the St. Lawrence River is as much a spatial endeavour as a temporal one. Changing, inscribed, embodied—these characteristics shape the experience of historical reflection on the river and the process of representing it in a documentary form. At the heart of this reflection is place. Often place is referred to as location: designating a building, a residence or even a parking spot. Similarly, the river is often referred to primarily as a body of water—and at times, just an inconvenient place to cross over on a bridge on the way to another place.

In this chapter, I elaborate the documentation and narrativization of place beyond the characterization of it as a static site, by bridging theory with the oral histories formulated in my documentary. The storytelling that unfolds through the filmic material is essential to, and inseparable from, the historicization of the river, for the knowledge it produces highlights the fluidity of that very production. The power of storytelling is indeed to change how stories get told: "The cultural store of stories is in fact a huge reservoir or lake, into which stories flow and mingle, and out of which stories flow differently, or can be drawn."[101] In thinking with river, then, stories contribute to better understanding the changing narratability of its history. In this context, I will first treat place as event—as a mover of spatio-temporal processes—and look at how the river, as place, activates such mutability, in turn shaping its historical telling. This variability unfolds in other kinds of shaping as well: in the ephemeral markings of history. In the second section of this chapter, I put forward a way of adapting the concept of palimpsest—traditionally referring to print on solid material—to a place as flowing as the river. I will look at how events and stories carve its current. I draw from the experiences of two storytellers in my documentary

[100] "Being in contact with that nature, with the abundance of nature—the vastness of the river, water as far eyes can see—reminds me who I am, keeps me in touch with my essence, and it humbles me." (my translation)

[101] Shaw, 2.

to impart different ways of seeing the river's palimpsestic manifestations and implications. Finally, after looking at what has been imposed on the river, as event and as palimpsest, I will examine how the ways in which it is physically and affectively experienced develops senses of place. I relay from my documentary Mylène Paquette's sensorial testimony on her experience navigating to elicit both the significance of place in sensorial storytelling and the agency of storytelling in articulating senses of place.

Engaging in these explorations through the river-place—as event, palimpsest, and sense—is key in rethinking gaze and relationality toward the histories of emplacement by water. Throughout the documentary, the stories of some of the Montrealers who have already embarked on such undertakings open place to the fluidity of historical narratability.

Place as event, as agent of shifting relations

Conceptions of place as enacting relations with time and with agents, human and non-human alike, compel generative formulations of historiography. Casey importantly attributes to the role of place more than being a locator in space, but an evolving scene of historical event: "Place in not entitative—as a foundation has to be—but eventmental, something in process, something unconfinable to a thing."[102] Seeing a place as event opens up objectifying definitions of place as static and governable. I return here to Massey, who proposes to think of place as dynamic space-time that both produces and is produced by social relations.[103] Since, as she remarks, social relations are continually (re)configured by power and representation, so too, then, the spatial becomes "an ever-shifting social geometry of power and signification."[104] This geometry implies a "simultaneous multiplicity of spaces" that may align, intersect, link, but also obstruct and oppose.[105] Such is the making of place, as an articulation of this heterogeneity, of these potential connections and confrontations. In this articulation, I posit that the St. Lawrence River as place can be understood as a passageway through and by which stories have been played out. As such, the river fills the mutable terrain that has formed the historical relations and

[102] Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*, 337.

[103] Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender*, 3, 4.

[104] Ibid., 3.

[105] Ibid.

oppositions between agents such as ecology and development; institutional regulation and personal engagement; and belonging and expropriation.

No event more major than the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway has impacted these socio-natural interactions in the river. The St. Lawrence Seaway is part of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System, a waterway that extends 3,700 kilometres from the Atlantic Ocean to the head of the Great Lakes.[106] The Seaway portion of the System ranges from Montreal to mid-Lake Erie.[107] The Seaway was officially inaugurated on June 26, 1959 by Queen Elizabeth II, U.S. president Dwight Eisenhower, and Canadian Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, who embarked on the first voyage through it at the Saint-Lambert lock just by Montreal. Official institutional discourse hailed it as opening to the world the heart of the North American continent.[108] Considered as one of the most impressive engineering feats in Canadian history, various levels of government summoned it as a nation-building symbol of progress.[109] This marine highway was even designated as "Highway H_2O," which "has become the seaway's brand and the cornerstone of a range of marketing and promotional efforts."[110] Yet the Seaway's ongoing emblematic importance, conveyed to this day in infrastructure heritage, in tourism, and even in popular culture renders a determining factor of this progress-hailing exploit markedly absent: the expropriation of lands and destruction of the river's ecosystem commanded by its construction.[111] While discursively exalted for its commercial and geopolitical prominence, hydrographically and cartographically, the Seaway, in effect, fits seamlessly in the surrounding waterscape.

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[106] The St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation and Saint Lawrence Development Corporation, "The Seaway," *Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System*, accessed July 31, 2018, http://www.greatlakes-seaway.com/en/seaway/index.html.

[107] Ibid.

[108] Amedée Gaudreault and Vincent Prince, "La reine et Eisenhower ouvrent au monde le cœur du continent," *La presse*, June 26, 1959, http://numerique.banq.qc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/2829446.

[109] "Le St. Laurent, fleuve canadien," *La presse*, June 26, 1959, http://numerique.banq.qc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/2829446.

[110] D'arcy Jenish, "The St. Lawrence Seaway: Fifty Years and Counting," *The St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation* (Manotick, ON: Penumbra Press, 2009), 22, http://www.greatlakes-seaway.com/en/pdf/Jenish_en.pdf.

[111] The inauguration of the Seaway was even featured as one of only seven historical milestone themes for the "Happy birthday Canada" episode of the 2017 season of *Top Chef Canada All-Stars* in which contestants had to create a dish inspired by an important moment in Canadian history, in honour of Canada's 150th.

Through this hydrographic emplacement, the dominant story of the Seaway gets memorialized in industrial and institutional discourse, while evading the colonialist displacement of Indigenous territories implicit in its making. On the Parks Canada Directory of Federal Heritage Designations website, the description of a plaque commemorating the Seaway, which is mounted, incidentally, in Iroquois, Ontario, illustrates the effacing nature of the settler-colonial narrative of progress. It reads:

> Impressive for its immense scale, organizational complexity, and speedy completion, the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway from 1954 to 1959 was an outstanding engineering achievement. This project, which included hydroelectric power generation and water-level control, transformed shipping on the St. Lawrence River above Montréal by allowing ocean-going vessels access to the Great Lakes. Acting in close cooperation, the Canadian and American governments coordinated the planning and construction needed to complete this remarkable undertaking on the world's longest inland waterway.[112]

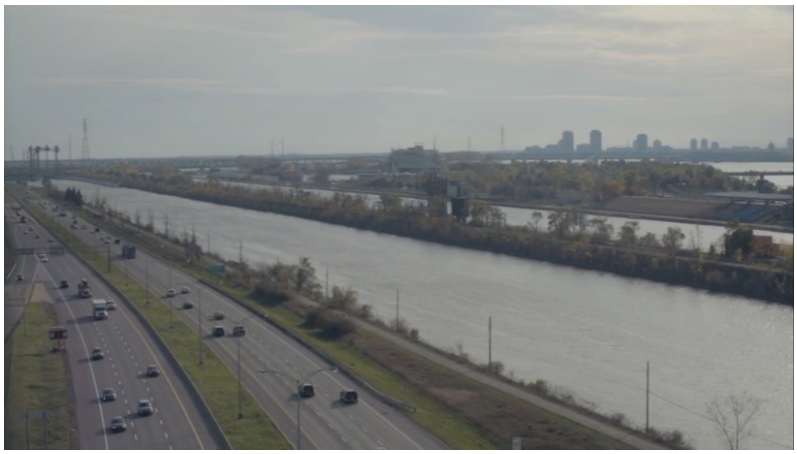
Yet this "remarkable undertaking" also uprooted countless residents along the shore, polluted (and in some cases irreparably damaged) the river's ecosystem, and violently severed Indigenous communities from their source of life by expropriating their land. "When the nation defines itself in terms of its relationship to that river, the implications are quite obvious. Your whole identity is taken away from you and you're forced into acculturation—it's a fancy word but really it means you have to rebuild your culture or more like your culture is taken away from you and you have to adapt to a new reality, not of your own making." Here, speaking in the documentary *Kahnawake Revisited: The Saint Lawrence Seaway*, Taiaiake Alfred denounces the Seaway as a vestige of the ongoing colonialist project. The construction of the Seaway expropriated 1, 262 acres from Kahnawà:ke, destroying one sixth of its land.[113] Most devastatingly, it disinherited Kahnawà:ke of the river and of the community's long-standing, profound relationship with it. Stephanie Phillips, who is from Kahnawà:ke and who studied the Seaway, explains in her M.A. thesis how the Seaway remains a formative discursive part of the community: "It is spoken of in conversation, in newspaper articles, at band council meetings, in schools. Recent history is divided into two periods, 'before the Seaway' and 'after the

[112] "Construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway National Historic Event," Parks Canada Directory of Federal Heritage Designations, accessed October 11, 2017, http://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/dfhd/page_nhs_eng.aspx?id=10266.

[113] Stephanie Phillips, "The Kahnawake Mohawks and the St. Lawrence Seaway" (M.A. Thesis, Department of Anthropology, McGill University, 2000), 46.

Seaway.'"[114] Conversely, across the river in Montreal, where no land was expropriated and no people were forced to relocate for the Seaway, it is not a significant part of settler public discourse. Rather, it is neatly relegated to commerce or touristic information, running smoothly through the place narrative of the river as resource for progress.

Figure 1



Shot of the St. Lawrence Seaway taken from the Jacques-Cartier Bridge

More troubling still is the legal and legislative discourse used to claim place for the building of the Seaway. According to the St. Lawrence Seaway Act, the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority (a corporation created by the Parliament of Canada) "may, without the consent of the owner, take or acquire lands for the purposes of the said Act and therefore the Expropriation Act shall be applicable, *mutatis mutandis*, to the taking, acquisition, sale or abandonment of lands by the said Authority."[115] The Seaway Act also provided that the Seaway Authority was a corporation in accordance with the Indian Act, thereby authorizing it, with consent of the Governor in Council, to "exercise its power to expropriate in relation to lands in a reserve or any interest therein" without the consent of the owner.[116] Through these Acts, the settler-state perpetuates its spatial claim to in turn legitimize a singular developmental narrative of place. But

[114] Ibid., 1.

[115] The St. Lawrence Seaway Authority Act, R.S.C. 1951, Chapter 24 (Can.).

[116] Omar Z Ghobashy, *The Caughnawaga Indians and the St-Lawrence Seaway* (New York: The Devin-Adair Company, 1961), 63.

as Kahnawà:ke resident Joe McGregor laments in *Kahnawake Revisited: The Saint Lawrence Seaway*, "they say it's surrendered land. I don't think it's surrendered land, I think it was forced. We were beaten to a pulp by this 'you gotta surrender sooner or later' and that's what happened. It's quite a land there that's still there that I believe that for me, myself, I always liked it as a boy to get it back. It belongs to Kahnawà:ke, and it's way over there." While the establishment of the Seaway attempts to maintain place as static and governable, riparian voices, like Joe McGregor's, remind that the story of the river-place is not only ongoing, but needs changing.

The event of place, then, as forged by Mohawk people in Kahnawà:ke's uprooted relation to the river, by the obscuration of a critical public discourse in settler society, and by Canada's legalizing control of it, articulates the contested "geometry of power and signification" outlined by Massey that configures space-time. Here, the river is the evocative reminder that the event of place continually transcends our present situation and calls upon the past in a relation that is complex and challenging.

In my documentary, I discussed with retired school teacher Pearl Grubert the historical managements of the river for the sake of progress, such as the building of the Seaway. She pointedly relates it to current attempts of exploiting place for advancement:

> Even today if you look at the news, just yesterday, there are landlords in buildings actually not far from here who are literally evicting their tenants who have lived in these apartments for years and years and years. One specifically his parents lived in the same apartment he's now living in, and the landlord is evicting him because he wants to renovate it and then rent it for double the price. […] Is it any different? All in the name of progress. All in the name of getting wealthier.

Grubert's parallel between expropriation and eviction in the name of progress is included in my documentary in the sequence that deals with the insidious usurpation of the river by the dominant Seaway. To address this place-event in this sequence, I nuanced the coherence of the river's visual space by bringing into view the Seaway's traces of dominion and expropriation otherwise nearly imperceptible from the vantage point of Montreal's side of the river. This took the form of first presenting the Seaway's historiographic grandeur by displaying newspaper headlines of its regal inauguration, underscoring its historical opulence in public discourse. Then there are shots of official signage by the shore of the Seaway promoting its geographic and industrial advantages. This imagery is followed by fly-through excerpts of newspaper clippings glorifying it, leading to short texts that question its easily forgotten impacts. These are

superimposed over a bicycle travelling shot of the embankment separating the river from the Seaway. Excerpts of Canadian law that legislated the expropriation of Indigenous lands for the construction of the Seaway are then presented, followed by a textual reference to the acreage losses incurred by Kahnawà:ke, which was dispossessed of its access to the river to build the Seaway. Subsequently, Grubert's aforementioned intervention comes in. The sequence concludes with a long take of the Seaway shot from above (captured from the Jacques-Cartier bridge), showing its imposing presence in the waterscape of the river.

If the Seaway was a major disruptive event with ongoing consequences, pollution of the river is a continual place-event as well. Whether through the dumping of the city's wastewater or the erosion of the shores due to industrialization and development or the cargo ships passing through the Seaway, the ecology of the river is changing. As environmentalist Martine Chatelain decries in her intervention in my documentary: "on ne s'est pas occupé de nos marais, on les a détruits parce que on se disait, bon, c'est de la 'swamp,' c'est pas beau; on va faire des belles maisons là-dessus, du beau bord en ciment et ça détruit l'écologie de l'eau, c'est-à-dire comment l'eau fonctionne. On n'a pas tenu compte de comment l'eau fonctionne."[117] Her reflection on existing ignorance of how water works points to an increasing disconnect from the river. In this regard, she jokingly remarks that even as people living on the *island* of Montreal, some seem to not even realize they are surrounded by water except when stuck in traffic on the bridges that cross the river. This sarcastic thought conveys the loss that she bemoans of a reciprocally nurturing bond once shared with the river. She regrets that it has come to be used, unfortunately, as sewage and even as a garbage can. Chatelain's reflection points to the vulnerability and mutability of the event of watery place. She also points out the consequences of disconnection from that mutability:

> On a eu un rapport de conquérant, de vouloir faire des barrages, de vouloir faire des ponts, de vouloir canaliser l'eau, qu'elle aille où on voulait qu'elle aille. […] "Nous allons conquérir et mâter la nature," puis on s'aperçoit qu'on ne peut pas le faire, alors on va aller vers des systèmes entre autres pour contrer les algues bleu-vert ou pour contrer les inondations, d'aller remettre des zones de marais, […] mais je me dis, si on ne les avait pas détruits on ne serait pas pris à les remettre en place. On ne serait pas pris à replanter

[117] "We did not take care of our marshes, telling ourselves it's ugly swamp, let's build nice houses and put cement walls instead. That has destroyed the ecology of water—how water works. We have not considered how water works. It's sad to see that we do not take seriously the warnings that nature gives us." (my translation)

> du roseau pour épurer l'eau. Là on est pris à faire des choses que la nature nous a montré, mais on ne l'a pas écouté assez vite.[118]

History thus shows that growing disconnection from the river has led to efforts of exerting mastery over its water, a process that has risked eliding its teachings. In *Thinking with Water*, editors Cecilia Chen, Janine MacLeod, and Astrida Neimanis suggest that it is precisely in water's unmanageability that lessons are to be learned: "Our spatial and temporal relations to water may seem unintelligible, unruly, and vague, but they are also full of disturbing potential. By drawing upon the reservoir of unknowability carried within all waters, we may situate ourselves in ways that challenge land-based preconceptions of fixity."[119] The "disturbing potential" of thinking with the river signals the event of water, which, on the one hand humbles us before the dynamism of the places we inhabit or frequent, and on the other hand, situates our accountability toward them.

The St. Lawrence River as palimpsest

The term 'palimpsest' describes the ways by which a writing material gets overlaid with new writings over time as previous layers of writing fade away, while still leaving a trace.[120] I adapt the concept of palimpsest to look at the ways history is continually negotiated in the engravings and elisions of its inscriptions on place, and more specifically on watery place. Fluid and aqueous, the St. Lawrence River further negotiates the ephemerality of these inscriptions, raising questions about the evolving legibility and erasure of place history. In considering the river metaphorically as palimpsest, it is possible to see that the deletions and overwrites are never complete, as previous layers remain perceptible. Massey critiques the geo-historical metaphor of palimpsest as denying space the dynamic contemporaneity of the trajectories that constitute it,

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[118] We've had a conquering relation—seeking to build dams, bridges, to channel water for it to go where we want it to go. […] "We will conquer and master nature," and we're realizing that we cannot do it, so we're turning toward systems that counter blue algae or flooding and that put back marshlands, […] but if we hadn't destroyed them in the first place we wouldn't have to put them back in place; we wouldn't have to replant reeds to purify water. Now we're stuck doing what nature taught us, but we didn't listen to it fast enough." (my translation)

[119] Chen, MacLeod, and Neimanis, "Introduction: Toward a Hydrological Turn?" 8.

[120] *Merriam-Webster*, s.v., "palimpsest (*n.*)," accessed December 12, 2017, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/palimpsest.

rendering gaps in representation and superimpositions as too temporally distinctive and surface-based.[121] However, a watery conception of palimpsest evocatively enables an engagement with the fluidity of these trajectories in space-time. The relations articulated by the water palimpsest interpolate us to consider place more deeply as reciprocally transforming. This conception compels a more attentive view to the histories of place that are obscured from dominant discourses of the river, submerged in its waters or cut off by its embankments, but persistent in its current.

