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**The Grey Fox Meets Jumanji:
The Emergence of the Feature-Film Industry in British Columbia**

Mike Gasher

A Thesis
in
The Department
of
Communication Studies

Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at
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Abstract

The Grey Fox Meets Jumanji: The Emergence of the Feature-Film Industry in British Columbia

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Concordia University, 1999

This thesis studies the emergence since the late 1970s of a feature-film industry in British Columbia. The thesis asserts that the relationship of this cinema to its place of production can be best understood in terms of media globalization, rather than in the more conventional terms of national cinema development. Through an assessment of the history of cinema in British Columbia, the political economy of the North American film industry, provincial film policy and the way films made in British Columbia are located spatially and temporally, it is argued that the British Columbia feature-film industry belongs to a continental media ecology, closely, but not fully, integrated with the transnational commercial cinema based in Hollywood. The thesis concludes with a discussion of changing conceptions of place in a period of globalization, and proposes that British Columbia is particularly well-suited to Doreen Massey's notion of place as 'meeting place' or 'intersection.' Such a sense of place is critical to situating the British Columbia feature-film industry, which has been built upon a complex interface of distinct transnational and regional/local regimes of production.

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A doctoral dissertation resembles a feature film in at least one respect. That is, an individual is usually credited with what many people helped to produce. For that reason, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge those who made special contributions to this project.

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Chapter One

Introduction: Cinema in the Age of New Media Ecologies

My first recollection of the film industry in British Columbia dates from 1978, when my friend Gord Darby invited me to attend the Vancouver premier of a film in which he claimed to have played a central role. Gord is 6-foot-10 and played college basketball. As he tells it, he received a phone call at home one evening from a film producer, whose first words were: "I hear you're tall." Gord was thus recruited to wear the large and cumbersome costume of the monster in the John Frankenheimer horror movie *Prophecy*, which was shooting some scenes in North Vancouver. We laughed all the way through the film -- until the end, that is, when Gord's name was excluded from the credits, leading us to believe that none of his scenes had made the final cut.

I had a similar experience in 1985 when another friend, Larry Pynn, a reporter with the *Vancouver Sun*, signed on as an extra for the Michael Chapman fantasy *Clan of the Cave Bear*, then filming on Bowen Island. At the film's Vancouver debut, it seemed that most of the audience consisted of extras like Larry. Larry insists to this day that he saw himself on the screen -- during a long shot of three cavemen, clad in animal skins and carrying spears, walking up over a hill toward the camera -- but I found him as hard to recognize as Gord had been in his monster costume. The credits, at least, verified Larry's participation.

The British Columbia film industry was in those days, to me and my friends at least, a lark, nothing we were prepared to take seriously. Even when I began to study the Canadian film industry during the free-trade debates of the late 1980s, I had little regard for what was happening all around me. Film-making in British Columbia was not *real* cinema, because the province was little more than a Hollywood back lot, and because the films shot in British Columbia were almost always set somewhere else. The province's role seemed as integral to these films as Gord and Larry had been to theirs. To my mind, the products of what had come to be called Hollywood North lacked the integrity of those rare home-grown films like Phillip Borsos's *The Grey Fox* or Sandy Wilson's *My American Cousin*, films which were conceived, shot *and* set in British Columbia. I was convinced that, for the most part, real cinema took place elsewhere.

But the film industry in British Columbia has become harder and harder to ignore. It has grown steadily, producing more films and more television programs, and spending more money in the province each year. Some years have been leaner than others, certainly, but Hollywood's anticipated desertion of British Columbia has never materialized. In fact, during the busy summer months, there often aren't enough film crews and there isn't enough studio space to satisfy Hollywood's demands. If anything, Hollywood's presence in British Columbia has become further entrenched in recent years with the establishment of local production facilities by major Hollywood studios. At the same time, a small indigenous industry has emerged, gaining notice at film festivals throughout Canada and internationally, occasionally winning awards.

British Columbia has become in a short span of 20 years one of the largest centres of film and television production in North America. Starting with four productions and \$12 million in direct spending in 1978, in 1997 the film and television industries spent \$615 million on 106 productions -- including 24 feature films -- in British Columbia (B.C. Film Commission, 1998). Some observers expect the industry to contribute \$1 billion directly to the local economy by the turn of the century.

Canadian film and television production has become a \$2.7-billion industry, creating the equivalent of 30,000 full-time jobs annually. The industry produces about 40 Canadian feature-length films each year. British Columbia occupies a distinct place within this industry, given its relatively recent emergence as a production centre, its heavy reliance on foreign service production and, consequently, its small contribution to Canada's stock of indigenous films and television programs. From 1994 to 1997, for example, spending by foreign film and television producers accounted for between 70 and 75 per cent of the industry's economic activity (B.C. Film Commission, 1998; Monk, 1997). As recently as 1995, B.C. production represented just seven per cent of Canadian production budgets, compared to Ontario's 59 per cent and Quebec's 30 per cent (Canadian Film and Television Production Association, 1997, pp. 1-10).

The idea that British Columbia's feature-film industry is a dis-placed cinema is written into the nicknaming of Vancouver, the province's centre of film production, as "Hollywood North" or "Brollywood". The *New York Times* has called Vancouver "The City That Can Sub for All of America" (Elias, 1996). What does it mean, in an age of global image flows and transnational audiovisual production, to speak of the *British*

Columbia film industry, an industry with clearer links to Hollywood than to the Canadian film industry? Besides being the geographical *site* of production, what relevance does this place have to the dramatic cinema which is produced within its boundaries? These questions have been the source of some *angst*, as the opening paragraphs of a front-page article in *The Vancouver Sun* attest:

It's the old familiar story. In the movie business, B.C. residents are the hewers of wood and drawers of water for a seductive foreign culture -- and Beautiful British Columbia itself stands in for less beautiful foreign parts, usually in the U.S.

The movie invasion of B.C. by U.S. producers may be good for Canada's economy, but what is it doing for our soul as a nation? In the circumstances, the nickname "Hollywood North" takes on an ominously ironic ring ("Canadian Culture?," 1995, p. A1).

Where does British Columbia fit within this cinema? Is it merely a convenient, yet expendable, site of production? Or does it have a more integral claim to make to the cinema made within its boundaries?

British Columbia is one of about 250 jurisdictions around the world competing for the estimated \$8 billion Hollywood spends each year on "runaway" production, a competition which includes film commissions in every Canadian province and territory. This thesis contends that the conventional frame of analysis -- cinema as national cinema -- is inadequate to understanding such sub-national cinemas which stand at the intersection of global and local cultural practices, and which are defined by the cross-hatched patterns these practices produce. The British Columbia film industry stands as evidence that film production has been transnationalized in the same way that film

distribution and exhibition were earlier in this century. British Columbia's feature cinema is part of the emergence of what James Carey (1998) calls "new media ecologies," which are transforming the scale on which we commonly think of time and space -- i.e., in terms of the temporal-spatial unit of the nation -- and which are reconfiguring structures of social relations.

If cinema is one of the communications media through which we imagine place, it must also be acknowledged that, conversely, place is one of the templates through which we imagine cinema. Cinema, in other words, is commonly perceived to be a medium of expression specific to a geographically situated culture. And within cinema's taxonomy, privilege has been granted to *national* cultures. Even those studies which foreground genre or *auteur* analyses frequently appeal to national cultural contexts to explain specific characteristics of film texts. Thus, we read about *German* expressionism, *Soviet* socialist realism, *Italian* neo-realism, *French* impressionism and surrealism, and the *American* western (see Cook, 1985; Bordwell and Thompson, 1986; Turner, 1990).

Certainly it can be argued that context remains pertinent to the analysis of both film industries and film texts. But what is less clear is how context itself should be demarcated. Classifying cinema as *national* cinema remains one option among others, but it can no longer be assumed to be the most appropriate category of analysis for a body of films produced within a given nation-state, nor can it be taken for granted that all film industries are national industries. The nation is not the only scale on which place can be imagined.

The framing of cultural production as national cultural production is called into

question by transnational enterprise, by local or regional cultural workers, and by cultural producers whose identity is not tied to geographic proximity. Thus, we can point to women's cinema, black cinema and queer cinema as examples of cinemas emanating from communities which do not (necessarily) share a geographical locale. This is an historical period in which, David Morley and Kevin Robins (1995) argue: "Questions of identity and of citizenship have become dissociated" (p. 19).

Classification is an important issue because how we categorize cinema informs the way we talk about films, or whether we talk about them at all. Critical categories, such as the national, help to define cinema by assigning the medium a particular social role, by establishing parameters of discussion, by including certain individual film texts and by excluding others. Angela Stukator (1993) writes: "The problem is that categories have a mythologizing and homogenizing function: they perpetuate a logic of identity, a logic which dictates that the critic emphasize elements (textual or extra-textual) of coherence, unity and wholeness" (p. 118). Consequently, dissonant elements are either suppressed or overlooked.

Andrew Higson (1989) argues that there is no single, accepted discourse of national cinema. National cinema can be defined in economic terms, "establishing a conceptual correspondence between the terms 'national cinema' and 'the domestic film industry.'" National cinema discourse can also take a text-based, consumption-based or criticism-led approach, the latter of which "tends to reduce national cinema to the terms of quality art cinema, a culturally worthy cinema steeped in the high-cultural and/or modernist heritage of a particular nation state" (pp. 36-37). "In other words, very often

the concept of national cinema is used prescriptively rather than descriptively, citing what *ought* to be the national cinema, rather than describing the actual cinematic experience of popular audiences” (p. 37). The process of identifying a national cinema, Higson maintains, “is thus invariably a hegemonising, mythologising process, involving both the production and assignation of a particular set of meanings, and the attempt to contain, or prevent the potential proliferation of other meanings” (p. 37).

Peter Morris (1994) offers a specific example of this problem in his analysis of canon formation in Canadian film studies during the 1960s and 1970s. A prevailing assumption of criticism in that period, Morris remarks, was that films in Canada should be discussed as products of a national culture.

Since the late sixties it has been a given premise that Canadian film criticism should be primarily engaged with elucidating the distinctiveness of Canadian cinema as, precisely, Canadian. While there has, of course, been criticism that did not embrace this assumption, such essays were not usually included in anthologies, nor cited in articles by others (p. 32).

Morris invokes the example of two Claude Jutra films: *Mon Oncle Antoine*, which has been canonized, and *À tout prendre*, which has not. While both are generally acknowledged to be excellent films, they are distinguished by their treatment of identity. *Mon Oncle Antoine* deals with French-English relations, and therefore fits comfortably within the “two solitudes” discourse of Canadian film scholarship, while *À tout prendre* foregrounds sexual identity, and thus falls beyond the boundaries of “national” cinema. Morris argues that the nationalist orientation of 1970s criticism “effectively negated any meaningful debate about how a ‘national’ cinema might be defined” (pp. 30-33).¹

For Bart Testa (1994), Canadian film scholarship has been constrained by a “social-reflection thesis,” a legacy he traces to John Grierson, who “institutionalized that social-reflection thesis in the once omnipotent National Film Board of Canada.”

Canadian critics (and governments too) have repeatedly declared that there should be ‘distinctly’ Canadian movies. The distinction would be that these movies would ‘reflect’ Canadian social realities, and so they would somehow have to be ‘realistic.’ This social-reflecting activity, in turn, would constitute Canadian identity. It is this social-reflection prescription that provides unity to critical debates and to Canadian cinema (p. 9).

Testa remarks a “consensual preoccupation” among Canadian film scholars that “movies should serve a high moral purpose” -- nation-building, the articulation of a national culture -- as opposed to being, for instance, sources of entertainment.

Organizers of an extensive Canadian cinema retrospective at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris in 1993 struggled over how to categorize the disparate assortment of 145 films they chose to screen. The cumbersome title of the exhibition -- *Les Cinémas du Canada: Québec, Ontario, Prairies, côte Ouest, Atlantique* -- acknowledged plurality as it embedded Canada’s national cinema in the country’s diverse regions. The souvenir program states:

Chacune de ces oeuvres témoigne d’un regard personnel sur le monde et sur la vie, mais traduit aussi un rapport particulier à un territoire, puisque les grandes régions du Canada ont créé des cinématographies aux personnalités bien différentes. Entre l’océan Pacifique et Atlantique, ces cinématographies se sont épanouies à leur rythme propre, façonnées par des géographies, des modes de vie, des traditions et des cultures distinctes (*Les cinémas du Canada*, 1993).

The catalogue which accompanied the retrospective devoted chapters to Quebec and “les autres provinces” as well as to documentary, feminist, experimental and IMAX films (Garel & Pâquet, 1992). In his introduction to the catalogue, Sylvain Garel (1992) acknowledges that “ces cinématographies abordent des thèmes et développent des styles très différents, à tel point qu’il aurait été plus logique d’intituler cette retrospective et cet ouvrage «Les cinémas du Québec et du Canada».” However, he writes, “ce titre a dû être abandonné a cause de problèmes économique-politiques résultant de l’interminable et complexe débat constitutionnel canadien” (p. 9).

Michael Dorland (1998) proposes that the challenge to scholars of film-making in Canada is “the utter heterogeneity of its cinema.” Besides its various genres -- documentary, experimental, animation, features, shorts -- Canada offers “varied production traditions” emanating from an array of institutional sites (p. 3). “Given the complex heterogeneity of Canadian cinema, where was the analyst to actually ‘locate’ it” (p. 5)? Canadian film scholarship has typically treated Canadian cinema’s heterogeneity “as problems to be disposed of,” Dorland argues, rather than as “starting points for a problematic of historiographical method.” The concept of ‘national cinema’ has allowed scholars to dispense with the “problem” of heterogeneity, providing a “unified theory” with which to frame a fragmented Canadian cinema (pp. 5-6). Canadian film studies has thus been “prescriptive and moralistic.” “As a moralistic discourse, this field of study has functioned as a mediator between the ideal of a Canadian national cinema and the representativeness of that ideal as signified by film texts and filmmakers” (p. 7). Dorland adds: “In reducing the conceptualization of the cinema in Canada to that of a national

cinema only, and in so doing hopefully eliding the difficulties of the unequal sharing of the continent with the United States, English Canadian film intellectuals staked a claim to play a role in nation-building” (p. 11).

Conventional analyses of cinema as national cinema, further, ignore or suppress what has become an increasingly prominent feature of contemporary film industries. The transnationalization of Hollywood’s film production sector, which resulted from the Hollywood majors abandoning the factory-like “studio system” of production in the post-war period, complicates further the relationship between cinema and place. What Toby Miller (1996) refers to as “the new international division of cultural labor” (p. 77) means that local film industries around the world comprise both indigenous film-making and “runaway” production conceived and financed by, typically, American film companies. In places like British Columbia, the hybrid motion-picture industry is devoted *primarily* to foreign location production -- indigenous film-making is a peripheral part of the industry -- and over time, local film workers have increasingly implicated themselves in the production of these Hollywood films and television programs by assuming creative roles as performers, directors of photography, assistant directors, and occasionally, as directors. When Steven Spielberg shot portions of *Schindler’s List* in Poland, for example, Polish nationals Janusz Kamiński (director of photography), Allan Starski (set designer) and Ewa Braun (costumes) occupied key creative positions (Wertenstein, 1995).

John Hill (1994b) suggests that if *specific* cinemas are contested categories, so is the category of cinema itself. A cinema comprises three main components -- the

economics and organization of film production; the nature and textual characteristics of film; and the distribution, exhibition and “consumption” of films -- and “it is still relatively rare to find discussions of the cinema which take all of these elements into account”. Because of these different components, Hill argues, a distinction can be made between, for example, the cinema in Europe and European cinema. “For what is quite evident is that neither all of the films made, and certainly watched, in Europe could sensibly be regarded as European.” Given Hollywood’s dominance of European cinema screens and the major studios’ investment in runaway production, Hill suggests “it could be possible for there to be a successful European film industry which is nonetheless neither making nor showing European films” (pp. 54-55).

Kevin Rockett (1994) offers Ireland as such an example. “Since the 1930s, the state’s support for film production has usually been limited to addressing problems of unemployment through encouraging foreign capital to invest in films in Ireland” (p. 128). Rockett points out that well-known “Irish” films like *My Left Foot* (1989), *The Field* (1990), *The Commitments* (1991), *The Playboys* (1992) and *Far and Away* (1992) “have been almost exclusively funded from British and American sources” (p. 132). The Irish government established a film office in Los Angeles in 1995 for the purpose of promoting Ireland as a location for runaway production (Dwyer, 1995).

John Hill (1994a) argues that Hollywood is not simply a parallel “other” which can be ignored in the analysis of indigenous cinemas. He suggests that “it may be helpful to think of Hollywood less as a national cinema than a global one, which Europeans [and Canadians] have not only helped to create but which they have also, at least in part,

integrated into their own culture” (p. 5). As an example, Martin McLoone (1994) notes that “Hollywood cinema ... has insinuated its way into the consciousness of Ireland, Britain and Europe so completely that its images are now part of common currency.” Of Ireland, specifically, McLoone writes:

In a situation where Hollywood has dominated the screens of Ireland unchallenged by indigenous film-making, the only cinematic images of Ireland with which the Irish were familiar were the representations that flowed out of the Hollywood industry (and at crucial points when it was productive, the British industry as well). In other words, ‘cinematic Ireland’ was entirely a foreign construction (p. 151).

When Irish film-makers began subsequently to construct their own ‘cinematic Ireland’, McLoone argues, they were compelled “to explore film form itself, in an attempt both to destabilise dominant imagery and to construct a different film language, one that is adequate to the films’ thematic explorations” (p. 158). Such films constitute “a cinema of national questioning, an attempt to re-imagine Ireland” (p. 168).

Stephen Crofts (1993) lists seven varieties of national cinema in an attempt to acknowledge that there is a wider range of cinemas than is typically signified by the term ‘national cinema’ (pp. 50-60).

The ongoing critical tendency to hypostatize the “national” of national cinema must also be questioned in non-First World terms. Not only do regional and diasporic cinema production challenge notions of national cinemas as would-be autonomous national businesses. So, too, Hollywood’s domination of world film markets renders most national cinemas profoundly unstable market entities, marginalized in most domestic and all export markets, and thus readily susceptible, *inter alia*, to projected appropriations of their indigenous cultural meanings (p. 61).

One of the varieties of national cinema Crofts identifies is regional/ethnic cinema, a category which includes, for example, Catalan, Québécois, Welsh, Aboriginal, Maori, native American, Chicano and Afro-American film-making. Unfortunately, the single, three-sentence paragraph Crofts devotes to this cinema doesn't elaborate on the issue of the particular sense of 'national' these cinemas evoke (p. 57).

In a similar vein, Tom O'Regan (1996) opens up the category of national cinema analysis about as far as it will go without rendering it altogether meaningless. For O'Regan, a national cinema is "a film milieu made up of antagonistic, complementary and simply adjacent elements, which are to be made sense of in their own terms" (p. 4). This accounts not only for the varied motivations of local film-makers, but also for the presence in the same milieu of the transnational commercial film industry. O'Regan writes: "National cinemas involve relations between, on the one hand, the national film texts and the national and international film industries and, on the other hand, their various social, political and cultural contexts" (p. 1).

Crofts and O'Regan call into question the way national cinemas are conceived and analyzed, but they stop short of rejecting the frame altogether. They maintain the hegemony of "the national," a classification which cannot account for the possibility that certain sub-national jurisdictions may constitute cinemas which obey alternative spatial-temporal dynamics, with distinct histories, laws, institutions, traditions and funding mechanisms, cinemas integrated within industrial networks operating both *intra-* and *internationally*.

What such criticism points to, instead, is a category crisis. The film industry in British Columbia cannot be understood within the national cinema frame. It doesn't fit. If the idea, proposed by Tom O'Regan, is to make sense of particular cinemas "in their own terms," then it is necessary to set aside prefabricated conceptual frameworks, such as "national cinema," and let the characteristics of these cinemas establish their own terms of understanding.

James Carey (1998) argues that a new communications revolution has been underway since the late 1970s, resulting in "the complex alteration of physical, symbolic, and media ecologies" (p. 28). If the development of new transportation and communication technologies at the end of the 19th century -- railway, telegraph, telephone, cinema, radio -- "enclosed" space and time on a national scale, creating in the 20th century "one nation under a common system of communication" (p. 30), in the late 20th century "we have been undergoing a similar communications revolution but one whose scalar dynamic is at the global rather than the national level" (p. 33). Carey writes:

The 1890s appears to be a moment when people actively shed their past, shed ways of being and belonging, and created a society in motion that lacked a clear sense of where it was going or what it would be when it got there. These were movements organized by media, defined by media, commented upon by media, formed within media or at least as responses to new conditions of social life brought about in part by new media (p. 33).

The late 20th century has produced similar phenomena, among them:

a category crisis or cultural melt-down in which established conceptual schemes no longer make adequate sense of the world; a frenzied attempt to build new conceptual schemes to account for changed circumstances; an attempt to deconstruct the metanarrative of the modern and build a new

historical understanding through the category of the postmodern; a deconstruction of fixed subjective identities and the search for new forms of self understanding and new forms of social relations; a reconstruction of the dimensions of space and time through the agency of new communications technologies; the eruption of new social movements attempting to reconstruct politics, economics, and social life; a new migration that has unsettled the established social fronts of the city and, even more, the nation; and, of course, the international expansion of multinational capitalism which is the ingredient that has kept the pot boiling. We are living through yet another crisis of representation, another episode in our attempt to produce a knowable society and a livable community (pp. 33-34).

Carey argues that, beginning in the 1970s, cable and satellite technologies “undercut the network system on which the national hegemony of communication was built.” Today, he notes,

the Internet is at the center of the integration of a new media ecology which transforms the structural relations among older media such [as] print and broadcast and integrates them to a new center around the defining technologies of computer and satellite.... This new media ecology develops in relation to a new physical ecology among peoples represented by world-wide migrations over national borders, the formation of diasporic groups and by what we might call the diaspora of the Internet itself wherein new social groupings are formed and organized. In turn, and at the cultural level, there is a struggle over new patterns and forms of identity, new representations of nations and transnational associations, and the eruption of “identity politics” (p. 34).

British Columbia has always been marginal to the institutions of communication which have been fundamental to the nation-building project in Canada. But Canada’s westernmost province is an active participant in the global restructuring of patterns of trade, migration and cultural exchange. Nowhere is this more evident than in the film industry. As long as film production was organized on a national basis, cinema in British

Columbia remained inconsequential. As film production has been reorganized on a transnational basis, the importance of British Columbia as a film production centre has grown. The province, in other words, has found the place in globalized film production that it could not find in Canada's nationalized cinema.

Methodologically, the thesis seeks to transcend 'the national' as the determining category of analysis, recognizing that a cinema is a social construction whose particular definition is contingent upon a nexus of historical, economic, political and cultural forces. As Carolyn Marvin (1988) maintains: "Media are not fixed natural objects; they have no natural edges. They are constructed complexes of habits, beliefs, and procedures embodied in elaborate cultural codes of communication" (p. 8). What the term 'cinema' signifies in any particular context is the result of choice, struggle, negotiation and compromise, processes which are often overlooked. These processes of definition privilege one particular film form -- animation, documentary, experimental, feature, etc. -- over others, favour one form of governance -- e.g., private enterprise or public service -- over others, and identify specific social roles for cinema -- entertainment, education, cultural enlightenment, nation-building, etc.

As a socially-constructed institution, a given cinema is defined across a number of social sites. I have identified four which have shaped in fundamental ways the feature-film industry in British Columbia: provincial film history; the economics of the commercial cinema; federal and provincial film policy; and film practice. Each of these is a site of the production of meaning, of both cinema and place. A particular methodological approach is applied to each of these sites.

Employing institutional and political history, Chapter Two describes the history of film-making in B.C., from the late 1890s to the early 1970s. Drawing on both primary and secondary sources, this history reveals that the central characteristics which define B.C.'s feature-film industry today have been in place for most of this century. These characteristics -- an emphasis on foreign location production, provincial government intervention, an industrial conception of cinema -- only became decisive advantages to British Columbia when the commercial film industry based in Hollywood began to externalize production in the post-war period.

This chapter, first of all, enhances the limited existing literature by providing further documentation of the early history of film production in the province. Secondly, and more to the point, it begins to construct the contextual picture out of which a feature-film industry in British Columbia emerged in the 1970s and establishes a sense of continuity between the history of film-making in the province and British Columbia's contemporary cinema. That is, the chapter argues that British Columbia's historical inheritance is a perception of cinema as a medium, not of cultural expression, but of regional industrial development.

Chapter Three builds upon this theme by applying a political-economic analysis to the feature-film industry. All film production is governed to some extent by economic factors. Film is both a capital-intensive and labour-intensive medium, and thus even the most modest of film projects demands some form of funding, whether in the form of investment, loan, subsidy or barter. Feature film, as cinema's predominant commercial form, is especially implicated by the transnational industry which organizes cinema as a

form of commodity production. Hollywood's dominance of this industry has had a profound influence on normalizing particular forms of cinema and has thus influenced the circulation and projection of individual movies. As Albert Moran (1996) writes:

With the increasing transnationalization of film production, of motion picture financing, the articulation of a long chain of distribution outlets and their domination by the [Hollywood] majors, and the growth of independent producers who themselves frequently act as brokers between film-makers and the principal distributors, the system now exists whereby national film making is, through a series of commercial linkages, also a part of Hollywood (pp. 6-7).

By opting to develop a *feature-film* industry in the 1970s, British Columbia mobilized a distinctly *industrial* strategy in which, to support Moran's contention, British Columbia's cinema became part of Hollywood. Here it is argued that the opportunity to develop a feature cinema in British Columbia was a product of both national and international factors: B.C.'s exclusion from Canada's national cinema based in Ontario and Quebec; and B.C.'s inclusion in Hollywood's transnationalization of audiovisual production.

Chapter Four employs political history and social discourse analysis to assess the policy initiatives undertaken by the B.C. government since the 1970s to develop a feature-film industry. The policy process establishes guidelines, regulatory instruments, funding vehicles and institutions which become integral to film production by directing resources in specific directions with identifiable aims. More specifically, policy also stakes out the degree of state intervention a government chooses to exercise in the governance of a cultural practice. Policy discourse constructs a privileged notion of what cinema is, and delineates film production in particular ways. Toby Miller (1993) writes:

“Discourse is an area in which knowledge is produced and operates, both openly and in a less than overt way. It fixes norms, elaborates criteria, and hence makes it possible to speak of and treat a given problem at a particular time” (p. xiv). Social discourse analysis situates discourse within the broad framework of society and culture, emphasizing “the relationships between discourse and social structures” (Van Dijk, 1997, p. 22). The chapter demonstrates how the economic opportunity that foreign location production represented was well-suited to Victoria’s industrial perception of cinema and its long-term objective of expanding and diversifying the province’s recession-prone, resource-based economy.

Any attempt to conceptualize the relationship between cinema and place in the context of an analysis of British Columbia’s feature-film industry would be incomplete without reference to the films themselves. Chapter Five considers a sampling of feature films which have been produced in British Columbia since the late 1970s. The method of textual analysis employed in this section of the thesis is governed by the question of how the films depict British Columbia, and how these depictions speak to B.C.’s sense of place. This chapter asserts that if foreign service productions almost always appropriate British Columbia within ‘America,’ denying the province sociohistorical particularity, a number of British Columbia’s indigenous films re-assert the region’s distinctiveness.

To my knowledge, there has been very little analysis in film studies devoted to discerning what location filming implies for the rapport between story and setting, and what little there is foregrounds aesthetic rather than political or cultural concerns. Most commonly, locations are treated within larger discussions of *mise-en-scène*, or are not

mentioned at all (e.g., Giannetti, 1993). Charles Affron and Mirella Joan Affron (1995), in fact, have gone some distance in rescuing the study of set design from a general neglect within film studies, and they include examples of locations within their larger analysis of the degrees of intensity with which film sets establish time, place and mood. Yet even here, locations are simply another type of film set. In a too-brief article, Bernard Nietschmann (1993) argues that geography should matter in film production, but too often does not. In films shot on location, Nietschmann insists, setting is reduced to background, contributing nothing to the content of the film -- "all is context, not content" -- and suppressing the meaning and power of place (p. 5). "When a place is shown or seen as just a location for a story or as but pretty scenery, there is a dislocation between people and nature, between image and experience, between the screen and geography, and between the director and the audience" (p. 7).

Chapter Six, finally, concludes that British Columbia is particularly well-suited to what Doreen Massey has termed a "global sense of place," which conceives of place as a meeting ground or intersection -- for international flows of people, capital, commodities and images -- rather than as a clearly-bounded cultural enclosure. Such a sense of place is critical to understanding the British Columbia film industry, which is itself built upon a complex interface between transnational and regional/local regimes of production.

Note:

'Quebec's French-language cinema has long presented a challenge to the category of Canadian "national cinema." Does Canada, in fact, have two national cinemas, or one national cinema which speaks two languages?

Chapter Two

Cinema as a Medium of Regional Industrial Development:

A History of Film Production in British Columbia

While the film production industry which has emerged in Vancouver over the past 20 years is new to British Columbia, the central characteristics which define this industry are not. Foreign producers have been visiting British Columbia to shoot films since the turn of the century, attracted by the province's natural beauty and the diversity of its landscapes. If, in the earliest days of cinema, British Columbia's scenery occupied the foreground -- tracking shots along the railway lines of the Fraser Canyon were a favoured trope -- today British Columbia forms the backdrop to fictional narratives set all over the continent. Nor is provincial government involvement in film-making new. Victoria has assumed a central role as promoter, patron and producer in B.C. cinema since at least 1908.

This chapter seeks to establish a sense of continuity between British Columbia's half-billion-dollar feature-film industry and earlier state-sponsored initiatives which employed cinema as a medium of regional industrial development. Historically, that is, the B.C. government has perceived cinema as a medium to: attract immigrants, capital investment and tourists; encourage tourism by British Columbians within their own province; advertise its industrial products around the world; and promote education pertaining to health, safety and conservation issues. The chapter asserts that the provincial government's sudden interest in *feature* film in the 1970s, which would seem

to signal a change in its thinking about cinema, can in fact best be understood as a mere revision of Victoria's long-term regional industrial development strategy. Once looked upon as a promotional appendage to its traditional resource industries, that is, today cinema in British Columbia is an industry in and of itself.

Specifically, this chapter traces the historical roots of three themes which characterize the feature-film industry in British Columbia today: first, the predominance of foreign location production in the province's film history; second, the central role played by the provincial government as a film producer throughout this century; and third, the privilege Victoria's role as producer, and as regulator of the exhibition sector, has afforded the provincial government in defining what 'cinema' has meant historically in British Columbia. These themes lend British Columbia a distinct tradition within the larger history of film production in Canada and serve to distance west-coast film-making from the notion of cinema as the product of a national culture.

Inventing Hollywood North:

Location film production in British Columbia has a rich genealogy. Colin Browne (1979) notes that, in the first quarter of this century, "whenever motion pictures were actually made in British Columbia they were almost always filmed by outsiders and produced elsewhere, returning as finished products that interpreted the province through either eastern Canadian or American or British eyes" (p. 3). Of course, British Columbia's population of the time consisted primarily of migrants; according to the 1921 census, 95 per cent of the province's 525,000 residents were not native-born (Browne,

1992, p. 174). Browne writes: "Nothing probably seemed more natural to these people, at the far edge of the civilized world, than this reinforcement of their original preconceptions of the land of their choice" (1979, p. 3).

Location production dates from the earliest days of cinema. Films of the period were subject-driven, and when subject matter demanded, film production companies travelled with their cameras to shoot "found events." As early as 1897, Niagara Falls attracted film-makers from France and the United States. In 1899, film-makers representing the Edison and the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company of New York filmed Canadian troops training and departing for the Boer War (Morris, 1978, pp. 244-245). Edison licensed the Klondike Exposition Company in 1899, sending Thomas Crahan and Robert Kates Bonine into the Yukon gold fields to shoot three movies (Musser, 1991, pp. 144-145). In 1901, James White, head of Edison's Kinetograph department, shot two films for the Canadian Pacific Railway in British Columbia (Musser, 1991, pp. 191-192).

The first film-makers to photograph British Columbia came from the United States and Great Britain. G.W. (Billy) Bitzer, who later achieved notoriety as the cameraman for D.W. Griffith (see Bitzer, 1973), made at least six short films for the American Mutoscope and Biograph Co., beginning in 1899. Browne (1992) writes: "Ces films, tournés dans les montagnes de l'intérieur et à Vancouver, prophétisaient l'avenir; ils ont été tournés par un studio étasunien pour un public d'abord et avant tout étasunien" (pp. 174-175).

British film-maker Charles Urban established the Bioscope Company of Canada

to make films for the Canadian Pacific Railway, whose commercial viability depended upon western settlement. The Urban crew travelled from Quebec to Victoria for its *Living Canada* series. Urban released 35 of these films in 1903-04, which included: travelling shots made along the CPR tracks in the mountains of British Columbia, salmon fishing on the Fraser River, canneries at Steveston, logging activity near Vancouver, and the departure for Japan of the Canadian Pacific steamship Empress of China (Morris, 1978, pp. 33-36; Browne, 1992, pp. 174-175). Browne (1979) notes: "These films mark the first time that British Columbia's industries and Vancouver's waterfront were recorded on motion picture film" (p. 7). In 1906, several of these films were re-edited, condensed and re-released as *Wonders of Canada* (Morris, 1978, p. 35).

A member of the Urban film crew, cameraman Joseph Rosenthal, is credited with the first film drama made in Canada: *Hiawatha: the Messiah of the Ojibway*, released by Urban in 1903. Rosenthal also made a one-minute drama in British Columbia, *Indians Gambling for Furs -- Is it Peace or War?*, released in 1903. The Urban company's work for the CPR led to a contract with the government of British Columbia in June, 1908. Urban was hired for the purpose of "making known the advantages and resources of British Columbia to the outside world" (Morris, 1978, p. 36).

From May to July, 1914, American ethnographer Edward S. Curtis, the author of a 20-volume work on North American Indian life, made a full-length motion picture of the Kwakiutl people, shot at Fort Rupert on Vancouver Island. Entitled *In the Land of the Head-Hunters*, Curtis's film was screened later that year in Seattle and New York City (Holm & Quimby, 1980).¹

When it came to the production of dramatic films, particularly, Browne (1979) maintains British Columbia could best be described as a “good set.”

Photoplays about British Columbia were almost always instigated and funded outside the province, written according to romantic misconceptions that had little to do with life here, (or anywhere else for that matter) and attended with incredulity by locals who dug into their pockets to swell the coffers of foreign studios. Predictably, stories set in British Columbia were about lumberjacks, Mounties, or the CPR (preferably all three), the interpretation of which most Canadians felt should be treated with more reverence than British or American studios were willing to manifest. Only in a few cases did original Canadian stories evolve into feature films and even these owe more to Hollywood than to British Columbia (p. 5).

Between 1907 and 1974, U.S. film companies made 575 films in which the plot was set entirely or principally in Canada (Berton, 1975, p. 16). Hollywood films shot in British Columbia included: *The Man in the Moonlight*, by Universal Pictures, in 1919; *Winds of Chance*, by First National Pictures, in 1925; *The Flaming Forest*, by Cosmopolitan Productions, in 1926; *Canadian Pacific*, by 20th Century-Fox, in 1949; and *The Cariboo Trail*, by 20th Century-Fox, in 1950 (Berton, 1975, pp. 254-268; Browne, 1979, p. 21).²

One of the more interesting stories in British Columbia’s film history involves the shooting of the Columbia Pictures feature *Commandos Strike at Dawn* on Vancouver Island during the summer of 1942. The film is the fictional account of a raid by British commandos on a seaside village in Nazi-occupied Norway, and stars Paul Muni and Lillian Gish in lead roles. But the lesser-known stars of the film would have to be Canadian soldiers training at Camp Nanaimo -- the Royal Rifles of Canada, the Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury regiments, the Canadian Scottish regiment and the 114th Veterans’ Guard, who played the soldiers in the film -- as well as the Royal Canadian Navy vessel

Prince David, which played the raiding warship. Most of the location shooting took place at Finlayson Arm, and the cast stayed at the regal Empress Hotel. Historian J.M.S. Careless (1980) recounts one episode in which Alexander Knox, late for the bus taking actors to the set, “stamped briskly through the lobby in Nazi officer’s uniform and Iron Cross, followed by jack-booted soldiers of the *Wehrmacht* -- and nearly caused heart attacks among the old ladies of the Empress in the shrubbery. No one had told them that the Germans had got *this far*” (pp. 12-13).

The film was intended to be released sometime in 1943, but in the wake of the disastrous Dieppe Raid in August, 1942 -- a raid which resembled Columbia Pictures’ commando raid in all but its outcome -- the studio rushed *Commandos Strike at Dawn* into distribution in late 1942 to maximize its propaganda value on the home front. The warship *Prince David* was later converted into a heavy landing ship and participated in the Normandy invasion in June, 1944. Among the Canadian troops the ship delivered to Juno Beach that day were those same members of the Canadian Scottish Regiment from the film shoot on Vancouver Island two years earlier (Careless, 1980, pp. 9-16).

Early attempts to establish a feature-film industry *based* in British Columbia consistently failed, usually because of a lack of capital. New York producer John Arthur Nelson, for example, incorporated Dominion Films Corporation Ltd. in February, 1917, but couldn’t raise enough money to move into production. Companies with names like Canadian Historic Features Ltd., British Canadian Pictures Ltd., Lion’s Gate Cinema Studios and British-American Films Ltd. were founded in the 1920s, but just as quickly disappeared without leaving a trace of film (Browne, 1979, pp. 19-20).³

A.D. (Cowboy) Kean managed to make some films, but became increasingly frustrated in his attempts to obtain adequate distribution and exhibition for his films. As his nickname suggests, Kean had been a working cowboy before he began making films in 1912. Throughout his correspondence, Kean complains of being obstructed by U.S. film companies who were then in the process of establishing their dominance in the Canadian distribution and exhibition markets. Kean's initial grievance was that the "monopolistic operations" of the American Motion Picture Patents Company and its film exchange, the General Film Company, refused to sell him a movie camera. He finally managed to purchase a British camera (Duffy & Mattison, 1989, p. 29).

Kean shot newsreels and films about rodeos, First World War recruiting efforts and British Columbia wildlife. These films enjoyed limited release in Victoria and Vancouver theatres. In 1916, Kean made *Whaling: B.C.'s Least Known and Most Romantic Industry*, a documentary filmed at the Kyuquot station of the Victoria Whaling Company on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Describing the film, Dennis Duffy and David Mattison (1989) write:

In it Kean presented the grisly spectacle of a whale hunt: the chase, the harpooning, the whale's frantic struggle as it fights to escape; the ship towing the inflated carcass back to the whaling station; the flensing operation performed by Japanese labourers and a steam winch, and a hellish scene of workers tending steaming vats of blubber. The film poignantly ends with a native Indian, described as an old-time whaler, "talking" to the camera, expressing his amazement at the white man's efficiency (pp. 29-31; see also Browne, 1979, p. 347).

Kean also shot actuality films for the B.C. Game Conservation Board and the B.C. Patriotic and Educational Picture Service in the early 1920s.

Kean made his first dramatic feature, *Told in the Hills*, in 1917, shooting scenes at the Penticton and Princeton rodeos in September of that year. It was shown only once (Morris, 1978, p. 294). Kean's second feature film proved to be his most ambitious project and, sadly, his swansong. In 1924, Kean began work on an historical epic entitled *Policing the Plains*, based on a popular history of the North West Mounted Police published by Rev. R.G. MacBeth in 1922. Kean obtained the motion-picture rights from MacBeth for \$5,000 in January, 1924, then established a syndicate of more than 40 investors who agreed to finance a six-reel film, budgeted at \$40,000. Before the film was completed, three years later, Kean ran short of money several times and was forced to postpone production. The finished, eight-reel film cost more than \$125,000 to produce (Duffy & Mattison, 1989, pp. 31-38).

Filmed on location in Vancouver and Green Lake, B.C., Banff, Macleod, Standoff and Wainwright, Alberta, and completed at the Ontario Government Motion Picture Bureau's Trenton studios, *Policing the Plains* played at Toronto's Royal Alexandra Theatre for just six days, from December 19 to December 24, 1927. The Toronto screening proved to be the film's only booking and Kean blamed the American distribution chains for obstructing its further release. In 1928, Kean left the movie business for a much more successful career as a freelance writer and radio broadcaster in Toronto (Duffy & Mattison, 1989, pp. 34-39; Browne, 1979, pp. 229-230).

When the Canadian government established a federal inquiry in 1930 to examine alleged combines activity by the Hollywood film companies operating in Canada, Kean was one of those who testified. While it is difficult to weigh the merits of Kean's

particular complaints, the federal inquiry under commissioner Peter White indeed concluded that a combine of exhibitors, producers and distributors had existed in Canada since at least 1926 (Canada, 1931).

Peter Morris (1978) argues that the delayed and modest release of *Policing the Plains* “was the last testament of Canada’s still-born feature film industry.” The promise of producing a viable film industry in the post-war period had faded. “Investors had been burnt too often, the brief flurry of nationalism in film production died down and Canada increasingly turned to Hollywood films with Canadian plots as a substitute for the -- obviously -- doomed domestic production. Hollywood responded magnificently” (p. 91).

The most vibrant period of film-making in British Columbia, until the present, occurred as a result of Britain’s Cinematograph Films Act of December, 1927, which reserved a percentage of screen time in British movie theatres -- beginning at five per cent, gradually climbing to 20 per cent -- for films made within the British Empire. Browne (1979) notes that as early as 1925 rumours of a British quota were circulating, and business people and municipal politicians in Victoria and Vancouver were eager to promote British Columbia as the film capital of the British Empire (pp. 21, 69).⁴ The opportunists, however, turned out to be American producers eager to exploit the British quota law by shooting their films on Canadian soil.

In 1927, Nils Olaf Crisander, head of the National Cinema Studios Syndicate of Hollywood, announced plans to construct a \$750,000 studio on Vancouver’s North Shore to supply the British quota market. He bought some property for that purpose, but was unable to raise enough capital and his company was neither incorporated nor registered.

Hollywood producer Samuel Bischoff registered British Canadian Pictures Ltd. in June, 1928. Bischoff had an agreement with the Gaumont Company of England to supply them with six features starring the German Shepherd dog Silverstreak, but the company never made a Silverstreak movie in Canada (Browne, 1979, pp. 19-21).

Where others failed, however, Kenneth James Bishop succeeded -- for a time. Bishop arrived from California in 1932, leased the main show building from the B.C. Agricultural Association at Willows Park in Oak Bay and converted it into a film studio. The first two companies Bishop formed went into receivership: Commonwealth Productions Ltd., which released *The Crimson Paradise* in 1933, and Northern Films Ltd., which released *Secrets of Chinatown* in 1935.⁵ But in 1935, Bishop convinced Columbia Pictures to produce films in British Columbia for the British quota market. Bishop's new company, Central Films Ltd., made 12 "quota quickies" over the next two years, using Hollywood directors, stars and technical personnel, and a few local actors. Among the Central Films productions were: *Tugboat Princess* (1935-36), *Secret Patrol* (1936), *Lucky Corrigan* (1936), *Death Goes North* (1937) and *Across the Border* (1937) (Browne, 1979, pp. 25-27).

The success of Central Films was short-lived, however, because it exposed the abuses of the British quota legislation. Browne (1979) writes: "The kind of films turned out by Columbia in Victoria resulted directly in a revision of the Cinematograph Films Act in 1938 which eliminated films made in the Dominions and effectively shut down Central Films forever." The Central Films studios were demolished in April, 1939 (p. 28).

For Peter Morris (1978), the “quota quickies” marked an opportunity lost for Canadian cinema:

... in terms of developing a domestic film industry Central Films and its sister companies contributed absolutely nothing. Indeed ... its effect was exactly the reverse. Being totally dependent on a set of circumstances beyond domestic control and operable only at the whim of a New York or Hollywood distributor, the effort sapped the drive of those Canadians who might have been able to take advantage of the positive possibilities the British quota law offered to Canadian production (p. 194).

Colin Browne (1979), however, situates the quota films within the context of British Columbia’s dependence on the American film industry. “Why British Columbia essentially bit the hand that Britain extended may be more understandable in view of the province’s relations with the movie industry throughout its history. It is a story of foreign domination and the quota legislation ... was only one of the beckoning fingers that led to broken dreams” (p. 6).

Dennis Duffy (1986) describes the period between 1940 and 1965 as a general slump for feature film-making in British Columbia, characterized by “brief periods of promising activity in the 1940s and a few isolated productions in the 1960s” (pp. 22-23). If World War II was the catalyst for anti-Nazi propaganda film production in the 1940s -- of which *Commandos Strike at Dawn* was one example -- British Columbia’s popularity as a film location waned in the aftermath of war. Universal shot *Johnny Stool Pigeon* and 20th Century-Fox shot *Canadian Pacific* in B.C. in 1949, and Republic Pictures shot *Timberjack* in the province in 1954. But British Columbia had to wait another decade for the next British or American picture. Robert Altman shot -- and set -- *That Cold Day in the Park* in Vancouver in 1969 and returned to film *McCabe and Mrs. Miller* in 1970.

Bob Rafelson shot portions of *Five Easy Pieces* on the Gulf Islands in 1969 and Mike Nichols shot *Carnal Knowledge* on location in British Columbia in 1971 (Duffy, 1986, pp. 23-24, 34).

Alberta, however, began to replace British Columbia as a Hollywood film location in the early 1970s. Prompted by the shooting of the Arthur Penn film *Little Big Man* west of Calgary in 1969, Alberta became one of the first jurisdictions in North America to establish a film commission when it opened an office in 1972 (Kupecek, 1993). Alberta subsequently established the Alberta Motion Picture Industries Association in November, 1973, putting in place the kind of liaison network that British Columbia could not provide and which had been a source of complaint among Hollywood producers shooting in the province (see Wasserman, 1976).

Victoria as Producer:

Governments have played a central role in shaping British Columbia's film culture since at least 1908. The provincial government in Victoria acted first as a producer of films and a regulator of the exhibition sector, but in more recent years it has turned its attention to promoting a feature-film industry in the province through the efforts of the B.C. Film Commission and British Columbia Film. The federal government, while not as fully committed to regional film production as many would like, has nevertheless played a part in British Columbia's film history through the regional presence of the National Film Board and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and through the investment Telefilm Canada (originally the Canadian Film

Development Corporation) provides.

Victoria's initial foray into film production came in the summer of 1908 when the government hired British cameraman James Ferens to record the province's industries and scenery. Ferens shot footage of the Hastings Sawmill, the loading of lumber onto ships, Vancouver street scenes, fish canning on the Fraser River, panoramic views of the Fraser Valley and early orchard plantings in the valleys of the Interior (Browne, 1979, p. 9). The London office of the Agent-General for British Columbia instituted a lecture program illustrated with motion pictures and lantern slides in 1909. It is not known whether the films used were those shot by Ferens the year before, but according to J.H. Turner, one of the lecturers: "These animated pictures are proving to be most valuable; they so perfectly show the life and work of our Province, and, no doubt, they have been one of the causes for the increased correspondence and number of callers at the Office." The 1909 annual report of the Office of the Agent-General for British Columbia contains a request to Victoria for more films (Agent-General for British Columbia, 1909, pp. G41-G44). By 1910, films of British Columbia were being shown at agricultural and horticultural shows throughout Britain and being loaned to itinerant lecturers by the Agent-General's office in London (Agent-General for British Columbia, 1910, pp. H33-H35). British Columbia's Bureau of Provincial Information also began to use motion pictures for publicity purposes in 1910 (British Columbia Bureau of Provincial Information, 1911, pp. M33-M35).

In September and October of 1913, Arthur H.C. Sintzenich of Charles Urban's Natural Colour Kinematograph Co. in London travelled throughout the province for

British Columbia's Department of Lands, shooting forests, sawmills, ranches, fruit farms and travelogues of Victoria. Browne (1979) writes: "Sintzenich's work was likely the first colour cinematography in the forests, cities and farms of British Columbia" (p. 9).

An amendment to the *Moving Pictures Act* in 1920 created the B.C. Patriotic and Educational Picture Service under the Department of the Attorney-General and introduced a quota provision which required British Columbia movie theatres to introduce each film program with 15 minutes of films either produced by, or approved by, the Picture Service. The amendment further stipulated the *kinds* of films the Picture Service was to provide:

... films and slides of a patriotic, instructive, educative, or entertaining nature; and in particular, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, films and slides depicting the natural, industrial, agricultural, or commercial resources, wealth, activities, development, and possibilities of the Dominion, and especially of the Province; or which may tend to inform or educate the public as to Imperial, Federal, or Provincial public events, and the men and women of note connected therewith (*Moving Pictures Act, 1920*).

According to Duffy and Mattison (1989), the B.C. Picture Service was "the first government film unit in North America with statutory authority to compel the screening of its productions" (p. 32).

At one point, the Picture Service had more than 100 titles in circulation. Duffy (1986) argues: "This represents the earliest substantial commitment to film production of any of the provincial governments of Canada" (p. 3). Little is known about specific agency productions -- the only government-initiated film to have survived is a 1926 travelogue entitled *Beautiful Ocean Falls*, believed to have been shot by A.D. Kean -- but

what remains on the historical record is the considerable opposition the quota provision provoked. It was a topic of public debate during the 1920 provincial election, and by 1924 funding for the Picture Service had dried up and the 15-minute screen quota was no longer enforced (Browne, 1979, pp. 14-15; see also, British Columbia, Journals of the Legislative Assembly, Nov. 11, 1924, p. 15).⁶

The introduction of 16-mm film stock in the 1920s rendered film a more accessible medium, and several provincial government departments initiated film production programs. The most enthusiastic was the Forest Branch of the Department of Lands, which used films for publicity and fire-safety education as early as 1920 (British Columbia Department of Lands, 1921). In 1924, for example, motion pictures were used to illustrate lectures during "Save the Forest Week." The annual report of the Forest Branch for 1924 states: "Moving-picture theatres exhibited forest-protection slides and the film 'Red Enemy,' and also offered the use of their theatres for forest-protection lectures" (B.C. Department of Lands, 1925). In 1925, British Columbia movie theatres used trailers "embodying 'The care with fire in the woods lesson'" from May to September (B.C. Department of Lands, 1926).

The department, later named the B.C. Forest Service, remained active in film production through the 1970s. In 1973, for example, the library of the Forest Service made 2,470 film loans to schools in the province (British Columbia Department of Lands, Forests and Water Resources, 1974, p. S42). In addition to general industry publicity and fire-prevention messages, the Forest Service began in the 1970s -- possibly earlier -- to use film for propaganda purposes to combat growing criticism of its practices.⁷ The

Forest Service's 1971 annual report notes: "Mounting public concern over forest-land uses throughout 1971 resulted in a more concentrated effort by the Forest Service to 'tell its side of the story.'" That year, the Forest Service began production on a series of reforestation films entitled *Trees Unlimited* (B.C. Department of Lands, Forests and Water Resources, 1972, p. V42).

The Department of Agriculture also became active in film production in the 1920s with the encouragement of Premier Simon Fraser Tolmie (1928-32), who had a personal interest in agricultural education and improvement. By 1949, the Department of Agriculture owned five projectors and its field representative was authorized to obtain films from the National Film Board and the University of British Columbia, aside from the department's own library (British Columbia, Journals of the Legislative Assembly, Feb. 18, 1949, p. 18). The B.C. Bureau of Industrial and Tourist Development, the Physical Education Branch of the Department of Education and the Provincial Game Commission also instituted film programs in the 1920s and 1930s (Browne, 1979, pp. 17-18; Mattison, 1986a, pp. 95-96).

The British Columbia government established in-house production in 1937 when Clarence Ferris and Dick Colby toured the province with 16-mm cameras, making travelogues for the Bureau of Industrial and Tourist Development (Browne, 1979, pp. 18-19). In 1938, this bureau moved to the Department of Trade and Industry and became the British Columbia Government Travel Bureau. While the bureau's principal duty was to promote tourism -- then estimated to be a \$30-million industry -- it was also required to "induce settlement and general development" in the province. In 1939, the bureau added

to its library films depicting a tour of British lumbermen, sport fishing, skiing and “scenic features” of the province. The bureau organized film and lecture tours of the Prairie provinces and commissioned the Vancouver company Travel Films to make “several films in colour depicting attractions of various districts” (British Columbia Department of Trade and Industry, 1939, pp. FF13-FF23). Browne (1979) writes: “The renewed economic vitality which accompanied World War II appears to have inspired the Travel Bureau, and from 1940 on there were few years when several promotional films were not made, either by or for the government.” By 1952, 31 films in the Travel Bureau’s catalogue were its own productions (pp. 18-19).

The Travel Bureau’s film program enjoyed a boost in 1941 when a film called *Beautiful British Columbia*, produced for the bureau under contract by Leon C. Shelly, was released theatrically by Columbia Pictures and Warner Bros., and its narration was translated into Spanish for screening in Latin America. The bureau’s annual report states: “The success achieved by this picture induced the Bureau to make arrangements for production of another similar picture, which will feature hunting, fishing, and other recreational and outdoor features.” The Travel Bureau had by this time developed its own production studio and projection room (B.C. Department of Trade and Industry, 1941, pp. Q24-Q32). The following year, the Travel Bureau’s newest theatrical feature, *Evergreen Playground*, was released by 20th Century-Fox (B.C. Department of Trade and Industry, 1942, p. M24).

In April, 1957, the Photographic Branch of the B.C. Government Travel Bureau was transferred to the newly-created Department of Recreation and Conservation and

produced films about government campsites, sport fishing, highway construction, big-game species and Haida totem poles. The Photographic Branch also made travelogues about the province's various tourist regions, as well as educational films about the B.C. ferry service, the B.C. International Trade Fair, firearm safety, waterfowl conservation and "the importance of the white centre line on the highway." In 1967, both the Photographic Branch and the B.C. Government Travel Bureau were moved to the Department of Travel Industry, "reaffirming the branch's primary commitment to tourist promotion." What had come to be called the Film and Photographic Branch remained the responsibility of the tourism ministry until 1984, when it was closed. Dennis Duffy (1986) writes:

All told, films produced by agencies of the B.C. government accounted for a significant portion of all production in the province from 1941 to 1965. The Photographic Branch, under either the B.C. Government Travel Bureau or the Department of Recreation and Conservation, produced about 80 titles. The Forest Branch or Forest Service was responsible for about 50 films, and the Provincial Museum generated a similar amount of footage.

In 1984, Duffy notes, all of the provincial government's film production units, with the exception of that of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, were merged within Government Information Services (pp. 6-8).

Admittedly, the topics of government-produced films seem terribly mundane and unlikely to be of interest to very many people. Yet it is worth noting that many of these films enjoyed wide circulation -- greater circulation, in fact, than many of the commercial features produced in British Columbia today -- and a few won awards of excellence for films of their genre. If, by the mid-1940s, Photographic Branch films were already being

screened for audiences totalling more than 100,000, by the mid-1960s its films were reaching total audiences of between 1.5 and 2 million, not including television audiences (British Columbia Department of Recreation and Conservation, 1967; B.C. Department of Travel Industry, 1968). B.C. government films were regularly distributed by the Canadian Government Travel Bureau's film library, the offices of the National Film Board, the Bell Telephone Co., British Columbia Hydro, and through British Columbia House in London, San Francisco and Los Angeles. As mentioned above, these films were also occasionally distributed theatrically by major Hollywood film companies. Both the Odeon and Famous Players theatre chains in Canada screened Forest Service films as trailers in the summers of 1956 through 1959 (British Columbia Department of Lands and Forests, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960).

Beginning in 1948, a selection of B.C. government films was televised. Station WRBC in Birmingham, Alabama, for example, telecast 14 Travel Bureau films in 1949 (B.C. Department of Trade and Industry, 1950, p. DD59). The CBC network broadcast the Forest Service film *Flying Surveyors* in 1953 (B.C. Department of Lands and Forests, 1954, p. 109) and the Photographic Branch's sport fishing film *Tight Lines* in November, 1959 (B.C. Department of Recreation and Conservation, 1960, p. Y55). By 1965, the Photographic Branch reported 500 screenings of its films on American television (B.C. Department of Recreation and Conservation, 1966, p. Y66). The Photographic Branch had a veritable blockbuster on its hands in 1969, however, when a reported 56 million viewers saw a dubbed version of *Ski B.C.* on Japanese television (B.C. Department of Travel Industry, 1970, p. H61).

Between 1957 and 1974, five Photographic Branch productions won awards. *The Road Home* won first prize for sociological films at the Kootenay International Film Festival in 1957 (B.C. Department of Recreation and Conservation, 1958, p. II43). *Men, Mountains and the Challenge* was chosen best industrial film at the Kelowna Centennial Film Festival in 1958 and won a citation as “the most distinguished contribution to publicity for good roads across the nation” from the Canadian Good Roads Association (B.C. Department of Recreation and Conservation, 1959, p. Q56). Two Photographic Branch films, *The Silent Ones* and *Fraser Canyon*, won unspecified awards at the 1961 Vancouver International Film Festival (B.C. Department of Recreation and Conservation, 1962, p. V65), and *Ksan*, a documentary on the rebirth of Gitksan culture near Hazelton, won an award at the Annual Industrial Photography Film Awards in New York in 1974 (B.C. Department of Travel Industry, 1975, pp. H50-H52). The B.C. Forest Service film *Axe Facts* won two awards in 1969; it was selected best training film by the Canadian Forestry Association and won an award of distinction at the International Festival of Forest Fire Control Films (B.C. Department of Lands, Forests and Water Resources, 1970, p. 27).

Undoubtedly, however, the most distinguished provincial government production was the 10-minute film entitled *The Theatre of the Antipodes*, which played 45 times daily in the B.C. Pavillion at Expo '70 in Osaka, Japan. The film was projected on a vertical screen, measuring 42 feet high and 14 feet wide. It employed both full-screen and split-screen sequences, and intermittently highlighted objects suspended both in front of, and behind, the screen (British Columbia Department of Industrial Development,

Trade and Commerce, 1970, pp. Y21-22).

Province as Regulator:

While the provincial government grasped early the power of cinema and was keen to exploit the medium to promote immigration, industrial development and tourism, it was at the same time wary of that same power when it came to the commercial cinema. British Columbia, Peter Morris (1978) writes, “was the first province to establish film censorship and one of the first to use motion pictures to promote immigration” (p. 149). Malcolm Dean (1981) notes that “film arrived in Canada in a climate where freedom of the press and freedom of expression were not clearly established, and where the new visual media were viewed not as serious arts, but as vehicles for sensationalism” (p. 6).

As early as 1911 there was pressure on the British Columbia government to regulate the commercial cinema, “particularly when every film exhibited was a product of the United States.” Colin Browne (1979) writes: “Consequently, reformers, legislators, and countless clergymen expressed concern about the purely American vision being stuffed down eager Canadian gullets. They complained, too, about what they imagined to be the results of watching lewd, suggestive performances in dark rooms filled with cigar smoke” (pp. 10-11).

The British Columbia Motion Picture Act, adopted in June, 1913, established a provincial censor, who, Browne (1979) remarks, “created what quickly came to be known as the most rigid motion picture censorship on the continent.” “By October, 1913, regular complaints were being received from the United States regarding rejection of films displaying the Stars and Stripes” (p. 11). In 1914, the B.C. censor banned 50 film reels

for their display of U.S. flags, which, Morris (1978) points out, “made it third behind infidelity and seduction as the most banned offence” (p. 55). British Columbia passed a new Theatres Act in 1914 which added restrictions and penalties, and gave the censor greater power over the seizure of films. Dean (1981) notes: “Theatres were now to be licensed and there were to be no film exhibitions on Sunday” (p. 116).

Even though it was beyond its jurisdiction, the federal government also expressed interest in film censorship. In 1924, W.J. Egan, deputy minister of the federal Department of Immigration and Colonization, wrote to B.C. Minister of Finance John Hart seeking his cooperation in a scheme to ban films which gave an “unfavourable impression” of Canada. In a letter dated January 12 of that year, Egan explained that Ottawa, the CPR and the crown corporation Canadian National Railways were working together to promote the immigration of “desirable classes of settlers into Canada,” but that their efforts were being thwarted by motion pictures that were creating “wrong impressions concerning Canadian life and conditions.” Egan wrote: “Many of the representations of Canada which are made on the screen are grotesque and damaging in the extreme, while as a matter of fact a portrayal of actual conditions would be of greater value to the picture house itself.” Egan proposed that provincial censors be asked to “lay down as a principle that any motion picture film which given an unfavourable representation of Canadian life or conditions in Canada, or a representation likely to mislead the audience as to the attractiveness of Canada as a field for settlement and investment, should be denied the privilege of exhibition in this country” (B.C. Archives and Records Service [BCARS], GR 1323, File M-283, Microfilm B2210). There is no

record of British Columbia taking any such action.

As times changed, so did the activities of the provincial censor. Dean (1981) explains: "When economic conditions in the 1930s shook traditional beliefs in the free-market economy, the censors kept a beady eye out for newsreels or features which might put forth a sympathetic view of the trade union movement, or of other 'seditious political philosophies.'" Two films which were deemed seditious and banned by the B.C. censor in 1929 were Sergei Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* and *October* (p. 119).

It was not until 1970 that an amendment to the Motion Pictures Act replaced the term 'censorship' with 'classification.' Speaking to the amendment in the B.C. Legislative Assembly, Attorney-General and Minister of Labour Leslie R. Peterson explained: "The main thrust of the Bill is moving from the concept of censorship to the idea of classification of films, but still giving to this office the responsibility of rejecting films for showing to the public. That has not been removed in its entirety" (British Columbia, Debates, 1970, p. 626). The amendment, however, did nothing to prevent the nearby American border town of Blaine, Washington, from making its reputation in the 1970s as the place to see uncensored, hard-core features like *Deep Throat* and *The Devil in Miss Jones* (Dean, 1981, pp. 119-120).

The issue of the American presence on Canadian cinema screens was raised again in 1930. During the 1920s, the Canadian affiliates of the major American studios created an association which came to be called the Motion Picture Distributors and Exhibitors of Canada. This cartel, which included the vertically-integrated distributor Paramount Pictures and exhibitor Famous Players, awarded exclusive exhibition rights to its

members' films to Famous Players, squeezing out the rival Allen theatre chain. By 1929, having bought the Allen chain and nine others, 207 of the 299 theatres belonging to chains were controlled by Famous Players (Canada, 1931).

In 1930, federal Minister of Labour G.D. Robertson ordered an inquiry under the Combines Investigation Act. Commissioner Peter White concluded that a combine had existed since at least 1926, comprising Famous Players and the distributors Paramount, Universal, Fox, Columbia, RKO and First National (Canada, 1985, pp. 42-43). The case was prosecuted in Ontario in 1932, where it was thought to have the best chance of success, but Ontario Supreme Court Justice J. Garrow cleared the accused of all charges. Famous Players and the distributors, Manjunath Pendakur (1990) notes, "were acquitted on the basis that the prosecution could not establish that the alleged combine was detrimental to the public interest" (pp. 90-91). The acquittal was attributed to the limited scope of the Combines Investigation Act itself (Canada, 1985, p. 43; Morris, 1978, p. 311).

The combines investigation and subsequent court proceeding prompted considerable public debate over the kinds of films shown in commercial movie houses in British Columbia. A memo dated October 16, 1930, addressed to Premier Tolmie from the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire in British Columbia, requested the revival of the provincial screen quota "so that at least 15 minutes at every show will be given to Canadian Patriotic and Educational subjects, illustrating the products, resources, and scenery of the Province, and that the expense of these as a matter of right be paid for by the Exhibitors as part of their regular programme" (BCARS, GR 1323, File M-178,

Microfilm B2326). An April 17, 1931 letter from H.B. Page of Oak Bay advised MLA J.H. Beatty of the formation of a local film group, "an informal association of Canadian citizens who are dissatisfied with the present conditions of foreign monopoly and commercial exploitation of Canadian screens, and who desire to see the art of the motion picture used constructively to raise the standards of our national life." One of the five specific objectives of the group was: "To encourage genuine Canadian film production, free from foreign influence" (BCARS, GR 1323, File M-178, Microfilm B 2326).

Other participants in the debate had a material interest in local film production. A newsletter from British Picture Producers Ltd. of Victoria, published in July-August 1930, contained an implicit endorsement from an unidentified author for the development of a local industry:

There are some who consider that a studio on this coast ... would be in a position to make great film spectacles of historical and foreign subjects, in an attempt to "out-Hollywood" Hollywood. I do not agree with this attitude. It is a principle of business management to use one's resources to best advantage. Why should we in Victoria, for instance, create elaborate settings of the Australian bush or the Pacific Islands, when an Australian company could use the genuine locations? -- or build ruined castles such as lie within easy reach of Elstree? Conversely, would a studio in India be wise to undertake the filming of a Canadian story? Hollywood does these things because the real thing is not available (BCARS, GR 1323, File M-178, Microfilm B 2326).

In a letter dated July 22, 1931, the manager of a Victoria theatre endorsed the conclusions of the White Report and urged B.C. Attorney-General Robert H. Pooley to proceed with legal action against the American film monopoly. "They have ruined scores of small theatre owners, including myself" (BCARS, GR 1323, File M-178, Microfilm B 2326).

But opinion was divided. An editorial in the *Victoria Times* on July 8, 1931 endorsed the principle of *laissez-faire* capitalism:

As far as the quality of the motion picture product in Canada is concerned, whether we have a combine or not makes no difference. This is determined absolutely by the public, subject to provincial censorships which are supposed to protect the public morals by banning indecent or otherwise undesirable films. A motion picture is a commodity which survives or falls on its merits. It will not succeed because it is British, Canadian, American, German or Zanzibarian.

The editorial went on to argue: "The idea that government regulation can determine the taste of the public in respect of picture films is stupid beyond childishness" (BCARS, GR 1323, File M-178, Microfilm B 2326).

In the aftermath of the combines investigation and court proceeding, B.C. Attorney-General Robert H. Pooley announced he would look into the imposition of film exhibition quotas. As early as December 4, 1929, Pooley had written to B.C. censor Joseph Walters, stating: "In spite of what Col. Cooper [John A. Cooper, president of the Motion Picture Distributors and Exhibitors of Canada] would suggest, we in British Columbia want clean pictures and as many British pictures as possible" (BCARS, GR 1323, File M-178, Microfilm B 2326). An April, 1932 amendment to the B.C. Motion Pictures Act granted the Lieutenant-Governor in Council special authority to regulate a quota for films "of British manufacture and origin," an authority which remained on the statutes until 1971. But it was never implemented (Browne, 1979, pp. 23-24).

By 1937, the province's concern with the exhibition of motion pictures had more to do with how theatres were operated than with what kind of films they showed. In January, 1937, J.M. Coady was appointed head of a provincial royal commission under

the Public Inquiries Act to examine regulations governing motion-picture projectors and projectionists. In essence, the commission was concerned with fire-safety regulations and the working conditions of film projectionists (see British Columbia, 1937).