Constructing the world exhibition site for Expo 67

Perhaps one of the best examples of the re-inscriptions of history in and through the river is Expo 67, as it was an attempt to engrave a new page of Montreal's cosmopolitan opening to the world by consciously showcasing the river. The Expo 67 World Exhibition was exalted by all instances of government to propel not just the city of Montreal, but the country as a whole, into the annals of history. At the inauguration of the exhibition's construction site on Île Ronde, just below the Jacques-Cartier Bridge, Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson exclaimed that Expo 67 would draw worldwide attention on Montreal and Canada as "hardly anything else has ever done."[122] Historian and passionate archivist Roger La Roche recalls in my documentary how Expo 67 would ultimately transform the place-event of the river on an international scale.

From the outset, the preparations for Expo 67 took the river into account. La Roche explains how even during the first proposals for the exhibition, the Bureau international des expositions in Paris ensured that Mayor Jean Drapeau privileged the river. La Roche points out, "c'est l'essence même de notre histoire qui est relié au fleuve et donc c'est ce qu'on voulait aussi démontrer. Mais ça l'a donné quelque chose de merveilleux comparé à toutes les autres expositions parce que le fleuve est devenu une barrière naturelle. C'est la seule exposition internationale qui n'a pas de barrière, y a pas de clôture."[123] The river would be determining in

[121] Massey, *For Space*, 110.

[122] Bill Bantley, "Pearson says $50 million federal aid to world fair," *The Gazette*, August 13, 1963, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=Fr8DH2VBP9sC&dat=19630813&printsec=frontpage&hl=fr.

[123] "The very essence of our history is tied to the river, and so that's what we wanted to demonstrate. It engendered something marvelous because it's the only international exposition that doesn't have barriers or fences. It's an open area." (my translation)

Expo 67's emplacement, just as Expo 67 changed the course of the river's life, both effacing and re-etching its channel.

The plans for Expo 67 required expanding Île Sainte-Hélène and constructing another island, what became known as Île Notre-Dame. The expansion and construction of these islands implied the destruction of three other islands in the river: Île Ronde, Île Verte, and Île Moffat (or Île à pierre). La Roche explains the excavating and depositing process: to erect the perimeter of the islands, starting with the expansion of Île Sainte-Hélène, large pieces of rock were needed. Supply was problematic because although such multi-ton rocks could be found in quarries in Montreal, they were extremely costly and more importantly, their weight would have destroyed the bridge on the way to the island. Due to these obstacles, Île Ronde, Île Verte, and Île à pierre were destroyed in order to provide the rock. Each made way to bodies of water in the islands: Lac des dauphins, Lac des cygnes, and the water in Parc Notre-Dame. With their perimeter now in place, the islands themselves needed to be filled. Originally, studies concluded there was enough sediment from the riverbed to build the islands. The studies, however, neglected to consider the heavy compaction level of the riverbed, which meant that since the soil was too hard, dredging quickly got behind schedule. To compensate, builders used soil from the ongoing metro excavation as well from quarries in Montreal.

The physical flow of the river is determining as well in the emplacement history of Expo 67, and in turn, of Montreal. As La Roche explains, the river was part and parcel of the site: "L'eau et le fleuve sont parties intégrantes physiquement non seulement du site, mais tout le côté émotif, le côté philosophique du site."[124] Head architect Édouard Fiset ensured that the river was continually integrated, channeling through the pavilion, La Roche notes. On a logistical level, integrating the river came as a solution to the lack of sediments needed to fill the islands. Beyond infrastructure, however, bringing in the surrounding water to flow through the site immersed Montrealers and visitors alike in the event-place of the river: "L'omniprésence de l'eau dans les îles c'est l'omniprésence de l'eau dans Montréal. C'est l'omniprésence de l'eau dans notre développement. Fait que, l'eau est un support émotif, un support visuel, mais un support— un

[124] "Water and the river form integral parts of the Expo 67 site, not just physically, but emotionally and philosophically." (my translation)

enracinement."[125] La Roche distinctly remembers how the waters throughout the site became, for so many people, gathering and resting grounds. Water offered a space of tranquility, whether by the shore of the river or inside the site:

> Je me rappelle j'avais des périodes libres de deux à cinq heures l'après-midi. Il pouvait y avoir 300 000 personnes aux îles, je me promenais, puis c'était calme. C'était… Tu pouvais t'isoler. Tu pouvais… L'eau amenait de façon permanente un état de tranquillité à l'Expo. Mais, en même temps, quand le fleuve et le canal bougeaient, il y avait aussi une activité. C'était pas de l'eau stagnante, c'était pas un lac et ça donnait aussi énormément de vie au site.[126]

In this way, while the islands changed the course of the river's story, so too did the river etch their scroll. In this palimpsestic exchange, renewed encounters are forged with the places that come to be visited, inhabited or even claimed. Yet this exchange also raises questions about the traces of past inscriptions and the stakes of new markings.

Understanding how Expo 67 was constructed also reshapes understandings of how place history is situated, but in flux, continually marking the river. Crucial in the consideration of the building of Expo 67 is recognizing the environmental impact it had on the river. La Roche points out how excavation for the islands destroyed the surrounding ecosystem in the river, mainly because it was on spawning grounds. The river was once a plentiful zone for reproduction, but dredging put many species at risk, including one that nearly disappeared, the Atlantic sturgeon. Jeopardizing the river's ecosystem in this way would not have been done today, La Roche points out.

Expo 67 imprinted the mingling of the river's organic and material histories, leaving erasures, traces, and new inscriptions in its perpetual flow. Flow is significant in characterizing the river-palimpsest, as it accounts for the evolving place narratives that come to be written. Sometimes, that flow can have positive impact on the environment. For instance, as La Roche

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[125] "The omnipresence of water in the islands is the omnipresence of water in Montreal. It's the omnipresence of water in our development. So, water is an emotional support, a visual support, but importantly, a rootedness." (my translation)

[126] "I remember I always had free time in the afternoons. There could be 300 000 people on the islands, I would walk around, and it was calm. It was… You could isolate yourself. You could… Water brought, in a permanent way, a state of serenity to Expo 67. At the same time, since the river and the canals flowed dynamically, it also brought a sense of activity. It wasn't stagnant water, it wasn't a lake. That brought a tremendous amount of liveliness to the site." (my translation)

remarks, one other impact of the construction of the islands is that they became major reproduction sites for birds. Île Notre-Dame counts as many as 250 species per year.

Like a palimpsest, preserving the memory of Expo 67 involves taking into account the different material and discursive layers of historical telling. La Roche is adamant about the need for careful reading of these histories. This attention includes, for instance, dispelling urban myths regarding excavation for the islands, namely that the islands were built principally from metro soil. He reminds that only approximately ten percent of the soil was used from the metro. The majority—about sixty to seventy percent—was from the riverbed and the rest came from the metro and quarries. For him, correcting such popular misconceptions about the construction of Expo 67 is part of the greater purpose of archiving: "Un document d'archive ça ne sert absolument à rien si justement il n'est pas analysé, il n'est pas étudié, il n'est pas compris. Donc, pour moi, pour sauvegarder, pour m'assurer que la mémoire de l'Expo soit la bonne, c'est important qu'il y ait justement une archive structurée, disponible."[127] Over decades, he has built (and continues to build) an archive made available online with thousands of documents and over 26, 000 photos. At the heart of his mission is accessibility, so at no cost, students, researchers, and others alike may browse written accounts, maps, plans, newspaper excerpts, etc., which otherwise would remain tucked away in institutional or governmental archival storage.

Having participated in Expo 67 at thirteen years old, working at a stand, and spending as he fondly recalls 162 out of the 185 days at the exhibition, La Roche himself is both a storyteller and a living archive—a generous source of experiential knowledge and care for this place-event. Much like the river, whose bed and water both erase and carry the sediments of an evolving history, La Roche's stories and archive transcribe the rich complexity of Expo 67's engravings on the St. Lawrence. In this flow, palimpsest becomes archive, just as archive becomes palimpsest.

In his seminal *Archive Fever* (1996), Jacques Derrida states that the structure of the archival institution also determines the structure of the archival material, whereby the past is not simply preserved, but constructed by the archive: "The archivization produces as much as it records the event."[128] Traditionally, the archival institution—the archive as place—conserved

[127] "An archival document is absolutely useless if it is not analyzed, studied or understood. So for me, to preserve and ensure that the memory of Expo 67 is accurate, it is important that there is a structured archive, made available for people." (my translation)

[128] Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 17.

hermeneutic authority, preserving historiographic knowledge within an exclusive domain. The river as palimpsest and La Roche's shared collection point to how the understanding of archival place, as a site of mnemonic property, may be reformulated toward one of a lively process where history can be revisited and reconsidered. If "archivization produces as much as it records the event" and if storytelling changes as much as it tells the story, then La Roche, as both archivist and storyteller, intervenes in the generative epistemological tension between record and narrative. His passionate relaying of Expo 67, through the sharing of his memories and of years of tedious retrieving and amassing of archival documents, continually reconvenes place history, enabling old writings to emerge and new readings to ensue in the river's bed and current.

The river as palimpsest, then, pours into the notion of the river as archive—unfixed and shifting. The concept of "territorial archive" is explored by Peter C. van Wyck in *Highway of the Atom* (2000). From a fragmentary, place-based, storytelling approach, he describes the eponymous route on which uranium was passed as "a territorial archive, dispersed but nonetheless in situ."[129] For van Wyck, the route as territorial archive has no centre to coalesce evidentiary elements, but rather leaves a scattering of material, memorial, and narrative remnants, calling for a "hermeneutics of leakage."[130] Through this porous conception, passage rather than containment defines the archive. Applying this to the St. Lawrence, it can be said that it not only carries the deposits of past events and experiences but is the conduit for their evolving meaning: "A territorial archive is that matrix from which the past is transformed by the present not as history, as mere record of past events, but as sites of active and ongoing concern."[131] In this sense, the river-place may be interpreted as an aqueous archive.

The passage of art and memory

It is also important to note and preserve other, less visible, material reconfigurations of the river. Moving to a different register—art—the metaphor of river as palimpsest provides a moving space-time to reflect on the passage of belonging in the collective memory carried by the river. Multidisciplinary artist René Derouin—whose life was powerfully marked by growing up

[129] Peter C. van Wyck, *The Highway of the Atom* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), 20.

[130] Ibid.

[131] Ibid., 35.

next to the St. Lawrence—began his ambitious art project *Migrations* in Mexico and then journeyed with parts of it to the waters of the St. Lawrence River a few years later. His *Migrations* installation was a vast polychrome wood relief platform laden with tens of thousands of ceramic migrant figurines, which had been individually sculpted by Derouin, emplaced fluidly in, through, and out the Rufino Tamayo modern art museum in Mexico City. The notion of place as passage evoked by the museum was key for Derouin. He notes: "L'œuvre naît de ce lieu-là, qui m'est très révélateur. […] On rentre dans le musée, on traverse le musée puis on sort à l'autre bout avec des grandes fenêtres. Alors, je me suis dit, c'est un lieu de passage. Pour faire un art public je trouve que, entre le lieu extérieur et le lieu intérieur, c'est comme de la migration."[132] Following the project's own migration to Quebec and an instinct to cultivate artistic permanency, Derouin realized that *Migrations* belonged in the St. Lawrence River. He thus embarked on a quiet, non-publicized journey (other than photographs taken by his wife, there is no visual account of this event) of depositing thousands of his ceramic migrants at different places in the river—the river itself being a symbol of migration.

Derouin had intimately grown up with the river in Montreal's east end; it was part of his identity. It had also taken the lives of his brother and his father in tragic accidents. These losses led to another traumatic loss: that of the river. Heartbroken after his brother's death, his mother could no longer live by the river and so they moved further north in Montreal. Derouin would subsequently migrate abroad, realizing only years later, after completing *Migrations*, that he had never fully mourned the river. Letting go of pieces of *Migrations* into the river enabled his journey of mourning. It also rewrote—or rather continued—a chapter in his story of relation with the river. For him, this deposit carries the memory of his work; it carries the memory of the mourning for his brother and father; at the same time, it carries the memory of migration to North America by the river. The river as, in his words, a "lieu de passage" (a place of passage), narrates the compilation of history. At the bottom of the river, he says, are the sediments of history. As with migration, history, he believes, is a process of sedimentation, and so, for him, depositing his art work in the river re-inscribed a piece of history and reconciled him with all the other sediments of the river's history: the presence of Indigenous peoples, the settlers, the migrations

[132] "The installation is born of this place, which is very telling for me. […] You enter the museum, walk through, and come out the other side where there are large windows. I tell myself, it's a passageway. In doing a work of public art, the passage between outside and inside is like migration." (my translation)

ever since, etc. The reconciliatory deduction in this cumulative view of history runs the risk, in my opinion, of euphemizing the confrontations and tensions at play in historical sedimentation, especially if considering colonization as one of many layers. The palimpsest metaphor in this case may not aptly problematize the potential violence and disruption involved in the layering of its stories. However, Derouin's own story with the river—in its intimate bond, its tragic rupture, its complex mourning, its voyage through alterity, and its passage of return and letting go—movingly expresses the multiple and ongoing streams that write the narratives of history. These streams cannot be harnessed and their stories may never be complete, the current unabiding. But sometimes, and hopefully, they pass and leave an imprint on us.

Representationally in my documentary, the river as palimpsest was invoked visually by a confluence of expansive shots of its currents and immersive shots of its water. Immersive shots included close-ups that contemplate the texture of the water's movement as well as submerging shots that penetrate the river's abyss and negotiate its lively surface from beneath. Through this visual junction of the river's flow and materiality, Derouin's story of migration—of sedimentation and passage—was articulated. Just as barely any visual record exists of his depositing of the migrant figurines in the river, the mediation of this event in the documentary consciously only alluded to it, leaving Derouin's words to narrate the re-inscription of the river—symbolically, echoing the passage in time and watery space of people's migratory stories, and physically, engraving the river with the statues of migrants.

Senses of place

So far, looking at the river-place as event and palimpsest has demonstrated the effects and consequences of the changes made to the river. Let us now consider how when we engage the river, it changes us.

To do so, it is necessary to turn to the implications of our own human embodiment in place. The body's position in, and relation to, space, is elucidated in Yi-Fu Tuan's *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* (1974) and *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (1977). His argumentation in both these works raises some issues, namely that much of it authoritatively assume the primacy of the human being as well as derives generalizations about emplacement and spatial organization from ethno-cultural and socio-

economic determinism. Despite the problematic nature of some of his more sweeping claims, Tuan's detailed attention to spatial embodiment helpfully orients the analysis of relations to place history, for it is a reminder to consider the imbricated formulation of perceptions and senses of space. Describing the surrounding space of the human body as frontal, rear, left, and right, he ascribes to the experience of space the stance of the body, whereby, for example, frontal space would be sensed visually and rear space through non-visual cues[133] (of course, however, this only takes into account a seeing human being). Interesting in this basic proposition is that it raises awareness of the simple yet determining effect of our position in place: "The human being, by his mere presence, imposes a schema on space. Most of the time he is not aware of it."[134] How we relate to place, currently and in memory, is to a large extent physically defined, as shaped by posture, scale, field of vision, etc.

Oral history cultivates this relationality in articulating " 'situated knowledge' and embodiment, that is, sensorial understanding related to a particular place and time."[135] The senses having a distinct mnemonic quality, they can be effectively convened by oral history practice.[136] Borne of a particular place and time, the senses, when communicated, bring the past of place into its present, and presence. In my documentary, Mylène Paquette's sharing of her cross-Atlantic voyage poignantly exemplifies the impact of sensory engagement on the experience of place, and in turn, on its historical calling:

> Quand on rame on est sur l'océan. On a qu'à se pencher un peu pour pouvoir toucher dans l'eau, mettre notre main dans l'eau, puis on a vraiment un rapport qui est étroit. […] Les rames étaient comme une prothèse pour moi, comme une extension de mon corps. Puis je sentais quand même avec ma main comment la rame répondait à la mer de l'autre côté; j'avais comme une, on dirait des tentacules jusqu'au bout de mes rames pour pouvoir ressentir la mer, donc je sentais ce contact-là étroit avec l'eau.[137]

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[133] Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, 40.

[134] Ibid., 36.

[135] Paula Hamilton, "The Proust Effect: Oral History and the Senses," in *The Oxford Handbook of Oral History*, ed. Donald A. Ritchie (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 225.

[136] Ibid., 222.

[137] "When we're rowing on the ocean, we merely have to bend over to touch the water, so there's a close relation. […] The oars were like a prosthetic, an extension of my body. […] I could feel with my hand how the oar responded to the sea; I could really feel it, as if I had tentacles all the way to the end of the oars to feel the sea, so I felt that intimate link with the water." (my translation)

Her hand movements and head gestures as she recounted this experience during the filmed interview were invitingly expressive. The corporeality of her description sensorially situates and illustrates a primary factor in relating to place: physical engagement. As she alone experienced this, listeners and viewers of her testimony can only have a mental image of that relation. Nonetheless, the visceral materiality of her account, shared from the edge of the river, enables a process of identification with the space-time of water.

Paquette continues, sharing her bond with the river as an ongoing emplacement of her sense of identity: "aujourd'hui, je poursuis ce contact-là avec le Saint-Laurent avec le fleuve en pratiquant le canot à glace puis en habitant proche du Saint-Laurent parce que je peux pas m'éloigner des vagues et de l'eau parce que j'ai besoin de les avoir près de moi."[138] The senses of place evoked by Paquette encourage a deeper consideration of the influence of our location and embodiment.

Paquette's account transmits sensorial understandings of watery place primarily through touch and vision. Another sense—smell—is particularly conducive to developing situated knowledge. This is strikingly conveyed in the prose of writer Monique Durand. For my documentary, I included audio recordings of her reading excerpts from her collection of reflections *Saint-Laurent Mon Amour* and laid her voice over imagery I shot of the river. In one passage, she fondly recalls the smells of the St. Lawrence when her father would bring her to the port by Pie-IX boulevard: "Quand il avait plu, l'air sentait le poisson mort, odeur à nulle autre pareille qui, depuis, me pourchasse délicieusement, pour moi LE parfum de Montréal, que je reconnaîtrais entre tous et qui chaque fois me met en émoi."[139] Remembering the unique scent of Montreal after it rains, when the air smells of dead fish, Durand's sensorial memory viscerally situates the ongoing presence of place.

Beyond the physicality that can mark relationships with place, the St. Lawrence River cultivates multivariate "affective ties" between people and place, what Tuan refers to as

[138] "Today I pursue that contact with the ocean and the river by practicing ice canoeing and by living by the St. Lawrence because I can't stay away from the waves and the water because I need to have them close to me." (my translation)

[139] Monique Durand, *Saint-Laurent Mon Amour* (Montréal : Éditions Mémoire d'encrier, 2017), 10.

topophilia.[140] Another excerpt of Durand's words expresses topophilia, as engendered by the river:

> Eau de vie, eau d'histoire, eau de nos sources vives, c'est bien de cela qu'il s'agit. Je m'ennuie. Je m'ennuie du fleuve comme d'un être cher. Un manque ontologique.
>
> Il n'est rien qui me ramène davantage à moi-même et à ce pays mien, que la pensée du fleuve, long squelette de mon être et de mon peuple, dont chaque vertèbre est une rivière flamboyante se jetant dans sa moelle épinière.[141]

The intrinsic tie to the water and stories of the river-place described in this passage recalls Casey's claim of our imbrication with place: "However lost we may become by gliding rapidly between places, however oblivious to place we may be in our thought and theory, and however much we may prefer to think of what happens in a place rather than of the place itself, we are tied to place undetachably and without reprieve."[142]

Informed by Paquette's active renewal of her engagement with the place of the river and Durand's lyrical attachment to it, the development of this documentary project became part of an ongoing effort on my part as a researcher and practitioner to explore what can be recognized and learned from a watery sense of place. It followed the course called upon by Dorothy Christian and Rita Wong of "untapping watershed mind"—to raise our awareness of how we are emplaced within the transformational flow of our being-in-the-world, or more specifically, of our being-with-the-river.[143] The creation of the documentary involved following diverse avenues for untapping watershed mind: filming the effects of expropriations of the St. Lawrence River by cycling along the dike of the Seaway; audio-visually experiencing the river from within and without; and, where my sense of watery place elides and ignores, learning from each participant about the shifting, complex—at times material, at other times ineffable—relation with the place-event of the river.

Part of untapping watershed mind in thinking with river, and more specifically, filming with river, meant paying attention to the differentiated renderings of senses. Tuan suggests the

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[140] Tuan, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1974), 93.

[141] Durand, 9.

[142] Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World*, xiii.

[143] Dorothy Christian and Rita Wong, "Untapping Watershed Mind," in *Thinking with Water*, eds. Cecilia Chen, Janine MacLeod, and Astrida Neimanis (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013), 247.

more abstractive nature of sight in perceiving space, conversely denoting the more visceral rendering of the perceived world by the other senses.[144] He also remarks that seeing has a distancing effect, relegating what is seen as "out there," as opposed to the rapprochement produced by the ability to touch, smell, and taste.[145] These considerations are particularly interesting when applied to the documentary representation of place, for cinema is commonly analyzed as a principally visual medium (the audience of a film, for example, is conventionally referred to as "viewer"). To the distanciation produced by sight is added the mediation of the camera lens and the digitization of an image onto a screen.

While recognizing the inevitable sensory-relational limitations of representation, I also took into account the material relationality at play in the making of documentary representation. Every time I filmed the river, whether just beside it on the shore, over it on a bridge, on it from a boat, upon a cold winter's day or in the solitude of daybreak, I was made deeply aware that "water is a *matter* of relation and connection."[146] In all its matters, the river's water forges particular encounters with its emergent stories. For instance, the formidable chunks of ice ventured through by ice canoers during a blizzard in March invoked the harshness of earlier forms of travel by water. Alternatively, the near stillness of the river by a park in Lachine in contrast with the rumble of the rapids a few hundred metres away relayed the simultaneous multiplicity of place-event. Even more palpably, the sheer force of the river's current and waves experienced while paddle-boarding downstream elicited its humbling power.

The process of filming at the particular encounters forged by the river raised questions about the complexity of senses of connection, belonging, and alternatively, of separation. My approach to filming, then, was grounded in letting the river evoke reflection sensorially. I pursued a meditative approach in order to pause and be in place, producing an affective encounter with the diverse situations articulated by the river. The use of the long take was conducive to the mediation of these encounters, as a means to foster pensive visualizations. The long take enables a grounding in presence, providing the time and space to contemplatively engage with the image. In her article "New Mode of Cinema: How Digital Technologies are Changing Aesthetics and Style," Kristen M. Daly discusses the ways that digital technologies' evolving flexibility and

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[144] Tuan, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values*, 10.

[145] Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, 146.

[146] Chen, MacLeod, and Neimanis, "Introduction: Toward a Hydrological Turn?" 12.

adaptability continually renew modes of access to, and in turn representational strategies of, the profilmic space: "Thus digital technologies make accessible a way of production that can be organic to both the place and people of that place, producing an innovative, spontaneous and intimate aesthetic."[147] This digital way of production engenders a place-based documentary form, whereby limited production presence (myself, the camera, and the tripod) as well as digital capture's ability to shoot long takes without the interference of complex cinematographic settings facilitate *in situ* grounding.

This meditative place-based aesthetic was based in the essay film mode in which subjectivity and reflectivity invite a process of thinking, whereby the film "raises problems and asks questions, and does not offer clear-cut answers […]. The essayist does not pretend to discover truths to which he holds the key, but allows the answers to emerge somewhere else, precisely in the position occupied by the embodied spectator."[148] And I would add, the position occupied by place. In this way, the camera's patient visualizations could engage the water of the St. Lawrence River and the histories it carries. The meditation on sense of place that ensued proved to be an exercise in humility. The long takes and the zoom function of the camera enabled me to visualize the flow of the water in a way that confronted me with my ignorance of the life of the river—not having ever realized how fast it flows, just to name a trivial example. Filming the river from different positions on, by, above, and in it also engaged me with its humbling vastness and force.

More uncomfortably, filming the river meditatively reveals the ways the city has come to inhabit and organize the place enabled by the river—through the guarded, monopolizing ports or the neglect of the shores, for instance—in turn exposing the usurpation of the river as a foundational building block of my sense of place as a Montrealer. Turning the camera to the Jacques-Cartier Bridge shed light on the tensions that make up this sense of place. The bridge is a striking symbol of home for me, with its familiar peaks and colour and its protruding presence in Montreal's skyline, but also with, inevitably, its undying colonialist toponymical legacy. Both as referent and as passage to home, the bridge structures the conflicting sense of appropriation and belonging evoked by the contested histories of place brought forth by the river that runs beneath it. As I filmed it in the dead of winter and on a hot summer day, from the shores of Montreal and

[147] Daly, 9.

[148] Rascaroli, 35-36.

Île Sainte-Hélène, from a boat passing under it and from my bicycle riding on it, I recognized how the bridge mirrors my positionality, negotiating the tensions from the complex boundary where acknowledging being the beneficiary of colonized land and water and feeling an attachment to what has always been home collide to structure sense of place.

Ultimately, *De courants et d'histoires* integrates meditations such as those described above with the senses of place communicated by participants. In this representational space, the river's narratives can force us to rethink how we negotiate our relationship to it. As Massey put it, place changes us, "not through some visceral belonging (some barely changing rootedness, as so many would have it) but through the *practising* of place, the negotiation of intersecting trajectories; place as an arena where negotiation is forced upon us."[149]

When it comes to the practicing of place, a key arena of negotiation is the boundary that can surround or delineate a place. This is what we explore in the next chapter.

[149] Massey, *For Space*, 154.

Chapter 4

Boundary: Traversing the limits of the shoreline and of narrative

It's a constant learning curve because history is always—you know you talk about the past, but there's always going to be a future history. It's a never-ending subject if you will. Some things are finite, history isn't.
—Pearl Grubert

Border, limit, demarcation, frontier: these designations articulate the concept of boundary of places, and the St. Lawrence River exemplifies all those features. Its shoreline is a contested site of belonging, claim, and expropriation, while its banks constantly negotiate the parameters of access. Conversely, the river as boundary also elicits the notions of passage and encounter, where thresholds are unfixed, generating places for renewed reflection and interpolation. It is through boundary's transient frame, as both edge and crossing, that the river mobilizes the representation of relations to place history. To that end, Casey attributes to boundary a purposeful meaning: "To be is to be bounded by place, limited by it. "Boundary" (*horos*) or "limit" (*peras*) is not the nugatory notion of mere cutting off; nor is it the geometric concept of perimeter (itself a linear reduction of placial limit to an abstract residue comparable to the time-line). Boundary or limit, construed cosmologically, is a quite positive presence."[150] For Casey, boundary is both spatial and temporal.

Like place, then, as discussed in the previous chapter, boundary is another manifestation of event. The positive presence of boundaries—their *event*, not just their existence—engenders ways to think *with* the river. In this chapter, I will look at two ways of pushing boundaries: first, in the physical world, through the role of the St. Lawrence River shoreline, examining the memorial, physical, and referential complexities of access that it engenders. Second, in the documentary world, broadening narrative frontiers by analyzing the representational impact of the boundary-making and boundary-breaking processes of montage and frame composition on a navigational interface.

[150] Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World*, 15.

The shoreline

The shore of the fluid frontier that is the St. Lawrence River brings up important questions about the access needed to navigate the flux of histories it invokes. In most representations of the river, its wondrous expanse and simultaneous fragility are emphasized, while the loss of human connection to it, physical and otherwise, is bemoaned. The shore is the front line of this connection. However, access to it, as physical and metaphorical boundary, has been denied, uneven, contested or even forgotten. Industrial and property developments have severely strained Montreal's shoreline, leaving behind a generalized sense of disconnection from the river. In this context, how can relating to the river be reimagined? How can it be practiced and materialized more mindfully?

One way to reconnect with it is by listening to people who have vivid memories of what the shoreline once enabled. When I sat down to interview René Derouin, I learned of the power of memory to transmit stories of a not-so-distant, yet easily forgotten, past when the river's water and seasons brought people together. As Derouin fondly remembers from his childhood growing up by the river in Longue Pointe:

> La rue où j'habite, la rue Saint-Just, c'est la rue où on fait la traverse. La traverse du fleuve St-Laurent c'est extraordinaire parce que cette rue-là à partir du mois de décembre quand le fleuve est gelé, en décembre début janvier, les gens viennent des îles de Boucherville—ils ont le mandat de faire une route sur le fleuve qui est large, une route de soixante pieds de large et ils mettent des sapins tout le long pour baliser la route. […] On voit arriver les gens de l'autre côté qu'on ne connaît pas—c'est eux qui font la route—puis tout d'un coup c'est comme si on avait construit un pont entre le nord, la rive nord, puis la rive sud. On se côtoie puis ça dure janvier, février, mars…[151]

The careful details with which he recalls witnessing the construction of the traverse—the weight of the ice blocks needed to build it, the depth of the ice, the method of hosing to maintain it, and so on—convey the significance of the river in developing a sense of place and community. They

[151] "I lived on Saint-Just street, which is where the "traverse" on the river begins. The St. Lawrence River "traverse" is extraordinary. Starting in December, when the river freezes—beginning of January—people come from the Îles de Boucherville with the mandate to build a road across the frozen river. It's a large road, 60 feet wide. […] They put pine trees all along to delineate it. We see people arriving from the other side—we don't know them—and all of a sudden, it's as if we built a bridge between the north and south shore. It lasts through January, February, March..." (my translation)

express the import of inhabitancy *with* the river. By building the ice road, they were literally expanding the shoreline, pushing beyond it. Derouin's passionate recollection of the traverse articulates what *Thinking with Water* encourages us to do: "Deepen awareness of our material connections within the very particular watersheds in which we live, and that we recognize their continuing and multiform exchanges with other places and times."[152]

Another one of his memories from the shore brings historical insight into modes of engagement with the river that evolve or even disappear with time:

> Et quand arrive le printemps, c'est un autre rituel extraordinaire que je me souviens : l'arrivée des brise-glaces, pour ouvrir le fleuve. […] Il y a deux grands brise-glaces, un qui s'appelle l'Ernest Lapointe pis l'autre qui s'appelle le McLean. On les voit venir là tranquillement sur le fleuve. Ils ouvrent le chenal, le milieu du fleuve. Alors le gros brise-glace il avance puis il défonce. Il monte un peu sur la glace—je ne sais pas si t'as vu ça des brise-glaces—il monte sur la glace puis par son poids il défonce puis la glace se défait. Le petit brise-glace en arrière casse les morceaux pour que ça re-bloque pas derrière. Il ouvre ouvre ouvre une grande voie.
>
> Nous on est juste à la traverse. Et là il y a des milliers de personnes qui viennent voir ça : à quel moment les brise-glaces vont arriver à la traverse? […] Et il y a beaucoup de gageurs—des gens gagent que le brise-glace va arriver à la traverse en 4 coups. […] Tout d'un coup, on voit le centre de ce qu'on appelle la traverse se détacher avec les sapins chaque côté et elle se met à descendre. Elle descend. C'est comme si on perdait, c'est comme si le milieu du pont se détachait puis il partait.[153]

Derouin's shoreline memories are an important link to the history of relation with the river. They also point to the loss of access to that relation over time. The development of urban planning and industry tends to cut people off from the natural link with water that the shore should inherently relay—a disconnection Martine Chatelain regrets:

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[152] Chen, MacLeod, and Neimanis, "Introduction: Toward a Hydrological Turn?," 4-5.

[153] "When the spring comes, it's another extraordinary ritual: the arrival of icebreakers. It's time to open up the river. There are two icebreakers. One is called Ernest Lapointe and the other, the Maclean. We see them coming slowly on the river and they open the channel—the centre of the river. The big icebreaker advances and smashes. It climbs onto the ice—I don't know if you ever saw this—it climbs onto the ice and just by its weight it smashes down, and the ice breaks apart. The small icebreaker behind breaks down the ice chunks. They open a large way.

We are just by the traverse. There are thousands of people who come watch this event: when will the icebreakers cross the traverse? […] There are many betters. They bet that the ice breaker will be able to smash the ice in four tries. […] Suddenly, we see the centre of the traverse detach itself, with the pine trees on each side, and it descends. It's as if the centre of the bridge detached itself and slipped away." (my translation)

> C'est triste parce que maintenant on voudrait profiter de cette nature-là. On veut à Montréal faire des plages mais là on se dit, mais la qualité de l'eau est-ce qu'elle permet de se baigner ? On est sur un endroit magnifique, on est dans une île, on devrait avoir accès à l'eau partout. Il y a plein d'endroits où on n'a pas accès à l'eau à Montréal parce que c'est bouché par le port, c'est bouché par des rues, c'est bouché… Je pense à la rue Notre-Dame qui empêche les gens de l'autre côté de traverser—euh, essayer de traverser ça Notre-Dame c'est pas évident ![154]

As the city develops, access even to the shoreline, much less the water, is much harder. Mylène Paquette is struck by how lack of access to the river's presence has made it difficult to engage the shoreline as a natural reference point, ultimately denaturalizing Montreal's link with water:

> Juste quand je regarde Montréal, […] l'accès au fleuve est difficile. Il y a le port de Montréal—on peut aller sur les quais, mais c'est très haut, on n'a pas le droit d'accéder partout. […] Y a pas beaucoup d'activités non plus, même pour les touristes, même pour les gens qui veulent aller sur l'eau, même à ça il faut payer encore pour pouvoir y accéder. Il y a plusieurs endroits où on peut le voir, mais c'est quand même assez loin. On peut aller aux Îles de Boucherville; on peut aller au parc des rapides ici ou le parc Bellerive à Pointe-aux-Trembles, mais c'est pas, c'est pas tout le monde qui le sait, puis c'est pas dans notre culture de le fréquenter à Montréal.
>
> Même moi ce qui me surprend toujours c'est quand quelqu'un me demande un chemin—un touriste je comprends—mais un Montréalais me demande un chemin sur le coin de rue. Ça arrive moins maintenant, mais ça arrivait souvent avant. Quand je disais, marche vers le fleuve puis quand tu vas arriver à telle rue tu… "le fleuve ?" Les gens savent même pas. T'es au coin de… t'es dans le Quartier latin puis tu dis "marche vers le fleuve," puis les gens te regardent comme "de quoi tu parles ?" Mais, le fleuve il est par là, il est vers le sud. Si on descend on va toucher à de l'eau. Fait qu'on dirait que culturellement on l'a pas suffisamment développé à Montréal.[155]

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[154] "Nowadays, we want to take advantage of this natural environment. In Montreal, we want to develop beaches, but can the quality of water even permit swimming? We live in a beautiful place, on an island, we should have access to water everywhere. There are tons of places where we don't have access to water in Montreal because it's blocked by the port, by streets—Notre Dame Street, for example, that prevents people to cross from the other side. It's no simple task trying to cross Notre Dame!" (my translation)

[155] "When I look at Montreal, access to the river is difficult. There's the Old Port, where we can go on the docks, but they're very high and we don't have access everywhere. […] There are many places where we can see the river, but they're far. There are the Boucherville islands, the Lachine Rapids park here or the Bellerive park in Pointe-aux-Trembles, but not everyone knows about it and it's not in our culture to frequent it in Montreal.

What always surprises me is when someone asks me for directions—a tourist, I understand, but a Montrealer (it happens less now, but it used to happen a lot)—when I'd tell them to walk toward the river and when you get to this street… "the river?" People don't even know… you could be in the Latin Quarter, for example, and you say, "walk toward the river" and people look at you inquisitively. The river is that way, toward the south. If you keep going, you'll touch water. It's as if culturally we haven't developed it enough in Montreal." (my translation)

The disconnection she alludes to, whereby even residents on an island can struggle to orient themselves in relation to the river, speaks of an epistemological erosion of the shore through which growing mastery over water works to efface the processes that link to its history. Paquette's passion for water, for sharing in the essence of the ocean and the river, reconvenes the shore as access.