Defining the Medium:

Through its interventions as a film producer and industry regulator, the government of British Columbia played a central role in establishing particular film practices and in privileging particular definitions of what cinema in the province was to be. David Mattison (1986a) notes that, as a result of Victoria's early sponsorship of film production, "various provincial governments have recognized the promotional and educational possibilities of film both for attracting settlers, manufacturers, and visitors to the province and for instilling in the population a strong moral character, pride in country, and respect for environment, especially the dense forests that were vulnerable to fire" (pp. 79-80). The result of Victoria's intervention, Dennis Duffy (1986) argues, is: "The filmed image of the province has always been mediated primarily by the twin concerns of industry and tourism" (p. 30).

The British Columbia Government Travel Bureau was foremost among provincial production units in realizing the promotional and educational possibilities of the medium. Mattison (1986a) writes: "Its filmmaking activities during the Second World War set the stage for more than four decades of continuous production, longer than any other provincial government film unit" (p. 80).

The creation of the Travel Bureau in 1937 can be traced back to a Depression-era

movement by business leaders, community service groups and municipal politicians to promote tourism as a “Back to Prosperity” ticket in British Columbia. Norman W. Whittaker, the MLA representing Saanich in T. Dufferin Pattullo’s Liberal government, submitted a brief on the tourism industry to the government in January, 1935. The following year, the Pattullo government responded to the initiative by proposing a new Department of Trade and Industry “to attract visitors through advertising and general publicity.” The 1937 statute creating the new department included three separate bureaus. One of them was the Bureau of Industrial and Tourist Development, which incorporated the former Bureau of Provincial Information. In 1938, an amendment to the Department of Trade and Industry Act renamed the Bureau of Industrial and Tourist Development the B.C. Government Travel Bureau and assigned the bureau “to assemble, classify, and distribute information and conduct general publicity and advertising” (Mattison, 1986a, pp.80-81).

Travel Bureau productions included *Beautiful British Columbia* and *Evergreen Playground*, already discussed above, as well as: the travelogue *North of the Border* (1938); *All-Sooke Day* (1940), about Sooke’s community festival; *Dollars and Sense* (1941), which describes manufacturing in British Columbia; and the travelogue *Vancouver Island: British Columbia’s Island Playground* (1942) (Mattison, 1986a, pp. 85-86; Browne, 1979, p. 217).

The Travel Bureau also assumed the task of promoting British Columbia as a location for foreign films in 1942, when Columbia Pictures arrived in Victoria to shoot *Commandos Strike at Dawn*. While not directly involved in the production, the Travel

Bureau produced an illustrated folder containing congratulatory messages for the film's principals from: Commodore W.J.R. Beech, commanding officer of the Royal Canadian Navy's Pacific Coast fleet; Major-General G.R. Pearkes of Pacific Command; Air Vice-Marshall L.F. Stevenson of the Royal Canadian Air Force's Western Air Command; Lt.-Gov. W.C. Woodward; and B.C. Premier John Hart (B.C. Government Travel Bureau, 1942). This pamphlet was issued to movie-goers on the U.S. west coast (Mattison, 1986a, pp. 86-87).

The private sector also played a role in producing promotional films. In fact, the Canadian Pacific Railway must be regarded as a pioneer in exploiting film to promote tourism and settlement throughout western Canada, two activities in which it had a direct, material interest. The CPR sponsored a tour of Britain by independent Manitoba filmmaker James Freer in 1898-99 to promote Canadian immigration (Morris, 1978, pp. 30-32, 128). In 1910, the CPR hired a dramatic troupe from the Edison Manufacturing Co., asking them to travel across Canada "developing fictional shorts which would glorify the new land and the opportunities for love and success it promised." Browne (1979), writes:

It is impossible to determine what effect such films had on immigration for these years of the greatest influx of immigrants into Canada. The message however was loud and clear. Certainly no other company in Canada, or perhaps the world, realized the potential of film in selling its product as quickly and surely as the CPR. Through the years, and with great success, the company wasted no opportunity to depict its package of dreams through the newest dream medium of all (p. 9).

Elsewhere, Browne (1989) argues that the CPR publicity machine turned Canada -- and, by extension, British Columbia -- into a commodity to be purchased, and the CPR-sponsored films hailed those viewers who saw their films as potential customers.

There is enough evidence to suggest that the pre-Great War commodity called Canada was almost single-handedly invented by the maps, pamphlets, posters, photographs, paintings, motion pictures, and other image-rich promotional paraphernalia of the CPR -- with the grateful blessing of the Dominion government. In this way, the CPR provided a young, untried nation with an accessible image (p. 29).

The subject of the films produced by the CPR in British Columbia, Browne (1989) maintains, "is not the realist construction of BC mountain landscape through photographic representation, but rather the construction of the viewing subject, a potential tourist and money spender" (p. 30).

Browne (1992) argues that the institutional film production of the provincial government and the Canadian Pacific Railway established patterns of film practice which would persist. "Même après que les habitants de la Colombie britannique eurent commencé à tourner leurs propres films, ceux-ci servaient en général à des fins promotionnelles, malgré l'air «pédagogique» qu'on s'efforçait souvent de leur donner" (p. 175). Dennis Duffy (1986) adds: "Admittedly, the shortcomings apparent in many films about B.C. are often due to the circumstances of their creation. As travelogues, industrial films or institutional documentaries, they were made possible by some form of sponsorship which inevitably imposed a degree of creative restraint" (pp. 32-33).

These films also contributed to the early development of a particular film practice in British Columbia. Browne (1989) writes:

The early Mutoscope, Edison, and other phantom ride reels are of interest to us because they more or less define film practice as it has developed in British Columbia since the turn of the century. We have not, in general, been a feature filmmaking society, or a culture of question-askers, muckrakers, or myth-makers. With the exception of a hardy and significant few, the film industry in BC has for all intents and purposes

been government- and/or corporate-sponsored. In short, it has been an official film industry with appropriately modest ambitions, content to serve the powers that be (p. 31).

Mattison (1986b) notes that a key dimension of British Columbia's image established in these films is its malleability, citing the example of Travel Bureau films. "The provincial government over the years refined through travelogues the image of British Columbia to fit the perceptions of tourists seeking both relaxation and self-fulfillment. As one advertising agency writer put it, 'We can be whatever anyone wants us to be'" (p. 20). As will be discussed in Chapter Five, this credo had been adopted almost word-for-word by the B.C. Film Commission to promote the use of British Columbia as a location for Hollywood films.

From the outset, then, the history of film production in the province has been informed by the frequent presence of foreign producers using British Columbia locations and by an active provincial government interested in employing film to promote immigration, industrial development and public education. Cinema in British Columbia has thus been defined predominantly in regional industrial rather than in national cultural terms, an ethos which continues to distinguish British Columbia film-making to the present day.

Notes:

¹George Quimby, curator of exhibits in the Department of Anthropology at Chicago's Field Museum, came across a faded and scratched print of Curtis's film in the late 1940s. Quimby was interested in restoring the film and conducted some preliminary research. In 1962, he met Bill Holm, a scholar of Kwakiutl culture, who had heard about the film and became interested in Quimby's restoration project. It was not until 1973, however, that Curtis's film, re-titled *In the Land of the War Canoes*, was finally restored and edited. Quimby and Holm also added a sound track to the film (Holm & Quimby, 1980, pp. 13-17). To determine the availability of films cited in this chapter, see Browne (1979) and Duffy (1986).

²For a more extensive list of feature-length films made in British Columbia, see Walsh (1976) and MacIntyre (1996).

³In a letter to Attorney-General A.M. Manson on December 14, 1923, J. Edward Bird of the law firm Bird, Macdonald, Bird and Collins, stated: "There is no encouragement at the present time for anybody to undertake business of this nature in British Columbia. If the parties had a right to exhibit their motion pictures anywhere within the Province by paying a reasonable fee therefor [sic] there would be an encouragement given for development of a local business which would tend to advertise British Columbia not only to the residents of the Province themselves but it would encourage production of films that would find their way all over the world" (BCARS, GR 1323, File M-283, Microfilm 2211).

⁴A September 27, 1927 letter to Attorney-General Manson from his secretary, makes reference to a plebiscite by the city of Victoria regarding "a by-law designed to assist the establishment of a moving picture industry in this city" (BCARS, GR 429, Box 20, File 4).

⁵Ping Yang Lai, Consul for China, wrote to B.C. Attorney-General Gordon Sloan on March 27, 1935, requesting that *Secrets of Chinatown* be banned. "I am wholly convinced and declare unequivocally that the whole tone throughout the said picture is derogatory to the self-respect of China." Sloan responded in a letter dated April 2, 1935, upholding the censor's approval of the film. "I see nothing in it derogatory to the Chinese race in general, -- no more than the picture of Chicago gangsters could be taken as typical of American life" (BCARS, GR 1323, File M-178, Microfilm 2327).

⁶One theatre manager who was happy to screen Picture Service films was George E. Clark of the Allan Theatre. In an undated letter to Dr. A.R. Baker, director of the B.C. Patriotic and Educational Picture Service, Clark wrote: "The subjects we have played have rounded out our program nicely, and have proven to be very enjoyable subjects."

Two films Clark singled out for praise were *Stanley Park* and *The Land of Wonder Review*. However, Frank Campbell, a partner in the British American Film Co., complained that provincial government film production hurt his business. Writing to Attorney-General J.W. de B. Farris on Dec. 11, 1920, Campbell requested "at least a portion of the Government work" (BCARS, GR 1323, File M-283, Microfilm 2211).

⁷As early as 1961, David R. Monk, director of the B.C. Forest Service's Public Information and Education Division, discussed the methods used by the Forest Service to "educate" the forest industry. Monk perceived his department's function as "not so much to educate in its classical context but rather to assist the Forest Service in the administrative execution of its policy aims, through the securing of compliance" by the forest industry. In a speech delivered May 12, 1961 to a Forest Service silviculture meeting, Monk stated: "In order to attain departmental goals it is ultimately essential that the various publics comply with the needs of our policies; that they change their attitudes to comply; that they change their behaviour to comply." He added: "Thus this Service's policy of persuasion has always been directed towards the justification of the means by the virtue of the ends because it is in the area of means that there is less solidarity of opinion and thus less resistance. In other words, we direct our efforts towards the development of a broad, socially-based acceptance of the sustained-yield program in order to create such a climate of opinion amongst the largest segment of the community -- the disassociated -- that the direct-interest group are [sic] forced to comply due to the pressures of social mores (BCARS, GR 1295, Box 4, File 32).

Chapter Three

The Terms of Inclusion:

British Columbia Within the Political Economy of North American Film Production

The opportunity for British Columbia to become a major feature-film production centre in the 1970s arose as Hollywood began to transform its method of film production in the post-war period. The 1948 Paramount Decision, which forced the major Hollywood studios to divest their theatre holdings in the United States, and the emergence of television as a rival medium in the entertainment business, prompted the major studios to abandon the Fordist production methods of the “studio system.” They came to embrace a production system based on contractual relationships with independent producers who favoured the flexibility and economy of location shooting.¹ Where, then, the continental integration of the film industry’s distribution and exhibition networks had since the 1920s relegated film producers in Canada to the margins of the commercial cinema, the post-war restructuring of the Hollywood film industry -- and particularly its externalization of production -- created an opportunity for Canadians to make feature films, provided they were Hollywood films.

Yet if Hollywood’s vertical integration has been one of the central explanations behind the exclusive structure of the commercial film industry, a second factor which has contributed to the particular formation of the B.C. film industry is agglomeration. Film

production is one of those multi-faceted enterprises which has a tendency to cluster in urban centres which can provide a pool of skilled labour, cinema-specific services and sources of investment. Vancouver's relative proximity to Los Angeles was a structural advantage when Hollywood began to externalize production -- particularly in the 1970s when the exchange rate favoured Canadian locations -- but Vancouver's distance from Montreal and Toronto was a clear disadvantage when an indigenous feature cinema began to develop in the 1960s and 1970s. Montreal and Toronto are Canada's principal financial centres, Montreal was already the home of the National Film Board, and the two central Canadian cities are the respective headquarters of the French-language and English-language television industries. It was in Montreal and Toronto that Canada's principal film production and distribution companies established their head offices, and where most of the Canadian "studios" that emerged in the 1990s remain.

This chapter positions British Columbia within the political economy of feature-film production in North America. It contends that British Columbia's inclusion within Hollywood's transnationalization of audiovisual production provided west-coast filmmakers with the opportunity to establish a commercial cinema, an opportunity which had been denied British Columbia by the concentration of the Canadian film industry in Ontario and Quebec.

The Studio System of Production:

Until the late 1940s, the motion picture industry was dominated by large, vertically-integrated firms which produced films "via a routinized, factory-like production

process.” Industrialized production methods had been widely accepted by the time the major Hollywood studios were established in southern California in the 1920s, and the studios patterned the film production process “in the image of the assembly line, as in the auto and machinery industries” (Christopherson & Storper, 1986, pp. 305-306). Los Angeles was initially a shooting location for independent producers taking advantage of its clement weather, its diverse locations and California’s open-shop labour legislation, which meant labour costs were 25 to 50 per cent lower in Los Angeles than in New York (Stanley, 1978, pp. 43-44). Permanent studio sets only became necessary with the introduction of sound technology in 1927. As the volume of film production grew, “studios were transformed into large vertically integrated motion picture factories.” By the late 1920s, Hollywood had become a major employer with an estimated 12,000 full-time workers and another 150,000 extras on call (pp. 313-314).

There were eight “major” Hollywood production companies in the period of the studio system, between (roughly) 1930 and 1948. Warner Bros., RKO Radio Pictures, Twentieth Century-Fox, Paramount and Loew’s (MGM) were the “big five” studios, vertically integrated with distribution and exhibition networks. United Artists, Universal and Columbia Pictures comprised the “little three” studios -- or “mini-majors” -- which had a symbiotic relationship to the “big five.” Universal and Columbia owned studios and distribution facilities and supplied the “big five” with low-cost films. United Artists operated exclusively as a distributor for a select group of independent producers (Balio, 1990, p. 4).²

This was a period of movie mass production, characterized by the breaking down

of the production process into small components through the division of labour, the direct employment of film workers (including actors), and the standardization of films into two general categories: “classic” Hollywood films, which consisted of a “highly specific type of narrative structure combined with a circumscribed range of cinematic expressions of narrative”; and genre films, such as musicals, westerns and gangster movies (Cook, 1985, pp. 10-11).

Independent producer-director Thomas Ince is credited with being the first to adapt Fordist production techniques to movie-making, instituting later the same year at his five-stage Hollywood studio the factory methods he had seen Henry Ford apply to automobile production in 1913 (Schatz, 1983, p. 40). Michael Storper (1989) writes:

Ince developed a management-oriented model that strictly separated conception from execution. The vehicle for this production process was the ‘continuity script,’ which fragmented the story of a motion picture and reordered it so that each bloc of scenes in a set or location could be filmed at the same time or, alternatively, so that a set of actors could film all the scenes in which they were to be involved in a continuous work session (p. 278).

Pre-production, production and post-production were all organized on mass-production principles, explains Storper (1989):

For example, the major studios had permanent staffs of writers and production planners who were assigned to produce formula scripts in volume and push them through the production system. Production crews and stars were assembled in teams charged with making as many as thirty films per year. Studios had large departments to make sets, operate sound stages and film labs, and carry out marketing and distribution. A product would move from department to department in assembly-line fashion (p. 278).

Warner Bros., for instance, introduced assembly-line production techniques in the early 1930s as a method of maintaining strict control over budgets and production schedules during the Depression, and was able to produce up to 60 films annually (Cook, 1985, pp. 11-12).

Each of the studios, of course, put its own stamp on these general production techniques. MGM was reputed to be the most dictatorial in insisting that film workers faithfully follow a blueprint for each film, while Paramount offered film-makers more leeway (Mast, 1986, p. 232). RKO, on the other hand, deviated from the norm by adopting "unit production" in 1931, "a system whereby independent producers were contracted to make a specific number of films for RKO entirely free from studio supervision, with costs shared by the studio and the producer, and distribution guaranteed by RKO." *King Kong* (1933) and *Citizen Kane* (1941) were two films produced in this fashion (Cook, 1985, pp. 20-22).

The vertical integration of the "big five" with distribution and exhibition networks ensured the circulation of their films and raised the barriers of entry to would-be competitors. In 1944, for example, these studios earned 73 per cent of domestic theatre rentals and owned or had an interest in 4,424 movie theatres, 24 per cent of the U.S. total. Susan Christopherson and Michael Storper (1986) write: "These theaters included 70% of all the first run theaters in the ninety-two cities with populations over 100 000, and they accounted for over 50% of total US box-office receipts." In almost half of all U.S. markets, one distributor owned all of the theatres (pp. 305-307).

The movie industry was radically restructured in the aftermath of World War II,

and anti-trust action against the major studios by the U.S. government put an end to the studio system of production. The U.S. Justice Department first filed an anti-trust suit against the eight major studios in 1938, “charging them with combination and conspiracy to restrain trade and monopolize interstate trade and commerce in violation of the Sherman Act.” However, in 1940, the government settled for a “consent decree” against Paramount, Loew’s (MGM), RKO, Warner Bros. and Twentieth Century-Fox, by which the studios agreed to alter four specific trade practices. They promised to: limit “block booking,” by which exhibitors were forced to book blocks of films, to a maximum of five films; end “blind bidding” by offering at least one trade showing of every film; stop forcing theatres to accept short films as a condition of renting a feature film; and cease acquiring new theatres. Robert Sklar (1978) writes: “The government retained the right to reinstitute the suit if it was dissatisfied with results of the consent decrees, and in 1944 it did so” (p. 170).

The case of *U.S. v. Paramount Pictures, Inc., et al* was initially tried in Federal District Court in New York in October, 1944. The court ruled that the movie industry’s distribution system violated the Sherman Act, but instead of requiring the studios to divest some of their holdings, the court ruled that the studios institute a competitive bidding system for all films. The Justice Department appealed the ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court, which in 1948 upheld the lower court’s findings, but disagreed with its solution. It asked the lower court to consider breaking up the vertically-integrated industry. That is what the lower court did, and in July, 1949, Circuit Judge Augustus N. Hand ordered the separation of the studios from their exhibition networks. “By 1954 the

five major producing firms had divested themselves of ownership or control of all their theaters” (Sklar, 1978, pp. 272-274). Christopherson and Storper (1986) insist: “This decision eliminated an assured market for films and increased the risks associated with production” (p. 308).

A second, concurrent blow to the studio system was a sudden shift in entertainment from the public to the private sphere, prompted by the arrival of television and the trend to suburbanization. Between 1946 and 1956, cinema audiences declined by 50 per cent and more than 4,000 U.S. movie houses closed (Sklar, 1978, p. 274). Christopherson and Storper (1986) explain: “What had been a market dominated by one medium became a segmented market in which different products competed for the consumer’s entertainment expenditures” (p. 308).

The Hollywood studios responded to this crisis by, first, reducing the number of films they made, and second, by differentiating their products through such innovations as colour, three-dimensional film and wide-screen formats like Cinerama and CinemaScope (Storper, 1989, pp. 279-280; see also, Balio, 1990; Wasko, 1995). Increased attention to individual film “spectaculars” meant increased budgets for talent, marketing and advertising (Christopherson & Storper, 1986, p. 309). Storper (1989) writes: “This strategy of product differentiation increased the need for specialised inputs. The studios began to turn to independent producers to develop these differentiated film products” (p. 281).

During the 1950s there was a gradual externalization of both production and pre-production. “Term contracts,” by which above-the-line personnel signed exclusive deals

with a studio for a set period of time (often up to seven years), were replaced by more flexible "project contracts." Below-the-line personnel were placed on seniority rosters, and the unions became hiring halls for the studios (Storper, 1989, p. 282).³ The major studios continued to dominate film finance and distribution -- from 1960 to 1972, for example, the eight major studios accounted for 83 per cent of distributors' gross revenues in the U.S. and Canada -- but during the 1960s and 1970s, more and more of their production was assigned to independent producers (Christopherson & Storper, 1986, p. 310).

In 1970, all of the major studios suffered large financial losses, and it became clear that their holdings in studio facilities and property had become liabilities. The studios began to divest themselves of their production facilities -- e.g., Twentieth Century-Fox sold the land that is now Century City in Los Angeles -- and those properties they held became "profit centers" which were "required to support themselves through rentals to independent producers making films with studio financing." The studios also changed their relationship to the nascent television industry by renting their film libraries to the networks and by financing the production of made-for-television movies. By the mid-1970s, the major Hollywood studios were specializing in high-budget theatrical features, leaving television movies and low-budget features to independent production companies (Christopherson & Storper, 1986, pp. 310-311).

One result of the studios' transformation was the externalization of film production. Storper (1989) writes:

Initially, vertical disintegration encouraged location shooting as a cost-cutting move on the part of independent production companies, and as a product differentiation strategy in the case of some spectacles. Location shooting, which is a type of change in production technique, began as a direct consequence of vertical disintegration; like many such practices, it seems to have reinforced itself in circular and cumulative fashion with the result that the studios can no longer control its use (p. 285).⁴

The major studios continued the process of production externalization throughout the 1960s. Between 1950 and 1973, only 60 per cent of total production starts by American film companies were located in the U.S. (Christopherson & Storper, 1986, p. 310). Storper (1989) writes: "Location shooting is now a genuine alternative to the studio in most situations, offering a more realistic 'look' and lower overhead costs. Locations, too, have begun to promote themselves by offering better services and, sometimes, considerable subsidies to production companies" (p. 285).

Christopherson and Storper (1986) describe the Hollywood of the 1980s as having a "split locational pattern" with pre-production and post-production work concentrated in the greater Los Angeles area and production activity dispersed globally. The movie business has become a "transactions-intensive industry" with the major studios acting as institutional investors who control the "afterlife" of a film in ancillary markets, spreading the initial risk of film production to the independents (pp. 313-316).⁵

Canadian Feature-Film Production:

Canada renewed its efforts in the post-war period to establish a Canadian feature-film industry. Thanks to its vertically-integrated structure, the Hollywood industry had

dominated the Canadian market since the 1920s, deterring Canadians from developing a market for their films and providing Canadian audiences with little access to indigenous films. Canada's own attempt in the 1930s to break up the Hollywood movie cartel through the courts had failed, and the 1948 Paramount Decision did not apply beyond the U.S. border. In Canada, it was business as usual for the Hollywood studios (see Pendakur, 1990). This state of affairs was summed up by the Massey Commission's 1951 report on the state of national cultural production when it referred to cinema as "not only the most potent but the most alien of the influences shaping our Canadian life" (Canada, 1951, p. 50).

There was pressure on the Canadian government, however, to recapture its own market, and a post-war balance-of-payments crisis with the United States forced the federal government to consider protectionist measures for the Canadian film industry. But motion pictures were exempted from the 1947 Emergency Foreign Exchange Conservation Act, which imposed restrictions on a number of imported goods from the U.S., even though \$17 million of the \$20 million taken out of Canada by the movie industry went to the U.S. A lobby from the Motion Picture Export Association of America (MPEAA) and Famous Players Canada Corp. instead convinced Minister of Trade and Commerce C.D. Howe that Hollywood could help resolve the problem it had largely created, without resorting to restrictive trade legislation (Pendakur, 1990, p. 136).

Rather than impose screen quotas, import restrictions or excise taxes, Ottawa negotiated the Canadian Cooperation Project with Washington and the resourceful MPEAA. The deal, signed in 1948, required Hollywood to: produce a film on Canada's

trade-dollar problem; provide more complete newsreel coverage of Canada; produce short films about Canada; release National Film Board films in the United States; include Canadian sequences in its feature films; make radio recordings by Hollywood stars extolling Canada; make more careful selections of films to be shown in Canada; and work with a Canadian government officer in Hollywood to coordinate the project (Cox, 1980, p. 34). Manjunath Pendakur (1990) dismisses the Canadian Cooperation Project as “public relations gimmicks to stop the Canadian government from legislating any quotas.” He adds: “The smoke screen created by the MPEAA lobby through the CCP began to thin out in less than a year, and some government officials in high positions were beginning to get suspicious.” The Canadian Cooperation Project expired in 1951 when Canada’s currency reserves crisis eased (pp. 137-141).

The first serious attempt by the Canadian government to stimulate indigenous feature-film production was the establishment of the Canadian Film Development Corporation (CFDC) in 1967, Canada’s centennial year. With an initial budget of \$10 million, the CFDC was instructed to “foster and promote the development of a feature film industry in Canada” by: investing in Canadian feature films; making loans to Canadian feature-film producers; making awards for outstanding production accomplishments; making professional development grants to film-industry workers; and offering advice and assistance with regard to film distribution and the administration of production (CFDC, 1969, p. 9). Ted Magder (1996) writes: “From its inception, the CFDC was conceived as a commercial agency, interested as much (if not more) in the profitability of the films it supported as in their contribution to Canada’s cultural life.”

By 1971, the CFDC had invested \$6.7 million in 64 film projects (p. 165).

In 1974, the federal government revised its Capital Cost Allowance program to stimulate private-sector investment in the film industry. The tax shelter, which had since 1954 permitted film producers to claim 60 per cent of their capital costs against their taxable income (from all sources) in the year the film was made, was restructured to allow producers to claim 100 per cent of costs in the first year for film projects which met minimum Canadian-content criteria. This change, which coincided with a devaluation of the Canadian dollar (against U.S. currency) and the abolition of a similar tax-shelter program in the U.S. in 1976, sparked a production boom which lasted until 1982. Investors with no previous experience in film production were suddenly attracted to a high-profile industry which held out the potential, at least, for significant returns (Pendakur, 1990, pp. 169-171). In concert with the revised tax shelter, the CFDC in 1978 shifted its emphasis from providing equity financing to offering bridge financing to film projects designed to take advantage of the tax shelter (CFDC, 1979).

This was a period of considerable -- albeit short-lived -- optimism in the Canadian film industry. While in 1966 Canada had only three feature-length theatrical releases, the Canadian Film Development Corporation in its first decade invested almost \$26 million in 220 films. In 1978-79, for example, the CFDC invested in 27 films with budgets totalling \$50 million (CFDC, 1979). The previous year, 1977-78, the CFDC for the first time recovered more than \$1 million from its investments in a single year, thanks in large part to the commercial and critical success of three indigenous features -- *Outrageous!*, *Who Has Seen the Wind* and *Why Shoot the Teacher?* -- and increased television sales

(CFDC, 1978). The boom reached its peak in 1979 when 70 features were produced in Canada -- 36 of which were made without CFDC financing -- with budgets exceeding \$150 million (CFDC, 1980). This is a fantastic number of films when compared to Hollywood's output of 95 features the same year, but as Martin Knelman (1987) reminds us, more than half of the Canadian films produced that year were never released (p. 24).

The boom went bust by the early 1980s, as a nation-wide economic recession underscored the growing recognition that returns on film investment were exceedingly rare. If Canada still managed to produce 50 features with budgets of \$165 million in 1980 and 37 features with budgets of \$85 million in 1981, by 1982 the CFDC invested in a total of just 24 projects -- features, documentaries, television series *and* shorts -- with budgets totalling \$28.3 million (CFDC, 1981, 1982, 1983). Ted Magder (1996) writes:

Measured in terms of employment and total dollars spent, the tax-shelter boom was a success. But many of the films produced during this period were never distributed; many of those that did receive distribution were second-rate efforts that were ... practically indistinguishable from American ones (notable examples include *Meatballs* and *Running*) (pp. 166-167).

Knelman (1987) adds: "Investors flocked to movies, glad to have their money sheltered, but also hoping for a future profit. Too often the future profit failed to materialize, and so, even though they had the advantage of tax relief in the short term, the investors lost money in the long term" (p. 24). In 1983, the Capital Cost Allowance was adjusted to allow producers to claim 50 per cent in each of two years, and in 1988 the benefit was reduced again to 30 per cent per year (Magder, 1996, pp. 166-167).

The Tax Shelter Reconsidered:

The tax-shelter years are typically regarded with scorn by scholars who have catalogued the squandered investment and the films' dubious claims to Canadian content (e.g., Knelman, 1987; Pendakur, 1990; Magder, 1993, 1996). But while the period may not have earned Canadian cinema much respect, it merits reconsideration in light of a number of developments in the industry since that time. The tax-shelter years led to the industrialization of Canadian cinema and revealed a number of characteristics of the commercial cinema which led to the restructuring of the nascent Canadian industry.

First of all, the tax-shelter experience exposed in stark terms the futility of government policies which address only the production sector of the industry and neglect the distribution sector so vital to theatrical release. Public investment and tax relief proved to be a boon to production, but did nothing to challenge Hollywood's domination of Canadian cinema screens, and therefore had little impact on what movies Canadians saw in their theatres. Through the 1980s and 1990s, Canadian films' share of screen time in Canadian movie theatres remained around three per cent, although this average is skewed by their concentration in select downtown theatres of the larger urban centres, where such films might run for a week or two (Magder, 1996, p. 150).

Canada's two principal theatre chains, Famous Players and Cineplex Odeon, remain vertically integrated with major Hollywood studios, ensuring and privileging access to Canadian movie screens for the products of those studios. Together Famous Players and Cineplex Odeon control an estimated 82 per cent of the Canadian film exhibition market (McCarthy, 1997). Famous Players, with 555 screens at more than 100

locations across Canada, is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Viacom Inc. of New York, a diversified entertainment and communications conglomerate which owns the major Hollywood studio Paramount Pictures.⁶ Famous Players has plans to add 25 theatres and 247 screens to its Canadian holdings over the next three years (Heinzl, 1997; MacDonald, 1998a).

Cineplex Odeon operates 806 screens across Canada (MacDonald, 1998a). The company merged with Sony Corp.'s Loews Theaters in September, 1997 to form Loews Cineplex Entertainment (LCE), the largest film exhibitor in the world with 2,600 movie screens in 460 locations throughout North America. Sony, which owns the Hollywood major studio Sony Pictures (formerly Columbia Pictures), controls 49.9 per cent of LCE, while Cineplex Odeon Canada controls 26 per cent. The Hollywood major Universal Studios, in turn, owns 41.6 per cent of Cineplex (Lamey, 1997a; Enchin, 1996b).⁷

The monopolization of Canada's theatre screens by Hollywood led to a second revelation during the tax-shelter years: television is a much more reliable distribution system for the Canadian film industry, thanks to Canadian-ownership and Canadian-content regulations, and thanks to the licensing in the 1980s of pay-television and specialty channels devoted to broadcasting movies. As of 1980, television was by far the largest source of revenue for private Canadian film and video companies; TV commercials accounted for 41 per cent of revenues, and the sale and rental of TV programming represented another 30 per cent. Theatrical features accounted for just three per cent of the industry's total revenues (Canada, 1982, p. 257). The Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission expanded the market to

Canadian film producers by licensing its first national pay-TV networks -- First Choice and Lively Arts Market Builders (C-Channel) -- in March, 1982 (Magder, 1993, p. 202). A year later, the CRTC licensed three cable services specializing in feature-length movies: SuperChannel (in western Canada), The Movie Network (in eastern Canada) and the French-language Super Écran (Canadian Cable Television Association, 1995).

Producers committed to film production on a full-time basis began to explore a variety of funding sources, and specifically, co-production between the private and public sectors, and hybrid film-television production. The 1981 film *Les Plouffe*, for example, received one-fifth of its budget from the CBC, and was released in three versions: as a six-hour television mini-series; as a French-language feature film; and as an English-language feature. The principal backers of the 1982 feature film *The Terry Fox Story* were broadcasters Home Box Office and CTV. It was distributed theatrically by Astral Films in Canada and by 20th Century-Fox internationally. Magder (1993) writes: "Feature film producers were now more eager than ever to obtain major funding from broadcasters, who had become an important source of film capital. Always narrow, the space between the two industries was growing narrower still" (pp. 200-201).

In recognition of the promise television held, the federal government in 1983 altered the mandate of the Canadian Film Development Corporation. The federal Department of Communications introduced the \$35-million Canadian Broadcast Program Development Fund, to be administered by the CFDC, which later that year changed its name to Telefilm Canada to reflect its new emphasis on television. While the sum of money in the Broadcast Fund may not appear significant, it increased considerably the

leveraging power of production companies in their quest for other sources of investment, and it encouraged Canadian film producers to look more and more to television production. Ted Magder (1993) writes:

In no uncertain terms, the Broadcast Fund made Telefilm a major player in the production industry. Obviously, it also meant that there was an enormous incentive for Canadian feature film producers to shift their activities to the production of television features and other forms of television programming in the drama, children's, and variety categories (p. 209).

Magder adds: "In a very real sense the Canadian government had solved the problem of distribution and exhibition by gearing production activities to the regulated market of Canadian television" (p. 211).

While a number of investors had been burned by Canada's tax-shelter cinema, a third impact of the experience was what economists refer to as a "rationalization" of the film industry, eliminating those players who were in it for short-term profit rather than long-term industrial development. Magder (1993) explains:

Among those who had used the tax-shelter boom as a way of moving Canada's film industry closer to the form and substance of a Hollywood North, the neophytes -- those fly-by-night producers with little or no long-term experience in the film industry -- bid a hasty retreat, while the more successful producers bravely depicted the production downturn as a necessary, and useful, consequence of market adjustment (p. 196).

It was in this period that a number of today's industry leaders established production houses. For example, the corporate roots of Alliance Communications, Canada's largest audiovisual entertainment company, date from 1972 when Robert Lantos and Victor

Loewy formed the distribution company Vivafilm (Rice-Barker, 1996). The Lantos and Steven Roth company RSL Productions produced *In Praise of Older Women* (1978) and *Agency* (1978).⁸ Companies such as Behaviour Communications (formerly Malofilm), Astral Communications, Paragon Entertainment, Atlantis Films, Productions La Fête, Cinar Films and Nelvana were all founded in this period. In April, 1981, nine of the 10 largest feature-film production companies in Canada -- Astral Film Productions, Dal Productions, Filmplan International, International Cinema Corp., Paragon Motion Pictures, Robert Cooper Productions, RSL Films, Ronald I. Cohen Productions and Tiberius Productions -- formed the Association of Canadian Movie Production Companies (ACMPC) to strengthen the relationship between Canada's established production houses and American distributors. In 1980, these companies had produced more than \$75 million worth of feature films ("Big Nine," 1981; Magder, 1993, pp. 196, 286).

If the tax-shelter boom led to a rationalization of the industry, it also concentrated Canadian feature-film production in Ontario and Quebec. A 1977 study commissioned by the federal Secretary of State (Canada, 1977) noted that 75 per cent of Canada's 150 production companies were located in the Montreal-Ottawa-Toronto triangle, and accounted for at least 90 per cent of the country's production (p. 154). The report noted that, given the small Canadian market, the Canadian film-production industry depended for its economic survival on producing commercials, commercial documentaries and sponsored films; 80 per cent of these companies were involved in at least two non-theatrical sectors (pp. 71-72, 152). "The picture emerges of a production industry

comprising a large number of producing firms, few if any big enough to sustain all the facilities and resources needed for large-scale production, and an infrastructure of more solidly established firms or individuals providing the necessary services and physical resources as and when they are required” (p. 153). The report explained the industry’s agglomeration this way:

As has been shown, the majority of film-production units are dependent on the availability of specialized services and facilities. This sector of the film industry operates on the principle of high turnover and low profit margins, and therefore tends to be concentrated in areas where demand is high. All but the largest film producers naturally locate where these services and facilities are readily and speedily available. Similarly, there is a natural tendency for film producers to congregate in the areas where their principal markets are located. The largest potential customers are federal organisms such as the NFB, the CBC, together with provincial educational organisms, major distributors, and television networks and major corporations that operate in the metropolitan areas included in this study. These concentrations facilitate the continuous relationships that must exist between producers and the service sector on the one hand, and between producers and customers on the other, while reducing the costs of transporting people and materials. Producers located further afield are thus at a disadvantage in many respects (pp. 154-155).

Montreal was, and remains, the centre for French-language film and television production in Canada, and as the home of the National Film Board (since 1956) it was where a number of NFB-trained film-makers would make their first forays into feature film in the 1960s. A “first Quebec film industry” produced 15 French-language and four English-language features between 1944 and 1953, the best-known of which are *Le père Chopin* (1944), *La petite Aurore, l’enfant martyre* (1951) and *Tit-Coq* (1953). But the arrival of Canadian television in 1952 killed off this emergent cinema and drove the main

Montreal production houses, Renaissance and Quebec Productions, out of business (Clandfield, 1987, pp. 59-61).

By the early 1960s, however, interest among Quebec film-makers in producing a *cinéma d'auteur* was stimulated by the example of the *Nouvelle vague* in France. As Marcel Jean (1991) recounts, the passage from documentary film-making to feature production was signalled in 1962 when NFB film-makers Denis Héroux, Denys Arcand and Stéphane Venne made *Seul ou avec d'autres*. Crew members included Michel Brault (camera), Marcel Carrière (sound), Bernard Gosselin (editing) and Gilles Groulx (editing) (pp. 56-57). Between 1963 and 1967, Claude Jutra (*À tout prendre*), Gilles Groulx (*Le chat dans le sac*), Gilles Carle (*La Vie heureuse de Léopold Z*) and Michel Brault (*Entre la mer et l'eau douce*) made their first features at the NFB (pp. 58-59). Jean writes:

Alors que, durant les années 50, le cinéma québécois produisait tout au plus deux longs métrages par année, alors que, en 1962, *Seul ou avec d'autres* était le seul long métrage réalisé, huit longs métrages verront le jour en 1964 et treize en 1965. Une industrie commence à développer: pour le meilleur (l'accroissement de la production) et pour le pire (la soumission de la création au commerce) (p. 59).

The NFB made its first English-language feature, *The Drylanders*, in 1963, followed by Don Owen's acclaimed *Nobody Waved Goodbye* in 1964 (Clandfield, 1987, p. 87). A number of independent Montreal producers also began to make feature films in the 1960s. Roger Blais, Pierre Patry and Jean-Claude Lord formed Co-opératio in 1963 and produced seven features over the next five years (Clandfield, 1987, p. 73). The prolific Jean-Pierre Lefebvre made his first feature, *Le Révolutionnaire*, in 1965 (see Harcourt,

1981). Quebec was also one of the first provinces to establish an investment program for indigenous film, creating l'Institut québécois du cinéma in 1975 to support local film production, distribution and exhibition (Lever, 1988, pp. 271-274).

David Clandfield (1992) describes the period from 1963 to 1984 as “l'essor et la consolidation de la province de l'Ontario et de sa ville-reine Toronto comme point de mire de la production canadienne de langue anglaise,” when an estimated 150 to 200 feature films were made. This was also the period when Toronto became Canada's largest city and the country's financial and communications centre. Toronto has been home base of the CBC's English-language television services since 1952, and the Ontario government established the Ontario Arts Council (which included funding for film arts) in 1963, the Ontario Film Institute in 1968, and the educational broadcaster TV Ontario (which programmed both classic Hollywood and international films) in 1970. The Toronto film festival was founded in 1976 and the NFB established a regional production centre in Toronto that year. Clandfield writes: “Tout favorisa la consolidation de la ville-reine comme centre d'une industrie cinématographique de langue anglaise en voie de développement et comme centre de consommation pour les cinéphiles” (p. 133).⁹

Meanwhile, in British Columbia:

Even at the height of the tax-shelter boom, very few indigenous features were made on the west coast. British Columbia remained a remote outpost of the Canadian film industry in the 1970s, physically removed from the key sources of both public and private investment, from the principal Canadian distribution companies and from the

head offices of both the public and private television networks. While geographical distance does not prevent the generation of film ideas and scripts, it does inhibit the kinds of social interaction which fosters industry contacts and creative collaborations, and which leads to the kind of financing and distribution agreements that enable films to get made. West-coast film-makers talk about “the \$5,000 cup of coffee” in reference to the prohibitive costs of a business trip from Vancouver to Toronto, where most distribution and television pre-sales agreements must be negotiated (see Caddell, 1998a, 1998b).

What is regrettable about the post-war history of British Columbia cinema is that the vibrant film community which emerged in Vancouver in the 1950s and 1960s was not encouraged to develop further. The CBC established its fourth television station, CBUT, in Vancouver in December, 1953, and CBUT’s Vancouver Film Unit -- founded by producer Stan Fox, cinematographer Jack Long and director Arla Saare -- produced more than 150 films over the next 12 years (Browne, 1992, pp. 177-178; Reimer, 1986, p. v). Dennis Duffy (1986) notes that the CBC’s Vancouver presence “brought about a renaissance of regional filmmaking at new levels of artistic and technical competence” (p. 17). Notable early films included the documentaries *A Profile of Ethel Wilson* (Ron Kelly, 1955) and *Skidrow* (Allan King, 1958). CBUT subsequently generated a number of regional series including *Cariboo Country*, its first major filmed drama series, which ran from 1958-1960 and from 1963-1966. Produced and directed by Philip Keatley and based on scripts by noted B.C. journalist Paul St. Pierre, *Cariboo Country* was unmistakably rooted in the plateau country of 1960s British Columbia (see Miller, 1987, pp. 68-90). It was originally shot in CBUT’s Vancouver studios, but in its second run

was filmed on location in the Cariboo and Chilcotin regions, and in the cities of Vancouver and Williams Lake (Duffy, 1986, pp. 17-19, 80-81).

The CBC, however, suffered from what Mary Jane Miller (1987) has termed “periodic swings toward centralizing production” (p. 333), and by the mid-1960s the Toronto headquarters of the English-language television network was re-asserting its control over dramatic production. By the mid-1970s, CBUT was limited to producing the long-running half-hour drama series *The Beachcombers* (1972-1990) and occasional specials (Duffy, 1986, p. 21). With the loss of production went the loss of some of its best talent. Daryl Duke, who began producing public affairs programs at CBUT in 1954, “graduated to corporate headquarters” in 1958, where he produced the hour-long weekly series *Sunday* (Knelman, 1978, pp. 42-43, 140). Allan King, who joined the Vancouver Film Unit as a director in 1954, moved to England to form his own film company in the 1960s, later moving to Toronto where he made the acclaimed documentaries *Warrendale* (1966) and *A Married Couple* (1969) and the feature film *Who Has Seen the Wind* (1977), based on the W.O. Mitchell novel (Bastien & Handling, 1980, pp. 207-208).

The CBC’s commitment to regional television production had been called into question as early as the report of the Royal Commission on Broadcasting (the Fowler Commission) of 1957 (Canada, 1957, pp. 75-76), and in her study of the first three decades of CBC television drama, Mary Jane Miller (1987) was unable to discern any coherent CBC policy on the role of regional dramatic programming (p. 327). Defending the CBC’s centralization in the corporation’s 1959-60 annual report (CBC, 1960), president Alphonse Ouimet argued: “The natural pressures of television, which are

present in every country, have resulted in Toronto and Montreal becoming the focal points of program production for Canada. This centralization has taken place in every country.”

Nevertheless, Ouimet allowed that “the further development of regional contributions to the national television network” was expected to be one of the CBC’s most important future developments (p. 7). The corporation’s 1960-61 annual report (CBC, 1961) made a point of remarking a “substantial increase” in regional contributions to the English network, rising from 30.3 per cent to 34.7 per cent of programming. But by 1965, even the public broadcaster acknowledged that it did not yet “adequately reflect the diversified pattern of life, ideas and opinions from the various regions of Canada” (CBC, 1965).

A decade later, the issue was raised again. During the CRTC’s public hearings on the renewal of CBC licences in February, 1974, the British Columbia Committee on the CBC pressed the CRTC “to require the CBC to respect its mandate concerning local and regional programming as well as ... national unity” (Raboy, 1990, pp. 229-230). The B.C. Committee for CBC Reform published a manifesto in the Vancouver *Sun* on March 11, 1976, urging the CBC to “abandon its Toronto-oriented policy of progressive centralization and restore programming and financial AUTONOMY to regional broadcasting centres.” The more than 100 prominent British Columbians who signed the statement noted that the only region of Canada “not subject to the dictates of Toronto and Ottawa” was Quebec. “In B.C., we have a prime example of how regional programming, once original, alive and interesting to listen to and watch, has become increasingly

subservient, in the name of efficiency and economy, to the centralizing authority of CBC Toronto” (B.C. Committee for CBC Reform, 1976). In a speech in November, 1976, CBC president Al Johnson vowed “that the CBC, over a five-year period, would increase significantly the regional production for drama, music and variety -- whichever programmes are most appropriate and indigenous in the several regions of Canada.” But because this promise required substantial funding, the increase in regional programming was never realized (Miller, 1987, pp. 329-330).

As a result of the CBC’s centralization in Toronto, Vancouver film-makers were denied both the training opportunity of television production and a dependable market for their films. This problem became particularly acute once the Canadian film and television industries converged in the 1980s, and television became Canadian cinema’s principal delivery system. From a national standpoint, Mary Jane Miller (1987) remarks, what was squandered was Vancouver’s voice as “the true counterweight in quality and quantity to a Toronto-based vision of this country and its concerns” (p. 327). The only non-CBC drama series made in B.C. in the 1960s was *The Littlest Hobo*, produced in Vancouver by Canamac Pictures. *The Littlest Hobo* was made with the American television market foremost in mind, but was broadcast in Canada on the CTV network (Duffy, 1986, p. 22).

If CBC television’s commitment to production in British Columbia was inadequate, the National Film Board’s contribution to west-coast film-making was worse. Founded in 1939, the NFB did not establish its first regional production centre until 1965, when veteran producer Peter Jones was assigned to be the board’s eyes and ears in

Vancouver. Vancouver, however, fared better than the regional production offices in Halifax, Toronto and Winnipeg, which were closed in 1969 as an austerity measure. The NFB did not have a production presence in all regions of Canada until 1976 (D.B. Jones, 1981, pp. 177-178; Dick, 1986, pp. 118-121). Historian Ronald Dick (1986) credits Jones himself with making the NFB's initial, halfhearted commitment to regional production work for Vancouver. "More perhaps than anyone else, Peter Jones may be considered responsible through his tireless missionary work for the eventual acceptance of the regional idea at the NFB" (p. 120).

Until 1968, Jones's role at the Vancouver office was to: offer advice to local filmmakers; conduct research for film projects submitted to the NFB's head office in Montreal; file reports to Montreal on local film talent and "other resources"; produce the few films which were cleared by the production committee in Montreal; and perform public-relations activities on behalf of the NFB. Jones wanted the Vancouver office to be a regional producer of NFB films with its own guaranteed annual production budget, and he asked a reluctant head office for \$2,000 to \$2,500 annually for equipment rental, film stock and processing "for developing film makers to show what they could do" (National Archives of Canada [NAC], MG 31, D210, Volume 4, File 1). In a July 11, 1968 letter to Frank Spiller, the NFB's director of English production, Jones noted that "practically all" NFB films were still produced in Montreal, and he advocated that "the NFB apportion part of its production funds to Regional Film Production." Jones proposed that each regional production centre be given an initial film production budget of \$100,000, excluding sponsored films and special projects like Challenge for Change (NAC, MG 31,

D210, Volume 7, File 3).¹⁰

Jones received some production money after 1968, and was able to support films by Sandy Wilson, Sylvia Spring, Al Razutis and David Rimmer. These funds were increased in fiscal 1971-72, and by 1972-73, Vancouver was allotted its own production budget (NAC, MG 31, D210, Volume 4, File 1). Between 1972-73 and 1976-77, the Vancouver office was allotted the following amounts for production:

1972-73	\$475,000
1973-74	\$500,000
1974-75	\$500,000
1975-76	\$492,000
1976-77	\$535,000

In its first four years of regional production, the Vancouver office made 28 films, ranging from one-minute clips to 57-minute documentaries. One of the first of these films was *He's Not the Walking Kind* (1972) by Sandy Wilson of Penticton, who would play a key role in the emergence of an indigenous feature-film industry in British Columbia a decade later (NAC, MG 31, D210, Volume 7, File 6).¹¹

NFB decentralization became government policy in 1972 (see Magder, 1993, pp. 145-146) and in its 1976-77 annual report, the NFB committed 20 per cent of its English production budget to the regional production centres in Vancouver, Halifax, Toronto and Winnipeg, and 15 per cent of its French budget to its Moncton, Toronto and Winnipeg offices. English regional production was to increase to 42 per cent by fiscal 1980-81, and "then rise more moderately until it reaches the maximum 50% mark."

The objective of this policy, in keeping with the role of the Film Board, is to provide each region the opportunity to interpret a regional subject to a national audience or a national subject from a regional point of view. Regional production provides the NFB with access to the best creative and technical resources at the local level and in turn provides Canadian film-making talent from across the country with access to the national public film agency.

The purpose of the regionalization plan, the report went on, was two-fold: “to provide more diversified programming to reflect regional concerns and the relevance of the regions to the rest of the country; to encourage the development and employment of independent film-makers locally.” Regionalization, however, would not occur at the expense of the Montreal production facility; the volume of activity at the NFB’s headquarters would be maintained (NFB, 1977, pp. 5-11; see also, Shepherd, 1979).

A native of Ontario who had worked for the NFB in Ottawa and Montreal for 20 years prior to his Vancouver assignment, Peter Jones got a taste of western alienation first-hand. Quickly recognizing both the paternalism and the impracticality of having to have regional film proposals approved by a production committee based in Montreal, Jones reflected on his own conversion to decentralization in a September 27, 1972 letter to government film commissioner Sydney Newman:

My concept of Canada as a federal nation used to be based on a strong central authority which would listen to representative-advisers from the regions but would not allow them any significant participation in government policy-making or administration. I now believe (after witnessing the alienation of Western Canada) that the strongest kind of federalism would be the system which guaranteed basic benefits and rights to all Canadians, but would permit the execution of federal policies to be carried out by regional federal offices -- on the spot and in the midst of the citizenry they are serving. Because we are not all identical from coast to

coast and the government that understands this will be a strong government with widespread support in this country.

This is particularly true of a cultural agency such as the N.F.B. Why should we insist that a film-maker leave the environment he knows and loves in order to make films for the federal government? (NAC, MG 31, D210, Volume 7, File 5).

In a December, 1982 letter responding to the conclusions of the Applebaum-Hébert report, Jones noted: "Since its inception as a production centre, the Pacific Regional Studio has proved its value by the production of an impressive collection of films, most of which would not have been made if the Studio had not existed" (NAC, MG 31, D210, Volume 4, File 7).

The federal institution which was intended to have the most direct impact on the feature-film industry was the Canadian Film Development Corporation, but little CFDC investment came British Columbia's way, especially after the fiscal year 1972-73. As Table 3.1 indicates, the CFDC/Telefilm Canada participated in the production of 28 B.C. films in its first 16 years, an average of less than two films per year. It also offered grants of \$50,000 to nine west-coast film-makers in 1971-72 and \$49,575 to seven B.C. film-makers in 1972-73 (CFDC, 1972, 1973).

In sum, the federal institutions which had both the mandate and the resources to provide British Columbia with a base for developing its own cinema merely reinforced the concentration of Canada's feature-film industry in Montreal and Toronto. Certainly, some persistent independent film-makers made features in British Columbia during the 1960s and 1970s, among them Morrie Ruvinsky, Tom Shandel, Jack Darcus and Dale Zalen. But as Colin Browne (1992) argues, the most vibrant film-making activity came

Table 3.1: B.C. films produced with CFDC/Telefilm Canada assistance

Fiscal Year	Film Title	Director
1968-69	<i>High</i>	Larry Kent
1969-70	<i>The Plastic Mile</i> <i>The Brotherhood</i> <i>Madeleine Is ...</i>	Morrie Ruvinsky Al Sens Sylvia Spring
1970-71	<i>Another Smith for Paradise</i> <i>The Apprentice/Fleur Bleue</i> <i>The Life and Times of Chester-Angus Ramsgood</i> <i>The Finishing Touch</i>	Tom Shandel Larry Kent David Cumick Morrie Ruvinsky
1971-72	<i>Proxy Hawks</i> <i>The Mask</i>	Jack Darcus Judith Eglington
1972-73	<i>The Beast</i> <i>A Game of Bowls</i> <i>The House that Jack Built</i> <i>The Late Man</i> <i>Return of Cowboy</i> <i>Straight People</i>	Al Razutis Douglas White David Cumick Andreas Schroder J. Andrew de Lilio Rymysza Phil Surguy
1973-74	<i>Wolf Pen Principle</i> <i>The Inbreaker</i>	Jack Darcus George McGowan
1974-75	<i>Sally Fieldgood & Co.</i> <i>The Supreme Kid</i>	Boon Collins Peter Bryant
1975-76	<i>Keeper</i>	Tom Drake
1976-77	<i>Skip Tracer</i>	Zale Dalen
1977-78	---	---
1978-79	<i>Yesterday</i>	Larry Kent
1979-80	<i>Going for Broke</i>	George McGowan
1980-81	<i>The Grey Fox</i>	Philip Borsos
1981-82	---	---
1982-83	<i>Deserters</i>	Jack Darcus
1983-84	<i>Walls</i>	Tom Shandel

Source: CFDC/Telefilm Canada, annual reports, 1968-69 to 1983-84.

from experimental directors like Byron Black, Ellie Epp, Chris Gallagher, Larry Kent, Gordon Kidd, Peter Lipskis, Sam Perry, Al Razutis, David Rimmer and Bill Roxborough,

and documentary film-makers like Jan Marie Martell, Jim Monro, Rick Patton, Moira Simpson, Dennis Wheeler and Sandy Wilson. Browne writes: "Entre 1960 et 1970 ils ont créé à Vancouver les prémices d'un cinéma politiquement engagé et ont tracé la voie pour les générations futures" (p. 177; see also Duffy, 1986, pp. 27-35; Douglas, 1996; Testa, 1992).

In a December, 1982 response to the Applebaum-Hébert report, Raymond J. Hall, president of the British Columbia Film Industry Association, argued: "B.C. receives a disproportionately small share of the nations [sic] film production and distribution opportunities despite having the country's 3rd largest metropolis and the 2nd largest English language film community." Hall advocated decentralization of the CBC to allow "greater access to both regional audiences and independent filmmakers," and he sought local program and budget authority for the CFDC office in Vancouver "in order to reflect the potential of the Regional feature interests." He branded the NFB's regionalization strategy a failure. "The NFB has not lived up to its earlier promise to expand its regionalization program. It remains a highly centralized organization with program authority and production activity concentrated at its Montreal Headquarters." Hall concluded his pointed critique of the federal film institutions with an anecdote that summarized British Columbia's marginality within Canadian cinema: "A Montreal producer once proposed entitling a television series interpreting British Columbia to the rest of Canada 'The Outsiders.' As long as Toronto and Montreal are the interpreters of Canada, filmmakers and audiences in the regions will continue to be -- outsiders" (NAC, MG 31, D210, Volume 4, File 7).

This chapter has traced the developments leading up to Hollywood's externalization of audiovisual production in the wake of the 1948 Paramount Decision and the arrival of television and suburbanization in the 1950s. This created the opportunity for rival jurisdictions throughout the United States and around the world to become participants in the production of Hollywood films. As David G. Murphy (1997) summarizes it: "The dismantling of the integrated Hollywood 'studio system' of motion picture production and the ensuing search for new locales laid the foundation for the emergence of new centres of production. Vancouver was able to capitalize on this restructuring" (p. 534).

While Hollywood was perceived to be the principal impediment to the development of a Canadian cinema, the indigenous feature-film industry which began to emerge in the 1960s was concentrated in Ontario and Quebec, and thus did little to nurture film-making in regions outside central Canada. At the same time that it became evident the federal film institutions were failing the film community on Canada's west coast, the provincial government in Victoria was looking for ways to promote British Columbia as a film location. If British Columbia could not be a full participant in the Canadian cinema, then the province would look to Hollywood for a way into the commercial cinema, and the B.C. government would assume the leadership role in building its own particular British Columbia feature-film industry.

Notes:

¹The term 'independent' is a slippery one in the film industry. It is used here to refer to producers who operate either on a contract basis with, or completely outside of, Hollywood's major studios.

²There was another group of production companies nicknamed Poverty Row. Studios such as Monogram, Republic, Grand National and Producers' Releasing Company served smaller theatres with low-budget movies and had little financial impact on the industry (Balio, 1990, pp. 4-5).

³Above-the-line production costs refer to costs associated with a film's principal creative elements, such as writer, director and lead performers. Below-the-line costs include crew, equipment, transportation and catering (Moshansky, 1996).

⁴While the breakdown of the studio system was a "push" factor stimulating location production, the post-war debt crisis in Europe was a "pull" factor. In the aftermath of war, European nations could no longer afford to import luxury items like motion pictures -- and export their earnings -- when the need for more vital commodities was pressing. A common remedy to these states' balance-of-payments problems was to freeze funds; films were allowed entry, but only a portion of their earnings could be withdrawn. In 1948, Great Britain became the first European territory to freeze funds. Britain lifted its 75-per-cent import duty on motion pictures, but restricted U.S. film companies to withdrawing \$17 million (US) annually over the next two years. France, Italy and Germany followed suit (Balio, 1985, p. 407). American production companies concocted elaborate schemes to retrieve their blocked funds in the form of goods they could subsequently liquidate, including motion pictures. Initially they invested in ship-building, and bought wood pulp, whiskey and furniture abroad to sell for U.S. dollars (Guback, 1985, pp. 477-478). But ultimately, [t]he availability of unremittable funds drove companies to shooting abroad, and films were made, partially or entirely, in Europe." Runaway production in Britain, Italy, France and Spain was "a direct result of blocked earnings and company desires to spend them" (Guback, 1969, pp. 164-165).

⁵As Tino Balio (1990) insists, however, the major Hollywood studios retained their primacy in spite of the restructuring the Paramount Decision required. "In 1954, the Big Five and the Little Three plus two minor companies collected most of the domestic film rentals, as did ten companies (not all the same ones) 20 years later. Overseas, the majors fared just as well. Despite trade restrictions and stiffer competition from foreign producers, U.S. film companies continued to dominate foreign screens; they distributed the lion's share of the gross. Before the war, about a third of their revenue came from abroad; during the fifties, the proportion rose to one-half." This, he believes, can be explained by the courts allowing the major studios to maintain their distribution capacity.

“By allowing the defendants to retain their distribution arms, the court, wittingly or not, gave them the means to retain control of the market. The reason, simply stated, is that decreasing demand for motion picture entertainment during the fifties foreclosed the distribution market to newcomers. Distribution presents high barriers to entry. To operate efficiently, a distributor requires a worldwide sales force and capital to finance 20 to 30 pictures a year. During the fifties, annual overhead costs of a major distributor amounted to over \$25 million [US], and financing a full roster of pictures came to more than twice that amount. Since the market absorbed less and less product during this period, it could support only a limited number of distributors -- about the same as existed at the time of the *Paramount* case. Without new competition, the film rentals collected by the majors represented a market share of 90 percent in 1972, the same share they collected during the halcyon days of the thirties and forties” (p. 6).

⁶Viacom acquired Paramount Communications Inc. in 1994, and with it, complete ownership of Famous Players Canada Ltd. Viacom’s five principal areas of operation are: broadcasting, publishing, video and music, theme parks and entertainment. Its holdings include Blockbuster Video, MTV, Showtime, Aaron Spelling Productions, Republic Pictures and movie theatres in 11 countries (Moody’s Investors Service, 1997). Investment Canada extracted \$400 million (Cdn) from Viacom in 1996 in exchange for the federal government’s approval of the transfer of ownership of Paramount’s Canadian assets (Enchin, 1996a).

⁷The beverage company Seagram Co. Ltd. acquired 80 per cent of Universal Studios Inc. (formerly MCA Inc.) in 1995 from Matsushita Electric Industrial Co. of Japan. Universal produces and distributes motion picture, television and home video products and recorded music, publishes books, and operates theme parks and retail stores. Seagram also owns just less than 2.3 per cent of Universal’s competitor Time Warner Inc., a holding it has gradually been reducing (Moody’s Investors Service, 1997, 1996; Stroud, 1997; Milner, 1998). A newcomer to the film exhibition markets of Toronto and Montreal is AMC Theatres of Canada, whose parent company is based in Missouri. AMC plans to build 110 screens in Toronto and Montreal, and it is the company behind the conversion of the Montreal Forum into a 30-screen entertainment complex (MacDonald, 1998a; Lamey, 1997b).

⁸In July, 1998, Alliance Communications and Atlantis Communications merged to create Alliance Atlantis Communications, the 12th-largest production and broadcasting company in the world. Michael MacMillan of Atlantis took over as chairman and chief executive officer of the new company, while Alliance chairman and co-founder Robert Lantos announced his decision to return to producing films. Lantos has an exclusive three-year production contract with Alliance Atlantis (Shecter, 1998; MacDonald, 1998b).

⁹At the same time as the CFDC and the tax shelter were making investment capital available to independent producers, the pressure intensified on the NFB and the CBC to externalize production. The private sector had been complaining since at least the late 1940s that the NFB was retarding the development of a Canadian film industry (Evans, 1991, pp. 9-10). Specific bones of contention were the NFB's occasional forays into feature-film production after 1963 and its exclusive right to produce sponsored films for federal government departments, mandated by the Film Act (Evans, 1991, p. 95; Canada, 1977, p. 170). The Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee (known as the Applebaum-Hébert committee) recommended in its 1982 report that the NFB be transformed into a research and training centre and delegate the bulk of its film-making to independent producers (Canada, 1982, pp. 256-265). This recommendation was echoed by the 1984 Film and Video Policy (Canada, 1984) and the 1996 Mandate Review Committee, which noted the inappropriate concentration of 81 per cent of the entire NFB staff at its Côte-de-Liesse production facility in Montreal (Canada 1996, pp. 163-164, 171). The Applebaum-Hébert committee similarly recommended in its 1982 report that the CBC relinquish all of its production activities -- with the exception of its news programming -- to independent producers (Canada, 1982, pp. 292-294). The Caplan-Sauvageau report in 1986 endorsed the CBC's strategy of increasing its proportion of independent production (outside of sports and information programming) to 50 per cent by 1988, noting that the federal Department of Communications had created the Broadcast Program Development Fund in 1983 "partly as a consequence of the unsatisfactory relationship between the CBC and the independent sector" (Canada, 1986, pp. 277-278, 315). Yet as recently as 1996, the Mandate Review Committee again recommended that a majority of CBC programming outside of news, current affairs and sports "should be produced by the independent production community" (Canada, 1996, p. 102).

¹⁰Challenge for Change was a different approach to decentralizing NFB film-making. Its purpose was to provoke social change through the use of video and film by allowing communities throughout Canada to make their own films, with guidance from NFB producers (see Hénault, 1991; Burnett, 1991). From the program's inception in 1967 through to 1979, 83 Challenge for Change films were made (Evans, 1991, p. 176). John Grierson, the NFB's original commissioner, was critical of Challenge for Change as a program of decentralization. While Grierson heard talk of making films "not *about* people but *with* them," he argued: "But not yet is there a real decentralizing of production. The cinéastes may make their films *with* the people and *in* the villages, but they are soon *off* and away *from* the people and the villages to their normal metropolitan milieu" (Grierson, 1977, pp. 133-134).

¹¹One of the best-known NFB films made in Vancouver was *Whistling Smith*, which was nominated for an Academy Award in 1975. A documentary about the unorthodox approach of a Vancouver police officer and directed by Michael Scott and Marrin Canell, it was made by the Montreal production centre (Evans, 1991, p. 235).

Chapter Four

Promote it and They Will Come: Provincial Film Policy in British Columbia

Grace McCarthy traces the beginnings of British Columbia's feature-film industry back to 1976, during a casual conversation she had with Vancouver *Sun* newspaper columnist Jack Wasserman at an arts community awards dinner at Vancouver's Bayshore Inn hotel. At the time, McCarthy was "Madame Socred" -- the former party president and current deputy premier, house leader, provincial secretary and minister of recreation and travel industry -- in William Bennett's newly-elected Social Credit government. Wasserman was the *Sun's* eyes and ears on the entertainment beat.

"There was a lot of talk about [the film industry] in advance," McCarthy (personal communication, June 12, 1997) recalls. "It really just congealed that night at the Bayside Room in the Bayshore Inn when Jack Wasserman said, 'Why don't we have a film industry?', and I said, 'Okay Jack, tell me, why don't we?'"

Wasserman explained to McCarthy that British Columbia was losing Hollywood film business to Alberta and Ontario because visiting film-makers were frustrated at the complications involved in shooting in B.C. Wasserman maintained that all it would take to make the province industry-friendly would be a film office to "pave the way" -- to serve as a liaison with the various levels of government, to facilitate the importation of film equipment and personnel, and to secure the necessary permits for shooting in public locations. McCarthy liked the idea and presented it to Don Phillips, the minister of economic development. When Phillips's ministry proved too busy to deal with such a

small matter, McCarthy investigated the idea herself. In August, 1977, she established British Columbia's first film development office at Robson Square under the auspices of the Ministry of Tourism.

"Frankly, when I started it, I looked at it strictly as an economic development, with a little spin-off for tourism, so it justified putting it in my department," McCarthy explains. "I thought, first of all, it was a job creator. Secondly, we could use it as a tool for tourism. It was justifiable.

"So to this day, it is still in the travel industry portfolio of the provincial government [now the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture], which may make people wonder, because it actually is an economic development initiative first and foremost" (see also, British Columbia, Debates, 1986, May 9, p. 8134).

This anecdote underscores two points. First, in taking the initiative to encourage feature film-making in British Columbia, the provincial government, unlike its federal counterpart, perceived cinema strictly in industrial terms, with no thought at all for its cultural dimension. The promotion of a B.C. film industry would be exclusively an economic development initiative designed to attract foreign capital and create local jobs. Second, Victoria's initial promotional efforts would be directed at Hollywood, with no regard for encouraging local, indigenous production, even at a time when B.C. film-makers were largely excluded from the indigenous production industry based in central Canada. Local producers would have to wait another decade for provincial government assistance in making indigenous films, but even then, the industrial perception of cinema in British Columbia would prevail.

Unlike the federal government (see Dorland, 1998), the B.C. government was reluctant to enlarge its field of jurisdiction into the cultural sphere, and treated filmmaking as an opportunity to expand and diversify the provincial economy. If at first Victoria refused to use public funds for either investment or subsidy, both forms of incentive were introduced after 1986 to protect the gains the industry had made against both *inter-* and *intranational* competition.

This chapter describes three phases of provincial film policy. During the first phase, from 1976 to 1986, Victoria recognized opportunity knocking and established the British Columbia Film Commission to promote foreign location production within the province. The second phase, from 1986 to 1993, was characterized by industry restructuring and diversification. On the one hand, increasing amounts of runaway production and increasing competition for Hollywood location shoots compelled Victoria to address a shortage of studio space in Vancouver. On the other hand, the B.C. film industry's overdependence on Hollywood prompted Victoria to introduce the public funding agency British Columbia Film to encourage more indigenous production. The third phase, from 1993 to the present, was characterized by *intranational* competition, as British Columbia moved to remain competitive with the rival Canadian jurisdictions of Ontario and Quebec by introducing the tax-credit program Film Incentive B.C. as an inducement to both foreign and indigenous producers.