Caring for the nearness of the river, she lives by the shore not far from the Lachine Rapids. When we planned the interview, I asked if it would be possible to do it by the river (not knowing at that point where she resides) and without hesitation she suggested the shore near her place, ensuring different options depending on the weather. The interview took place in mid-March, during a sudden late winter snow storm. It was - 11˚C outside and the wind was biting. I had furiously checked the weather earlier that morning, worried the conditions were too blustery for the interview. When I showed up to meet her, she enthusiastically guided the way to a spot she likes past the Parc Lachine, over a small ridge, right onto the river. The camera was positioned at the bottom of the ridge, nestled in the withered bush. Paquette, daringly yet carefully, ventured onto the frozen river, testing the depth of the ice to find an area to stand on. Hers was an intrepidness that only experience and mindful familiarity with the river's temperament could bring. We began the interview, with the camera on frozen ground and Paquette on frozen water, on the delicate threshold summoned solely by winter when shore and river merge.

At one point, the geese gathered further out on the river began to clack vociferously. They had been singing all along, but this was loud enough for us to take deeper notice. Paquette turned around to have a closer listen and remarked smilingly: "Moi quand je vois des affaires de même—les bernaches ils se parlent, y a un meeting en ce moment, ils discutent—mais ça me permet ça, tu sais? Si j'habitais, je sais pas là, en ville, où est ce qu'il y a du béton partout, j'aurais pas accès à ça, puis je trouve que c'est important parce qu'on est dénaturés aujourd'hui."[156] The simple acknowledgement of the geese's meeting—the pause in our human activity of doing an interview to deepen our awareness of the life we share with the river—had

[156] "When I see things like this, I think well, the geese are talking, they're in a meeting right now. That's the kind of thing that living close by enables. If I lived in the city where there's concrete everywhere, I would not have access to this. I think that's important because we tend to be disconnected." (my translation)

been enabled by our littoral emplacement; the shore providing access to a reflection on relationality.

Figure 2

Shot of Mylène Paquette looking over to the geese "talking"

I myself discovered the difficulty in accessing the shore when I set out to film the river from Montreal. As Chatelain warns, crossing Notre-Dame where it follows the river is indeed challenging. There are few points at which crossing it is possible and while the other side of it promises a stunning view of the St. Lawrence, it is largely unreachable, the exclusive domain of the port of Montreal. For example, walking on the sidewalk, camera in hand, where a tall fence stood not one metre away, I filmed, almost nervously, one of several signs saying "ACCÈS INTERDIT NO TRESPASSING." By Notre-Dame Street, the shore cannot cultivate a sense of place; rather, a sense of boundary has been imposed on it.

Often I pointed my camera toward the river from either side of the busy thoroughfare and observed the varying obstacles to the river. I experimented with location and orientation to produce a documentary affective encounter with the experiences of access, boundary, and connection. As I crossed Notre-Dame street to get closer to the water, I sought to get closer to that generative borderline. What does the shore enable me to see and what does it teach me about my own gaze? Standing on the snow-blanketed shore, a fence, proceeded by train tracks, and followed by a ship docking platform all punctuated the spatial continuity toward the river. Here, I began a meditative observational method, which I would employ during my subsequent

encounters with the shoreline. I looked upon the river, past the fence, the tracks, and the dock, and saw a confluence of barren stillness and determined movement. The crisp cold, the grey, naked tree branches, and the vacant roller coaster ride at la Ronde on Île Sainte-Hélène exerted a strong sense of fixity, while the water's resolute flow, the blowing wind, and the advancing train animated the space. I observed this site of convergence and reflected on the river's history of convergences.

Figure 3

Shot of the river in front of la Ronde, obstructed by fences and train tracks

I continued my observational meditation the following week, moving westward to the Old Port, where I was struck by yet another kind of boundary: the edge formed by the thick, frozen water in the port's enclave and its flowy counterpart in the river further away from the port's shore wall. The encounter with this stark contrast harnessed my filming method: to mobilize the affective potential of the documentary image. It should be noted here that sound also factors into this potential. For example, while editing this video sequence, I noticed an abrupt change in sound from one view of the water to another: from early morning's silence to the rushing loudness of an approaching train. I intentionally left the sound contrast intact, for it accompanied well the visual contrast capturing the flowing water in a wide shot and the frozen water in close-up.

This exercise in observational meditation was rooted not only in my eye's gaze but also in the camera's. Its zoom function and its moveable position on the tripod enabled different modes of access and vantage points. As I filmed, I wondered how the camera would access the

materiality of the water and the shoreline differently than my own vision. I panned to follow the water as it turned into ice, hoping the camera would capture the texture of its frozen immobility, and then tilted up along the port's shore wall to reveal the skyline of Old Montreal. I wondered, could this meditation transcend the rigidity of the established shoreline as frontier? Or perhaps would it accentuate it?

I mediated this contemplation through the long take, directing a (sometimes uncomfortable) sense of presence, one that may feel long but that could also foster pensive visualizations. I applied an essay film method whereby reflectivity invites a process of thinking, raises questions rather than deliver answers, and calls upon the spectator to "reflect on the same subject matter the author is musing about."[157] The approach here, then, expressed the shoreline as encounter, experiencing its diverse articulations of boundary, perspective, and relation to water.

In Montreal, the river has often been taken for granted, as a given. History shows that this assumption can easily fall synonymously with neglect. As the shore has become increasingly polluted, commodified, industrialized, and privatized, the process of disconnection becomes naturalized. Increased awareness of the shore—listening to its stories—can teach about accountability toward watery relations. Encounters with the shore and the experiences shared on it, as demonstrated by the experiences of Derouin, Chatelain, and Paquette, activate, question, and test those relations. As locator, the shore of the St. Lawrence River connotatively situates these place narratives. As threshold, it manifests the fluidity by which place-based relations to history unfold. The stories that arise from its conjunction of locator and threshold—Derouin's memories of a time past from the shore; Paquette's cultivation of a connection with it; and Chatelain's dedication to preserve it—summon the careful meeting of commitment, fragility, and ephemerality that encompass the river. The representation of their encounters and experiences in *De courants et d'histoires* worked to mediate the complexity of access to the shoreline and of the shoreline as access.

The documentary's navigational interface sought to evoke these formulations of the shoreline and access. Following the opening sequence, the documentary opens to a navigational screen upon which icons directing to the different place narratives are interspersed. This interface was designed with varying degrees of movement, tone, and texture. The foundational layer of the navigational screen is a digitized image of a watercolour rendering of the river that I painted. The

[157] Rascaroli, 35.

painting portrays a slightly angled bird's eye view of the river where it borders the Montreal archipelago. The river and the shore are depicted with the use of flowing brushstrokes, while the digitization of this painting leaves visible the markings of the strokes on the canvas as well as the varying highlights, conveying the trace of its materiality. The image of the painting is overlaid with continuous underwater footage of the river filmed with a GoPro. This video layer was reduced in opacity, letting the watercolour rendering transpire, while animating the evocation of the river and its shores through the movement and sound of the water. This navigational screen portrays the mutability and fluidity of the shoreline as threshold for storytelling.

The representation of shorelines is often denied its complexity, especially in cartographic renderings. Most maps of today represent shores in much the same way as colonial maps did: reducing it to a mere line. Yet as Chen remarks in *Thinking with Water*: "Although coasts are typically mapped as a wavy line blithely demarcating a seemingly simple border between water and land, this simplification is generally inadequate to the wealth of these complex zones."[158] Considering the legacy of mapping conventions that renders cartography as space to be outlined and delimited, it is relevant to interrogate these practices and imagine different ways of mediating the shore to account for stories, for conflicts, for overlaps, and to concede to inherent gaps of knowability. The interviews with Derouin, Chatelain, and Paquette, and the stories they shared, show how the shoreline can be represented for its complexity, transience, and confluence.

Narrative frontiers

As mutable threshold, the shoreline negotiates the physical boundary of the river. Thinking with river—and with its shore—can also expand the narrative boundaries in documentary representation. This section will analyze how narrative boundaries are pushed and crossed through a consideration of montage's functionality between scenes but also across representational space, as well as through framing and composition.

[158] Chen, "Mapping Waters: Thinking with Watery Places," 282.

Montage

Montage is a defining construct of cinema, compositing shots together to create order or opposition, thereby mediating the sense of movement in time. As Daly remarks: "Thus montage from the very beginning became the visual grammar of cinema."[159] Documentary, in its more traditional cinematic form, imposes boundaries in its storytelling through montage, by the mere fact that it is ordered by a mapped out narrative sequence. Multilinearity serves to break down such boundaries by intervening in this kind of sequential communicative address. If montage was the visual grammar of cinema, it perhaps became the visual syntax of multilinearity. Recalling Adrian Miles' attribution to multilinearity the possibility of activating formal and narrative relations in documentary even after the completion of its production (once it is distributed), instead of a pre-determined montage in a traditional documentary, multilinearity enables the openness of storytelling's articulation and direction. Manovich seminally termed such a configuration of media language: spatial montage, through which "in contrast to cinema's sequential narrative, all the "shots" in spatial narrative are accessible to the viewer at once."[160] Spatial montage thus arranges new forms of legibility that move through distribution, simultaneity, and divisions.

Providing an assemblage of partitioned narrative expressions, multilinearity reconfigures the representation of documentary storytelling, divaricating the sense of master narrative habitually rendered in a sequential fashion. It is not to say that a multilinear interface negates the possibility of a master narrative. Rather, the delineations it formulates mitigate the tenure of an overriding arch. Narrative formulations are not bound by cohesiveness or singularity. As de Certeau elaborates, "Là où la carte découpe, le récit traverse. Il est « diégèse », dit le grec pour désigner la narration : il instaure une marche (il « guide ») et il passe à travers (il « transgresse »)."[161] (What the map cuts up, the story cuts across. In Greek, narration is called "diegesis": it establishes an itinerary [it "guides"] and it passes through [it "transgresses"]).[162] Commanding selection on the part of the navigator, splitting the screen, pluralizing storylines—

[159] Daly, 10.

[160] Manovich, 322-323.

[161] de Certeau, 225.

[162] Rendall, 129.

such delineation processes enable the open-endedness or splintering of an overarching stream. They serve to reconsider narrative representation as a self-sufficient, unfolding system; in essence, they *become* the storytelling process. Narrative representation is thus transformed into what Marida di Crosta calls *l'espace narrationel*, a contingent narrational space through which participation and multivariate arrangement negotiate the interplay of fragmentation and continuity in storytelling.

The development of the documentary for this project grew from the affordances and limits of this interplay, whereby participants' stories and themed reflections can be interpreted on their own, but they are arranged to accompany each other. The opening sequence was edited to introduce this narrative configuration. It gathers snippets of the participants' thoughts over imagery of the St. Lawrence River in its varied forms, conveying a theme of historical reflection on the river, but not explicitly establishing a directive storyline. This was done intentionally, with the goal of suggestion, of inviting navigators into a journey of contemplation.

After the opening sequence, navigators (themselves agents in dividing narrative streams) are prompted by a navigational screen that harbours a selection of icons, indicating a story sequence or a reflection sequence. They can choose any one of the five participants' story or they can choose one of the four themed reflections. They are not bound by one principal ordering. There is no automatic sequential modality determining the narrative; it is laid out spatially—architecturally—among disjointed sequences ready to be activated at various points and intervals. The interface brings upon an altered "*viewing regime*"[163] where the bounds of continuity are negotiated by the navigator, through selection, and by discrete spatial simultaneity.

[163] Manovich, 96.

Figure 4

Screengrab of the documentary's navigational screen

This arrangement must also contend with the gaps and disconnects it provokes. On the one hand, this kind of fragmented diegesis gives way to an open narrative experience of place-based histories where sequential boundaries may be transgressed. On the other hand, such crossings imply breaks or ellipses, as selection entails exclusions. Faced with disparate icons, navigators choose one, necessarily at the expense of the others. They may choose Paquette's story, for example, view her experience of travelling with water, and they may or may not follow the embedded link in her story to the themed reflection sequence that historically questions access to the river. They may return to the navigational screen and pick another sequence. They may only watch one or two sequences. The lack of encompassing order means that the broader narrative of the documentary—the exploration of relating to place history through the St. Lawrence River—may ultimately evade navigators. Implicit, therefore, in the documentary's composition is the risk of a modular or abridged articulation of narrative. However, assuming this risk convenes a different kind of documentary literacy where historiographic representation unfolds at the dynamic boundary between spatialized storytelling and participation.

Framing and composition

The documentary literacy engendered by the encounter of spatialized storytelling and participation is articulated not just in the overall montage, but also in its constitutive parts. Here, the concept of boundary is integral to the act of framing, the ensuing composition of that frame,

and in turn, to the composition of the screen. Cinematically, the frame itself functions as a boundary. Gilles Deleuze characterizes framing as "*la détermination d'un système clos*"[164] (*the determination of a closed system*),[165] but it is an encasing that is co-constitutive with its parts: "L'ensemble ne se divise pas en parties sans changer de nature à chaque fois : ce n'est ni du divisible ni de l'indivisible, mais du « dividuel »."[166] (The set cannot divide into parts without qualitatively changing each time: it is neither divisible nor indivisible, but 'dividual').[167] As delineation, framing not only demarcates but generates meaning. Deleuze was of course speaking about traditional cinema, but seeing the frame as determining of a mutative visual literacy is key to understanding how multilinearity expands the notion of representational assemblage.

In my documentary, the frame is at times altered by the integration of textual prompts which, if clicked on, lead to a new sequence. For example, at one point during Pearl Grubert's story sequence, as she talks about the river historically being the entryway into the continent, the imagery filling the frame reveals an expansive view of the river from the perspective of the Jacques-Cartier Bridge. At the same moment, a textual prompt emerges, referencing how the river has been exploited. Clicking on this prompt links to another sequence—the themed reflection that deals with how the river has been used (and abused). The emergence of the prompt generates a visual and narrative boundary through the frame. It deliberately interrupts the flow, offering the navigator a choice that, like all choices, is somewhat disruptive of linear thinking. This dividing operates not only at the level of composition, but also in terms of storytelling and participation, for the prompt dynamically links to another sequence entirely, and in turn, another narrative stream.

In this way, the bounds of the frame's closed system are pushed, engaging Deleuze's other qualification of framing that reminds that "Tout système clos est communicant."[168] (Every closed system also communicates).[169] While delimiting one system, it calls upon what is outside

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[164] Deleuze, 23.

[165] Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, trans., *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, by Gilles Deleuze (London: The Athlone Press, 1986), 12.

[166] Deleuze, 26.

[167] Tomlinson and Habberjam, 14.

[168] Deleuze, 29.

[169] Tomlinson and Habberjam, 16.

of it. As the prompts in my documentary show, for example, communication with what is beyond transgresses the borders of the frame's circumscription, as it is activated by navigators.

I also experimented not only with going *beyond* the frame but also with communication and evocation across boundaries *within* the frame. For example, in one sequence, which presents my personal meditation from the shore, the opening framing outlines the animation of writing on a notebook page. The text is a personal reflection on my relation to the river, complicated by the barriers of accessibility. It is also a reflection on the river's own evocation of boundaries, as a place of convergence, where histories meet and cross each other. As this reflection unfolds into a handwritten note, the image of the paper on which the words are scribbled slowly loses opacity, dissolving into a long-take pan of a morning view of the river taken from an overpass across the way from Notre-Dame Street. The goal here was to superimpose the mediation of a reflection process onto the mediation of the river-place in order to layer across representational boundaries the elaboration of thought with the configuration of the image. As container, the frame highlights the dissolving threshold that enables the transposition of one system to another, from a contemplative place to a physical place.

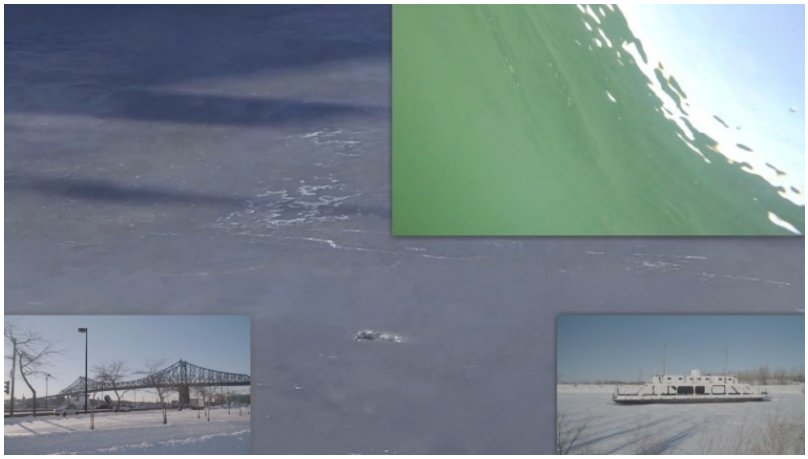
Toward the end of this meditative sequence, a long-take pan follows the frozen river, halted between docks at the Old Port, and tilts up the port wall revealing the skyline of Old Montreal. The sequence being an observational meditation on the river as a physical and metaphoric site of convergence, it moves between fluidity and stillness, between nearness and inaccessibility. There were deliberate edits made to reflect this contemplation on confluence: There are no voice clips to tie together the shots; close-ups are juxtaposed with pans; and natural loud sounds (more specifically, the sound of a moving train) are confronted with the silence of the ice's immobility. The outcome is an assemblage of audiovisual cues whose conjunction, in its slow cadence and lack of directive through line, sought to evoke pause for reflection on the boundaries forged by the river.

As the camera movement pans over the stark calm of the frozen river, three smaller frames containing sequences of various river representations emerge to populate the screen. Each divides the main frame, if only temporarily (according to their duration), drawing attention away from the totality of the composition toward multiple parts. The frame in the upper right-hand corner is larger than the others and it contains a compilation of underwater shots of the river, edited seamlessly to mediate its fluidity. The one in the lower left-hand corner is a sped-up

looping shot of traffic on Notre-Dame Street in front of the Jacques-Cartier Bridge. Finally, the one in the lower right-hand corner includes various points of view of an abandoned ship frozen in place in the snow-covered river near the Îles de Boucherville.

Each of these smaller frames expresses a space-time from the river: the immersive, continuous flow of its water; the industrialization of its shore and the ever-accelerating—increasingly disconnected—way of life that borders it; and a vestige of its legacy, literally frozen in time. The contrast between them is accentuated by their bounded, uneven distribution on the screen. With all these visual cues, the long pan capturing the frozen river's rest (the shot of the master sequence) is disrupted by disparate mediations of the river-place in its varied manifestations. The disruption provokes a type of "architectural mise-en-scène,"[170] in Daly's sense, whereby navigators' attention is suddenly divided, and they must choose where to direct it or alternatively, try to assimilate what they can simultaneously. Adding to this partition of attention is the option to click on the smaller frames. Clicking on one of them darkens the rest of screen, without stopping any of the other smaller frames or the master sequence, merely highlighting the activated one. The navigator can deactivate the sequence at any time, which brings all the other frames back to full colour and opens the door to more explorations.

Figure 5



Screen composition of meditative sequence

Through this partitioned, irregular assemblage, the representational strategy of observational meditation transitions into dispersal. This frame composition runs the risk of

[170] Daly, 3.

diffusing an overall view of narrative reflection into discordant segments. Focusing to follow the content in one of the smaller frames, while not completely eclipsing any other, draws attention away from the whole as well as distracts from its individual parts. The mere emergence of framed cues, before even any kind of selection process occurs, splits focus. The viewing regime hence erected can be seen as mediating the intersections that arise when pondering: at times we focus; other times we zone out; we take notice; and get distracted. There is a certain fragmentation that is organic to reflection. The boundaries on the screen may therefore representationally align with the cognitive boundaries engaged when exploring narrative. Boundary as a representational modality can be negotiated from within and beyond the frame.

Boundaries are experienced as barriers, but also as frontiers to be crossed. René Derouin, Martine Chatelain, and Mylène Paquette have acquainted the physical boundary of the shoreline to better understand and relate to the river's stories. Representationally, spatial configuration in documentary can advance ways to push the boundaries of thinking with river and explore its historiographic storytelling as an open-ended process. By definition, we cross boundaries to explore. Such an exploration involves navigation. As the next chapter will demonstrate, navigation brings its own challenges and discoveries.

Chapter 5

Navigation: Learning from the River

Le Saint-Laurent est un voyage. Quand je ne pourrai plus marcher sur ses flancs ni le voir couler à ma fenêtre, je pourrai encore voguer sur son onde claire avec le stylo des mots ou de ma mémoire.[171]
—Monique Durand

In contemporary parlance, the word navigation typically conjures up ways we use to orientate ourselves, such as using a GPS, to get to a specific location. It is interesting to note that etymologically, navigation is situated in water. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines navigating as "to travel by water," finding its roots in the Latin *navigatus*, past participle of *navigare—navis* (ship) and *igare*, from *agere (to* drive). Not surprisingly, perhaps, the first known use of the term took place in the 16th century, during the Age of Exploration.[172] The term carries with it the legacy of imperialism, the spur of voyage and discovery, and the promise of uncertainty and trial forged by water—forces of history that also mark the St. Lawrence River.

Yet historically, navigation has implied conquest, at the expense of that uncertainty and trial. In mobilizing navigation as a conceptual framework but also as a structural framework for how I built my documentary, I was interested in the narrative and representational potential of the estuary where travelling by water and thinking with water meet. I found that in filming the river and its accompanying place narratives, the flow of its water inexorably moved the reflection on relationality. The water's own navigation became a cogent mediator of place history.

Navigation orients the final way relation to place history is explored in this thesis. To do so, this chapter firstly will look at the legacy of navigation as the conquering of space and the use of maps to enshrine territorial claim. As a counter-point to that perspective, it will also look at ways of re-imagining navigation as relational encounter rather than mastery. This re-envisioning involves considering the river's own flowing agency and the lessons in humility it teaches, as learned through Mylène Paquette's experiential navigation. Secondly, this chapter will interpret

[171] Durand, 26.

[172] *Merriam-Webster*, s.v., "navigation (*n.*)," accessed March 20, 2018, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/navigation.

the implications of navigation as tour, as a means to get to know place. It will examine how tours are not neutral; the way they take course and the very names used to describe the places encountered are determining of perspective. Thirdly, it will assess the production of my documentary, with navigation as a pivotal modality, through an exploration of multilinearity. In all these considerations, travelling by water, mediated or material, enables deeper understandings of how we are connected to other times and other places.

Navigation as place history

From conquest to relation

Navigation has long implied geographic ascendancy. Galvanized by 15th and 16th century quests seeking to uncover treasures or discover passages to faraway lands, navigation, in this formulation, has constructed voyage as terrain for conquest. As Massey critiques, such a formulation "[…] makes space seem like a surface; continuous and given."[173] Peoples and places are thereby conceived of as objects on this assumed plane. The dangerous implication of this conception, for Massey, is that they are thus denied histories: "Immobilised, they await Cortés' (or our, or global capital's) arrival. They lie there, on space, in place, without their own trajectories."[174] Navigation, then, must also be considered for its legacy of operationalizing space in ways that render its crossing the sole venture of the dominant group.

The St. Lawrence River has unmistakably been an arena for this legacy. Explorers like Jacques Cartier and Samuel de Champlain are heralded for "discovering" what is now Quebec because they travelled through the river and staked a claim on abiding surfaces. In a letter to the Cardinal Duke of Richelieu, France's superintendent of commerce and navigation, Champlain relays the exploits of navigation:

> Vous y verrez les grands et périlleux voyages qui y ont été entrepris, les découvertes qui s'en sont ensuivies, l'étendue de ces terres, non moins grandes quatre fois que la France, leur disposition, la facilité de l'assuré et important commerce qui s'y peut faire, la grande utilité qui s'en peut retirer, la possession que nos rois ont prise d'une bonne partie de ces

[173] Massey, *For Space*, 4.

[174] Ibid.

> pays, la mission qu'ils y ont faite de divers ordres de religieux, leur progrès en la conversion de plusieurs sauvages, celle du défrichement de quelques-unes de ces terres.[175]

Simply the descriptive terms employed here, such as "disposition," "facilité" "assuré," "utilité," "retirer," "possession," and "défrichement" signal the undertaking of navigation as the passage through useful, conquerable space. Tales of voyage recounted in this way indicate a process of spatial management in which colonization, settlement, and globalization have historically established dominion over movement. Passage is thus usurped to gain geographic knowledge and from that knowledge, transit is imposed on others, dispossessing them of their space. In a walking tour and study of Carnarvon Gorge, in Australia, where Aboriginals lived for tens of thousands of years before being massacred or displaced within half a century of the first visit by a white man, Australian social scientist Jane M. Jacobs deconstructs some embedded assumptions about travel and dwelling as functions of colonialism: "For many Aboriginal Australians the experience of being under colonialism has been one of dispossession and forced movement, that is, dwelling out of place. For non-Aboriginal Australians, occupation is in part constituted out of travel."[176]

Facing this legacy of appropriating by travel, how can navigation be rethought and reformulated? We might begin by recognizing water's own agency of flux and what it teaches about relating to place: "The movements, transformations, and relations of water seasonally overflow neat categorizations and normative discourses. As a responsive and promiscuous solvent, water is rarely pure and is always picking up, carrying along, dropping off, and bonding with other elements. In this sense, it materially communicates where it has been, what has occurred elsewhere, and even what is possible."[177] Thinking with water, then, with its transgression of intelligibility, may help open other ways of recognizing how we transform and are transformed by where we travel or dwell. As expressed in my documentary, Paquette's

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[175] Samuel de Champlain, "À Monseigneur l'illustrissime cardinal duc de Richelieu, chef, grand maître et surintendant général du commerce et navigation de France," in *Derniers récits de voyages en Nouvelle-France et autres écrits 1620-1632*, ed. Mathieu d'Avignon (Quebec City: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2010), 11; "You will see the great perilous voyages that were undertaken, the discoveries that ensued, the vastness of these lands, not least four times greater than the size of France, their layout, the ease with which important and assured commerce may happen, the great utility that can be derived, the possession of a good part of this country proclaimed by our kings, the mission with which they have endowed various religious orders, their progress in converting many savages, the clearing of a few of these lands." (my translation)

[176] Jackie Huggins, Rita Huggins, and Jane M. Jacobs, "Kooramindanjie: Place and the Postcolonial," *History Workshop Journal* 39, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 171. DOI: 10.1093/hwj/39.1.165.

[177] Chen, "Mapping Waters: Thinking with Watery Places," 277.

navigational endeavours, from crossing the Atlantic solo by paddle to ice-canoeing through the St. Lawrence River, exemplify the humble approach to travel by water made possible by listening to the histories carried in its flow. When Paquette speaks of her adventurers in the sea or in the river, what stands out immediately and repeatedly is her recognition of the gift of being with water: "On peut être sur la glace en plein milieu du fleuve, on peut être sur l'eau, puis on se sent vraiment privilégiés d'être là."[178] As she describes the privilege with which she paddled out in the sea, navigation can be imagined as profoundly relational:

> J'étais vraiment vraiment en contact avec mon essence puis je côtoyais—bien, je côtoyais pas comme je jouais aux cartes avec eux, mais…—je côtoyais des animaux, des mammifères marins. Je voyais des dauphins, des dorades. Je reconnaissais vraiment ma différence encore plus que lorsque je suis sur terre, alors ce contact-là, ce que ça l'a fait naître chez moi c'est un respect pour la mer—oui, une adoration pour la mer, pour un plan d'eau, pour la nature—et aussi une reconnaissance de ce que moi je suis, vraiment.[179]

From encounters like these, she recognizes too her own perceptual accountability in travelling by water: "Et puis, j'ai comme l'impression aussi que quand la mer est pas belle, quand le Saint-Laurent est pas beau, quand les vagues sont dangereuses, c'est moi qui feel pas."[180] She continues, saying she cares about being in good health in order to continue her contact with the river. Her experience enables a reconceptualization of navigation. Rather than being a vehicle for control, it motivates care for the relation between well-being and water. Paquette's navigation is one that cultivates gratitude, identification, and recognition that water connects her to something greater than herself—a recognition of her relations within and to the spatialities and temporalities convened by the river.

As a canoer, she reinvigorates the historical link to navigation, raising awareness of other links—some forged, some broken—that evolved with the river. She enthusiastically describes the history of travel by water to which ice canoeing introduced her. She explains how couriers used to transport mail and merchandise by canoe and depending on the ice levels, they would adapt

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[178] "We can be on the ice in the middle of the river, we can be on water, and we feel fortunate to be there." (my translation)

[179] "I was very much in touch with my essence. I got to be alongside animals, marine mammals—I saw dolphins, sea breams—so I truly recognized my difference, more so than on land, and so what that contact awoke in me was a respect for the sea—an adoration for the sea, a body of water, nature—and a recognition of what I truly am." (my translation)

[180] "I get the impression that when the sea is rough or when the St. Lawrence is rough and the waves are dangerous, it's like if I'm not feeling well." (my translation)

their boats—always working *with* the river to attend to the needs of people in balance. Ice canoeing began to phase out with the arrival of bridges:

> Le pont est arrivé pour pouvoir passer *par-dessus* le Saint-Laurent, *par-dessus* le fleuve, fait que là les gens sont plus autonomes, peuvent parcourir d'une rive à l'autre seuls. C'est comme si on est au-dessus nos affaires maintenant. On est au-dessus de l'eau puis OK y a plus de danger, plus besoin de vous, on peut—bon c'est sûr c'est de l'innovation, ça l'a permis plein plein de choses, c'est super le fun les ponts—mais ça l'a justement, ça nous a déconnecté de ça, de la rudesse, de la rudesse du Saint-Laurent, des difficultés de navigation, puis dans le fond, c'est ça, de notre essence.[181]

Her reflection is not a simple nostalgia for a less industrial time; she recognizes and appreciates advancements in infrastructure. But by practicing ice canoeing and by relaying its history, she opens up public discourse to connect it to the stories that once tied people more closely with the river's own mobility, but importantly as well, to a growing disconnection.

As ambassador of the river for the David Suzuki foundation, she boated downstream from Montreal to the Îles-de-la-Madeleine. Her role she says was to raise awareness of the river and invite people to frequent it because of what it can teach them. In the end, what she recalls as being most enriching were her encounters with people and their stories in relation to the river. Of significance was learning from people how differently they are influenced by watery place: "J'avais parcouru le Saint-Laurent puis là j'avais rencontré des gens tellement différents de par le milieu qu'ils occupent. Par exemple, à Matane les gens sont plus 'bon, le fleuve c'est dangereux'—on l'entend plus souvent. Puis à Québec, c'est différent. Sur la côte nord aussi c'est different."[182] Her voyage would ultimately be an experience in letting oneself be transformed by the specificity of place, as traveled by water. Through her encounter with people, the sharing of their experience from the shore, and the water's obstacles, a relational acquaintance of the river is articulated.

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[181] "The bridge gets built and it goes over the river and now people are more independent; they can go from one shore to the other autonomously. It's as though we're on top of things now: "We're above the water, there's no more danger, we don't need you anymore." Of course, it's innovation and bridges are important, but it's disconnected us from the ruggedness of the St. Lawrence and the struggles of navigation, and yeah, of our essence." (my translation)

[182] "I traveled the St. Lawrence and met people who were so different just by the place they inhabited. For example, in Matane people are wearier and say the river is dangerous—we hear that more often—whereas in Quebec City it's different and on the north shore it's different as well." (my translation)

Mapping as dominion

Paquette's travels along the river to discover more about the water and the peoples along its shores was a kind of mapping. Like navigation, mapping is not neutral: perspective determines how navigation and mapping are used, and how they are used in turn influences perspective. Looking into the historical path of this interaction is formative in accounting for current relations to place. Maps and mapping practices provide insight into how navigation has shaped these relations, as elusive as they may be. As representations of geographic locating, they reveal the dominance of cartographic practice as a mode of measure, an ordering of space. In *Ecologies of the Moving Image: Cinema, Affect, Nature* (2013), Adrian Ivakhiv situates the magisterial legacy of cartography within the historical primacy of visuality, its objectifying reach, and its accompanying technologies to glean information from, and project stories onto, "image-worlds."[183] Linking navigation with mapping, the rise of "linear-perspectival representation" in 15th century Europe, according to Ivakhiv, granted it its maritime clout.[184] Linear perspective objectified and distanced, stabilizing sites in view as manageable: "This facilitated the development of navigation and mapping techniques that led to the conquest of space and the colonization of new lands—lands that were in turn represented as empty spaces to be mapped, measured, and carved up according to the distributive logic of colonization."[185] French geographer Pierre Duval's 1677 map, "le Canada faict par le Sr de Champlain"[186] (a modified reprint of Samuel de Champlain's 1616 map) shows such a depiction of space as traversable and tending.

[183] Adrian J. Ivakhiv, *Ecologies of the Moving Image: Cinema, Affect, Nature* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2013), 2.

[184] Ibid., 3.

[185] Ibid.

[186] "NUMÉRIQUE : Patrimoine québécois," Bibliothèque et archives nationales du Québec, accessed December 6, 2017, http://numerique.banq.qc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/2246831.

Figure 6

Pierre Duval, *Le Canada faict par le Sr de Champlain*, 1677.
Bibliothèque et archives nationales du Québec

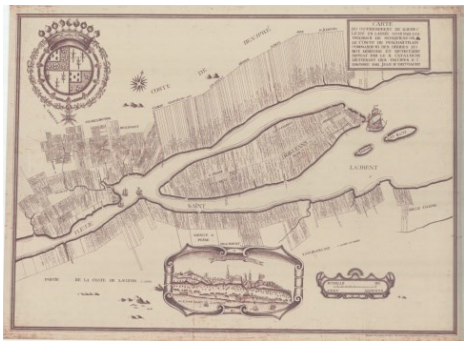
Its identification of certain locations or bodies of water, including the St. Lawrence River, as having an either/or appellation denotes the passage of different claims made on place. For example, the river is labelled as "L Grande R. de Canada ou de S^{t} Laurens." Similarly, the portion depicted of the Atlantic Ocean is identified as "Mer de Canada ou de la Nouvelle France." Revealing in this map is also its notation of attempted exploratory routes. A line emerging from the Atlantic Ocean following Labrador and Northern Quebec into Nunavut points to a trajectory labelled as "Route tenuë l'an 1665 pour aller au Iapon et ala Chine." Just above the line in the water between Greenland and Nunavut is written: "Par ce deftroit les Anglois ont cherché Paffage aux Indes Orientales." Each of these inscriptions marks the story of navigation as assuming discovery or as leading the way for colonization.

Eighteenth century maps depicting settlement around the St. Lawrence River also illustrate the spatial logic described by Ivakhiv, as measured for claim. A 1709 map from the Government of Quebec by order of Monseigneur le Compte de Ponchartrain *et al*.[187] strikingly demonstrates the literal parceling of space for ownership. The map shows the river surrounding Île d'Orléans and its north and south shores. The shores and the island are thinly gridded by long rectangles inscribed with names of people, representing strips of lands belonging to them. As Pearl Grubert explains during our interview, this partitioning of the land was a function of the French seigneurial system. In this system, the seigneur, usually someone from France who owned the territory granted to him by the king, would divide his land into strips for each farming family

[187] "NUMÉRIQUE : Patrimoine québécois," Bibliothèque et archives nationales du Québec, accessed December 6, http://numerique.banq.qc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/3121076.

so that they had access to the river. Grubert reminds, "water being the prime source of just about everything you need in order to live." The farmers would have to give the seigneur a tithe, approximately one tenth of everything they produced "and that's how the seigneur grew richer and richer," Grubert continues. As the farmer's family grew larger, the farmer began dividing his property as well, so eventually the strips of land got narrower and narrower until subsequent generations of farmers had to go elsewhere—including the cities—to make a living. The spatialized trace of this system is still visible to this day. Grubert remarks, "if you fly into Montreal you can literally see the seigneurial system as it was on the St. Lawrence with the strips of land. You can still see those divisions." This view starkly reflects the trace of "the distributive logic of colonialism." The 1709 map, in particular, depicts the linear-perspectival representation that facilitates this logic, cutting up land and access to the river into divisible and manageable space.