Invitations are sent:

McCarthy's gesture to foreign film-makers was by no means the British Columbia government's first. Provincial highways minister Phil Gaglardi loaned British director Sidney Hayers a plane and pilot to help him scout locations for *The Trap*, part of which was shot at Birkenhead Lake near Pemberton in 1965 ("U.K. filming," 1965). In 1968, the Department of Travel Industry in the W.A.C. Bennett government placed a full-colour advertisement in the Hollywood trade papers encouraging film-makers to shoot in B.C. Entitled "Invitation to Film in British Columbia," the ad was reported to have prompted 41 enquiries (British Columbia, Department of Travel Industry, 1969, p. 57). Again in 1971, the provincial government placed a four-page, full-colour brochure in the Hollywood trade papers. A message from W.A.C. Bennett informed film-makers that "our province offers an endless selection of unspoiled scenic locations suitable for films of every type" and he invited film-makers "to visit a few of our choice 'locations' in the near future" (Associated Press, 1971). Travel minister Ken Kiernan promised that his department's film and photographic branch "is prepared to provide interested film producers with a complete package of information on any location in British Columbia. This can include details of highway, rail and air communications [sic], accommodation, rental equipment, production facilities, technical staffs and talent" (in Wedman, 1971). In concert with its advertising campaign, the provincial government hired Ivan Stauffer to act as British Columbia's representative in Los Angeles. "We don't want to take away any production that can be done in Hollywood," Stauffer said at the time. "But we can offer unparalleled scenery, as well as production costs that are considerably less than

here” (Thomas, 1971).

The B.C. government was encouraged in this direction by the modest, yet regular, number of Hollywood features that were shot in the province between 1969 and 1971, including *That Cold Day in the Park*, *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*, *Five Easy Pieces* and *Carnal Knowledge*. Vancouver director Daryl Duke nonetheless cautioned: “This is never going to be another Hollywood. But you can figure that Vancouver is a good location for three, four, five films a year” (Studer, 1971).

David G. Murphy (1997) argues that organized labour prepared much of the groundwork for Victoria’s efforts. Local freelance technicians had chartered a branch of the American film technicians’ union (International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and Moving Picture Machine Operators, Local 891) in 1962 to service runaway productions, and a group of local technicians, producers and service providers founded the British Columbia Film Industry Association as a lobby group in 1964. As early as 1975, IATSE Local 891 sent its business agent to Hollywood to drum up film business for British Columbia (pp. 534-536).

The New Democratic Party government of Dave Barrett, which came to power in August, 1972, tried over the next two years to find a more comprehensive role for Victoria in the development of a B.C. feature-film industry, but it was largely unsuccessful. As early as October, 1972, Premier Barrett, education minister Eileen Dailly and minister of industrial development, trade and commerce Alex Macdonald held a meeting with Peter Jones, executive producer of the National Film Board’s regional production office in Vancouver. They discussed the possibility of the B.C. government

co-financing feature films with the NFB (NAC, MG 31, D210, Vol. 3, File 3.14). In an October 25, 1974 letter from Jones to Gary Lauk, who had succeeded Macdonald as minister of industrial development, trade and commerce, further reference is made to the B.C. government's plans to develop a film policy (NAC, MG 31, D210, Vol. 3, File 3.18). By November, 1974, however, Lauk was dispelling hopes that the B.C. government could participate in the launch of a local film industry. Money had become tight and the B.C. government had higher priorities. While Lauk remained in favour of the development of an indigenous film industry in Canada, he was opposed both to screen quotas -- "because it offends my sense of freedom" -- and government grants to film-makers -- "because management becomes less effective, doesn't have to meet payments and it all becomes Vanity Productions" (Wedman, 1974).¹

In June, 1975, the B.C. Film Industry Association perceived a crisis in the provincial film industry and requested a meeting with the Barrett government. In a six-page brief to the premier, Bob Linnell of the BCFIA outlined four principal problems: there was a decline in the number of features being shot in British Columbia; this decline was prompted in large part by the lack of access to distribution and exhibition networks; the provincial government had no department dedicated to film industry concerns; and the B.C. government had made no attempt to communicate with the film industry. Linnell proposed that the provincial government establish a film office to act as a liaison with the local industry and to promote film-making in the province (Walsh, 1975).

Linnell's comments echoed similar concerns expressed by film producers throughout Canada, who were beginning to remark the failure of Canadian Film

Development Corporation investment to gain better access for Canadian films to Canadian cinema screens. Sandra Gathercole, head of the Council of Canadian Filmmakers, went so far as to describe the Canadian film industry as a “national disgrace,” owing to the federal government’s “timidity” in the face of Hollywood’s dominance (United Press International, 1976). Among the proposals being aired by Canadian producers were box-office levies and exhibition quotas (see Walsh, 1972; Shields, 1973). In February, 1974, a group of 20 film-makers, among them Denys Arcand, Don Shebib and Peter Pearson, signed the Winnipeg Manifesto following a Canadian film symposium at the University of Manitoba. Arguing that the “present system of film production/distribution/exhibition works to the extreme disadvantage of the Canadian film-maker and film audience,” the manifesto called for three immediate measures: public financing of feature films through a federal government production company; a national film marketing board; and a system of quotas (Walsh, 1974). The crisis in the Canadian film industry was particularly severe for English-language production; after having made 13 English-language features in 1972, only six were produced in 1973 and four in 1974 (Farrer, 1975).

Everything short of investment:

While the federal government responded to the crisis in Canadian cinema with its 1974 capital-cost allowance program in an attempt to increase private investment in what it saw as an important national cultural industry, the B.C. government took a very different tack. Victoria maintained its perception of film production as regional industrial

development and opted for a strategy of promoting foreign location production when the Social Credit party returned to power in December, 1975. After all, Hollywood had continued to frequent the province as a film location -- the films *The Groundstar Conspiracy*, *Master of Images*, *Harry in Your Pocket*, *The Rainbow Gang* and *Russian Roulette* were among those made in B.C. between 1972 and 1975 -- and there was good reason to believe that, with the right kind of promotional effort, more film and television shoots could be attracted to the province (MacIntyre, 1996).

Social Credit was a private-enterprise party which perceived the state's proper role in society as fostering an economic environment in which the private sector could flourish. The party had governed the province from 1952-72, and would not relinquish power to the NDP again until 1991. In his March, 1981 budget speech, Finance Minister Hugh Curtis summarized the Socred position this way: "Our priorities flow from our economic philosophy, which is to encourage and coordinate growth in the private sector. Let me put it quite bluntly. We want to help without meddling" (Debates, 1981, March 9, p. 4407).²

This philosophy applied to cultural activity as well. Throughout the late 1970s, the Social Credit government responded to New Democratic Party opposition demands for a comprehensive provincial cultural policy by repeating its *laissez-faire* stance. Replying to a July 26, 1979 complaint by NDP MLA Charles Barber that the province lacked a cultural policy, Curtis, then the Provincial Secretary and Minister of Government Services, informed the Legislative Assembly: "I'm not sure that government should attempt to develop a cultural policy.... If you have a provincial government cultural

policy, that suggests that it's going to be imposed from above; it's going to be laid on the arts community" (Debates, 1979, July 26, pp. 1036-1037). The extent of the provincial government's commitment to cultural practice at the time was a \$10-million endowment. Victoria established the \$5-million Centennial Cultural Fund in March, 1967, "for the purpose of stimulating the cultural development of the people of the Province" (B.C. Statutes, 1967, Chapter 7, p. 23), adding another \$5 million in March, 1972 when it changed the fund's name to the B.C. Cultural Fund (B.C. Statutes, 1972, Chapter 10, p. 25).³

In 1986, in the context of a discussion of the province's program of matching grants for local and regional cultural initiatives, Grace McCarthy, then Provincial Secretary and Minister of Government Services, described both the B.C. Festival of the Arts and the 100th anniversary of the provincial museum as boosts to tourism and the economy, with no mention of their heritage value. Cultural events, McCarthy told the Legislative Assembly, have become

an important part of the provincial economy and are significant factors in the tourism industry. It's clearly time for communities throughout the province to enter into partnerships and increase funding levels to reflect the importance of the arts in British Columbia. Cultural industries form one of our largest business sectors. They are the country's fourth largest employer (Debates, 1986, June 2, pp. 8480-8481).

This attitude toward cultural activity would also inform provincial film policy. As it became clear in 1976 that the Socred government was investigating the establishment of a film office, the B.C. Film Industry Association was pushing McCarthy to adopt a two-pronged strategy. In a letter to McCarthy dated August 22, 1976, BCFIA treasurer

Kirk Tougas maintained that the objectives of the film office should be “to attract foreign feature film productions to the province” *and* “to encourage feature films produced by B.C. filmmakers” (BCARS, GR 1672, BO 6242). This insistence upon an indigenous element to the provincial film strategy was consistent with the BCFIA’s push to increase British Columbia’s share of Canadian film production. In a brief dated April, 1977 and addressed to federal Secretary of State John Roberts, the BCFIA’s Feature Film Committee argued that Canada needed a cinema which represented all regions of the country, and that British Columbia needed a film industry that was not dependent on foreign production. “We want to see more films made that are relative [sic] to Canadian lives -- we want to see them made in all regions of Canada, so that above all, Canadians may have an opportunity to see how the other half, or quarter lives” (BCARS, GR 1672, BO 6242).

McCarthy was all in favour of encouraging local film production, provided that ‘encouragement’ did not take the form of provincial government subsidy. This position was evident in her response to a request by Mr. R. Tarplett of West Kootenay Film Productions in Trail that film production be eligible for grants from the B.C. Cultural Fund. In a November 8, 1976 letter denying Tarplett’s request, McCarthy explained: “It would seem to us that the future of the industry lies in self-sufficiency. If the industry is to grow and prosper it must be as a healthy competitive industry with the support of the Government of British Columbia, but not subsidized by the Government of British Columbia” (BCARS, GR 1672, BO 6242). Asked in a recent interview why her government did not address local, indigenous production as the BCFIA advocated,

McCarthy (1997) said the federal government had assumed that responsibility through the Canadian Film Development Corporation and the Canada Council.

In effect the national government was really addressing that. I was more interested in getting the business end of it here -- to support our artists here, but to support it in a stand-alone, they-earn-their-way, not-to-be-subsidized way. To me, that was the key. And yes, it was totally a commercial venture on behalf of those who paid out the money, the private sector. We simply just made it easy for them; that was our motivation.

McCarthy was supported in this position by her deputy minister, Wayne R. Currie. In a May 5, 1977 memo to McCarthy, Currie noted that of 300 productions funded by the Canadian Film Development Corporation through 1976, only seven had recouped their production costs and only three had made "a modest profit." Currie wrote:

I would suggest the funding of motion picture production by Government is not an attractive investment opportunity, and would constitute an extremely expensive 'incentive' to attract production to the Province. I believe our policy should be one of utmost co-operation, cutting red tape, facilitating production, finding locations, etc. -- in short -- everything short of investing in the production itself (BCARS, GR 1672, BO 6245).

McCarthy felt that film *promotion* was one area in which government enjoyed an advantage over the private sector. To illustrate this point, she recalled once receiving a frantic phone call from a film location on Vancouver Island. The crew needed federal government permission to shoot a scene in which a plane bearing U.S. markings was to fly over the set. While the crew stood waiting, McCarthy called B.C. Senator Ray Perrault in Ottawa, who in turn called Transport Canada. Within hours permission was granted. "The big thing about a film development office," McCarthy (1997) explained,

“is they can open doors and pave the way as a private-sector person couldn’t.”

Spectacular view, reasonable prices:

McCarthy hired Wolfgang Richter as B.C. film officer in August, 1977. A North Vancouver teacher who had worked in distribution at the National Film Board, Richter was one of 120 applicants for the job. His principal functions would be to: promote British Columbia as a film location; facilitate film shoots; and serve film-makers in a public relations capacity. While the primary target for his efforts would be Hollywood, Richter also hoped to attract film-makers from elsewhere in Canada (Wedman, 1977). By April, 1978, however, Richter had been dismissed for unspecified reasons, and he was replaced on a temporary basis by veteran production manager Bob Gray. Gray was in turn replaced by producer Justis Greene in August of that year (Wedman, 1978; “B.C. really getting into the picture,” 1978).

While British Columbia attracted just four film projects in each of 1977 and 1978 -- fewer films, in fact, than the province had attracted in each of the previous four years (British Columbia Motion Picture Association, 1992) -- 1979 proved to be a breakthrough year. Sixteen productions responsible for \$50 million in direct spending were filmed in the province. The suspense film *Bear Island*, starring Donald Sutherland, Vanessa Redgrave and Richard Widmark, was responsible for \$13.5 million alone. Noting that Canadians comprised between 75 and 85 per cent of the production crews, Greene said: “We don’t claim to be the best place in the world to shoot pictures. We just find that we shoot more pictures for less money with the same visual appeal” (Shepherd, 1980;

Ministry of Tourism and Small Business Development, 1980).

Besides the spending the province attracted, the nascent British Columbia feature-film industry enjoyed a certain amount of critical acclaim-by-association when two of the features shot in the province in 1979 were nominated for best Canadian picture at the 1980 Genie Awards. Starring Hollywood actor George C. Scott, Peter Medak's *The Changeling* -- the eventual Genie winner -- was shot on location in Vancouver and at Hatley Park in Victoria, and Peter Carter's *Klondike Fever*, starring Rod Steiger, Angie Dickinson and Lorne Greene, was shot at Barkerville. Both films were part of the \$185-million boom in Canadian production in 1979 that was sparked by the federal government's liberalization of the tax-shelter rules (Walsh, 1980a; MacIntyre, 1996; Locherty, 1979; Canadian Press, 1979; Warren, 1980).

British Columbia followed up on its 1979 success with another record year in 1980. Of the 15 projects -- 12 feature films, two television series, one made-for-TV movie -- responsible for \$65.8 million in direct spending were two Canadian features (Ministry of Tourism, 1981). Celebrated Quebec director Claude Jutra shot the \$3.3-million *By Design* in Vancouver (Walsh, 1980b) and the promising local director Phillip Borsos shot his first feature, the \$3.48-million *The Grey Fox*, in the B.C. Interior. Borsos earned an Academy Award nomination in 1980 for his documentary short *Nails*, which had been produced with the assistance of the NFB's Vancouver office in 1979. *The Grey Fox*, which recounted the story of Bill Miner, the first train robber in Canadian history, was to become one of the most highly regarded Canadian features ever produced (Wedman, 1980).⁴

While a Hollywood labour dispute slowed production in 1981, and the tax-shelter boom in Canadian production subsided, British Columbia was being proclaimed “Hollywood North” by 1982. The province attracted an unprecedented 16 major film productions that year, including *First Blood* (with Sylvester Stallone and Brian Dennehy), *Star 80* (Mariel Hemingway and Cliff Robertson) and *The Terry Fox Story* (Robert Duvall and Chris Makepeace). What gave the Hollywood North nickname added credence was that while the latter two films were based on the real-life stories of two British Columbians -- murdered *Playboy* Playmate Dorothy Stratten and cancer-stricken, cross-Canada runner Terry Fox -- they were told by Hollywood film-makers (Mulgrew, 1982). Hollywood was now not only using British Columbia’s locations, but was appropriating local stories.

Dianne Neufeld succeeded Justis Greene as director of what was now called the B.C. Film Commission in November, 1982, and while she found herself competing for location film production with more than 100 other jurisdictions throughout North America, she was confident in being able to build on Greene’s success in attracting Hollywood to British Columbia with the promise of an 80-cent dollar and a “wealth of locations” (Mulgrew, 1982). Notoriously high wages for production crews in California and the desire for more realistic locations increasingly drove Hollywood film-makers to leave the state as the 1980s progressed. *The Economist* reported in March, 1984 that whereas 51 per cent of the feature-film productions initiated in California in 1981 were subsequently shot there, that figure had dropped to 29 per cent in 1982. Between 1981 and 1982, total film production in the United States dropped by 37 per cent (“Hollywood

leaves home,” 1984). So-called “runaway production” cost the state of California an estimated \$1.6 billion (US) between 1979 and 1982 as film-makers moved production to New York City, Texas, Toronto and Vancouver (Foote, 1984). By 1984, an estimated 70 per cent of the major studios’ feature films were being made outside California, costing the state between \$1 and \$1.5 billion in spending. “Hollywood has priced itself out of the market,” declared Steven Spielberg (Blowen, 1985).⁵

British Columbia capitalized on its ability to provide locations to suit all purposes. The province can play any number of narrative settings -- mountain wilderness, sea-swept coastline, urban jungle -- depending on the needs of the production, and most of these settings can be found within easy reach of Vancouver. Typically, Vancouver is transformed into an American city such as Seattle or San Francisco, even New York, and British Columbia becomes part of the United States’ Pacific Northwest region.

Growing Pains:

If the strength of the B.C. feature-film industry to this point was its cost advantages and its diverse locations, its success in attracting film production soon revealed two structural weaknesses: a shortage of both studio space and post-production capacity. In addition, there was increasing concern that the predominance of foreign location production -- accounting for an estimated 85 per cent of direct spending between 1979 and 1985, 90 per cent of which came from the United States (Cawdery, 1985, p. 2) -- left the industry exceedingly vulnerable to fluctuations in the currency-exchange rate. The B.C. economy had long been characterized by the boom and bust cycles of the

resource industries, and there was fear that the film industry was leaving itself similarly exposed to external factors beyond British Columbia's control.

While the film industry was nowhere near as important to the provincial economy as forestry, mining and fishing, it had quickly earned a reputation as a growth industry at a time when British Columbia was mired in recession. No longer simply a novelty on the economic landscape, film-making had gained credibility as a job-generator, creating not only direct employment for film crews, but indirect employment in all those ancillary industries which serve the film industry: hospitality, construction, transportation, etc.⁶ Statistics indicated that the film industry was more than twice as labour-intensive as the forest industry and almost five times more labour-intensive than mining (See Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Selected British Columbia Industries, 1983

Industry	Gross Revenues	Employment	Gross revenues per employee
Forestry	\$7,580 million	90,100	\$84,000
Mining	\$2,860 million	16,600	\$173,000
Tourism	\$2,150 million	86,000	\$25,000
Agriculture	\$910 million	33,000	\$28,000
Fishing	\$440 million	24,000	\$18,000
Electronics manuf.	\$420 million	6,000	\$70,000
Film and Video ^a	\$92 million	2,550	\$36,000

^aThese figures include documentaries, commercials, shorts, etc.

Sources: British Columbia Ministry of Finance, Canada Employment and Immigration (in Testar, 1985, pp. 74-76).

A 1985 study by Jack Cawdery of Quantalytics Inc. of Vancouver for the crown British Columbia Development Corporation described studio facilities as the “weak link” in B.C.’s array of production facilities (Cawdery, 1985). Excluding commercial and community television operations, there were three sound stages at Panorama Studios in West Vancouver, two sound stages at the Vancouver and Associated Studios on Richards St. downtown, and one silent stage at the Dominion Bridge site on the Burnaby side of Boundary Rd. at Grandview Highway. The Panorama Studios, built in 1962, presented two problems. First, it was not clear that the complex was commercially stable. Panorama Estates purchased the 2.8-hectare site in 1982 with the intention of re-zoning part of the property for a housing development. But as of June, 1985, re-zoning had not been approved and the entire property was for sale (Gill, 1985). Secondly, the configuration and limited size of Panorama’s three sound stages had already precluded the shooting of a number of feature films there, films which opted instead for the Dominion Bridge site. Cawdery (1985) concluded that “the Panorama facilities appear to lack some of the flexibility that the industry is now seeking” (p. 6).

Size was Dominion Bridge’s greatest asset; with 50,000 square feet of floor space and a 55-foot ceiling, it was larger than any similar California facility and had attracted \$33 million in film production between 1983 and 1985. Cawdery, however, noted that “the facility is in an obvious state of disrepair, and from a technical standpoint has little, if anything, to offer at present.” The Dominion Bridge site would require significant and expensive upgrading if it was to continue to serve film-makers’ needs (p. 6).

The second structural weakness noted by Cawdery -- post-production capacity -- was less pressing, but Vancouver's underdeveloped post-production sector was allowing potential revenues to escape and could ultimately inhibit expansion of the film industry.⁷

The local industry still has many of the characteristics of a location industry. Producers come to B.C. from the U.S., Eastern Canada, Europe and Japan, but there are very few indigenous producers and a large share of the post-production activity still occurs outside B.C. Post-production activity is thus under-represented in the province relative to the production activity taking place (p. 7).

While local producers tended to be the most faithful patrons of post-production services, a healthy post-production sector would be an added attraction with which British Columbia could entice non-resident producers.

British Columbia's dependence on foreign location production and its marginal position within the Canadian film industry -- of approximately 160 independent Canadian feature films and television programs produced in 1984, only six were made in B.C. (Testar, 1985, p. i) -- also compromised the future viability of the west coast film industry. A 1985 *Task Force Report on the Motion Picture Industry in British Columbia*, prepared by Gerald Testar for the B.C. Film and Video Industry Association, proposed a number of ways to redress the foreign-domestic production imbalance. Testar (1985) argued: "The task before the industry, in British Columbia, is to increasingly turn our American employers into our clients and, like any ambitious employee with an entrepreneurial [sic] aptitude, to find a variety of ways in which this might take place" (p. 7).

The industrial strategy Testar proposed was to emphasize the development and

production of made-for-television movies which could be sold to the lucrative American market.

Our close association through language and work experience and our understanding of the business influences affecting our neighbor, suggests that we might profitably engage in further developing the market base for British Columbia's own motion pictures. The most accessible level of entry into the American marketplace appears to be the low end, feature length drama for television -- an area of production in which members of the British Columbia industry have become particularly skilled in creating, for American owned companies. Our own export oriented motion picture projects, under the control of B.C. companies, should be encouraged to enter this market (p. 56).

This export strategy sought to exploit British Columbia film-makers' familiarity with American television and their first-hand experience of working on such movies to enable B.C. film companies to conceive, produce and claim an equity stake in programming, instead of simply acting as contractors by executing projects initiated by Hollywood.

A key requirement of this strategy, however, was provincial government investment. Testar's report recommended that Victoria adopt a 30-per-cent tax credit for British Columbians who invested in B.C. companies involved in film and television development and production, and he recommended a two-pronged B.C. Film and Television Industry Development Programme. The first element of this program would be a system of financial incentives for script and project development. The second element would be a Film and Television Production Bank, charged with allocating equity investment and loans for B.C. production. The program was to be funded by new revenues derived from a seven-per-cent tax on pay-television subscriptions (pp. 58-59). Testar also proposed a 25-per-cent B.C.-content requirement for the Knowledge Network,

the provincial government's educational broadcaster, which would create a captive market for B.C. producers (p. 61).

Reformulating provincial film policy:

The feature-film industry in British Columbia had grown so quickly over its first decade that by 1985 there were clear signs it had reached capacity, and future expansion would require something more than simply publicizing west-coast locations and a cheap dollar. In 1985, the B.C. Film Commission reported that it turned away film projects with combined budgets of \$50 million because British Columbia had neither enough trained personnel nor sufficient studio facilities to handle the workload (Audley, 1986, p. 10). Two 1986 studies of the industry -- by Brad Quenville for the B.C. Film and Video Industry Association and by Paul Audley for the B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Recreation and Culture -- supported Testar's conclusion that some kind of provincial government investment in the industry had become a necessity in order to maintain British Columbia's viability as a film location and to remain competitive with Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec, each of which had recently established provincial film agencies to stimulate both foreign service production and indigenous film-making. The context of film production in British Columbia had changed so dramatically since 1976 that the provincial government had little choice but to adopt a more interventionist stance if the film industry was to restructure and diversify.

While Quenville (1986) acknowledged the B.C. film industry's accomplishments in the introduction to his report -- noting, for example, that in 1985 British Columbia was

the third most-popular site of runaway production in North America (pp. 3-4) -- he argued that, for both cultural and industrial reasons, the industry remained perilously dependent upon foreign location production. The B.C. Film Commission has been a success in building an industry, Quenville remarked, but

it has not been a showcase for B.C. culture. Ninety percent of B.C. involvement in American productions is in the provision of either technical or support services ... Therefore, generously speaking only about 10% of B.C. input into American films is creative in nature and that which is, is accredited to the American producer. Nor have American productions provided the province with the "world exposure" that was anticipated when the BCFC was put under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Tourism. Instead B.C. film personnel have been involved in contributing to the predominance of American pop culture and the province has been camouflaged to play many roles and in the words of the BCFC's film commissioner, Dianne Neufeld, "particularly the role of Nowheresville, USA." It will only be indigenous production that will be able to to [sic] accrue the benefits to B.C. obtained through showcasing B.C.'s culture and scenery to the world (pp. 7-9).

Quenville described the industry as "fragily [sic] tied to the exchange rate" and lamented the lack of any ongoing capital commitment on the part of foreign producers (p. 9).

Indigenous film production in British Columbia remained a "cottage industry" which was doubly marginalized. On the one hand, it suffered the effects of Hollywood's hegemony in the Canadian cinema market. Quenville argued: "The greatest constipating force inhibiting B.C. film production, as it does across Canada and in many foreign countries, has been the domination of film distribution and exhibition by largely vertically integrated foreign, primarily American, distribution companies" (p. 17). On the other hand, British Columbia was marginalized by the concentration of the Canadian film and television industries in Toronto and Montreal (pp. 26-35).

If federal government policy-makers were seeking to address the problem of Hollywood hegemony through the Film Industry Task Force (see Canada, 1985) -- and, subsequently, the Mulroney government's proposed Film Products Importation Act in 1988 (see Pendakur, 1990; Magder, 1993) -- Quenville argued that provincial government initiative was required to remedy B.C. film-makers' marginalization within the Canadian cinema. Quenville noted that if the centralist policies of the federal film institutions -- Telefilm Canada, the National Film Board, the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. -- had largely failed B.C. producers, federal support nonetheless represented 97.1 per cent (\$7,155,241) of the direct support the province's indigenous producers received in the fiscal year 1984-85. "Most blatantly insufficient is the current level of provincial support; the province supplying only 1/33 of that supplied by the federal government" (pp. 40-41). The B.C. government offered no film-specific support programs, and therefore offered no remedy to the "centripetal funding flow" (p. 43).⁸

In recommending that the B.C. government develop a funding policy for indigenous film, as Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec had already done, Quenville's key insight was to highlight the economic relationship of interdependence -- known as leveraging -- between provincial government funding programs and investment from federal government and private-sector sources. That is, provincial support provided film-makers with leverage in seeking public and private investment. As an example, Quenville noted that, in its first year of operation (1985-86), Film Manitoba estimated that its investment of \$356,000 in local film projects had leveraged an additional \$609,000 of funding from other sources. "The most dramatic effects of each of these

provinces' policies has been not only to increase the provincial motion picture production but in so doing, to lever greater funding from federal and private sources" (pp. 45-46).

The Alberta Motion Picture Development Corporation was established in 1982 to administer a \$3-million loan fund from the provincial Department of Economic Development over five years, and as of July, 1986, had injected \$1.3 million into the Alberta film industry (pp. 57-60).

The government of Quebec established La Société générale du cinéma du Québec in 1983, which provided an average of \$10 million per year in support of private-sector film production, more than any other province.⁹ Quebec's revised Cinema Act (1985) contained six objectives of provincial film policy, among them: the establishment and development of the artistic, industrial and commercial infrastructure of the film industry; the development of a Quebec cinema, and the spread of cinematic works and culture to all parts of Quebec; the establishment and development of independent and financially autonomous Quebec production companies; and the participation of television enterprises in producing and broadcasting Quebec films. This mandate, Quenville noted, "places high reverence on the cultural significance of indigenous film products" (pp. 68-72).

The government of Manitoba signed a five-year, \$21-million Subsidiary Agreement in Communications and Cultural Enterprises under the Regional Economic Development Agreement with Ottawa in 1984, \$3.25 million of which was to be committed to film and video investment by Film Manitoba. Film Manitoba was established explicitly as a leveraging vehicle, to provide incentive for private investment in the film industry and to increase Manitoba producers' access to federal sources of

funding, especially Telefilm Canada (pp. 61-63).

Finally, the Ontario government established the Ontario Film Development Corporation in January, 1986 with a budget of \$20 million to be spent in equal proportions over three years. Quenville summarized: "The mandate of the OFDC is to stimulate employment, investment and growth in Ontario's motion picture industry and in so doing increase the opportunities for those involved in Ontario's motion picture industry." Offering financial assistance in the forms of equity investment, loans and guaranteed lines of credit, the OFDC's primary focus would be low-budget feature films (budgets under \$3 million), but would also include documentaries and television programming (pp. 63-68).

Based on these provinces' experiences, Quenville advised that the British Columbia government's best option would be to develop a policy of industrial development, rather than trying to straddle the fence between cultural and industrial development, as Ontario had done with the OFDC and the federal government had done with its Capital Cost Allowance Program. "Opting for a mandate of industrial development will not preclude cultural development as well. As long as there is input by B.C. creative personnel; directors, actors, designers and particularly scriptwriters, there will be cultural input" (pp. 74-75).

Quenville's recommendation was the product of pragmatism and a desire for accountability. The B.C. film industry was operating under both fiscal and market constraints, which meant that "B.C. producers are unlikely to ever afford to produce, for example, an American-style feature length product, targeted at the mass market" (p. 75).

... the state of the B.C. economy is one that calls for government programs which have strong economic rationale. A development agency whose mandate was based solely [on] industrial development, could be audited to ensure that this provincial investment had sound economic justification. Job creation, revenue growth, and capital expansion could all be measured and quantified. Alternatively, a mandate based fully or partially upon cultural development could not so easily be evaluated. Objective economic results would be clouded with subjective evaluations of cultural output (p. 76).

Reminiscent of earlier statements by provincial politicians, Quenville added:

Perhaps the most damaging aspect of a culturally driven mandate is the uncertainty it will endow in the heart of the private sector. The tendency of a cultural programs [sic] to maintain a path of social dependency and inefficiency, tarnish their marketability as a suitable investment for the private sector. Rather, the private sector is far more likely to invest in an industry if the mandate that drives it, follows their own sense of business logic. This way, its actions and reactions are more predictable, reducing the associated investment risk (p. 77).

Quenville recommended that Victoria establish a B.C. Film Development Corporation under the auspices of the Ministry of Economic Development. The film development agency would be run on "sound business principles" by a chief executive officer and a board of directors, with a jury system to govern project selection. With a proposed budget of between \$4 million and \$6 million per year (funded either by a box-office levy or a tax on basic cable television service), its criteria for funding support "should be determined on the basis of what will best enhance the development of B.C.'s indigenous film production industry," such as B.C. content, producers' expertise and marketability (pp. 81-82). The most effective form of assistance, Quenville concluded, would be loan financing -- "It encourages the producer to plan more carefully and target his output at a realistic market" -- but assistance should vary according to the risk

associated with each stage of production (pp. 89-90).

The Audley report, which was released in December, 1986, signalled a fundamental reformulation of provincial film policy.¹⁰ Audley was commissioned by the provincial Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Recreation and Culture to determine “whether there are actions the Government of British Columbia could take which would substantially increase the share of Canadian production carried out by producers in the province.” Secondly, Audley was to recommend ways the B.C. film industry could increase both the volume of non-resident production and increase the percentage of film projects’ total budgets spent in the province (Audley, 1986, p. 26).

Audley concluded that B.C.-based producers faced three central limitations in their efforts to expand the indigenous production base. First, few local companies had sufficient levels of capitalization to manage a substantial volume of audiovisual production. Second, producers in B.C. lacked access to provincial government support. “Since the federal support programs are location-neutral, the question of whether the producers in a province have access to provincial support is now having an important affect [sic] on the level of production activity they can undertake” (pp. 40-41). Third, B.C. producers were geographically distant from the head offices of both the private and public-sector film and television institutions (p. 41). “One of the difficulties producers based in British Columbia must confront is the fact that most decisions related to the production of English-language Canadian films and television programs are made in Toronto For producers without an established reputation the result is extreme difficulty in finding opportunities for production” (p. 32).

Noting that B.C. government expenditures accounted for a measly 1.3-per-cent share of total provincial government expenditures across Canada for the support of film and video production in fiscal 1984-85 (p. 41), Audley recommended Victoria establish a three-year, \$10.5-million funding program to support indigenous film-making through investment, loans, loan guarantees and subsidies. "The program would provide assistance to production companies based in the province with an emphasis on the development of production projects, the production of feature films and television programs, and distribution and marketing of B.C. productions both in Canada and in export markets" (pp. 45-46). A wide range of productions would be eligible -- theatrical features, documentaries and animated films, TV movies, pilots, miniseries and sequels, as well as children's and educational TV programs -- provided they were shot primarily in British Columbia and 75 per cent of their budgets were spent in the province (p. 48).

Audley argued that such a program would produce significant employment benefits in a labour-intensive industry, and would "promote diversification and expansion in the economy." Besides the increased leverage this would afford producers seeking federal funding, it would also stimulate private investment. "Based on consultations with the industry, the expansion of domestic production is also likely to lead to increased private investment in expanding post-production facilities in the province." This, in turn, would likely encourage foreign producers to spend a greater share of their budgets in British Columbia (pp. 50-52).

Audley also recommended the provincial government amend the 1985 Small Business Venture Capital Act to allow Venture Capital Corporations to invest in

indigenous film and video production companies (pp. 52-53) and he recommended that the Knowledge Network become a licensed television broadcaster so that licence agreements with the provincial educational broadcaster would allow B.C. producers to qualify for Telefilm's Broadcast Program Development Fund (p. 54).

Investing in the film industry:

Audley's recommendations were largely endorsed by a new Social Credit government, which had won re-election under William Vander Zalm in October, 1986. Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Culture Bill Reid unveiled the Film Development Society of British Columbia (B.C. Film) in September, 1987, as the centrepiece in the government's new film strategy. A three-year, \$10.5-million film fund to be financed by B.C. Lotteries proceeds, B.C. Film's programs would include: direct loans (at a rate of prime plus one per cent) for pre-production, promotion and distribution; equity investment and loans for production; and direct grants for professional development. Preference was to be given to productions based on literary properties which originated in British Columbia and to projects which qualified for eight out of 10 points under the Canadian-content definitions used by the Capital Cost Allowance program, but six-point productions would also be eligible.¹¹ B.C. Film required applicants to exercise a minimum 50 per cent of financial and creative control of eligible projects (Audley, 1992, pp. 5-6; "B.C. Film," 1987; Andrews, 1987b).

Conceding that it was not easy to convince his cabinet colleagues to spend \$10.5 million on indigenous film-making, Reid justified the program in terms of its

contributions to British Columbia's economic diversification and its tourism industry. Reid said the establishment of the funding program was an acknowledgement by the Social Credit government of the "key role of service industries" in a restructuring provincial economy emerging from years of recession, noting that B.C. Film "will translate into jobs and diversification." Moreover, Reid vowed, the images of British Columbia the film industry presented to movie-goers all over the world would be a boost to the tourism industry, following up on the success of Expo '86 in Vancouver ("B.C. Film," 1987).¹²

The decision to establish B.C. Film, Audley (1992) maintained, was taken "in the context of a number of changes in the environment within which the film industry in the province functioned" (p. 3). These changes included: expanded federal government support for audiovisual production with the introduction of the Broadcast Fund (1983) and the Feature Film Fund (1986); the failure of B.C. producers to take advantage of this increased federal funding; the underdevelopment of B.C.'s post-production sector; the need for the diversification of a resource-based provincial economy with an expanding population; the availability of a growing film industry labour force; the volatility of foreign location production; and growing industry assistance from other provincial governments (pp. 3-5).¹³

A good example of the importance of leverage was provided by the first film to receive B.C. Film support. The \$2.35-million feature *The Outside Chance of Maximilian Glick*, by Vancouver producers Stephen Foster and Richard Davis, also received funding from Telefilm Canada, the CBC, the NFB, Rogers Telefilm, British Columbia Television

and the Canada-Manitoba Cultural Industries Development Office (Andrews, 1988). Similarly, the \$2.8-million B.C. film *Terminal City Ricochet* received \$1.2 million from Telefilm, \$500,000 from B.C. Film (including a \$90,000 loan), \$500,000 from private sources and deferrals worth \$388,000 (Hunter, 1988).

If the establishment of B.C. Film was the Vander Zalm government's principal intervention in the film industry, there were others. Just three days before the 1986 election, Victoria announced it would provide a \$5-million loan to private industry for the renovation of the Dominion Bridge industrial site ("Film studio start," 1986). In November, 1986, film-makers Colin Browne and Patricia Gruben of Simon Fraser University's Centre for the Arts established Praxis with \$240,000 in funding from the provincial Ministry of Education. The goal of Praxis was to generate independent, low-budget feature films written and produced by Canadians, and it began its work by offering a six-week program of workshops, seminars and private script conferences (Andrews, 1987a). In 1987, the Vander Zalm government also adopted Audley's recommendation to make film production companies eligible for investment under the Small Business Venture Capital Act (Audley, 1993b, pp. 49-50). In 1989, the Cultural Services Branch of the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry Responsible for Culture established the Film and Video Production Assistance Program, offering between \$10,000 and \$25,000 to independent productions -- in the genres of animation, documentary, drama and experimental -- in which the artist involved has total creative control (Audley, 1993b, p. 56).

Substantial new investment in the B.C. film industry also came from Hollywood,

when television producer Stephen J. Cannell Productions purchased the 14.6-acre Park and Tilford distillery site in North Vancouver in April, 1987, and announced plans to build a \$20-million, seven-sound-stage film complex to be called North Shore Studios. The principal tenant would be Cannell Films of Canada, Ltd., but rental space would also be made available on the Hollywood-style film lot. "North Shore Studios will be a significant film magnet for Vancouver," declared Cannell president Michael Dubelko, whose company had since 1979 produced 12 prime-time American television series, including *The 'A' Team* and *Hardcastle and McCormick* (Lewis, 1987). The B.C. government later contributed a \$4.3-million loan towards construction (Read, 1988).

The B.C. film industry diversifies:

The B.C. film industry enjoyed a spectacular average annual growth rate of 40 per cent from 1978 to 1989, when direct spending on film and television production in the province cracked the \$200-million mark for the first time (Lacey, 1989; Luke, 1991). The provincial government support provided by B.C. Film after 1987 had the anticipated effect of spurring local, indigenous production, but Hollywood location activity would remain the driving force behind British Columbia film-making well into the 1990s.

Among the film-making regions of Canada, British Columbia, in fact, remained unique in its heavy reliance upon foreign service production (see Audley, 1989, pp. 135-136).

In a cost-benefit analysis of B.C. Film's first five years of operation, Paul Audley (1992) concluded that the provincial government funding program "greatly exceeded" its goal of generating \$4 for each dollar of support it provided to B.C. producers.¹⁴ B.C.

Film contributed \$16.3 million to 62 indigenous film and television projects from 1987-88 to 1991-92, principally in the form of equity financing (See Table 4.2). Projects funded by B.C. Film attracted another \$65.4 million from federal government sources in this period. B.C. Film also contributed \$200,000 to non-theatrical production (compared to federal support of \$1.1 million) and \$500,000 to script and project development (compared to \$1.8 million in federal support) (pp. iv-v). "At the federal level the availability of B.C. Film funding not only triggered expanded Telefilm funding, but also increased support from other federal agencies and programs, including the National Film Board (NFB) -- although its involvement in B.C. production remained relatively limited -- and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)." CBC expenditures on B.C. production, for example, increased from \$500,000 in 1987-88 to a high of \$5.9 million in 1991-92 (p. 52).

Furthermore, Audley's report estimated that 80 per cent of the projects assisted by B.C. Film (by dollar value) would not have been realized without B.C. Film involvement. The basis for this assertion was that, between the establishment of Telefilm Canada's Broadcast Fund in 1983 and B.C. Film's creation in 1987, B.C. producers attracted just 1.4 per cent of Telefilm money, while after 1987, B.C. producers had claimed a 12.8-per-cent share of Telefilm funding (p. v). Audley also estimated that two-thirds of the development projects probably would not have proceeded without B.C. Film assistance (p. 53).

Audley calculated that each \$1 million in provincial funds spent by B.C. Film generated an incremental \$17.3 million in production activity, 284.4 jobs, and just under

Table 4.2 Sources of Financing: Projects Receiving B.C. Film Assistance

Source of Financing	1987-88 3 projects	1988-89 21 projects	1989-90 14 projects	1990-91 12 projects	1991-92 12 projects	5-year total 62 projects
B.C. Film	\$193,453 (6.2%)	\$4,074,795 (15.3%)	\$1,952,471 (5.9%)	\$5,040,662 (12.9%)	\$5,029,400 (11.7%)	\$16,290,781 (11.2%)
Teletilm	\$1,510,526 (48.1%)	\$10,621,807 (39.8%)	\$13,166,848 (39.7%)	\$12,159,215 (31.1%)	\$13,808,072 (32.0%)	\$51,266,468 (35.3%)
NFB	\$469,061 (14.9%)	\$186,450 (0.7%)	\$218,000 (0.7%)	\$380,000 (1.0%)	\$85,000 (0.2%)	\$1,338,511 (0.9%)
CBC	\$505,985 (16.1%)	\$1,128,093 (4.2%)	\$405,500 (1.2%)	\$4,622,817 (11.8%)	\$5,898,303 (13.7%)	\$12,560,698 (8.6%)
Other Federal	\$20,000 (0.6%)	0	\$165,219 (0.5%)	\$15,000 (>0.1%)	\$40,000 (0.1%)	\$240,219 (0.2%)
Provincial Broadcasters	\$6,500 (0.2%)	\$1,778 (>0.1%)	\$98,000 (0.3%)	\$185,063 (0.5%)	\$18,000 (>0.1%)	\$309,341 (0.2%)
Private Broadcasters	\$11,000 (0.4%)	\$465,000 (1.7%)	\$5,820,000 (17.5%)	\$1,793,995 (4.6%)	\$3,400,000 (7.9%)	\$11,489,995 (7.9%)
Pay TV	0	\$750,000 (2.8%)	0	\$422,930 (1.1%)	0	\$1,172,930 (0.8%)
Specialty Services	0	0	0	\$65,000 (0.2%)	0	\$65,000 (>0.1%)
Canadian Distributors	0	\$1,466,613 (5.5%)	\$3,951,902 (11.9%)	\$4,341,849 (11.1%)	\$3,104,000 (7.2%)	\$12,864,364 (8.9%)
Private (includes deferrals)	\$422,474 (13.5%)	\$8,020,335 (30.0%)	\$3,135,700 (9.5%)	\$7,113,183 (18.2%)	\$1,714,170 (4.0%)	\$20,405,862 (14.0%)
Foreign Broadcasters	0	0	\$4,267,500 (12.7%)	\$3,005,750 (7.7%)	\$80,000 (0.2%)	\$7,353,250 (5.1%)
Foreign (co-venture distributor)	0	0	0	0	\$9,990,855 (23.1%)	\$9,990,855 (6.9%)
Total Federal*	\$2,505,572	\$11,936,350	\$13,955,567	\$17,177,032	\$19,831,375	\$65,405,896
Federal Share of Total	79.8%	44.7%	42.1%	43.9%	45.9%	45.0%

*Includes Teletilm, NFB, Other Federal and CBC.

Source: Audley (1992, pp. 18-19)

\$480,000 in incremental provincial tax revenue (p. viii). While B.C. Film had only a limited impact on marketing and distribution -- at the time of Audley's study, no B.C.-based distribution companies qualified for assistance from Telefilm Canada's Distribution Fund (p. 64) -- Audley argued that projects assisted by B.C. Film had a significant impact on British Columbia's post-production sector. B.C. projects accounted for 60 per cent of post-production revenues over the five-year period, while other Canadian productions accounted for 16 per cent of post-production revenues (p. ix).

In his study of a sample of 31 projects receiving B.C. Film assistance, Audley found that more than 80 per cent qualified for eight or more Canadian-content points, based on the CAVCO scale. "[I]t seems clear that B.C. Film-assisted projects provided substantially expanded opportunities for B.C. residents to carry out key creative functions in film and television production. The result will be the availability in future of a strengthened base of talent in the province capable of taking on an expanded role in production" (p. ix).

While Audley's assessment of the impact of B.C. Film's first five years was largely positive, it was also clear that the agency's principal impact was in television rather than in film. By 1991-92, television programming accounted for 83 per cent of the total hours of B.C. production. Of the three feature films which received assistance in 1991-92, two were produced under the New Views program, "through which B.C. Film provides 100% of funding to stimulate the development of new feature film production talent" (p. 22). And while B.C. Film proved effective in leveraging federal government monies, it was less successful in attracting private-sector investment.

In September, 1995, British Columbia Film restructured its funding programs to streamline its process and to give greater emphasis to leveraging private-sector investment than federal government money. Abandoning its original approach of providing equity investment, B.C. Film adopted a system of grants based on producers' ability to obtain cash commitments from film distributors and television broadcasters. According to the press release announcing the change, the new policies are "intended to more closely link Film Fund assistance to marketplace support" (British Columbia Film, 1995).

B.C. Film has three basic funding vehicles. The Market Incentive Program (Production) offers a grant -- a "non-recoupable advance" -- to B.C. producers, the amount of which is determined by the level of cash support the eligible project has received from distribution agreements and broadcast pre-sales. To be eligible for B.C. Film production funding, a project must demonstrate a considerable material and creative commitment to British Columbia. That is, at least 75 per cent of its budget must be spent on salaries, goods and services within the province, and it must score a minimum of six points on a 10-point B.C.-content scale. The Market Incentive Program (Development) is designed to assist producers at the pre-production stage. This program offers interest-free advances to eligible projects, again based on a cash commitment from distributors and broadcasters. The Applied Support Program provides both financial and institutional support to selected producers who are not in a position to attract pre-sales for their projects (British Columbia Film, 1995; Edwards, 1995; Anita Wong, personal communication, June 3, 1997a).

In February, 1997, B.C. Film introduced a Regional Incentive program to encourage the development and production of indigenous film and television projects outside of the Lower Mainland. A component of the Market Incentive Programs, the regional incentive offers a 10-per-cent premium to regional producers who have secured cash commitments from the private sector (B.C. Film, 1997).

B.C. Film has not transformed Vancouver into a centre of indigenous film production to rival Toronto or Montreal. As recently as 1995, British Columbia was responsible for just seven per cent of certified Canadian production budgets, compared to Ontario's 59 per cent and Quebec's 30 per cent (Canadian Film and Television Production Association, 1997, pp. 1-10), and foreign producers still account for between two-thirds and three-quarters of spending on film and television production on the west coast.

British Columbia's motion picture industry continues to operate at some remove from Canada's film establishment -- whether the "major" Canadian studios like Alliance Atlantis or Behaviour (formerly Malofilm), or the public-sector institutions like Telefilm, the NFB and the CBC -- and the provincial governments of Quebec and Ontario, particularly, have remained a step ahead of British Columbia on the film policy front. Besides offering financial assistance to Quebec distribution companies for marketing and distribution, for example, the Quebec government as early as 1983 introduced a 150-per-cent tax shelter for qualifying Quebec productions. Decreased to 100 per cent in 1986, the Quebec tax shelter was increased again to 133 per cent in 1987 and 166 2/3 per cent in 1988 (Audley, 1989, pp. 57-58). Ontario established its two-year, \$30.8-million

Ontario Film Investment Program in 1989 (which was renewed in 1991 and 1993). The OFIP program offered Ontario investors cash rebates of up to 20 per cent of qualifying costs (Audley, 1989, pp. 60-61).

In its first 10 years of operation, B.C. Film committed almost \$41 million to indigenous production, including 41 feature films (Wong, 1997b). In spite of its efforts, productions owned and controlled by B.C. companies account for only a small share of total spending in British Columbia (Table 4.3). In 1996, for example, B.C. production was responsible for just 8.1 per cent of total direct spending in the province.

If B.C. Film did not correct either the foreign-domestic imbalance in the B.C. film industry or the concentration of the Canadian film industry in Ontario and Quebec, it nonetheless: solidified B.C.'s indigenous production sector by diversifying the sources of funding available to west-coast film-makers; helped the indigenous sector to grow along with the ever-expanding foreign location production sector; offered a substantial boost to the post-production industry based in Vancouver; and played a part in the B.C. film industry's contribution to the diversification of the British Columbia economy. More fairly assessed in qualitative than in quantitative terms, B.C. Film has been a central factor in the emergence of an indigenous film tradition in British Columbia, having supported such theatrical features as *The Outside Chance of Maximilian Glick*, *Impolite*, *Harmony Cats*, *The Lotus Eaters*, *Double Happiness*, *Whale Music*, *Hard Core Logo* and *Kissed*. B.C. Film, to cite two specific examples, contributed \$10,000 to script development and \$350,000 to the production of *The Lotus Eaters*, and gave \$5,000 for script development and \$333,140 to the production of *Harmony Cats* (British Columbia

Film, 1992, 1993).

Table 4.3 Foreign, Canadian, B.C. Spending in B.C. Film Industry, 1990-96.

Year	Total Spending (millions)	Foreign Share (millions)	Canadian Share ^a (millions)	B.C. Share ^b (millions)
1996	\$536.9	\$361.8 (67.4%) ^c	\$176.1 (32.8%)	\$43.500 (8.1%)
1995	\$432.8	\$322.5 (74.5%)	\$110.3 (25.5%)	\$35.144 (8.1%)
1994	\$402.0	\$303.7 (75.5%)	\$ 98.3 (24.4%)	\$52.456 (13%)
1993	\$286.0	\$218.2 (76.3%)	\$ 67.8 (23.7%)	\$39.173 (13.7%)
1992	\$211.2	\$153.9 (72.8%)	\$ 57.4 (27.2%)	\$38.274 (18.1%)
1991	\$176.0	\$103.3 (58.7%)	\$ 72.7 (41.3%)	\$25.130 (14.3%)
1990	\$188.5	\$134.2 (71.2%)	\$ 54.3 (28.8%)	\$32.440 (17.2%)

^aFigures include both Canadian and treaty co-productions

^bProductions owned and controlled by B.C. companies

^cPercentages rounded to one decimal point

Source: B.C. Film Commission

A number of these films have distinguished themselves with critics and audiences.

The Lotus Eaters and *Harmony Cats* each received 11 Genie Award nominations,

including best-film nominations, in 1993, and John Pozer's *The Grocer's Wife* won the Prix Claude Jutra that year for best first feature film. In fact, of the eight nominees for the

Jutra prize in 1993, six were B.C. films: besides *The Grocer's Wife*, *Impolite*, *Cadillac*

Girls, *The Burning Season*, *Digger* and *The Lotus Eaters*. *Whale Music*, directed by

Richard J. Lewis, was chosen to open both the Toronto and Vancouver film festivals in

1994, and was nominated for four Genies, including best picture. Director Mina Shum's

debut feature, *Double Happiness*, was a hit on the film-festival circuit and earned \$1

million at the box office when it was released commercially in the summer of 1995. Two

B.C. films, Bruce MacDonald's *Hard Core Logo* and Lynne Stopkewich's *Kissed* were nominated for best-picture Genies in 1997. *Kissed* was selected for the Directors' Fortnight at the Cannes film festival in May, 1997, and is expected to surpass the box-office earnings of *Double Happiness* to become British Columbia's most commercially successful film yet (Edwards, 1997b).

Toward a provincial cultural policy:

Paul Audley's cost-benefit analysis of B.C. Film's first five years was part of a larger review of provincial government cultural industries policy, prompted by the New Democratic Party's return to power under Mike Harcourt in October, 1991. If the Vander Zalm government had adopted an *ad hoc* approach to rewriting film policy, Harcourt's NDP government set out to draft the kind of comprehensive cultural policy position for which it had long been calling from the legislature's opposition benches. Darlene Marzari, the new minister responsible for culture, established the long-term goal of increasing Victoria's arts funding to one per cent of total provincial expenditures, and vowed to reach a level of one-half of one per cent by the end of her government's initial mandate (Dafoe, 1992).

The extent to which the NDP government of British Columbia took a different view of cultural practice than its Social Credit predecessors was made manifest when the Harcourt government released the province's first cultural policy statement in May, 1995. Its opening sentence asserted: "Governments have a responsibility to protect the cultural heritage and promote the artistic expression of their citizens" (British Columbia, 1995a).

The statement situated culture as “part of the overall social development framework of the province,” describing culture as a social good, an economic good and “intrinsically valuable and worthy of public support.” The policy statement described the provincial government’s cultural role as “a partner in a sector where artists and arts organizations have the leadership role in artistic creation. The province has a supporting role through funding programs and as an advocate for the arts and culture.” Finally, the B.C. government believed in “a cultural sector which is primarily self-reliant.” “The province’s overall goal is sustainability: a cultural sector which contributes fully to the province’s social and economic objectives, provides stable employment to its practitioners and a stable environment to its stakeholders.”

To give these words substance, the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture introduced a package of initiatives under the title CultureWorks! (British Columbia, 1995b). The package included: a commitment to create a B.C. Arts Council during the 1995 legislative session; \$4 million in additional funding to arts and culture programs; \$50 million in infrastructure projects; \$2.5 million to cultural organizations; \$850,000 to cultural industries; and \$400,000 to marketing initiatives. A message from Premier Harcourt read, in part: “CultureWorks! is an affirmation that the arts have a deep significance for British Columbia as a society, for it is through the arts that we define ourselves.”¹⁵

Historically, British Columbia had had a sorry record in funding the arts; in the fiscal year 1990-91, for example, Victoria spent \$14,984,000 (\$6.1 million of this on the film industry alone), which represented just 4.5 per cent of the spending by all the

Canadian provinces on the cultural industries. Given that B.C. accounted for close to 12 per cent of the country's population and 12.3 per cent of Canada's gross domestic product, this was deemed inadequate. As Audley (1993a) concluded, it was partly due to the provincial government's general neglect of cultural practices that B.C. "receives a much lower share of federal cultural spending than would be proportionate to its population." In fiscal 1990-91, British Columbia received just 5.3 per cent of federal spending on the cultural industries (although B.C. received a more respectable 10 per cent of Ottawa's film and video spending that year) (pp. 27-30).

Audley was commissioned by the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry Responsible for Culture to recommend a framework for the development of cultural industries policies for British Columbia, and the first thing he did was to call into question the privileged perception of cultural production as commodity production. Among his first recommendations was that:

Cultural industries policies for British Columbia should be developed within a conceptual framework which recognizes their primary role, both in British Columbia and in Canada, as instruments of cultural expression and communication, involving a diverse range of content which is important to social, political, economic and cultural development (Audley, 1993a, p. 11).

The key policy issues to be addressed were those "related to the creators of original B.C. cultural works, the financing of production, access to distribution, domestic and export marketing, the use of the province's purchasing power and publicly-owned distribution systems, technology, training and skills development, and the establishing of an ongoing statistical database and research activity" (p. 39).

But while Audley foregrounded the cultural goals of policy development, he did not overlook the economic rationale in his policy recommendations.

In considering the priority that should be given to the cultural industries in developing policies for economic growth and diversification, the Province of British Columbia should take into account the fact that both domestic and foreign markets for cultural works are expanding far more quickly than the economy as a whole, and account for a growing share of GDP and employment in Canada (p. 15).

The B.C. film industry provided him with a ready example; he noted that “the progress that has been made in the film and video industry provides firm evidence that, with a reasonable commitment of provincial resources, there could be rapid growth in cultural industries production within the province” (p. 16).

A film policy review, which began in August, 1992, was to be the first phase in a staged approach to policy development, to be followed by research and policy development for the periodical and book publishing industries, the sound recording and music publishing industries, and the crafts and design industries (pp. 35-36).

Film Policy Review:

With considerable provincial government input -- whether under the leadership of the right-leaning Socreds or the left-leaning NDP -- the B.C. film industry was restructured between 1985 and 1993 to address the weaknesses that most immediately threatened its future: studio capacity and financial support from the federal and provincial governments. While the financial commitment of the federal government's funding agencies to west-coast film-making would remain a policy concern, the most pressing

challenge became finding a way to increase private investment in indigenous film production.

In spite of the increasing amounts of foreign spending on film-making in the province -- more than \$300 million annually by 1994 -- the fear persisted that without a viable indigenous production sector the B.C. film industry remained vulnerable to collapse. The global mobility of Hollywood film production had become well-established by the 1990s (see Gasher, 1995; Pendakur, 1998), and to British Columbia this meant that a fluctuation in the Canada-U.S. currency-exchange rate, or a chilling of labour relations in the B.C. film industry, could be enough to send foreign producers packing for more hospitable locations.

Private-sector investment in indigenous production thus became the principal policy target, and Audley's *Policy Recommendations for Future Development of the Film Industry in British Columbia* (1993b) insisted the initiatives recently undertaken by the Quebec and Ontario governments indicated that "the role of providing an incentive to private investment has now shifted from the federal to the provincial level of government" (pp. vii-viii). Victoria would be called upon to become further implicated in the B.C. film industry. Among Audley's principal recommendations were: the establishment of the B.C. Production Investment Program, which would offer a rebate to B.C. investors ranging from 15 to 20 per cent (depending on B.C. and Canadian-content levels, and how much of the budget was spent in the province); and a \$9-million budget increase over five years to the Knowledge Network "for the purposes of increasing its expenditures to acquire independently-produced B.C. productions" (pp. viii-xi).

What is most striking about this policy document is less its specific recommendations -- private-investment incentives had been proposed before, and a provincial tax credit would not be introduced until 1997 -- than the manner in which it depicted Canada's three principal production centres -- Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia -- as rival jurisdictions competing to attract both foreign location production and indigenous production spurred by "location-neutral" federal funding vehicles. For example:

Unless British Columbia offers its producers support comparable to that available in Ontario and Quebec, those producers in British Columbia who wish to be involved with genuinely indigenous production will be at a substantial disadvantage, and are unlikely to maintain, much less expand, their market share. An important part of the research we have conducted has involved assessing the existing incentive structure in British Columbia to see to what extent it meets the needs of domestic producers in the province, and how it compares in effectiveness with the incentives available in Ontario and Quebec (pp. 48-49).

British Columbia was, in this way, less a branch, or even a junior partner in a *national* film industry, than it was a competitor with Ontario and Quebec. The B.C. Film requirement that eligible productions spend at least 75 per cent of their budget in the province inhibited interprovincial co-productions (see Macerola, 1997). British Columbia, in fact, enjoyed a closer relationship with Hollywood than with its sister provinces, given British Columbia's record of averaging a 50-per-cent share of Hollywood production budgets. Interprovincial rivalry would inform B.C. film policy throughout the 1990s. Toronto was Vancouver's principal rival for the distinction of being North America's third-largest centre of film and television production -- i.e.,

Hollywood North -- after the states of California and New York. Montreal was making its own bid for the title by 1996.¹⁶

But if the competition to attract foreign location production among Canada's three largest cities could be described as generally healthy -- after all, 250 jurisdictions around the world were vying for runaway production contracts -- the rivalry for federal film funding became increasingly bitter. Even though the B.C. government had taken steps to address its under-funding of the film industry, the leveraging power of its investments began to fade and B.C. producers began accusing the federal cultural institutions of a central Canadian bias. The Interagency Committee on Film Development Policy (1992), for example, perceived federal cultural expenditures in British Columbia as "considerably disproportionate" to the province's share of the Canadian population (p. iii). Much more strongly worded was a public notice filed with the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission in April, 1997, in which the B.C. Motion Picture Association (1997) accused Ottawa and its funding institutions of consistently short-changing B.C. film-makers. The opening sentence of the BCMPA notice reads: "The single undeniable fact of public policy in Canada regarding the indigenous film industry, is that regional inequities in the delivery of federal government funding has caused concentration of such funding to be regionalised in Ontario and Quebec, to the detriment of the British Columbia film community."

The principal target of the BCMPA's hostility was Telefilm Canada, but the association maintained that the CBC's track record in British Columbia "has been equally dismal" (p. 1). The BCMPA noted that the CBC's contributions to B.C. film projects,

which ranged from \$4.01 to \$5.76 million between 1990-91 and 1994-95, dropped to \$1.06 million for 1995-96 and just \$570,000 for the first half of 1996-97. (One month after the BCMPA filed its report, the CBC announced that it was picking up *DaVinci's Inquest*, a new, hour-long drama series about a Vancouver coroner, for its Fall 1998 prime-time schedule. *DaVinci's Inquest* was to be the CBC's first, hour-long, prime-time show produced in Vancouver (Edwards, 1997d)).

Telefilm Canada, though, has been the B.C. film industry's favourite federal target because it is the country's most powerful funding agency, responsible for some \$200 million annually. The B.C. Motion Picture Association (1997) noted that Telefilm Canada's contributions to British Columbia producers through its Feature Film Fund had dropped each year, from \$3.54 million in fiscal 1992-93 to just \$700,000 in 1995-96. B.C. companies received no money from Telefilm's Feature Film Distribution Fund for four consecutive years, from 1992-93 to 1995-96, and B.C. received nothing from Telefilm's Commercial Production Fund for five straight years, from 1991-92 to 1995-96.

Not only was British Columbia denied representation on the board of directors of the Canadian Television and Cable Production Fund when it was established in September, 1996, but B.C. companies received just four per cent (\$1.4 million) of the fund's \$46.2 million in its first year of operation, and 5.4 per cent (\$4.3 million) of the \$80 million the fund committed in its second year (pp. 1-12). The BCMPA charged: "B.C. companies consistently receive a proportionally lower share of funds from the crown corporations of Canadian Heritage such as Telefilm Canada, which has resulted in B.C. subsidizing the development of the cultural industries in Ontario and Quebec for

over 20 years” (p. 2). Wayne Sterloff, president and chief executive officer of B.C. Film from its inception until 1997, commented: “The federal government has implemented policies at Telefilm that prevent a culture being supported in British Columbia” (Rice-Barker, 1997).

In its defence, Telefilm made two points. In a letter to Sterloff dated May 16, 1997, Telefilm executive-director Francois Macerola noted, first, that Telefilm’s annual commitment to British Columbia between 1990-91 and 1995-96 represented 13 per cent of Telefilm’s total development and production commitments. “The decrease observed between 1994-95 and 1995-96, is partially due to the disappearance of several television series which were cancelled by [the CBC].” Without CBC’s cancellation of B.C.-based series *Northwood*, *Odyssey*, *Mom P.I.* and *Max Glick*, Macerola maintained, Telefilm’s investment would have been 17 per cent of its total budget (Macerola, 1997).

Table 4.4 Provinces’ Share of Telefilm funding, 1990-91 to 1996-97 (in percentage)

	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	Average
B.C.	11	15.8	15.3	14.9	11.9	4.8	7.4	12.9
Ontario	35.7	29.5	26.4	27.0	25.4	29.9	37.1	30.1
Quebec	44.7	44.7	44.5	43.0	47.8	44.0	36.8	44.7

Source: Macerola, 1997.

Secondly, Macerola noted the B.C. government’s own declining commitment to indigenous production. B.C. Film’s annual budget was cut from \$5.1 million in fiscal 1993-94 to \$3 million in 1997-98 (Rice-Barker, 1997). Due to these cuts, B.C. Film had

to suspend its distribution program, through which it bought shares in participating distribution companies. B.C. Film, for example, bought a 25-per-cent interest in TSC Film Distribution in 1994, the first distribution company to base itself in Vancouver (Edwards, 1996a). Macerola (1997) also noted that B.C. Film's requirement that 75 per cent of an eligible production's budget be spent in British Columbia made inter-provincial co-operation difficult. "Remarks from industry players -- made to all Telefilm offices -- makes it clear that other provinces find B.C.'s restrictions somewhat prohibitive."

Both sides made gestures toward resolving the problem of regional funding disparities in the Fall, 1997. In September, Telefilm adopted a plan to allocate pockets of funding for western Canadian producers -- a measure for which the B.C. industry had been lobbying -- and Telefilm promoted Elizabeth Friesen, a professed advocate of decentralization, as its new director of operations in Vancouver (Edwards, 1997f). In October, the B.C. government announced plans for a provincial tax credit, to take effect April 1, 1998, bringing the province in line with Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, all of which have tax-credit programs to support local film production. Entitled Film Incentive B.C., the plan provides B.C.-based production companies with a tax credit of up to 20 per cent of their labour costs (British Columbia, 1997).

Under Film Incentive B.C., the provincial government will refund a portion of producers' investment in film and television projects. A "basic incentive" refunds up to 20 per cent of eligible labour costs, which are capped at 48 per cent of total production

costs. In addition, the program calls for two “bonus incentives.” A training incentive allows producers to claim a refund of up to three per cent of eligible labour costs for providing training opportunities for workers entering the industry. A regional production incentive allows producers to claim a refund of up to 12.5 per cent of labour costs if principal photography occurs outside of the Lower Mainland. Producers can access the basic and bonus incentives together, or the bonus incentives alone. To be eligible for the tax credit, production companies must be based in British Columbia. To access the basic incentive, a production company must be B.C.-controlled and have copyright ownership of the project. The regional and training incentives are available to B.C.-based companies with Canadian ownership. Qualifying projects must incur a minimum of 75 per cent of production and post-production costs in the province, and must meet CRTC guidelines for Canadian broadcast content. To qualify for the basic incentive, projects must meet the guidelines for CAVCO certification.

In November, 1997, the federal government offered what seemed to be further good news to British Columbia. The Finance Ministry in Ottawa announced a tax credit for foreign producers shooting in Canada, which permits them to claim 11 per cent of eligible labour costs, up to a maximum of 5.5 per cent of their total budget. Called the Film and Video Services Production Tax Credit, it was designed to replace a federal tax shelter called the Production Services Limited Partnership, which expired October 31, 1997 (Edwards, 1997g).

But instead of simply shoring up Canada’s competitive edge in the runaway production sweepstakes, the federal announcement sparked renewed rivalry among its

film-making provinces. Ontario announced on November 17, 1997 its own version of the federal tax credit, the 11-per-cent Ontario Film and Television Production Services Tax Credit, in effect doubling the tax credit to foreign producers if they chose to shoot in Ontario (Hoffman, 1997b). While the bulk of Ontario's film activity is domestic production, foreign location production remains significant to the Ontario film industry. In 1996, for example, Ontario attracted \$252.8 million in direct spending from foreign producers, which represented almost 48 per cent of its \$530 million in total activity ("TV, film production," 1997).

The Ontario announcement, coming so quickly after the federal program was introduced, was a provocative gesture and caught British Columbia by surprise. B.C. Film chairman Michael Francis told *Playback*: "We've worked for years to have an even playing field in Canada. Now it's uneven again. It's very disappointing and far from the spirit of fair trade among the provinces" (Hoffman, 1997b). A Coopers & Lybrand survey released in March, 1998, estimated that 65 per cent of foreign film and TV producers working in British Columbia would "very likely" relocate to take advantage of production services tax credits, costing B.C. up to \$275 million in direct spending, \$100 million in wages and 5,300 jobs (Edwards, 1998a).¹⁷

Quebec was the first province to respond, matching the Ontario program in its March 31 budget, in the interest of encouraging "fair competition" between the Canadian provinces (Rice-Barker, 1998). British Columbia announced its own, 11-per-cent Production Services Tax Credit on June 1, 1998. At a press conference on the set of the television program *The Viper* at the new Paramount Studio Complex in Vancouver, B.C.

Premier Glen Clark stated:

Not only will this new incentive help keep jobs and the industry thriving in B.C., but it will lead to job creation. By helping keep B.C. competitive with other jurisdictions, the film industry tells us it can grow by 10 per cent each year in the next decade, resulting in more than 45,000 new direct and related jobs. This incentive is part of a commitment made in the provincial budget to grow the film and television industry (British Columbia, 1998; Bula, 1998).