Figure 7



Gédéon de Catalogne et Jean-Baptiste Decouagne, *Carte du Gouvernement de Québec […]*, 1709, Bibliothèque et archives nationales du Québec

Figure 8

Airplane shot over Montreal area

As Chen bemoans, "Unfortunately, similar inventory-like mappings continue to be used in our time to appropriate and to narrowly constitute landed territories and watery resources."[188] Considering the ongoing surveying tendencies of today's dominant mapping practices, how might such narrow representations be expanded to account for the relational encounters with watery place engendered by travel? In other words, how can navigation develop different ways of representing geography? Navigational journeys such as the ones undertaken by Paquette may not

[188] Chen, "Mapping Waters: Thinking with Watery Places," 275.

provide precise knowledge of the river's geography, but they provide a different kind of knowledge, one that is not calculable or objectified. Which raises the question: could cartographic representation not only categorize and control, but be opened up to account for such a kind of learning from journey?

The interactive documentary app *Ringbalin River Stories* attempts to do just that. It opens with an introductory narration over images of the Murray Darling river system in Southeastern Australia, its surrounding nature, and Indigenous ceremonies. After the introduction, a map of Australia is laid out with points along the rivers, marking entry places to follow the story of an Elder or a juncture of the Ringbalin: the 2,300 kilometre pilgrimage journeyed by Indigenous people to honour and save the river system. Embarking on the Ringbalin and the Elders' journeys may start at any chosen point, though chronologically, it begins near Cunnamulla down along the rivers toward Adelaide. At the top of the river system, near Cunnamulla, Kooma Elder Herb Wharton sets the tone for navigating this cartographic narrative when he introduces himself and the land he is from and invites the viewer into his story: "If you'd like to follow me on a journey—that is my life, not the life of all the Aboriginals—because we all took on different routes." The characterization of his life as one of many journeys to be followed highlights his welcome into a navigation of story that is grounded in place, yet unbounded by a singularity of path.

Being the integral storyteller, the Murray Darling transcends its depiction on the map. As de Certeau notes, narrative traverses what the map carves: "L'espace d'opérations qu'il foule est fait de mouvements : il est *topologique*, relatif aux déformations de figures, et non *topique*, définisseur de lieux."[189] (The space of operations it travels in is made of movements: it is *topological*, concerning the deformations of figures, rather than *topical*, defining places).[190] Travelling along its shoreline—now storyline—connects navigators with the flow of history into the present. We meet people like Uncle Peter Williams and Elders Cheryl Buchanan and Major Sumner who recall that growing up during assimilation meant they were prevented from practicing their culture or even speaking their own language. The dominant white society institutionalized fear of preserving Aboriginal identity, so dancing ceremonies became seldom practiced. However, they all remember how previous generations would go down to the water

[189] de Certeau, 225.

[190] Rendall, 129.

and bravely perform a dancing ceremony. Major Sumner thoughtfully remembers: "I talked to some of my old aunties. They went down to Coahnian Camp. One of my aunties said… 'it was a place where we could go and be free.' I asked her, what do you mean by free? She said 'free of the eyes upon us here.'"—referring to the watchful eyes of settlers who sought to eradicate Aboriginal culture. As they discuss their ancestral roots to the river system and the sharing of these with their own children, the river is mediated as the conduit to their way of life, which colonialism displaced. In this sense, water is the historical mover whose stories disrupt the stabilizing, objectifying functions of dominant mapping practices.

The mapping information that makes up *Ringbalin River Stories*' interface, and that is activated further with GPS, enables the documentary storytelling to voyage into the material world, as people can follow directions toward the stories while they navigate the river system *in situ*. This continuity between the digital and the real experientially transitions the knowledge created from the documentary. In their contribution to *Thinking Through Digital Media: Transnational Environments and Locative Places* (2015), Dale Hudson and Patricia Zimmerman discuss the potential of online interactive mapping projects to become a "migratory archive," which takes shape as mapping moves across platforms and spaces and activates new renderings of "history as process, rather than product."[191] As people have travelling encounters with the stories of Elders and of the Ringbalin, *Ringbalin River Stories*' mobility enables learning from place beyond the enclosure of a finite map. Whether exploring on site or on the documentary app, *Ringbalin River Stories* shows that story, as told by place or by people, creates points of encounter where geographical history can be questioned, revived or reimagined, just as navigation creates new trajectories of knowledge.

Navigation undoubtedly carries a history of exploration for the purpose of claiming. Much of its cartographic legacy therefore renders water as the channel for the taming of space. My documentary explored how navigation should also be considered for the connections and encounters with place it charts in affording ongoing spatial reorientation. The interview with Grubert recalls the legacy of navigation through the St. Lawrence River, how it has historically led to constraining claims on territory. It is important to be reminded of this legacy, for it locates accountability toward rethinking the implications of movement. In this light, Paquette's ventures along the St. Lawrence River and the Atlantic Ocean attest to the potential of travel by water to

[191] Hudson and Zimmerman, 62.

learn different ways of being in the inherent mobility and fluidity of space and time. What she and *Ringbalin River Stories* point to is that listening to the stories moved by water traces experiential modes of access to place history. The next section will look at what these modes of access teach as they are practiced *in situ* or rather, in motion.

Navigation as tour: Place history in movement

Navigation's course lends a transient perspective on place history. From movement, one greets place as shaped by trajectory, but also experiences mobility as place. What does emplacement in passage reveal about historical relations? The kind of course embarked on radically intervenes in the lessons learned from navigation. For the traveler or tourist, the itinerary is usually determined and controlled—as we shall see in taking an official boat tour of the St. Lawrence River. For the wanderer, it is open-ended—as I experienced by personally touring on, by, and sometimes in the river. For the migrant, it is destined, yet uncertain—as demonstrated by René Derouin's artwork's tour from Mexico to the St. Lawrence River.

Official tours and place-names

Formal tours provide insight into how place and the naming of place is officially memorialized. Taking a commercial boat tour of the St. Lawrence River along the Old Port and the east end of Montreal, I was interested in learning how the history of a place, to which I have a personal relation, is presented in public discourse. For an hour and a half, I let myself be transported as a tourist at home. This was in the summer of 2017, a year marked by innumerable celebrations for Montreal's 375th anniversary. The anniversary context is relevant, for this was a year during which a plethora of cultural, touristic, political, and archaeological activities were framed by the impetus to look back at the significance of place history, and in many cases, by an official discourse of rediscovery of *our* roots. The river figures prominently in this discourse, extolled as the route and means for the city's foundation. The enthusiasm for and the investment (financial, institutional and otherwise) in commemorating Montreal's 375th, in conjunction with the 150th anniversary of the Confederation of Canada, made me question the nature of what

exactly *we* are called upon to celebrate. The overriding discourse of the commemoration efforts had been one of forging a unifying identity of place, staking a claim of belonging.

As Massey points out, "the identity of places is very much bound up with the *histories* which are told of them, *how* those histories are told, and which history turns out to be dominant."[192] I therefore engaged the space-times that lay outside the superficial history told about Montreal and the river. Aboard the ship, with a GoPro in hand, I learned about this history, informative in many ways, but that "turns out to be dominant." The history-telling along the tour was, expectedly, unproblematized and glorifying: it presented heralded settler-founders of the city; explained the religious structure that determined much of the city's urban planning; outlined key moments of economic development, which heavily involved the river and its ports; pronounced the tremendous impact of Expo 67 and the ongoing relevance of Île Sainte-Hélène and Île-Notre-Dame; described the ecological features of the river; and situated the river geographically as the mover of progress.

Figure 9

Shot of the river and cityscape taken from the boat tour

Departing from the Old Port of Montreal, by the Quai Alexandra, the tour took us downstream until the Îles de Boucherville and then returned back to the Old Port. Upon leaving the harbour, the tour guide gave a history of the piers of the Old Port and explained that the King Edward pier was named after King Edward VII who ruled the British Empire from 1901 to 1910.

[192] Massey, "Places and their Pasts,"186.

The Alexandra pier was named after King Edward's wife, Princess Alexandra of Denmark. Subsequently we passed Jacques-Cartier Bridge and Île Sainte-Hélène, the latter named so by Samuel de Champlain in honour of his wife Hélène Boullé. She was twelve years old when they were married (this was not mentioned in the tour).

Passing these sites, with their colonial namesake in mind, and thinking of the monarchic toponymical legacy of the piers that mark the Old Port of Montreal, I interrogated the unproblematized place-names spawned from passing along the river. Named after explorers/conquerors, their wives (whose own story of disenfranchisement gets eclipsed by the larger narrative of settlement) or saints, most of the places convened by the river, whether natural or artificial, carry an insistence on the posterity of appropriation, imperial, religious or otherwise. Even the river itself—the St. Lawrence River—was named in honour of a Christian martyr from Rome, signaling, as one of the countless places named after saints in Quebec, the claim the Church has historically held on place. For Roger La Roche, as he explains in my documentary, this is a testament to the failings of the telling of place history in Montreal:

> On a toujours mal expliqué l'histoire de Montréal aux Montréalais. C'est une continuité depuis le début. On célèbre Maisonneuve, on célèbre Jeanne Mance, mais ce qu'on célèbre c'est l'intégrisme religieux. C'est ça leur but. C'est de créer une communauté dans le sens le plus intégriste chrétien possible sur le dos des autochtones, sur le dos… C'est ça aussi la fondation de Montréal. Fait que, il faut pas l'oublier.[193]

La Roche decries this kind of self-perpetuating place history that whitewashes the struggles and incoherencies brought upon by movement, bestowing toponymical honour instead to a select few dominant voices. He makes an impassioned plea for a place history that extends laterally, that takes into account the diversity of narratives—in essence, that navigates:

> De faire une histoire horizontale, de faire une histoire du peuple de Montréal. Et je pense que les gens ont de plus en plus mort de parler de nos découvreurs puis nos gens respectables—ils ont des stations de métro en leur nom là […]. Mais c'est pas ça l'histoire de Montréal. L'histoire de Montréal c'est l'histoire des irlandais qui sont venus mourir pour la construction des ponts puis du choléra. L'histoire de Montréal c'est la terre d'accueil des premiers réfugiés de la première guerre mondiale et deuxième guerre

[193] "We have never explained well the history of Montreal to Montrealers. This is ongoing since the beginning. We celebrate Maisonneuve, we celebrate Jeanne Mance, but what we're celebrating is religious fundamentalism. That was their goal: to create a community in the most Christian fundamentalist sense possible, on the back of Indigenous peoples. That is also the foundation of Montreal, we cannot forget that." (my translation)

mondiale, mais c'est aussi l'histoire sur l'île Sainte-Hélène d'un camp de concentration où on a mis tous les Italiens du coin là.[194]

By, through, and across the river, innumerable stories have unfolded, yet it is named after a saint who bears no link with the richness of its histories. The Commission de toponymie du Québec attributes the river's St. Lawrence appellation to Spanish and Italian translations of Jacques Cartier's *Relations* pertaining to his second voyage of 1535-1536. In this "Deuxième relation," Cartier names the water between Newfoundland, the north shore, and Anticosti island the bay of St. Lawrence on August 10th 1535, birthday of said saint: "Nous nommasmes ladicte baye la baye sainct laurens."[195] Eventually "St. Lawrence" would designate both the gulf and the river. From earlier passages, however, the river had been referred to by Jacques Cartier as the Grand fleuve de Hochelaga. The Commission also notes that according to several documents, the most commonly used name for the river in 16th century records was "rivière du Canada." But by the 17th century, "St. Lawrence" established its reign over other appellations.[196] Significantly, different First Nations have their own name for it. As previously mentioned, in Innu, the river is called *Wepistukujaw Sipo*. In Abenaki, it is referred to as *Moliantegok*.[197] In Mohawk, it is referred to as *kania'tarowá:nen*.[198] Interestingly, the word used for shoreline in Mohawk is *atsaktátie*, where the syllable "aktá" connotes "edge of" and the syllable "átie" refers to "continuously flows"—an example of how place can be named not after a distant (often religious) figure, but rather for what it situates.[199] Revealing in the colonial toponymical history of the river is the disconnect between place and naming brought upon by voyage. Throughout his *Relations*, Jacques Cartier frequently states "nous nommasmes," ("we named" in old French)

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[194] "A horizontal history, a people's history. I think people are fed up of hearing about the discoverers and honourable people—they have metro stations named after them. […] But that's not the history of Montreal. The history of Montreal is the history of the Irish people who came to die building bridges and who died of cholera; the history of Montreal is the welcoming land for refugees from the First and Second World War; but it's also the history of a concentration camp on Île Sainte-Hélène to where we sent Italians." (my translation)

[195] Jacques Cartier, "Deuxième Relation," in *Jacques Cartier: Relations*, ed. Michel Bideaux (Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1986), 131.

[196] "Fleuve Saint-Laurent," Commission de toponymie du Québec, accessed December 19, 2017, http://www.toponymie.gouv.qc.ca/ct/ToposWeb/Fiche.aspx?no_seq=121375.

[197] Ibid.

[198] Thomas Deer, in conversation with author, January 22, 2016.

[199] Ibid.

thereby designating a given body of water, landmark, island, mountain, etc., by the name of a saint or monarch. Such entitling laid claim to place. Without any connection to their referent, place-names along the river attributed by explorers and settlers convey navigation as bestowing possession, as a process of en-title-ment, whereby travel carried a mark of dominion on, rather than a relational understanding of place. How differently would relations to place history have evolved if Europeans had learned and respected Indigenous toponymy? How would our relations to history be different if we let place identify the nature of our dwelling (or passage)?

These questions guided my reflection when I took the boat tour. It was a sunny summer day with clear skies, and given the ship's grandeur, we were afforded an expansive perspective of Old Montreal, the entrance of the Lachine Canal, the peninsula that harbours Habitat 67, the Jacques-Cartier Bridge, Île Sainte-Hélène, the ports of Montreal along the shore of the east end, and of course, the water that defines it all. As we passed each of these places, the information we were given was to a large extent quantitative and concerned with industrial and economic prosperity. For example, the piers were pointed out for their historical significance in making Montreal a key player in trade and transport. The tour guide boasted that cruise ships are now a multi-million dollar industry in Montreal. The Lachine Canal and the Seaway were defined as conduits for commerce. The port entries were detailed according to cargo capacity and economic impact. Even the river's hydrographic features were intrinsically identified as markers of development. It was explained that between Montreal and Trois-Rivières, its natural depth ranges only from three to seven metres. This shallowness has meant repeated dredging of the river in order to allow heavier ships to transit. Such details about its expanse and depth were directly associated with its purpose as a transportation route. While not discounting the factual information communicated on the tour, its focus on industry and prosperity raises the question of what kind of historical narratives get molded by official travel routes, and in turn, what gets excluded?

Even along Notre-Dame street east of the Jacques-Cartier Bridge, two large billboards from the Montreal Port Authority (in association with Montreal's 375th anniversary) echo the historicization of the river-place as a product of industrial prowess and progress. With a blue background of the river, they read: "Avant de la fonder il fallait y débarquer" and "avant les cargos il y avait les canots." Passing by these clipped claims on history and touring the river as described in official public discourse, I critically questioned the way narratives of place get

mobilized by navigational routes. If histories become dominant by following the beaten path of their telling, then how can the course be de-routed or expanded?

Touring as wanderer

Experimenting with course, I embarked on personal navigations and trips with my camera to learn from place through mobility. Travelling on foot, by bicycle or even on a paddle board enabled an engagement with the river and that allowed me to challenge dominant channels of history-telling.

It was a crisp fall morning when I made my way to the Pointe du Havre, the peninsula that stretches out between Old Montreal and Île Sainte-Hélène. I had learned on the boat tour that it is an artificial peninsula built to protect the port from the river's flow. At its tip meet the intrepid Sainte-Marie current and the calm waters that border the Old Port, forming a visible delineation. I sought to see this meeting more closely through the camera lens and what I would encounter was another kind of convergence. At dawn, there is stillness to the city and neighbouring islands, but the river's steadfast stream reminds me of the event of place. Alone at first, I positioned the camera toward the numinous mist emanating from the river as it passed Pont de la Concorde, billowing by Île Sainte-Hélène. Not long after, a passerby came along and then a fisherman set up his line on the rocks right at the edge of the water. As I filmed the water, mesmerized by the steady brume, the passerby tapped me on the shoulder to direct my attention to the enormous cruise ship coming upstream into the Old Port. I turned around and witnessed the advancing cruise ship and the fisherman in foreground, the juncture of which evoked an odd synchronicity of scale and movement in the river-place. The cruise ship's immensity and nearness as it entered the narrow harbour of the Old Port galvanized the contrast to the lone fisherman, whose thin line was steered by the pull of the water, dressing along the way a confluence of grandeur and simplicity, of commercial and personal engagement with moving place.

Figure 10

Shot of fisherman and cruise ship taken from Pointe du Havre

Yet another kind of confluence is forged by tour. This one negotiates affordance and recognition. I often cycle to Île Sainte-Hélène and Île Notre-Dame, circling the former and riding along the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve on the latter. Pedaling over the Jacques-Cartier Bridge always excites a sense of wonder as it provides a vast view of the river's span. Heading onto Île Sainte-Hélène, the stark sight of the former military complex—now the Stewart Museum—invokes cognizance of the river's islands' historical usurpation by imperial forces for strategic positioning. Once on the island, cycling enables privileged outlooks on the river and Montreal. I followed a nestled path toward the back end of La Ronde that leads to a small enclave right at river level where the water is touchable and Montreal's shoreline (dominated by the Port) can be seen clandestinely. The sense of closeness brought upon by cycling continued as I ventured onto Île Notre-Dame and move through glimpses of the water and downtown Montreal piercing through the trees bordering the island. As I passed by the remaining pavilions of Expo 67 along the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve, I was reminded of the cultural significance of this island in the middle of the river, once the nexus of international visit and acclaim and now the destination of athletes, tourists, and casino goers. The changing mobilization of place through time is resonant. Concurrently, circling the race track along the basin, around the casino, and by the artificial Jean Drapeau beach, reminds that this island was constructed, built in large part from dredging the river; in a way, turning it inside out. Acknowledgement that the island is artificial complicates the sense of privilege cycling through it brings, calling into question the very nature of the contiguity

it endows. What does the privilege of nearness to, and perspective on, the river mean if it emerges from a land that fifty years ago was naturally part of the river itself?

Roger La Roche's experience suggests the powerful and complex impact of place's changing form on sense of history. On the one hand, as he explains, the islands severely disturbed the history of the river and its organic navigation by destroying the surrounding ecosystem for fish and by modifying the currents. Considering these environmental impacts, the continued presence of the islands in effect abates the loss of the ecosystem, so navigation on or by them potentially distances us from that eroded trace of past movement. On the other hand, La Roche's story as a young teenager working at Expo 67, mesmerized by the newly formed metropolis frequented and loved by hundreds of thousands of visitors, conveys the profound sense of care and humility bequeathed by the river's transformation into island: "Par l'interaction que j'avais avec les visiteurs, j'avais la forte impression que c'est moi personnellement qui recevais le monde chez moi."[200] La Roche emphasizes how Expo 67 conferred recognition of place, raising awareness of a long-neglected relation to the river—the river having been historically abandoned at the expense of progress. For example, La Roche points out how even the way the shore has been developed ended up disregarding the watery passageway that defines it: "Quand on regarde les églises qui ont été construites dans les années 1920 en montant à peu près, elles font toutes dos au fleuve. C'est unique au Québec. C'est la seule place au Québec où les églises n'ont pas leur porte d'entrée vers le fleuve. On a abandonné historiquement le fleuve à l'industrialisation."[201]

Conversely, as La Roche's experience shows, the construction and industrialization of the islands for Expo 67, while problematic in many respects, at least forged a deep respect and appreciation for the river that shaped it (and us). In his case, the opening to the world—to difference—spawned by Expo 67 and the river inspired a commitment to stay connected, and especially, to give back: "C'est le vrai devoir de mémoire. C'est hallucinant tout ce que l'Expo a donné à beaucoup de monde—je ne suis pas un cas unique—mais c'est hallucinant tout ce qu'elle m'a donné. […] C'est une des raisons aussi pourquoi tout est gratuit, je ne charge pas pour mes

[200] "With the interactions I had with visitors, I had the impression that it was me personally who was welcoming people to my home." (my translation)

[201] "If we look at the churches that were built from the 1920s on, they are all turned away from the river. That is unique across Quebec. It's the only place in Quebec where churches do not have open onto the river. We have historically abandoned the river in favour of industrialization." (my translation)

affaires, je reste disponible parce que je veux redonner une petite petite partie de ce que j'ai reçu."[202] La Roche's journey reveals the power of place to elicit cognizance of the historical routes that we travel. Yet it must also serve as a reminder that these routes are not seamless; they diverge; and they are often taken for granted as complete or having run their course.

As I travelled across the islands, I considered the complexity of historical route—how the privilege of mobility is problematized further by other deployments of the river, ones that have displaced people. From Île Notre-Dame I continued cycling along the embankment of the Seaway. The serene bike path goes on for kilometres. It is part of la Route verte, Quebec's network of cycling routes, and it provides access to a mobile, landed experience of the river. But like the islands built for Expo 67, the bike path built along the Seaway is the mark of a seemingly "neutral" event that also had a negative consequence. This dislocated shoreline now used by cyclists is also the reason why communities like Kahnawà:ke are no longer connected to the river. With the river on one side and the Seaway on the other, the tree-laced dike invites a serene travelling experience, but a quick look over to a massive tanker plowing along provokes a jarring reminder that passageways, in their advancement of movement, also transport the legacies of destruction and dispossession. The convergence of the charming experience of voyage and the exploitative heritage of its route is reflected in *De courants et d'histoires*. In one scene, I superimposed a long point of view travelling shot of cycling on this bike path (filmed with a GoPro attached to my bicycle) with written reflections on the despoiling uses of its passage as well as with an excerpt of the Expropriation Act that validated the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority Act. The mediation of this delta of place signification represents the uneasy simultaneity of history-telling evoked by navigation. Indeed, the navigational history of the St. Lawrence carries the concurrent streams of progress and sustainability, of access and expropriation—regrettably privileging the former at the expense of the latter. It is a history fraught with attempts at mastering the river's flow instead of listening to it.

Personally, I discovered that navigation has been especially humbling when it involved being in close contact with the water, when I allowed my body's movement to surrender to the river's will. I experienced such a change in perception when I participated in a paddle-board tour

[202] "It's the true duty of memory. It's incredible what Expo 67 gave me—it gave back to a lot of people, I'm not unique—but it's incredible what it gave me. […] It's one of the reasons why everything I provide is free and I make myself available because I want to give back, if only a small part of what I received." (my translation)

downstream. With a GoPro tied to my wrist, I paddled down the wavy, fast-moving waters of the river. Any assumption of proficiency or bearing was quickly dispelled by the water's command. As Casey asserts, "place is what takes place between body and landscape."[203] How would watery movement animate that threshold of place-taking? With each passing boat I saw in the distance, I braced myself in anticipation of the upcoming forceful waves, not always to much avail. Trying to keep balance on the river's turbulent flow, I experienced the strength of its current as I turned to film the swiftly travelling shoreline or as I plunged the GoPro in the water on the side of the paddle board, noticing the steady surf it formed. During the many times I fell in the water, I embraced what felt like a unique occasion to be submerged in the St. Lawrence. Usually detached from it, falling in evoked a sense of transgression and simultaneously, a privileged encounter. Once in it, observing the near opaqueness of the water made me wonder about the history of pollution that has clouded the river. Navigating in accordance with the river's directive connected me to its active materiality, deepening my awareness of its larger process of ongoing transformation, and in turn, of place taking place, in Casey's sense. With the footage of this experience included in the documentary, I attempted to mediate not just varied points of view of this fluid relationship to place, but embodiments of the fluidity itself.

Memories of a migrating artist

At times ineffable and most often invisible, the fluidity of relation to place and history is perhaps best expressed through art—taking, for example, the story of Derouin's self-imposed exile and journey of return. As described in previous chapters, Derouin grew up on the shore in Montreal's east end and lost his brother and father to tragic accidents in the river. At 18 years old, he exiled himself to Mexico where he pursued his art, eventually creating an installation made up of tens of thousands of ceramic figurines, representing migrants, laid out on a vast wooden base. After many perennial migrations away and after exhibiting his *Migrations* in Mexico, Derouin intuited a need to return to home-place, to the St. Lawrence River. Growing up by the river, he had always known his nomadic essence: "Je suis pas quelqu'un de l'intérieur du pays, moi. Je suis quelqu'un—quelqu'un qui vit sur le bord des fleuves ou sur le bord de la mer, c'est des gens

[203] Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World*, 29.

susceptibles de partir."[204] But all these travels later, he realized that his own migration had always been flight from losing the river, his brother, and father: "ça m'est resté comme quelque chose non-réglé; le deuil a jamais été fait et ça expliquera que le projet *Migrations*, il n'aurait pas existé si le fleuve avait pas existé."[205] Migratory itself, and as a place of passage ("lieu de passage"), the river would carry the movement of his ceramic migrants, and in turn, of migration's memory.[206] When he let go of the pieces of *Migrations* into the river—in front of Île Sainte-Hélène, by Longue Pointe where he grew up, and the bulk of them by Baie-Saint-Paul—he offered memory to passage. In offering to the river memorial emblems of migration, he pursued his own, returning to place the ephemerality of relation, and letting the river migrate his story:

> Je me suis rendu compte que ce qu'il y avait de plus fort dans mon projet *Migrations* c'est le rapport à l'eau et c'est le rapport au fleuve. Mais c'est le rapport aussi à ma migration—que ce qui s'était passé dans ma vie c'était pas tellement le projet, c'était moi qui avait changé. Pendant les trois ans que j'ai fait ça je suis parti d'une personne puis quand je suis sorti là j'étais différent. Je pense que c'est ça là, c'est la transformation dans le mouvement qui s'est produit chez moi après ce projet-là. […] Ça l'explique qu'il n'y ait pas de peine que l'œuvre soit disparue. Parce que l'œuvre ce n'était qu'un processus pour migrer, aller vers ailleurs. […] Je me disais c'est le mouvement, c'est le mouvement du fleuve, le départ, la transformation, de devenir autre chose, de perdre, de gagner autre chose.[207]

As explored in my documentary, his voyage of return reveals the powerful beckoning of place, even throughout a migratory voyage of separation and reacquaintance. Derouin's story—his personal and artistic journey—illustrates the significance of the place-event of the river in actualizing the symbolic gestures of return and of letting go in flux. Considering its transformative potential, navigation—travel by water—thus invokes a journey of letting go, of

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[204] "I am not someone from the interior—someone who lives by a river or by the sea, is someone prone to leave." (my translation)

[205] "It stayed with me as something unresolved, the mourning had never been done. That will explain how *Migrations* would never have existed if the river didn't exist." (my translation)

[206] René Derouin, *Ressac: de* Migrations *au largage* (Montréal: L'Hexagone, 1996), 64.

[207] "I realized that what was strongest in my project was its relation to water and its relation to the river. It was the relation, as well, to my own migration. With what had happened in my life; it wasn't so much the project, but it was me who had changed. During the three years I worked on this, I started out as someone and when I left, I was different. It's transformation by movement that happened in me with this project. […] It explains that there is no sadness with the work of art disappearing, because the work of art was but a process of migration, to go elsewhere. […] It's movement; it's the river's movement—departure, transformation, becoming something else, loss, gaining something new." (my translation)

uncertainty. Where it has often assumed the conquering of space, could it not rather lead to humility toward movement, toward the unknown? As the river teaches, navigating place history may be less about discovery than recognition of our part in its fluidity.

Navigation as representation: Exploring multilinearity in documentary

With its contingency on lived experience, documentary engenders palpable ways of relating to voyage. Through storytelling and testimony, immersive cinematography, and montage, *De courants et d'histoires* transports viewers across experiential, personal, discursive, and reflective planes, while mediating their connection to the real. Multilinearity negotiates this engagement further by mobilizing representational space. This is not to say that this space is inherently bound. As Massey argues, when representation is understood as flattening space, it renders it static. But considering space as dynamic simultaneity implicates representation as "no longer a process of fixing, but an element in a continuous production; a part of it all, and itself constantly becoming."[208] What multilinearity musters, then, are the pathways that operationalize this continual becoming, so that space is practiced: "Not representation but experimentation."[209] For example, in *The Block*—an interactive web documentary about a disinherited housing precinct in Sydney, Australia—the representational space encompasses traversable street views of the neighbourhood (traversable similarly to Google Maps street view, whereupon double clicking on a location tracks you toward it), browsable interviews and news stories about the Block, situated testimonies of residents, and an explorable map. This documentary moves its narratives along by experimenting, thus illustrating how we may reconsider the notion of navigational space toward an understanding of representation *as* navigation.

Just as travel (by water) involves choice, getting lost, multiple ways, directionality, and returns, so too does multilinearity in documentary. From this perspective, spatiality is not merely a surface on which actions are posed and movements drawn; it is constitutive of their deployment. In my documentary, the navigational modality—as travel agent of such spatiality—harbours the narrative, splits it, directs it, interrupts it; in effect, it *becomes* the narrative. After the opening sequence, navigators are presented with a narrative wharf of sorts. This "wharf"

[208] Massey, *For Space*, 28.

[209] Ibid.

screen includes the five storytellers: Mylène Paquette, Martine Chatelain, Pearl Grubert, Roger La Roche, and René Derouin. It also includes four main themes: the manipulation of the river; the river as palimpsest; access to the river; and reflections inspired by the river.

To help the navigators through all this content, I created several guideposts. On the navigational screen, the storytellers and themes are designated by icons that float on a mediated veil of the St. Lawrence River's moving waters, which overlays a digitized rendering of a watercolour of the river. At this confluence of movement, hovering, and superimposition, navigators are compelled to choose a path down the river—a storyteller or a theme—by clicking on one of the icons, which will lead them along a narrative stream.

If the navigator chooses a storyteller, a new journey begins. Throughout the course of each journey, one or two prompts will emerge, leading to a theme that is relevant to what the storyteller is discussing. For example, as Paquette's story about her adventures on the river unfolds, a prompt appears leading to the theme of difficult access that most people face in getting to the water. During Chatelain's story, as she discusses pollution and other issues, a prompt leads to a sequence on some of the ways the river has been used. As Grubert recounts her story, there is a prompt linking to a sequence on the impact of the St. Lawrence Seaway and another one linking to the sequence on the ways the river has been used. As La Roche takes us through the history of Expo 67 and his rich archive, there is a prompt that connects to a sequence about how Expo 67 enabled access to the river and a second prompt that connects with the theme of the river as palimpsest. Derouin's story, in which he recounts submerging some of his work in the waters of the St. Lawrence, also has a prompt that leads to the palimpsest theme.

The purpose of these prompts is to allow navigators, if they so choose, to dive more deeply into a theme raised by a storyteller. But as in many journeys, that choice must be made quickly. The prompts only last for a few seconds. The purpose of the fleeting prompt was for the documentary to reflect the experience of travel; when signs come up on a highway or when a river divides and turns, we must decide rapidly, especially if we are already in motion, whether or not to change course. The multilinearity enacted by the prompts was therefore designed with the risks and engagements of discovery in mind.

Figure 11

This prompt links to one of the access theme sequences. It appears about 4 minutes into Paquette's narrative, less than halfway through her sequence. It lasts 8 seconds.

Screengrab from Mylène Paquette's story

The appearance of the prompts before the end of the story implies a potential interruption of the narrative if the navigator chooses to follow the prompted current. Again, as in real travel, bifurcating to explore something that caught our attention entails momentary stops in furthering our initial route. But often on a river or highway, having taken an exit or a detour, we want to resume our main journey. I designed the documentary to do that as well. The prompts are set up so that, once finished, the navigators can easily return to their initial route: every sequence that is loaded has an "X" button in its righthand corner and if closed, navigators will be brought back to the story they were watching at the point where they took left off.

I also added in a "second chance" option. In case any navigator decides not to follow a prompt—to stay on course as they listen to a storyteller—all the prompts re-appear at the end of each story to give the option of following a new journey after another has been travelled.

Just as while travelling with a storyteller the navigator has the option of exploring a theme in more depth, so too the navigator who is watching a particular theme segment can decide to spend more time with a storyteller she or he encounters. Throughout each of the theme sequences, as different storytellers appear, there is a prompt that allows navigators to find out more about who they are and follow their story. For example, someone watching the sequence about the difficult access to the river might be interested in hearing more from Chatelain; they click on her name when the prompt appears and watch the full interview with her.

The intertwining of storytellers and themes, with varied paths, sudden openings and return options, enables trajectories and discovery. To give one example: A navigator might start with

the story of Chatelain and then be curious when a prompt appears about the bad choices we have made using the river. They are redirected to the theme of the river's manipulation and one of the storytellers they meet there is Grubert. If their interest in her is piqued, a click on her name will lead them to her storytelling sequence.

Structured this way, with signposts and crossroads, navigation experiments with multilinearity as narrator. By connecting the storytellers with the themes, the documentary allows navigators to traverse the various reflections as linked and not as isolated arrays. The goal was for the documentary interface to enable experimentation in travel by water. While the purpose of the documentary is to encourage the navigator to follow whatever currents they want, lest this experimentation be too disorienting, throughout the viewing experience there is a toolbar at the bottom with a button labelled "Navigation" that leads to the main navigational screen, which harbours all the storytellers and themes. In addition, for anyone who favours a more conventional and linear type of viewing, there is an index button that links to a straightforward list of all the storytellers and themes.

Multilinearity reflects what travelling down a river is like; it leaves open to spontaneity and unexpected turns and currents. At the same time, a river's directionality is most often markedly linear, running its course in not always a straight line but a line nevertheless. Therefore, my documentary leaves open the possibility of simply following the stream's linearity. For example, it is conceivable for a navigator to choose to watch a single story or theme—no disruptions, turns or digressions.

Similarly, by putting the documentary online it allows navigators to stop and start along their journey down the line they have chosen. The online feature of the documentary mirrors the disruptions, departures, and returns of travel as well. Accessible and available on the web for engagement, it lends itself well to diverse or parceled viewing experiences. By being able to return to visit the documentary periodically, navigators may thus experience storylines differently, whether by channeling attention to particular sequences or changing their intervention in the directionality of their flows. Repeated returns have become part of the new media reception process, whereby the communicative exchange between documentary and audience is narrowed and concretized. The broader spatiality of web documentary is relevant here, for it has evolved from, and will continue to grow with, the fluidity and mutability of cyberspace. As Manovich points out: "Rather than considering only the topology, geometry, and logic of a static space, we

need to take into account the new way in which space functions in computer culture—as something traversed by a subject, as a trajectory rather than an area."[210] Through the subjective trajectories of representation as navigation, relations to place history may be explored and modes of relating tested.

Each of the transitions outlined above—the choice of connections or lack thereof between sequences, the interruptions, and the possibility of departure and return—galvanize the new challenges to storytelling posed by an evolving documentary form. At stake is a delicate balance to be struck between providing the possibility of following linearities of narrative sense and letting go of vectors of certainty to make space for exploration, in all its risk and unknowability.