This rivalry among the provinces for film industry business was not, however, confined to government; organized labour was also implicated. David G. Murphy (1997) depicts the B.C. film unions as central collaborators in the project of building a film industry on the west coast. And like the provincial government, the unions found themselves fighting with their counterparts in Toronto to maintain both their independence and their competitive edge. As a national film industry based in Ontario and Quebec emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Murphy writes, “national film industry associations attempted to spread their control of the industry to B.C.” (p. 538).

If the U.S.-affiliated technicians’ (IATSE Locals 891 and 669) and drivers’ (Teamsters Local 155) unions, and the B.C. branch of the Directors’ Guild of Canada, had the autonomy to negotiate their own collective agreements, as required by B.C. labour law, performers and writers, who belonged to the ACTRA Performers Guild, were governed by their national office in Toronto. When the local ACTRA branch signed a collective agreement with an American television producer in 1989, the agreement precipitated a prolonged dispute between the national and local offices. Ultimately, two rival performers’ unions emerged: ACTRA-BC and the Union of British Columbia

Performers. "In the midst of this turmoil," Murphy notes, "two Toronto based technicians' unions, the Association of Canadian Film Craftspeople (ACFC) and the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians (NABET), opened offices, in 1989 and 1994 respectively, to compete with the established Locals 891, 669 and 155" (pp. 541-542). A measure of labour peace was assured in 1996 when ACTRA-BC and the Union of B.C. Performers merged (Birnie, 1996) and the B.C. and Yukon Council of Film Unions, representing IATSE Locals 891 and 669 and Teamsters Local 155, negotiated a master agreement with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers, representing the American production community, and the B.C. branch of the Canadian Film and Television Production Association (Lee, 1996; Tim Hiltz, personal communication, June 3, 1997).¹⁸

Conclusion:

The object of policy discourse in British Columbia is less *cinema*, as either a means of communication, an art form or a symbol of membership in a sub-national community, than it is *industry*, which has the potential to: draw investment capital to the province from both private and public sources; create jobs directly and indirectly; and, ultimately, expand and diversify the provincial economy. Even after 1986, when policy documents began to prioritize the encouragement of indigenous film production, and the issue of "culture" was raised by Quenville (1986), Audley (1986, 1993a) and Premier Mike Harcourt (British Columbia, 1995a, 1995b), the principal motivator remained the desire to stabilize an industry deemed vulnerable to Hollywood's increasing mobility and

an industry seen to be consistently shortchanged by federal funding policies. Provincial film policy reflects the view that British Columbia is less a partner contributing to a shared enterprise called national cinema, than it is a rival jurisdiction to Ontario and Quebec in the industry of Canadian audiovisual production. Further, British Columbia is one of hundreds of competitors around the world seeking to attract the capital, employment and regional industrial development associated with foreign location production.

Notes:

¹In an interview, Dave Barrett said he could not recall any details of his government's efforts to establish a film policy, insisting that the resource industries occupied most of his government's attention (Barrett, personal communication, March 8, 1998).

²While the Social Credit party was in opposition in 1973, Dan Campbell of W.A.C. Bennett's office commissioned a set of 15 "Liberty Papers," which were written by Delbert Doll, president of the Comox constituency. The 15th of these papers was entitled "Private Enterprise and the Arts" and it outlined the benefit to the arts community of a private-enterprise system of governance. In its conclusion, the paper states: "The private enterprise system does not deny the existence of values other than those formed by the market process. It simply leaves to the individual the responsibility of determining his own esthetic values and reducing them to dollar terms in his willingness to buy a painting, attend a symphony, purchase a record or a book. The private enterprise system has provided the artist with the media means of propagating his set of values, the materials to create art, and the wealthy public to purchase it and thereby provide the artist with creative and monetary satisfaction" (Simon Fraser University Archives, MG 1/1, Box 12, File 6).

³British Columbia was well behind the times when it came to provincial government support for the arts. Alberta established its Cultural Development Branch in

1946 “[t]o promote, encourage and coordinate cultural development in Alberta.” Part of Alberta’s Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation as of 1971, the Cultural Development Branch promoted tours and exhibitions throughout the province to stimulate both public interest and performance opportunities, held workshops, provided consultative services to government agencies, school boards and individuals, and offered financial assistance to amateur and professional arts groups and to students for training. Saskatchewan created the Saskatchewan Arts Board in 1948 to promote the enjoyment, production and study of the arts, Quebec established a Ministère des Affaires Culturelles in 1961, Ontario founded the Ontario Council for the Arts in 1963, and Manitoba created the Manitoba Arts Council in 1965 (Pasquill & Horsman, 1973, Appendix A).

⁴The Canadian film magazine *Take One* recently selected *The Grey Fox* as one of its top 20 Canadian films of all time (“Top 20,” 1998).

⁵Victoria jumped on the bandwagon in December, 1983 when the Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce established a film commission and distributed 5,000 copies of a directory of Vancouver Island film resources to producers in Los Angeles, New York and Toronto (Canadian Press, 1983).

⁶The list of support services for film and television production includes: accommodations, accounting services, aircraft rentals, antiques and period pieces, boat and yacht charters, bookstores, catering, communications, computer services, consultants (e.g., marine and mountain), costume design, costume rental, crafts, customs brokers, courier and delivery services, first aid, guarantors, insurance, lawyers and legal services, location scouting, medical services, office services, performers’ supplies, pilots, plants, properties, publicity, general rentals, restaurants, scenic supplies, security services, snow control, theatre equipment, translators, travel consultants, vehicle rentals and leases, and veterinarians (see Quenville, 1986, pp. 47-48). Manjunath Pendakur (1998) notes: “It is estimated that more than 1,500 retail and wholesale businesses in the Greater Vancouver area receive some portion of their annual revenue from film/TV production activity” (p. 224).

⁷Post production is the final assembly of the sound and picture elements of a film, which were recorded during the production stage. Music, narration, sound effects, additional dialogue, special visual effects, graphics, titles and credits are added during this process, and the total package is edited so that each of these elements works to the film-makers’ satisfaction (see B.C. Motion Picture Association, 1992, p. 6).

⁸Quenville (1986) cited three specific provincial support programs. The first was the Ministry of Economic Development, which offered two forms of support: direct support for feasibility studies and management improvement, \$15,000 of which was committed to three film projects in 1984-85; and indirect support through the B.C. Development Corporation, which had spent \$300,000 on a feasibility study of the Dominion Bridge industrial site, and which had put up a \$5-million loan for its

renovation. The second was the Knowledge Network, which produced between 20 and 30 hours of original programming per week. Given that its \$4-million annual budget was insufficient to finance significant amounts of local production, its principal contribution was to provide independent producers with access to its facilities and technical crews. The third support program was the Ministry of International Trade and Investment, which had four instruments to assist B.C. companies develop international markets, but, Quenville concluded, “they would seem to be of little particular benefit to the film industry as a whole” (pp. 37-40). Defending Telefilm Canada’s funding record, executive-director Peter Pearson argued that British Columbia’s three-per-cent share of Telefilm money over the previous four years was a reflection of the state of its indigenous film industry, which was restricted to “below the neck” production of films conceived outside of the province. B.C. director Jack Darcus claimed that the B.C. government “had done nothing for the arts for 30 years” (in Godfrey, 1986).

⁹La Société générale du cinéma du Québec was combined with La Société de développement des industries de la culture et des communications (SODICC) to form La Société générale des industries culturelles (SOGIC) in 1988 (Audley, 1989, p. 56).

¹⁰It could also be argued that the choice by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Recreation and Culture to commission Paul Audley to conduct the study signalled a philosophical shift in film policy. Audley was best-known in the period for his landmark text *Canada's Cultural Industries*, which foregrounded the cultural dimension to the publishing, recording, radio, television and film industries in Canada (Audley, 1983). In the book’s introduction, Audley noted that his study was “predicated on the view that cultural goals ought to be primary and that what is required is an approach to the cultural industries that effectively integrates a concern for the achieving of well-defined cultural goals with an understanding of the structure and operation of the industries themselves” (p. xxviii). To this point in time, of course, the B.C. government had emphasized economic goals in its approach to film policy, to the total exclusion of cultural goals.

¹¹The Canadian Audio Visual Certification Office (CAVCO) determines Canadian-content eligibility on the basis of a points system for key creative positions on a film. The director and screenwriter positions are worth two points each, while single points awarded to art director, director of photography, picture editor, music composer, highest-paid actor or actress, and second-highest-paid actor or actress (Canadian Film and Television Production Association, 1994).

¹²Given that most of the productions shot in British Columbia are not set in the province, the B.C. Film Commission demands a credit which identifies the film location. “We always get a credit,” insists Grace McCarthy (1997). The promotional logic here is that movie-goers will be intrigued enough by the scenery in a film to sit through the credits and want to visit the place where the film was shot. A concrete example of how this works is provided by *Roxanne*. The Columbia Pictures feature starring Steve Martin

and Daryl Hannah was shot in Nelson in 1986 -- Nelson, B.C. played Nelson, Wash. in the film -- and injected \$650,000 into a region with an unemployment rate of 25 per cent. Upon its release in the summer of 1987, the film further contributed to the Nelson economy by attracting tourists, who became known as "Roxanne people," from Washington, Oregon, California, Iowa, Montana and Illinois (Young, 1987; Canadian Press, 1987). The Hope and District Chamber of Commerce publishes a self-guided walking tour to locations used in the Fall, 1981 shooting of *First Blood*, describing itself as the "big screen birthplace" of the Sylvester Stallone character John Rambo. Stop one on the tour notes: "Sheriff Teasle drops Rambo off at Water Avenue, near Gardner Chev-Olds" ("Tour local filming locations," 1997).

¹³As recently as March, 1986, Premier Bennett had insisted the Bridge Studios renovation would be exclusively a private-sector initiative. Promoting the B.C. film industry during a business trip to California, Bennett maintained: "This will be done without subsidized film-making. I don't think our taxpayers want to pay for their movies twice, once at the box office and once on their taxes" (Palmer, 1986). In the same vein, Socred MLA John Reynolds responded to opposition calls for greater government involvement in the film industry with this statement to the legislature on May 9, 1986: "Throughout the development of the film industry our government has helped as a partner, as it does for all private sector industries. We believe that government should play a role in supporting the film industry, but government should neither control nor dictate to it. Because of the nature of the industry, it is best left to the private sector, where it can draw from the greatest number of creative and innovative people" (British Columbia, Debates, 1986, p. 8133).

¹⁴B.C. Film's mandate was renewed in January, 1990, when the agency was granted \$15 million over three years ("B.C. films get \$15-million aid," 1990). B.C. Film funding became an ongoing expenditure of the provincial budget in fiscal 1992-93, when its \$5-million annual grant was incorporated into the estimates of the Ministry for Tourism and the Ministry Responsible for Culture (Audley, 1993b, p. iv).

¹⁵The Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture commissioned a B.C. Advisory Committee on the Status of the Artist in 1993, in the recognition that: "To choose to be an artist in British Columbia in the 1990s is almost inevitably to live on the economic margins" (British Columbia, 1994, p. 4). Among the committee's recommendations was that the provincial government introduce "film investment incentives" on a sliding scale. That is, the higher the percentage of B.C. above-the-line personnel working on a project, the greater the incentive (p. 11).

¹⁶As recently as 1993, not one Hollywood feature film was shot in Quebec, but foreign spending in the province totalled \$35 million in 1995, \$86 million in 1996, and in 1997, one film alone, Paramount Pictures' *Snake Eyes*, spent \$70 million shooting in Montreal (Kelly, 1997; Brownstein, 1997).

¹⁷A recent front-page article in *The Globe and Mail* (Saunders, 1998) detailed the intense competition among Canadian provinces to attract film and television production. “Over the past 18 months, provincial governments have clambered to outdo one another in the generosity of the tax credits and subsidies they offer production companies, both Canadian and foreign, for shooting within their borders.”

¹⁸Manjunath Pendakur (1998) sees the rivalry among Canadian unions for film work as part of a global phenomenon which pits worker against worker in the bid to provide mobile American film producers with “more for less.” “Neither Canadian nor international unions appear to be ready to negotiate with the emerging entertainment industry. They are caught up in the daily demands of survival in which narrow economic interests set the agenda. In the final analysis, workers are pitted against each other: local against local, national versus the provincial, and so on” (p. 237). Pendakur concludes: “In the short run, the strategies pursued by the unions in B.C. appear advantageous to their immediate goals of creating employment in a crisis-ridden economy. Given the changes in the global economy in the last decade and the liberalization regimes at work in many economies around the world, organized labor faces a critical dilemma of choosing between long-term needs and short-term opportunities. B.C. unions have chosen the former, and their leadership is not certain whether this is the right path” (p. 236).

Chapter Five

Locating British Columbia as Cinematic Place: Contending Regimes of Film Production

British Columbia's industrial approach to cinema has an obvious impact upon the kinds of feature films produced in the province. By bringing together both non-resident and indigenous producers, the industry creates an interface between distinct regimes of production -- transnational and regional/local -- each of which embeds its films in their site of production in particular ways.

The distinctions between the way foreign and indigenous producers locate British Columbia in their films, however, should not be drawn too neatly. If Hollywood filmmakers consistently appropriate British Columbia within a continental cinemascapes -- emphasizing its physical geography, the topographical, climatic and natural historical features which adjoin the province to Oregon, Washington and Alaska -- indigenous producers are far more ambivalent about how they situate British Columbia as both a narrative setting and a film production location. Some B.C. films are indistinguishable from Hollywood productions. Still others lay claim to British Columbia as a place of culture, as a source of more than scenery, a source of characters, stories and social particularities.

Feature films are highly constructed spatial and temporal environments whose diegetic boundaries, while they may be guided by politics and history, are constrained

only by the imaginations of the film-makers. For this reason, these temporal-spatial constructs play a signifying role; they grant meanings to place by imagining place in particular ways. Place becomes the setting for a story, a milieu which will contribute to the story's tone, atmosphere, possibly its central themes. Most movies, Robert Fothergill (1977) observes, "do indeed convey, inadvertently or by design, some fragmentary image of a milieu within which their stories are set" (p. 347).

Geographer Edward Relph (1986) notes that identities of place are not given, but result from a complex and dynamic interrelationship between nature and culture. "Places are not abstractions or concepts, but are directly experienced phenomena of the lived-world and hence are full with meanings, with real objects, and with ongoing activities" (p. 141). Specifically, Relph argues that identities of place result from three interrelated components: physical features; activities and functions; and meanings or symbols (pp. 61-62). Film-making engages all three of Relph's place-defining components. On a symbolic level, films depict the physical features of place, and through their narratives attribute particular meanings to place: wild west, desolate seaport, cosmopolitan urban centre, sleepy village. On a material level, film-making is one of the activities and functions of place, employing workers with a range of skills in a labour-intensive industry. It is what people in that place do.

This chapter compares the way the British Columbia feature-film industry's respective regimes of production depict British Columbia. The implications of these imaginings are then considered in terms of British Columbia's sense of place.

Hot Property:

If, as noted in Chapter Four, tourism promotion was part of the provincial government's impetus for developing a feature-film industry in British Columbia, it is ironic that British Columbia is so well-disguised in most films that only those movie-goers who stay until the end of the credits will know where the films were shot. The B.C. Film Commission, the institution established by the B.C. government to promote foreign service production, quite deliberately plays up the fact that its film locations can be disguised as Anywhere, U.S.A.

British Columbia's role as an industrial site of production within the transnational film industry is very much in keeping with the promotional efforts of the B.C. Film Commission. The BCFC initially promoted the province exclusively as a film location, playing up its natural attributes -- the beauty and diversity of its landscapes, the proximity of such diverse locations to Vancouver, British Columbia's proximity to southern California, a shared time zone with Los Angeles -- and a favourable currency-exchange rate. As B.C.'s fledgling industry evolved through the 1980s, and Vancouver companies offering both production and post-production expertise proliferated, the B.C. Film Commission's mandate came to embrace four main areas of activity: international marketing; location production services; liaison between the film industry and the community; and information provision to the general public, the news media, industry, labour and government (B.C. Film Commission, 1997b).¹

Operating on an annual budget of less than \$1 million, the B.C. Film Commission competes with about 250 rival jurisdictions to attract a share of what the American Film

Marketing Association estimates is \$20 billion (Cdn) worth of annual film, video and television production by Hollywood (Peter Mitchell, personal communication, June 4, 1997).² These competing jurisdictions include all of the provinces and territories in Canada, American states such as New York, Florida, North Carolina, Texas and Washington, and countries such as Australia, England, Ireland, Luxembourg, The Bahamas, Jamaica and Poland (see Gasher, 1995).³

At the time the BCFC was founded in the late 1970s, less than 15 per cent of Hollywood production occurred beyond the greater Los Angeles area. British Columbia's relatively early entry into the promotion of location production remains one of its singular advantages, having earned early a solid reputation among L.A. producers who were nervous about working away from their home base. Recounting that early history, the BCFC's 1997-98 business plan states: "Having little experience in other jurisdictions, they were understandably cautious, bringing entire crews on location and shipping unprocessed film back to Los Angeles. It also meant that when they discovered a community or location they could trust, they became very loyal."⁴ Today, runaway production accounts for about 40 per cent -- or \$8 billion worth -- of the North American film and television production market (B.C. Film Commission, 1997b, pp. 6-8).

There is little question that the B.C. Film Commission has been successful in its first 20 years of location promotion. Scoring such early high-profile films as *First Blood* (1981), the original Rambo film directed by Ted Kotcheff and starring Sylvester Stallone and Brian Dennehy, *Rocky IV* with Stallone and Talia Shire (1985), the Bill Forsyth film *Housekeeping* (1986) and *Roxanne* with Steve Martin and Daryl Hannah (1986), British

Columbia's Hollywood film credits today include: *The Accused*, *Shoot to Kill*, *Stakeout*, *Cousins*, *Look Who's Talking*, *We're No Angels*, *Bird on a Wire*, *Jennifer 8*, *Intersection*, *Rumble in the Bronx*, *Alaska*, *Happy Gilmore* and *Jumanji* (MacIntyre, 1996). The B.C. film industry maintained a 21-per-cent annual growth rate for the 10-year period between 1986 and 1996, and attracted a record \$615 million in direct spending on 106 productions in 1997 (B.C. Film Commission, 1998).

Table 5.1 B.C. Film Industry, 1990-1997

Year	Total Productions	Feature Films	Total Spending (millions)	Foreign Spending (millions)	Canadian Spending' (millions)
1997	106	24	\$615.0	\$424.5	\$190.5
1996	102	34	\$536.9	\$361.8	\$176.1
1995	95	35	\$432.8	\$322.5	\$110.3
1994	85	32	\$402.0	\$303.7	\$98.3
1993	73	26	\$286.0	\$218.2	\$67.8
1992	63	16	\$211.2	\$153.9	\$57.4
1991	53	12	\$176.0	\$103.3	\$72.7
1990	50	16	\$188.5	\$134.2	\$54.3

*Figures include both Canadian and treaty co-productions.

Sources: B.C. Film Commission, Playback, Canada on Location, Reel West.

The B.C. Film Commission sells producers on British Columbia locations in two ways: through international marketing and through direct contact with producers in the pre-production stage. The BCFC creates awareness of the province and the film services it offers through reportage in both the mainstream media and industry trade publications,

by advertising in trade publications, and by maintaining a presence at industry conferences such as the Banff Television Festival, MIPCOM (an international market for film and television programs in Cannes), the Cannes Film Festival and the annual Film Commission Trade Show in Los Angeles.

Members of the B.C. Film Commission staff also work directly with producers at three different stages. At a preliminary stage, the BCFC receives and assesses film scripts, breaks them down into component locations, matches stock photographs from its library to the component locations, and returns the script with proposed B.C. locations to the producer. At this stage, the producer may be considering any number of jurisdictions in which to stage the project. If the producer remains interested in British Columbia after this first stage, the BCFC then provides personnel to accompany members of the production team on a scouting trip of potential locations around the province. Still, at this point, the producer may be considering two or three jurisdictions as candidates. If British Columbia is finally chosen as the location for the film, the BCFC works with the producer throughout the location shoot, providing research assistance, location expertise and general information (B.C. Film Commission, 1997b).

The B.C. film industry is made up of three types of productions. Television movies-of-the-week are the most sensitive productions to cost differentials between locations, based as they are on relatively slim profit margins and tight, four-week shooting schedules. Since most of these productions now use unionized crews, they are cheaper to shoot in Canada than in the U.S., and Vancouver's stiffest competition for MOWs are Toronto and Calgary. Television series operate on 10-month shooting

schedules, and require conducive climatic conditions and diverse locations. Most TV series are shot on the west coast, and therefore Vancouver competes with Los Angeles, San Francisco and San Diego for these productions (Mitchell, 1997).

With average negative costs of \$43 million (US) and shooting schedules ranging from eight to 12 weeks, major Hollywood feature films tend to be “location-driven,” and therefore much more mobile than television shoots. In this sector, British Columbia competes with locations all over the world. Canadian features, on the other hand, are “funding-driven,” and British Columbia’s ability to attract indigenous features has been handicapped somewhat by its poor track record of attracting federal funding (Mitchell, 1997).

The B.C. Film Commission’s success in brokering a partnership between the B.C. and Hollywood film communities over the past two decades, however, has also revealed a central structural weakness; the B.C. film industry is overly dependent on Hollywood, rendering it vulnerable to such factors as the Canada-U.S. currency-exchange rate and shifts in labour costs among competing jurisdictions. There is nothing to prevent Hollywood producers from leaving British Columbia as suddenly as they arrived, should any of the elements of B.C.’s competitive position change.⁵

For this reason, the next phase in the B.C. Film Commission’s business plan is to promote British Columbia as a centre for investment, by encouraging the major Hollywood studios to establish stable roots in Vancouver and by attracting U.S. and Canadian investment capital to the industry. “The preferred outcome is a permanent facility from one or more of the [major Hollywood] Studios including development,

production, post-production, distribution and marketing operations.” The commission’s goal is to attract two major Hollywood studios to invest in British Columbia over the next five years (B.C. Film Commission, 1997b, pp. 9-11).

Some gestures by Hollywood have already been made in this direction. Aaron Spelling Productions, a prolific Hollywood television producer known for such series as *Happy Days*, *Beverly Hills 90210*, *Melrose Place*, *Dynasty* and *Charlie’s Angels*, opened a production and development office in Vancouver in 1992 (Trustcott, 1992; B.C. Film Commission, 1992). Walt Disney Studios established an animation studio in Vancouver in December, 1996, initially hiring 45 people to work on the direct-to-home-video release *Beauty and the Beast: Christmas Belle* (Edwards, 1996b). Another Hollywood major, Paramount, opened the Paramount Studio Complex in Vancouver in June, 1997. With a five-year lease on an empty Molson Brewery distribution centre, the complex houses four sound stages and a production office. Employing 350 full-time staff, the complex will be the home of Paramount’s *Viper* and *Sentinel* TV series (Edwards, 1997e).

Canadian companies have also made investments in Vancouver. Former securities trader Frank Giustra established the publicly-trading company Lions Gate Entertainment in 1997, with the purchase of three well-established film companies: the production company Mandalay Television of Los Angeles; the Montreal-based producer and distributor Cinepix Film Properties; and Canada’s largest production facility, North Shore Studios (Gibbon, 1997b). Four former executives of Toronto’s Alliance Releasing -- Tony Cianciotta, Mary Pat Gleeson, Dave Forget and Maria Muccilli -- formed a Vancouver distribution company called Red Sky Entertainment in September, 1997

(Monk, 1997; Hoffman, 1997a). And a new English-language television station in Vancouver, CIVT, began broadcasting in the Fall, 1997, with a promise to draw on the local production community for 95 of the 121 hours of programming the station will produce each year. A key factor in the success of Baton Broadcasting's licence application to the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission was its pledge to award to independent producers half of its \$72-million in programming over the seven-year term of its licence (Gibbon, 1997a; Dafoe, 1997).

Studio investment would also alleviate a chronic shortage of studio space in the Lower Mainland. While a number of studio complexes have cropped up in the greater Vancouver area, most are "non-traditional" spaces converted temporarily to audiovisual production use. The preferred sites remain two "purpose-built" facilities: North Shore Studios in North Vancouver, which has five sound stages ranging in size from 11,000 to 14,600 square feet; and Bridge Studios in Burnaby, with six sound stages ranging from 9,000 to 25,000 square feet, as well as North America's largest effects stage, measuring 40,400 square feet (B.C. Film Commission, 1997a).⁶

BCFC director Peter Mitchell (1997) estimates 80 per cent of all film and television productions in British Columbia are shot in the Lower Mainland, requiring the commission occasionally to rule certain over-used locations -- "hot spots" -- out of bounds. Gastown, to cite the most common example, attracts the equivalent of 460 shooting days per year. Such concentrated activity tests the patience of area residents and merchants and leads to complaints to the film commission (see Parton, 1995).⁷

Another problem prompted by British Columbia's rapid growth as a production

centre is a shortage of crews during peak shooting periods. This is less a problem of finding school-trained film technicians and above-the-line personnel than it is in finding “vocational” workers -- hair dressers, carpenters, electricians, etc. -- with specific, film-industry experience (Mitchell, 1997).

British Columbia as Cinematic Place:

An examination of the B.C. Film Commission’s promotional materials reveals the extent to which the location production industry is designed to serve industrial and economic objectives, and the degree to which cultural considerations are excluded (B.C. Film Commission, 1997a).⁸ The BCFC promotional literature sells British Columbia as a place in two registers: place as backdrop or setting; and place as industrial site. In casting place as backdrop, the BCFC promotes the province’s penchant for proteanism. The region, that is, can play any number of narrative settings, depending on the needs of the production. Typically, Vancouver is transformed into an American city such as Seattle or San Francisco, and British Columbia becomes part of the United States’ Pacific Northwest. In this way, place becomes a natural resource whose physical geography and architecture can be framed to represent any desired space. Both the social and geographical identity of place are thereby effaced.

In casting place as a commercial site, the promotional literature peddles the region’s economic, topographical, climatic, architectural and human resource attributes as advantageous to film and television in a range of ways, from the aesthetic to the cost-effective. It is a discourse of regional economic and industrial development which

integrates the B.C. audiovisual production community within a larger industry based in southern California.

How the BCFC literature empties place of its specificity and constructs British Columbia as unplace or anyplace merits particular attention. The locations brochure, *The British Columbia Shooting Gallery*, provides a graphic example of this, particularly in its use of language to emphasize the malleability of B.C. as a place, and in its framing of the imagery to emphasize variability and adaptability.

The locations brochure foregrounds setting as backdrop, but it also alludes to place as commercial site. The front cover, for example, features a dramatic aerial view of a film shoot in downtown Vancouver, a photograph framed by the brochure's title and the claim: "We can give it to you for a song." The text refers to the affordability of shooting, production and post-production in British Columbia, an advantage which is more clearly articulated and more fully elaborated upon inside the brochure and elsewhere in the promotional package.

The brochure's first inside page situates the backdrops the region offers within a fuller industrial context, promising three kinds of services to the audiovisual production community: locations, "know-how" and assistance throughout film shoots. Subsequently, on pages 3 and 4, the brochure outlines the BCFC's specific roles. Like the photograph on the front cover, the two photographs which accompany the BCFC text depict actual film shoots: a set from the 1990 Hollywood feature *Bird on a Wire* on "the world's second largest special effects stage," and another shoot in front of the provincial legislature in Victoria. The *Bird on a Wire* photo foregrounds the technical capabilities of

the province as a production centre, while the Victoria photo emphasizes locations.

The back cover of the brochure reads like a BCFC advertisement. Under the provocative title “Come and get it ...,” we see an aerial postcard image of Vancouver -- the urban core in the foreground, Stanley Park, the Strait of Georgia, and the mountains beyond -- with a supporting text summarizing what the BCFC offers: “superb locations,” “full production facilities,” and “step-by-step assistance.” The image graphically situates Vancouver as an urban site and service centre within close proximity to ocean, forest and mountains, themselves diverse locations.

The remainder of the brochure is devoted primarily to picturesque images from throughout British Columbia, organized by genre -- “The Big City,” “Urban Ethnic,” “The Wild West,” etc. -- and speaking to British Columbia as backdrop. Two points which are crucial to understanding how the BCFC promotional literature constructs place are the brochure’s visual depictions of B.C. as anyplace any time, and the use of language to invest the images with particular meanings.

The first point concerns the photographic images themselves and, specifically, how they are framed to emphasize their malleability as stages on which to set audiovisual productions. Organized by the generic heading “The Big City,” for example, are four urban landscapes. While each is identified by a fine-print caption, the images themselves are composed to assert their unspecificity, their potential as urban anyplace. The images denote urban waterfront, rather than Vancouver waterfront, an urban alleyway, rather than a Vancouver alleyway. The photographs could have been taken in any number of cities. The text which accompanies these photos reinforces the point: “What do New York,

Hong Kong, Los Angeles, turn-of-the-century Boston, Detroit, London, and San Francisco all have in common? Answer: We've been stand-ins for all of them, right here in versatile British Columbia."

With the exception of the photograph on the back cover, none of the photos in the brochure signifies Vancouver or British Columbia. Photos of industrial plants in Vancouver and Campbell River, for example, merely signify "industry." Similarly, mountainscapes, seascapes and rural landscapes are malleable as anywhere settings.

A second striking feature of the photographs is the absence of people, or, at least, the de-emphasis of the social dimension of these landscapes. If people are not completely absent -- as in photos of downtown Vancouver, various industrial sites, a Kerrisdale street scene, Gastown -- then they are framed as an insignificant part of the landscape. Some of the photos are more remarkable than others in this regard, as if the photographer *removed* those who would normally occupy these spaces. A photograph of the lobby of Vancouver's Pan Pacific Hotel is a case in point. A site accustomed to heavy human traffic, it is hard to imagine when it would *not* be busy with people. Other photographs present, quite explicitly, location sites as empty film sets waiting to be peopled by performers. The text which accompanies photographs of the legislative chambers in Victoria and the Orpheum Theatre in Vancouver refers to such indoor locations as "standing sets."

Two notable exceptions to the unpeopled landscapes are a photograph of Barkerville's Main Street and a photograph of three costumed native Indian dancers, performing at the University of British Columbia. In both cases, the people depicted are

themselves theatrical performers. Barkerville, for instance, is a kind of theatre, a museumized gold-mining town staffed by actors in late-nineteenth-century costume.

The photograph of the native dancers is worth particular attention as an exception which proves the larger rule of the BCFC promotional material. Of all the images and their accompanying texts, this is the most explicitly peopled, as the dancers are foregrounded both in the picture and in the text. The photograph, in other words, is of *them*, not the site upon which they are performing. The text, too, draws attention to the “rich and unique culture” of the Haida, Kwakiutl, Kootenay and Kitsilano people, “Proud people willing to share their heritage with you.” This page of the brochure constructs a message which is distinctly contrary to the rest of the literature, in that it is the only part of the larger BCFC discourse which constructs place in social and cultural terms. These people have their own stories to tell, and the international production community is invited, for once, to leave its scripts behind and tell a local story. This, of course, is not what location production is about.

The brochure also uses contrasting imagery to assert malleability, and the text accompanying these images demonstrates the degree to which discourse -- that of the brochure, that of the feature-film narrative -- defines place. The last two inside pages of the brochure -- entitled “Fruit Farms” and “Coastlines” -- are indistinguishable from those of a tourist brochure. The two images under “Fruit Farms” are pastoral scenes from the Okanagan Valley: a Penticton apple orchard and an Osoyoos vineyard. Nothing in either of the images or in their accompanying text makes reference to audiovisual production. Similarly, the “Coastlines” page features a sweeping aerial photo of ocean waves crashing

onto Long Beach on the west coast of Vancouver Island, with well-treed mountains forming the backdrop. Again, there is no visual or textual reference to the film and television industries. The arrival of tourists to these locations would render place as tourist destination. The arrival of film crews would render place as film set.

In striking contrast, in terms of both text and imagery, are the two facing pages entitled "Industrial." Four photographs depict: a North Vancouver industrial plant; the Burrard Thermal Plant; the Vancouver docks; and the smoky Campbell River skyline at dusk. While none of these photos is particularly unsightly, their subject matter is a radical departure from the imagery of the preceding examples. But more importantly, it is the text which frames these industrial sites as "ugly," "gritty, sooty, back-breaking" and "down and dirty," and assigns their place as: "The wrong side of town." Clear reference is made in the text to "script action," emphasizing the sites' potential for particular kinds of movie scenes. The slogan, "Bend me, shape me ...," which runs across the top of the two pages, alludes to the power of the film-makers to manipulate these settings to suit their narrative needs.

Language plays a key role throughout the brochure, especially as it establishes the B.C. Film Commission's familiarity with the audiovisual industry, its vernacular and American popular culture in general, and it constructs British Columbia as shared ground in a service-industry relationship. The brochure, for example, employs first- and second-person personal and possessive pronouns -- me, you, we, yours, ours -- to assert an industrial partnership between an unspecified "we" -- understood as the BCFC -- and "you" -- foreign audiovisual producers, and primarily Americans. Examples include:

“We can give it to you for a song” and “This land is your land ... This land was made for you and me.” “We,” in other words, are here for “you,” and “we” will work in partnership with “you” to exploit the natural and human resources of British Columbia.

At the same time, the promotional discourse commodifies place as a resource to be employed in the manufacture of audiovisual products. “We can give it to you for a song” asserts that the BCFC can offer British Columbia locations cheaply to foreign producers. “Bend me, shape me” instructs the audiovisual client to do what s/he wishes with those sites. “Come and get it ...” reads like an advertising slogan for the product that is, in this case, British Columbia.

But language serves another purpose in the brochure; it expresses the BCFC’s familiarity with the industry, its jargon, and with American popular culture, in order to establish the commission’s credibility as a partner in American popular culture production. This language asserts familiarity in a number of ways: using film industry vernacular; making reference to Hollywood films and film genres; and by quoting lyrics and song titles from popular music.