Documentary as navigation invigorates the relational impetus of representing place history. From its production to its participatory reception, it orients both maker and navigator toward recognizing our place in place. Casey notes the significance of this commitment: "More than mere backdrop, places provide the changing but indispensable material medium of journeys, furnishing way stations as well as origins and destinations of these same journeys."[211] Connecting us to the movement of narrative and the voyage of pondering, documentary navigation journeys through discovery, crossways, and returns.

In its experiential engagement with geography, its cultivation of presence through movement, and its articulation of storytelling, navigation—as place history, as tour, as representation—is not merely an operation we conduct; it deepens our outlook and we become part of its historical flow. As both a mediation and modality of this transformation, multilinearity connects us with not just stories, but with storytelling itself. With the documentary produced for this project, navigators look and browse through the screen and watch people explore the St. Lawrence River. This thesis has explored and argued how a place like the river is much more than a name and mark on the map. It has shown that it is a place-event, a shifting construct of space-time, and a force and presence that changes its inhabitants. *De courants et d'histoires*

[210] Manovich, 279.

[211] Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World*, 274.

deepens these conceptualizations by immersing navigators in the stories, evocations, and questionings communicated by the river-place.

Conclusion

Faut l'écouter. Puis, on va pouvoir […] vivre avec lui, puis évoluer avec lui.[212]
—Mylène Paquette

C'est le vrai devoir de mémoire[213]
—Roger La Roche

Laissons couler les rivières, laissons couler le fleuve...[214]
—Martine Chatelain

It was on a cold March day that Mylène Paquette shared her travel adventures and reflections, as the snow trickled down to greet the river. Just as those sudden late winter storms remind us that we are part of something much greater than ourselves, her experience awoke me to the richness of relation to the river-place. As an adventurer—a rower, sailor, and ice-canoer—she is in and of the river. Humbled by what she considers her privileged contact with water, she is continually exploring the depths of the river and its history. My encounter with Paquette echoed Massey's seminal point: "Perhaps a really 'radical' history of a place would be one which did not try to present either simple temporal continuity or only spatial simultaneity with no sense of historical depth. […] but which recognised that what has come together, in this place, now, is a conjunction of many histories and many spaces."[215] This research-creation went beyond presenting a "simple temporal continuity or only spatial simultaneity" by exploring the historical depths of the St. Lawrence River. Through its convergence and dissonance of temporalities and spatialities, the river forges narratives that call into question the processes of relating to place.

Each participant, in their distinct connection with the river, enlivens this historical relation. Paquette's sharing of her ventures inspires a recognition that ongoing historical connection to the river is also cultivated through care, passion, and appreciation. Monique Durand's prose invites a contemplative journey of attentiveness to the river's evocations of memory and attachments. Martine Chatelain's reminder of our human watery composition urges

[212] "We have to listen to the river. That way we'll be able to […] live with it and grow with it." (my translation)

[213] "It's the true duty of memory." (my translation)

[214] "Let's let rivers run, and let the St. Lawrence run…" (my translation)

[215] Massey, "Places and their Pasts," 191.

recognition of an organic identification with the river's past, present, and future. René Derouin's personal migration from, and return to, the river traces paths of remembrance that link to the current of historical passage. Pearl Grubert's decades of educating students on the island of Montreal affords cognizance of how the river can shape a sense of place, in all its complexity and contestation. Finally, Roger La Roche's passionate archiving of Expo 67's legacy raises awareness of the river's evolving imprint on the places of belonging it engenders.

At the beginning of this thesis, I raised three questions, upon the shores of the St. Lawrence River: What can the river teach about history? What does it mean to be connected to place and what are the consequences of being disconnected from place? How can documentary storytelling and its multilinear web form mobilize different ways of engaging the narratives produced by place? This research-creation answered these questions by applying the concepts of place, boundary, and navigation as epistemological frameworks. It found that the theories of place developed by Massey, Casey and others can be creatively applied to the river, interact with its stories, and in turn deepen understandings of history and ways to engage to the place-event known as the St. Lawrence.

Thinking with river construes place as more than a locative site but rather as an event that implicates and teaches. Examining how the St. Lawrence has been historically documented, travelling along and in its current, and listening to a few of its storytellers, this research-creation has invested in thinking with river as something more than a line on a map. As Casey urges, "the primacy of place is not that of *the* place, much less of *this* place or *a* place (not even a very special place)—all these locutions imply place-as-simple-presence—but that of being an event capable of implacing things in many complex manners and to many complex effects."[216] Casey makes a plea to reconsider attitudes toward all kinds of places, and the river appeals to that perceptual change ever direly.

Every day people walk along streets, meet, enter buildings, come home; some may sometimes even cross water or simply gaze from the shore. In encountering and inhabiting the places that shape senses of identification, my project has demonstrated the importance of pausing and questioning those senses. Rather than encompassing the mere terrain upon which human action and development are deployed, place is determining of our presence and accounting for our passage through time. The river enacts this incumbency. The previous chapters analyze how

[216] Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*, 337.

it has been conquered and controlled; one lasting vestige of this is the St. Lawrence Seaway, which, as powerfully denounced by the Mohawk people of Kahnawà:ke, has expropriated Indigenous land and dispossessed them of their foundational link to the river. It has been polluted, channeled, and bounded, to serve the forces of urban development and progress. It has also been reshaped to develop a new sense of belonging as the construction of the islands for Expo 67's site demonstrates. As residents on an island profoundly molded by the river, connecting to its history compels care for, and attention to, the vulnerability of the natural flows that continually define our inhabitancy.

Inherent to the processes of connecting with the river's place histories is the recognition of boundaries. The facilities of the Port of Montreal designed for commerce, not people, the numerous "no trespassing" signs, the barriers along the shore—they have all conditioned a perception of the river as inaccessible, far, and separate. But as Massey argues, the character of place is "constructed not by placing boundaries around it and defining its identity through counter-position to the other which lies beyond, but precisely (in part) through the specificity of the mix of links and interconnections *to* that 'beyond.' Places viewed this way are open and porous."[217] The river as natural force may impose a sense of frontier, but it is one that defies circumscription. One's posture in relation to water—to the shore, to the current—negotiates questions of identification with, separation from, and being part of, history. Place narratives along the river unfold by a convergence of border and passage. An adventurer's voyage, a writer's musings, an artist's migration, an environmentalist's care, an historian's archive, a teacher's lessons, a consideration of access, an interrogation on use, and a contemplation of palimpsestic re-inscriptions across time—all these storylines—are shaped by the intersections of proximity and distance, of closure and open-endedness. Documentary's spatiality articulates these narrative intersections, affording varied alignments in the disposition of mediated experiences of the river.

At the heart of these alignments: navigation. Navigation can (and has been) used to control and manage what Casey contends as "a global scene for sites of discovery and exploitation."[218] The travels of explorers like Samuel de Champlain and Jacques Cartier, whose legacies persist in the namesake of the bridges that cross the river, attest to how navigation can lead to conquest. As demonstrated, contemporary official boat tours do not question the

[217] Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender*, 5.

[218] Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*, 201.

colonialist legacy of travel by water. Alternatively, navigation can be practiced to learn from and about place, and in turn, oneself. To travel by water along the river's place histories means abandoning oneself to the flow of its current; it means opening up to the varied ways stories unfold and lead. In its narrative streams, the river thus continually reveals passages to engage history. Chen reminds: "Water is much more than a resource. It is a socio-natural *force*—an active agent of overflow, creation, and destruction."[219] This message is echoed throughout my documentary. It shows that in all its seasons and temperaments, the river is a mutable source of relation. Throughout a history of being tamed, polluted, and taken for granted, it nonetheless connects people and communities not only to how they come to develop a sense of place, but also to how they will evolve in place and how place will evolve them.

The goal of this research-creation was to pursue the learnings from the river's agency to connect and confront. This pursuit was done on an exploratory basis, epistemologically and methodologically. The exploratory approach engendered unique perspectives, considerations, and stories, but it also incurred limitations. As the project comes to an end, new reflections arise as to what was not achieved and what other directions could be taken. In retrospect, the most significant limit sustained by adopting an exploratory approach within the constraints of a Ph.D. timeline involves subject participation in the documentary. In Chapter 2, I point to a documentary example of Indigenous self-representation in regard to the river and I explain the complications that rendered Indigenous participation in my documentary not possible. These limits could be explicitly explored in the written portion of this research-project, as was done in the earlier chapters. The written text can also provide outside sources and references to Indigenous voices. A documentary, however, is more restricted to what the camera sees and records. In this case, by pursuing an exploratory process of participation, the individuals who were gathered in the documentary were recruited by search, referral, and sometimes by chance encounter. This itinerant mode of recruitment gave way to meeting people whose unique insights and perspectives afforded distinct understandings, critical reflections, and varied ways of accessing lived history by the river. But the resulting representation in the documentary ended up lacking racial and cultural diversity, with the unintended consequence of limiting in some respects the frame of interrogation to solely white Quebecers. Looking back, this approach to recruitment led

[219] Chen, "Mapping Waters: Thinking with Watery Places," 277.

to a relatively narrow set of stories by not considering subjects whose relation to the river and to Quebec as place, encompass more complex identifications.

Looking ahead, potential elaborations of this process could include the perspective and experience of migrants, newcomers or displaced people, who would necessarily have different kinds of relationships to the river, as well as different notions of belonging. For example, the Montreal Life Stories' commemorative audio walk *A Flower in the River* exemplifies this diversification of relationality. Guided by the narratives of six Rwandan exiles, the tour follows the annual walk to the St. Lawrence River to commemorate the Rwandan genocide, where community members throw flowers of remembrance into the water.[220] Rivers hold symbolic significance in Rwandan history, one that carries the dark legacy of mass murder.[221] The importance of the St. Lawrence for the Rwandans on this walk is not derived from narratives of settler-colonial history, but rather from the mnemonic experience the river offers them. The confluence of river and metropolis means that diverse communities forge particular relationships to the river that are informed by their own experiences and history. Listening to their stories contributes to decentering the sense of belonging enabled by the complex privilege of settlement.

The exploratory process could also be diversified through the use of other rhetorical and formal modes of representation beyond the interview. In *De courants et d'histoires*, for example, I relied on newspaper archives and legal excerpts to shed light on colonialist power structures. This approach could be expanded upon by strategically choosing artefacts that mobilize counter-narratives to settled senses of belonging and colonialist historicization.

In creating a research-creation such as this one for a Ph.D., it is valuable to go through the entire process with a certain sense of finality in order to properly see and assess its strengths and shortcomings. Yet at the same time, one must also remain open to continuity and new directions, much like navigating the flows and currents of a river. This is how we learn and gain understanding—by constantly questioning ourselves and how to tell stories.

Regrettably, the river's stories have historically often fallen on deaf ears. Many residents on the island of Montreal tuned in during the spring of 2017, when the Rivière des Prairies and the St. Lawrence drowned their shores and flooded countless homes. Rivers command public attention at times of disaster or tragedy. Yet as manifestations of place, boundary, and navigation,

[220] High, 73.

[221] Ibid.

they are continuous interpolators of our relation to history. This connection, at times ineffable, is always there, even in the seeming mundaneness of the river's continual passing. It is precisely in this overlooked habitualness that stories from the past emerge to align us to the amenability of our present, and presence.

It is through journeys of ebbs and flows, of submergence and float, that storytelling envisions encounters that pose reflection upon our influences in time and space. This research-creation built upon readings on place by leading thinkers, enriched the knowledge of the river's history by gathering perspectives from diverse storytellers, and took a camera to the ice, by the rapids, below water, up on the bridge, and along the shore. The resulting chronicle in both this thesis and the accompanying documentary enables others to embark on paths to reconnect and rediscover the water that flows beside us. Mutable and directing, storytelling conveys, like the river, the courses that traverse the contingency of place history. Place tells stories.

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Appendix A

FORMULAIRE D'INFORMATION ET DE CONSENTEMENT

Titre du projet :	Storied Streams of History: A Documentary Navigation along the St. Lawrence River
Chercheuse responsable :	Myriam Tremblay-Sher [redacted]
Directrice de recherche :	Monika Kin Gagnon (514) 848-2424 poste 2563 monika.gagnon@concordia.ca
Organisme de financement :	Bourse de doctorat du Programme de bourses d'études supérieures du Canada, Joseph-Armand-Bombardier

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PRÉAMBULE

Nous vous invitons à participer à un projet de recherche-création. Ce formulaire explique le projet et la nature de votre participation. Si certains renseignements ne semblent pas clairs, n'hésitez pas à nous poser des questions.

A. OBJECTIFS

L'objectif de cette recherche-création est de réunir divers récits et perspectives à partir de lieux situés le long du fleuve Saint-Laurent à Montréal dans un webdocumentaire interactif afin d'approfondir notre questionnement sur l'histoire.

B. NATURE DE LA PARTICIPATION

Votre participation consiste à accorder à la chercheuse responsable un entretien dans lequel vous partagez votre perspective et votre expérience par rapport au fleuve Saint-Laurent et à l'histoire. Cet entretien sera enregistré audio-vidéo.

L'enregistrement prendra environ une heure de votre temps.

C. RISQUES

En participant à cette recherche-création, vous ne courez pas de risques particuliers. Cependant, si vous vous sentez inconfortable, n'hésitez pas à communiquer avec la chercheuse et à demander de suspendre l'entretien.

D. CONFIDENTIALITÉ

Nous allons recueillir les informations suivantes :

- Votre nom, voix et image
- Votre point de vue sur le rôle du fleuve Saint-Laurent dans l'histoire à Montréal

Nous entendons publier ces informations des manières suivantes :

- Un documentaire interactif, mis en ligne à des fins éducatives, sans but commercial
- Une thèse accessible dans Spectrum, le dépôt de recherche de l'Université Concordia

L'information recueillie sera identifiable, c'est-à-dire, votre identité sera révélée en conformité avec votre consentement.

L'enregistrement des informations recueillies sera conservé pendant au moins 5 ans sur l'ordinateur personnel de la chercheuse, protégé par un mot de passe. Vous êtes invité, invitée, à une copie de l'enregistrement sur demande.

Si vous préférez que l'enregistrement soit détruit après 5 ans, veuillez aviser la chercheuse :

□ Je veux que mon enregistrement soit détruit après 5 ans

F. PARTICIPATION VOLONTAIRE ET DROIT DE RETRAIT

Votre participation à ce projet est volontaire. La décision est entièrement la vôtre. Si vous choisissez de participer, vous êtes libre de retirer votre consentement et de mettre fin à votre participation en tout temps au cours de l'entretien ainsi qu'après, et ce, jusqu'au 1er octobre 2017, sans préjudice de quelque nature que ce soit.

G. CONSENTEMENT DU OU DE LA PARTICIPANTE (E)

Je reconnais avoir lu le présent formulaire. Je comprends les objectifs du projet et ce que ma participation implique. Je reconnais avoir eu la possibilité de poser toutes les questions concernant ma participation et que l'on m'a répondu de manière satisfaisante. Je comprends que je peux me retirer du projet, sans pénalité d'aucune forme**.** Je consens volontairement à participer à ce projet de recherche.

NOM (lettres moulées)_____

SIGNATURE_____

DATE_____

Pour toute information, vous pouvez communiquer avec la chercheuse ou la directrice de recherche. Leurs coordonnées sont à la page 1.

Si vous avez des questions par rapport à l'éthique de cette recherche-création, veuillez communiquer avec la coordonnatrice du Comité d'éthique de l'Université Concordia au (514) 848-2424 poste 7481 ou à l'adresse courriel suivante : oor.ethics@concordia.ca.

Appendix B

INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

Study Title: Storied Streams of History:
A Documentary Navigation along the St. Lawrence River

Researcher: Myriam Tremblay-Sher [redacted]

Faculty Supervisor: Monika Kin Gagnon (514) 848-2424 ext. 2563
monika.gagnon@concordia.ca

Source of funding for the study: SSHRC Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarships

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PREAMBLE

You are being invited to participate in the research-creation mentioned above. This form provides information about what participating would mean. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to ask.

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of the research-creation is to explore different perspectives on place history in Montreal as influenced by the St. Lawrence River through the production of an interactive web documentary.

B. PROCEDURES

If you choose to participate, you will be asked to do an interview with the researcher in which your voice and image will be recorded. You will be asked about your perspective, your experience or your work in regards to the St. Lawrence River and history.

In total, the interview will take between 1 and 3 hours. If you so choose, it will end immediately.

C. RISKS

There are no foreseeable risks to you by participating in this research-creation. But if at any point you feel uncomfortable, please let the researcher know and feel free to end your participation.

D. CONFIDENTIALITY

We will gather the following information as part of this research-creation:

- Your name, voice and image
- Your reflections on place history in Montreal as influenced by the St. Lawrence River

We will only use the information for the purposes of the research-creation described in this form. We intend to publish this research-creation in the following ways:

- An interactive documentary, which may be put online, for non-commercial purposes.
- A written thesis accessible in Spectrum, Concordia University's research repository

The information gathered will be identifiable. That means your identity will be revealed in accordance with your consent.

The raw recording of the information gathered will be preserved for at least 5 years on the researcher's password protected home computer. You are welcome to a copy of the recording upon request.

If you prefer that your recording be destroyed after 5 years, please let the researcher know:

□ I want my recording to be destroyed after 5 years

F. CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

You do not have to participate in this research-creation. It is purely your decision. If you do participate, you are free to stop at any time. You are also free to withdraw your consent and discontinue your participation at any time during and after the interview up until October 1st 2017 without negative consequences.

G. PARTICIPANT'S DECLARATION

I have read and understood this form. I have had the chance to ask questions and any questions have been answered. I agree to participate in this research-creation under the conditions described.

NAME (please print)_____

SIGNATURE_____

DATE _____

If you have questions about the scientific or scholarly aspects of this research-creation, please contact the researcher. Their contact information is on page 1. You may also contact their faculty supervisor.

If you have concerns about ethical issues in this research, please contact the Manager, Research Ethics, Concordia University, 514.848.2424 ex. 7481 or oor.ethics@concordia.ca.