The brochure employs theatrical terms like “stand-ins” and “Hot Property” and makes the claim “We know the biz” to demonstrate its acquaintance with film industry idiom.⁹ Jargon is exclusive speech; its use and understanding is confined to those who know the territory to which the language belongs. In this case the territory is film and television production and the BCFC speaks its language.

The use of film titles and film genres -- “mean streets” (referring to the 1973 Martin Scorsese film), *Clan of the Cave Bear* (Michael Chapman, 1986), *Border Town*

(an American television series), *We're No Angels* (Neil Jordan, 1989), "the Orient Express" (which invokes the 1974 Sidney Lumet film *Murder on the Orient Express*), "The Wild West" -- and the use of song titles and lyrics -- "Downtown ... everything's waiting for you," "If you go out in the woods today," "Mountain's high ... valley's so deep ...," "Take me home country roads ..." -- express in a similar way the BCFC's familiarity with American popular culture and reinforce its claim to insider status.

On one level, the promotional literature effaces the particularity of British Columbia as a distinct social, cultural, historical and geographical place. On another level, the literature positions British Columbia as an active partner in Hollywood's audiovisual production industry. The result is that the literature integrates the audiovisual production industry in B.C. with the transnational Hollywood industry. This integration of the industries in the symbolic domain is realized in the material domain where Hollywood location production largely defines the B.C. film industry. British Columbia becomes Hollywood North, an integral part of a transnational organization of cultural production.

Made in British Columbia:

Most of the foreign service productions shot in British Columbia do, indeed, set their films elsewhere. Usually they are set in American locations. British Columbia has played various settings in Washington state (*First Blood*, 1982; *Housekeeping*, 1986; *Roxanne*, 1986), California (*Jennifer 8*, 1992), New Hampshire (*Jumanji*, 1995), Alaska (*Alaska*, 1996), Massachusetts (*Little Women*, 1994) and Montana (*Legends of the Fall*,

1996). Vancouver has stood in for Detroit (*Bird on a Wire*, 1989), Seattle (*Stakeout*, 1987), New York (*Look Who's Talking*, 1989) and Los Angeles (*Who's Harry Crumb?*, 1989). If in most of these films considerable effort is taken to mask the actual shooting location -- changing flags, mailboxes, newspaper boxes, licence plates, police uniforms, signs, etc. -- occasionally a film will reveal the artifice. *Rumble in the Bronx* (Stanley Tong, 1996), for example, assigns the New York borough a mountainous backdrop, as if offering a cinematic wink to in-the-know Vancouver movie-goers.

Bird on a Wire (John Badham, 1989) is worth a closer look in this regard. Unlike most service productions, the Paramount feature starring Mel Gibson and Goldie Hawn permits the viewer familiar with British Columbia to identify the former B.C. Penitentiary in New Westminster, the Sinclair Centre, Harbour Centre Tower, the Metropolitan Hotel and the B.C. Hydro Building in downtown Vancouver, the Chinatown and Gastown areas of Vancouver, and Market Square and Chinatown in Victoria.¹⁰

Such a representational strategy reflects on the part of the film-makers a supreme confidence that revealing such architectural and topographical distinctions of southwestern British Columbia will not undermine the spectator's understanding that the narrative is set in Detroit and Racine, Wisconsin. On the contrary, the film reduces these distinctions to mere urban idiosyncracies within the larger continental landscape. Hudolin, Pennsylvania may not have a prison quite like the old B.C. Penitentiary in New Westminster, but the role of the prison in the film is simply to mark the release of the David Carradine character, a corrupt drug-enforcement agent and Mel Gibson's nemesis. Any prison would have done the trick. The first-class hotel which serves as Goldie

Hawn's base in Detroit may only be found in Vancouver, but it signifies 'luxury hotel' rather than 'Vancouver hotel.' Similarly, gas stations like that which plays Marvin's Motown Motors in the film can be found in every North American city. *Bird on a Wire*, in effect, continentalizes British Columbia by asking the province to play the parts of five American states; the story moves from Pennsylvania to New York to New Jersey to Michigan to Wisconsin without the film crew ever leaving British Columbia.

Cousins (Joel Schumacher, 1989) employs a similar representational strategy, even if the narrative setting is never identified. Ted Danson and Isabella Rossellini are photographed against a number of recognizable Vancouver locations -- a suburban Skytrain station, Granville Island Market, the Downtown Eastside, Chinatown, Fantasy Gardens -- and yet the movie's backdrop signifies 'urban America' rather than 'Vancouver.' It is as if the film-makers are acknowledging Vancouver's role in the film while hesitating to grant the city a full-fledged speaking part.

Vancouver, these films suggest, does not yet have sufficient signifying power -- sufficient star power, in Hollywood parlance -- to play itself. American cities like New York and Miami and Chicago and San Francisco can lend meaning or atmosphere to a film by their names alone, because audiences have learned to associate these place names with political and historical events, and with numerous other films, songs, plays, novels and television programs. The process of constructing such associations with Vancouver has begun -- as a site of major sports events (major-league hockey and basketball, an Indy-car race), political meetings (the 1993 Clinton-Yeltsin summit, the 1997 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting) and cultural gatherings (Expo '86), and, of

course, as 'Hollywood North' -- but Vancouver does not yet evoke significant meaning in the North American imagination.¹¹

This is doubly so for rural British Columbia. Films like *Roxanne* (Fred Schepisi, 1986) and *First Blood* (Ted Kotcheff, 1982) were shot in small British Columbia communities deemed so indistinguishable from small-town America that not even their names were changed for the films. Nelson, B.C. thus becomes Nelson, Washington in *Roxanne* and Hope, B.C. becomes Hope, Washington in *First Blood*. While a case could be made for the necessity of an American setting in *First Blood* -- Stallone plays a renegade Vietnam veteran who becomes the focus for a power struggle between law-enforcement jurisdictions, a common Hollywood theme -- *Roxanne*, based on the Cyrano de Bergerac story, could have been set in any small town. Here again, though, small-town Washington is a more resonant signifier to American movie audiences -- it is more imaginable -- than small-town British Columbia -- wherever that is.

Occasionally a Hollywood film is *set* in British Columbia. Robert Altman shot and set *That Cold Day in the Park* in Vancouver in 1969, although the story could have been set in any city. *Star 80* (Bob Fosse, 1983) was based on the true story of murdered *Playboy* playmate Dorothy Stratten, who grew up in suburban Vancouver, and some of the film's scenes were shot at locations in her home town, including the Penthouse night club and the Blue Horizon hotel. Similarly, *The Terry Fox Story* (Ralph Thomas, 1983) was based on the Port Coquitlam native's Marathon of Hope and used a number of local Vancouver scenes.

More pertinent to this discussion, however, is the Paramount feature *Intersection*

(Mark Rydell, 1994), a remake of the 1969 French film *Les choses de la vie* which director Mark Rydell chose to set in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. The film, which stars Richard Gere, Sharon Stone and Lolita Davidovich, is so full of explicit Vancouver references that it would seem Rydell went out of his way to trumpet Vancouver as the film's setting. The architect played by Gere has a well-appointed Gastown office which overlooks Burrard Inlet, Canada Place and the North Shore mountains. Among the Gere character's designs is the University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology. When he mails a letter, he uses a Canadian stamp. The journalist played by Davidovich catches a B.C. Ferry from Lonsdale Quay and a Vancouver Taxi to her job at *Vancouver Step* magazine in Gastown. The film also gives us glimpses of the Vancouver city skyline, Granville Island Market, Dewdney General Store, the Squamish Highway and the Ninety-Niner Restaurant in Britannia Beach (where Gere orders a very un-Canadian drink, bourbon and water, but at least pays for it with a blue, five-dollar bill).

Curiously, though, the setting of *Intersection* remains largely detached from the story; the setting serves merely an aesthetic role, as stunning scenery to complement the stunning Hollywood stars and the high-powered lives their characters lead. As Georgia Brown (1995) remarked in her *Village Voice* review of the film: "British Columbia's coastal highways, its snowcapped mountains, may as well be an extension of the hero's designer outerwear." *Intersection* is set less in a distinct, geographical location than in a social class, as a kind of fictionalized version of *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*. Vancouver -- or at least the city's prettier side -- is visually implicated in the film, but it

remains socioculturally detached; this is in no sense a Vancouver story.

This continentalization of B.C. film production renders North America and the United States of America consonant in the term 'America.' Such films are made for U.S. and international film markets, where the signifying power of the place names 'Vancouver' and 'British Columbia' may be minimal. But this transnational regime of film production does not preclude local production which is at least partly *about* British Columbia and British Columbians, and thereby signifies its location of production in particular ways.

Made by British Columbians:

Unlike the B.C. Film Commission, which as part of its sales pitch proposes a range of scenarios in which British Columbia can accommodate Hollywood film-making, British Columbia Film leaves such imagining to the local film community it is mandated to serve. Simply put, B.C. Film "encourages and supports those productions which have the greatest level of British Columbian creative elements, including personnel." These "creative elements" are not specified, except where it comes to economics. To qualify for funding, a minimum 75 per cent of a film's total production budget must be spent on salaries, wages, goods and services within British Columbia (British Columbia Film, 1997).¹² The rest is up to the film-makers.

It would be simply parochial to demand that every B.C. film map its precise geographic setting. Three of the finest indigenous films to emerge from the province -- *The Grocer's Wife* (John Pozer, 1991), *Whale Music* (Richard Lewis, 1994) and *Kissed*

(Lynne Stopkewich, 1996) -- conceive of place in psychological terms, so that the location of the narrative in time and space is not especially important. *The Grocer's Wife* was shot in Trail, B.C., but its setting, in the words of *Globe and Mail* reviewer Christopher Harris (1993), is "a nameless, dateless, placeless town whose defining feature is a vast and throbbing smelter with a towering stack that vomits forth an eternity of ominous smoke." Nor is the precise setting of *Whale Music* ever identified. The film concerns a reclusive, burned-out pop star who lives in a dilapidated seaside mansion somewhere in the Pacific Northwest -- it could be Oregon, Washington or British Columbia. While we don't know exactly where we are in this film, we do know where we are *not*: deep in the urban heart of the music industry. And that is the point of the character's remove. Similarly, we don't know where we are in *Kissed*, but geography isn't pertinent to the story. The film operates on a more confined scale, and Wallis Funeral Home serves nicely as the principal setting of this psychological exploration of necrophilia.

A confusing film with regard to setting, however, is the psychological drama *Deep Sleep* (Patricia Gruben, 1990). The film is about a young woman named Shelly, who is trying to uncover the truth about the shooting death of her father four years earlier. She is the only member of the family who continues to be tormented by the tragedy. The film is set in a city called Vancouver, and we are shown Main Street and the docks area of East Vancouver, but it is not clear where Vancouver is; if anything, the viewer is led to conclude that Vancouver is an American city. During a flashback in which Shelly recalls her father's sexual abuse, she is rewarded for her sexual favours with American dollars.

Both Shelly's father and his best friend were captains in the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam War and were based in the Philippines. One of the central themes of the film is power, and American imperialism in the Philippines is linked to the exportation of Filipino children to North America. How the story and its characters are connected to the Canadian city called Vancouver is not clear, unless, like the foreign service productions, Vancouver has simply been absorbed within 'America.'

British Columbia also produces outright Hollywood imitations, using American settings and, often, minor Hollywood actors, integrating indigenous production with the continental commercial film industry. *Air Bud* (Charles Martin Smith, 1997), for example, is set in the town of Fernfield, Washington and recounts the story of a basketball-playing golden retriever named Buddy who helps the Fernfield Timberwolves to the state high school basketball championship. As far-fetched as this may sound, the film was something of a hit, winning the Golden Reel Award as the highest-grossing Canadian film of the year in 1997 (\$1.6 million at Canadian box offices between October 1996 and October 1997). A sequel, *Air Bud II: Golden Receiver*, about a football-playing dog, went into production in British Columbia in February, 1998 and was released in the summer of '98 (Harris, 1997; McNamara, 1998). Less successful Hollywood imitators have been B.C. films like *North of Pittsburgh* (Richard Martin, 1989), *Xtro II: The Second Encounter* (Harry Bromley-Davenport, 1991) and *Flinch* (George Erschbamer, 1992).

But as opposed to those productions which deny British Columbia a distinct identity, there is another group of indigenous films which explicitly locate British

Columbia as a place of history, of politics and of culture, which foreground without timidity British Columbia settings, stories and characters. These films place British Columbia historically as a former British colony occupying native Indian lands in resistance to American westward expansion. They situate British Columbia geographically by representing the lives of their characters as heavily shaped by cross-border migrations and transcultural interaction, and by representing the province itself as a borderland adjoining western Canada, the northwestern United States, the sub-Arctic region and the Pacific Rim.

Two historical films which illustrate this point particularly well are based on migrants to the colony who became British Columbia folk legends. *Kootenai Brown* (Allan Kroeker, 1991) recounts the story of John George Brown, a junior officer in the British army who left Ireland in the mid-19th century with the dream of becoming an English gentleman in British Columbia. *The Grey Fox* (Phillip Borsos, 1982) traces the Canadian chapter in the career of Bill Miner, an American outlaw who became Canada's first train robber in the first decade of the 20th century.

Kootenai Brown is the tragic story of a man who leads a transient existence in the North American west, meandering throughout what is now western Canada and the northwest United States in his quest to attain social standing as a gentleman after rejecting class-bound Britain, where status was purchased rather than earned. Yet if he envisioned 'America' as a meritocracy, he finds it to be a corrupt frontier society populated as much by cheats and thieves as by honest hard-workers. Brown winds up on trial for murder in Montana Territory after knifing his parasitic business partner Eban

Campbell, known as McTooth, on the main street of Fort Benton in broad daylight.

The film depicts a ruthless society consumed as much with producing individual wealth as with establishing appropriate social values, where the most significant markers of identity are those based on race rather than nationality; citizenship is meaningless here. The white settlers from Europe are by definition “civilized” men and women, in spite of their behaviour and the differences among them, and the native peoples are by definition “savages.” Scots, Irish, Americans, natives and Métis work, drink and play cards together, but it is a volatile mix. Violent conflict results both from clashes between individuals -- Brown and McTooth, Brown and the card cheat Gilchrist -- and between belief systems -- centrally, between native society and the encroaching white settlers.

Brown’s personal struggle to survive, let alone prosper, is punctuated by bouts of moral uncertainty, even moral cowardice. His path to becoming a gentleman is strewn with all the vices the new world has to offer -- alcohol, gambling, prostitution, dishonesty, exploitation -- and he is rarely able to resist these lures. He loses his first gold stake in a crooked card game, has his second bundle stolen during a barroom shoot-out, and he later goes into the business of trading wolf skins for whiskey with the incorrigible McTooth.

Brown awkwardly straddles the European settler society of his origins and the Métis society he adopts through his marriage to the métisse Olivia. He refers to the Métis as “my people,” yet his sense of belonging is ambivalent; he is not forthcoming about why the buffalo are disappearing, he doesn’t tell his “people” about his stint trading watered-down, even poisoned, whiskey to Indians, and he refuses to cut his ties to

McTooth, who constantly appeals to Brown as a “gentleman.” “We’re not savages,” McTooth reminds Brown whenever Brown rejects the ways of white settler society.

Geographically, *Kootenai Brown* evokes ‘the west.’ The story moves from Williams Creek in British Columbia to the pre-Confederation North West Territories, from Assiniboia to Montana Territory. The pertinent territorial markers in the film are mountains, cold weather, gold, furs and buffalo herds; they are what governs the characters’ movement. Whether or not the film is historically accurate, *Kootenai Brown* seeks to capture a sense of what British Columbia was like during the Cariboo gold rush and relates the experiences of one mythical figure during that period.

Political boundaries between Canada and the United States are much more clearly demarcated in *The Grey Fox*, which begins with Bill Miner’s release from San Quentin Prison in 1901. Throughout the film, titles and dialogue tell us exactly where we are. Part of this can be explained by the nature of the story itself; Miner is running from law-enforcement officials on both sides of the border, and legal jurisdiction becomes central when the American Pinkerton agent Seavy pursues Miner into Canada. Sgt. Fernie, the local North West Mounted Police officer, clearly resents Seavy’s intrusion into his bailiwick, and only co-operates when instructed to do so by his superintendent in New Westminster.

But the borders are also historically relevant by this time. British Columbia is no longer a British Colony, but a province in a country called Canada which has begun to forge a sense of nationhood. Similarly, the northwestern American states -- Oregon (1859), Washington (1889), Montana (1889) and Idaho (1890) -- have formalized their

relationship to the United States by achieving statehood. By the time of Miner's release, in other words, the two countries are distinct political and economic entities, and British Columbia is a distinct entity within Canada. The importance of these boundaries to the story is underlined when Miner crosses into Canada after a botched train robbery in Oregon. As Blaine Allan (1993) notes, Miner's border crossing is signified three ways: by the sudden appearance of snow on the ground; by a close-up shot of the boundary marker; and by a superimposed title which reads "British Columbia." Allan writes: "The three signs mark the border for both Bill Miner and the viewer, and ensure that they both understand that the story is moving into someplace different" (p. 73). With newly-recruited partner Shorty Dunn, Miner is successful in robbing a Canadian Pacific Railway train near Mission, and, posing as a mining engineer from Idaho named George Edwards, he hides out in Kamloops until it is safe to continue.

But if the film always makes sure we know where we are geographically, we also know where we are historically. Like *Kootenai Brown*, *The Grey Fox* informs us not only of Miner's story, but of its historical context. Miner had been sent to San Quentin for robbing stage coaches, which, by the time of his release, had been replaced by steam-powered trains. He is inspired to apply his skills to this new technology after watching the Edwin S. Porter film -- cinema itself was a new technology -- *The Great Train Robbery*.¹³ In one of the most striking scenes in the film, it is a train which foils Miner's attempt to steal a herd of horses. Evoking the Alex Colville painting in which a horse and train are destined to collide, Miner and Shorty are driving the stolen horses along a railroad track when an unscheduled work train appears. The horses are forced down a

steep embankment and those that don't get away have to be destroyed because of their injuries. It is clearly the age of the iron horse.

The railroad in the film also draws attention to Canadian history. The transcontinental CPR was a key element in John A. Macdonald's nation-building program. Miner became a folk hero in British Columbia in large part because he robbed the CPR, an unpopular, monopolistic institution. Shorty makes specific mention of this monopoly -- "Damn railroad owns everything, both sides of the tracks" -- and in the closing scene of the film, Miner is given a rousing send-off at the Kamloops train station as he is sent off to prison.

A very different kind of historical film which nonetheless locates its characters spatially and temporally is *Hard Core Logo* (Bruce McDonald, 1995). The history recounted here is of the western Canadian punk music scene. The film is a mock documentary of the 1995 reunion tour of the fictional Vancouver punk group Hard Core Logo, a band we are told had a large and loyal following during the decade prior to its break-up in 1991. But if the film's foreground is fiction, the story is set against a non-fiction background; Hard Core Logo plays well-known Vancouver music venues the Smiling Buddha Cabaret and the Commodore Ballroom, and at its kick-off concert in Vancouver, Hard Core Logo appears with actual bands Flash Bastard, Lick the Pole, the Modernettes, Art Bergman and D.O.A. This flirtation between fact and fiction extends to two characters in the film who play versions of themselves: the band's booking agent Mulligan, played by Vancouver disc and video jockey Terry David Mulligan, and the film-maker Bruce McDonald. The band's drummer, Pipefitter, even teases McDonald

about two of his previous films: *Roadkill* and *Highway 61*. This narrative strategy reinforces the story's connection to actuality; the film wants to say something about an actual time and place.

The dramatic tension in the film is based on a distinction between what band leader Joe Dick sees as two very different punk scenes: one in which the music is everything, the other in which the music serves commercial ends. These distinctions are personified by Joe Dick, who wants to re-unite Hard Core Logo on a permanent basis, and Billy Tallent, the band's lead guitarist who wants to graduate to punk's upper echelons. Speaking directly to the camera, Joe Dick explains: "There's two different ways to look at it. Billy just wants the models and the limousines, and I'm happy with the hookers and the taxicabs." The film clearly situates the western Canadian punk scene in the music-is-everything category; the Hard Core Logo band members tour from Vancouver to Calgary, Regina, Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Edmonton, taking turns at the wheel of their decrepit van, driving all night to the next gig, hoping they sell enough t-shirts to pay their expenses. The film in this way particularizes west-coast punk music, distinguishing the subcultural attributes which set it apart from the universal signifier of 'punk music.'

The more personal histories of films like *My American Cousin* (Sandy Wilson, 1985), its sequel *American Boyfriends* (Sandy Wilson, 1989) and *The Lotus Eaters* (Paul Shapiro, 1991) establish a link between their protagonists' state of being and their place of being in an attempt to deconstruct the way place is imagined. British Columbia is depicted, from the point of view of these characters, as backward, remote and confining, a

place they must graduate from to fulfill themselves. All three films, ultimately, expose such depictions as being based on personal feelings of discontent.

Sandy, the pubescent protagonist of *My American Cousin*, pines to leave her family's ironically-titled Paradise Ranch in the Okanagan Valley -- where "nothing ever happens," as she notes in her diary -- for the more fertile cultural ground of the United States. The catalyst for this escape fantasy is Sandy's California cousin Butch, who arrives unannounced at the ranch late one night in the summer of 1959. Butch embodies Sandy's adolescent perception of 'America;' he looks like James Dean with his straight-cut blue jeans and white t-shirt, he drives a cherry red Cadillac Eldorado convertible with whitewall tires, and he listens to rock 'n' roll music on his transistor radio. Unfortunately, Paradise Ranch is out of reach of the American radio stations -- "In the States we got rock 'n' roll all day long" -- and the hit movie *Rebel Without a Cause* hasn't yet made it to the local theatre. Butch's flashy car must endure cattle gates and gravel roads. "Back in the States we don't got roads like this. Everything's paved!" Like Bill Miner in *The Grey Fox*, Butch is clearly someplace different.

Because the story is framed as a personal reminiscence of a more innocent time, *My American Cousin* signifies Sandy's Canada and Butch's America in stereotypical terms. The film establishes a simple dichotomy between lacklustre Canada and the hip United States. Sandy's Canada is a place of conservative values, quaint country music, dirt roads and chaperoned community dances. Butch's America is characterized by mobile individualism, rock 'n' roll, paved highways and sexual exploration. America, Sandy imagines, is everything Canada could be when it grows up.

If Sandy's liberation from Paradise Ranch is ultimately denied in *My American Cousin*, she manages at least a temporary escape to California in *American Boyfriends*, set in 1965. Butch is again the catalyst, inviting Sandy, now a somewhat independent, first-year student at Simon Fraser University, to his wedding in Portland.

Similarly framed as a personal reminiscence, *American Boyfriends* is a more serious film in that it raises the stakes involved in Sandy's American illusion. If in *My American Cousin*, the worst that happens is that Sandy can't go with Butch to California, in *American Boyfriends* Sandy's initial infatuation with California is quickly undermined as 'America' reveals a darker side of hostility, violence and death. At the beginning of the story, Sandy and school friend Julie perceive the U.S. as the place of interesting people and significant events: Martin Luther King, Bob Dylan, California surfers, the civil-rights movement and anti-war protests. The fact that their political science professor is from Berkeley -- he's come to teach these young Canadians what *real* politics is all about -- punctuates the point. Of course, Sandy and Julie have given little thought to the notion that an anti-war protest requires a war and a civil-rights movement requires systemic prejudice.

Gradually, however, the film probes beneath the theme-park façade. As the young women venture further into America, they lose both their sexual and political innocence. If at Butch's wedding they are initially attracted to the dapper young men in their military uniforms, they soon learn what those uniforms imply. Sandy's friend Lizzie loses her virginity to Butch's best man Daryl, who is due to leave for Vietnam in six days. Similarly, when Sandy and Julie continue on to California in their quest to meet surfers

and “radicals,” they are struck by the pervasiveness of the war. The surfers they meet in Santa Cruz are macho rednecks who have little regard for anti-war sentiment; one of the surfers recently lost a brother in Vietnam. Sandy and Julie befriend instead two young men the surfers have just bounced from a bar: Spider, a black, fourth-year political science student from UCLA, and Marty, a draft-dodger from the Bronx.

The Vietnam War is no longer some remote news event; it assumes an omnipresence which threatens the lives of people Sandy has come to know. Death itself hits home when she learns that Butch has been killed in a car accident. Sandy and Julie bolt back to Canada, which remains a much simpler place as the final scene suggests; one of the customs agents turns out to be a school friend of Sandy's, and he allows her to sneak Marty across the border.¹⁴

American Boyfriends doesn't erase the cultural border Sandy drew between Canadian and American society in *My American Cousin*, it simply redefines that boundary in starker, sociopolitical terms. Far less forgiving than the original film, *American Boyfriends* is less a critique of the United States than it is of Canadians' delusions about 'America.'

The Lotus Eaters demonstrates that you don't have to be an adolescent to indulge in adolescent fantasy, and it reinforces the point that illusions can have material consequences. It is 1964 and Hal Kingswood is a fogyish 40-something, the principal of the small elementary school on Dinner Plate Island. His long-held dream of sailing to Mexico -- “It's Paradise down there” -- is rekindled by the arrival of the free-spirited new teacher Anne-Marie Andrews. Reminiscent of Butch in *My American Cousin*, the Miss

Andrews character is an exoticized Other, a young, attractive and bright Québécoise from Montreal who captivates her students, her fellow teachers, and especially Hal.

Shot on Galiano Island, just off the coast of B.C.'s Lower Mainland, the film depicts the island as a remote, isolated place resistant to change. When Hal's teenaged daughter Cleo announces that The Beatles are coming, and Hal asks "Here?," Cleo curtly responds: "No, not here. No one ever comes here. Here is nowhere." The most remarkable islanders in the film are never seen, but only spoken about: Hal's father, who left for England after having an affair with Violet Spittle; and Violet herself, who ran off with the man who cleaned the island's septic tanks. People don't *come* to Dinner Plate Island, they *go*. Miss Andrews is the exception, and she brings the revolutionary excitement of the 1960s with her. Pulling up in a Volkswagen van with the stereo blaring, a guitar over her shoulder and a mini-skirt around her waist, she initially scandalizes her principal through the simple act of re-arranging the classroom desks in a circle.

Miss Andrews, of course, is not all that the islanders imagine her to be. We eventually learn that Miss Andrews came to the west coast to escape a lifeless relationship in Montreal; she departed on the eve of her wedding. And the reckless affair she initiates with Hal turns out not to be her first ill-considered escapade.

If Miss Andrews in *The Lotus Eaters* assumes a comparable role to Butch in *My American Cousin* -- as sirenic Other arriving in Paradise (lotus-land, Paradise Ranch) -- there is an important distinction in the way the films locate their settings. *My American Cousin* situates Paradise Ranch, not in the Okanagan Valley or in British Columbia, but

in Canada, and asserts a universalized Canada-U.S. dichotomy. The film offers no sense that Canada has other, more enticing, places to offer; Sandy's American dream remains undiminished when she moves to Vancouver in the sequel.

The Lotus Eaters, on the other hand, particularizes Dinner Plate Island, setting the island apart from everywhere else. *The Lotus Eaters* makes a distinction between its island community and other places; we can imagine life as different elsewhere. Cleo, for instance, imagines a different life in Vancouver and Hal conjures a utopian Mexico. This means that Dinner Plate Island signifies only Dinner Plate Island, and that we can imagine other island communities, other parts of British Columbia, other parts of Canada, as offering different experiences.

This distinction is noteworthy because it begins to paint British Columbia as not merely different than neighbouring Washington and Alaska, but as a heterogeneous, multi-dimensional space in and of itself. A recurrent theme in British Columbia's indigenous films, for example, is the divide between urban and rural ways of life.

In *Max* (Charles Wilkinson, 1993), former hippies Andy and Jane Blake move to a remote ranch in the Nicola Valley when their son Max is diagnosed as terminally ill with an immune system deficiency believed by doctors to result from environmental toxicity. Andy takes the diagnosis personally, blaming himself for Max's illness because he and Jane bought into the consumer culture of the two-car garage and the home in the suburbs.

Both Andy and Jane construct for themselves distinct images of city and country, and it is the contradiction between their views which provides the film's dramatic energy. For Andy, the city is unclean and city-dwellers have been corrupted by their over-reliance

on technology -- like the city doctors who have given up on Max because science tells them the boy's disease is incurable. The country, to Andy, is a more natural and healthy environment, and he eschews all vestiges of urban technology, substituting meditation and faith for science, exercise for medicine, organic food for processed food, even a cumbersome handsaw for the chainsaw his native Indian neighbour recommends. Jane, however, sees the country as menacing in its remoteness -- from doctors, hospitals, other people -- and the city as secure in its proximity to the professional help Max may need.

A different kind of cultural distinction is portrayed in *Harmony Cats* (Sandy Wilson, 1993). This time it is a gulf between urban high culture and rural popular culture. Graham Brathwaite is a self-centred violinist with the symphony orchestra in Vancouver. When the orchestra goes bankrupt, Graham is forced to find other work and, very reluctantly, joins the country-music band Frank Hay and the Harmony Cats for its annual tour of the British Columbia Interior. Like a little boy who knows he will hate spinach before he has tried it, Graham is initially appalled at having to play such pedestrian music. "I'm a world-class musician," he repeatedly protests. Predictably, he learns to respect both the musical talents and musical tastes of his fellow "Cats" by the end of the tour. Graham, in fact, adopts Frank's daughter Debbie as his protégée and it is his admiration for her singing and song-writing abilities which inspires Debbie to accept a Nashville recording contract.

Harmony Cats complicates the cinematic rendering of British Columbia because, like *Max*, it compels its central character to confront and to discover a British Columbia he knew very little about. This is a British Columbia of smoky beer halls, shabby motels,

male strippers and line dancing, a working-class culture with its own modes of speech and dress as far removed as one can get from sipping Chardonnay in the lobby of the Orpheum Theatre.

The more fundamental identity markers of race and ethnicity are mapped in *The Traveller* (Bruno Lazaro Pacheco, 1989) and *Double Happiness* (Mina Shum, 1994). The British Columbia depicted in these films is a complex, multi-ethnic and multiracial setting for both *inter-* and *intracultural* conflict.

In *The Traveller*, Robert Braun crosses back and forth between British Columbia's native and non-native cultures. A non-native himself, Braun was raised in a Haida community on the northwest coast, married a Haida woman named Helen, and then pursued a career which straddled the two cultures: first as a University of British Columbia anthropologist studying native culture, then as a dealer in native Indian masks.

Clearly, all his efforts to bridge native and non-native society have failed. He left his native community and separated from his wife; he is accused of stealing the ceremonial masks presented at their wedding. He quit teaching because he found anthropology to be exploitive and he was fed up "selling ideas to students." "So I got into the business of selling them *real* things, *real* masks. It seemed more honest at the time." As the film unfolds, the native carvers have come to resent the commercial exploitation of their work. Braun decides to sell his shares in the company he founded when he objects to his business partner's determination to buy cheaper, imitation masks produced by penitentiary inmates.

If the Braun character's naivety inhibits the story's dramatic impact, *The Traveller*

is much more successful in establishing the social proximity of native and non-native culture in British Columbia. On his way to Vancouver at the start of the film, Braun's plane flies over the lushly-treed islands of the B.C. coast, the same trees and same waters which bring native and non-native society into frequent and fundamental conflict over logging and fishing rights. Some of these islands and waters can be seen from Braun's West End Vancouver hotel room. When he visits the University of B.C., he sees some students hanging a banner announcing a Native Rights Student Coalition meeting. And throughout the city he is followed by the haunting call of a raven, a central icon in Haida culture. The British Columbia of *The Traveller* is a place of uneasy co-existence, not unlike the Williams Creek of *Kootenai Brown*.

Double Happiness renders prominent the Chinese community in present-day Vancouver. The story belongs to Jade Li, who struggles throughout the film to reconcile her career and personal aspirations with the wishes of her strict and custom-bound father Quo. Although Mina Shum, as writer-director, insists the story is her own and she isn't speaking for the larger Chinese community (see Knelman, 1995), *Double Happiness* nonetheless addresses the larger issue of intergenerational intracultural conflict as it is played out in its specific Vancouver setting.

Jade's parents and their contemporaries speak Cantonese most of the time -- almost half of the film's dialogue is sub-titled -- eat Chinese food exclusively, shop in Chinatown and socialize only with other Chinese. They are labourers, shopkeepers and homemakers who put more ambitious pursuits aside -- Quo wanted to be an architect -- when they immigrated to Canada. Jade's generation is highly Westernized. They speak

Cantonese as a second language, if they speak it at all, listen to Western music, frequent the same Vancouver clubs as non-Chinese, and aspire to professional careers.¹⁵

Jade, who was born in Hong Kong but came to Vancouver when she was two, wants to be an actress and, in no apparent rush to find a mate, clearly resents being sent on dates with young Chinese men her parents perceive to be good marrying material. Jade and her best friend Lisa both have non-Chinese boyfriends. Quo, by contrast, was raised in an affluent Chinese family which lost its wealth and social standing during the Cultural Revolution. He is primarily concerned with restoring and maintaining family honour -- "Li family values" -- and he has already been disgraced once by his rebellious son Winston, who was subsequently banished and does not appear in the film. Quo wants Jade to set aside her own independent notions, find a suitable Chinese husband and take over her aunt's clothing shop.

Two elements distinguish *Double Happiness* from what Kass Banning (1995) describes as "the common conflict of teen will-to-power against trouble-with father-knows-best" (p. 26). First, Jade isn't simply rebelling holus-bolus against Quo's paternalism; Jade is in large part wrestling with herself over how to accommodate the aspects of her Chinese-ness with which she is comfortable and those elements of her ethnicity she needs to overcome. The complexity inherent to constructing this new kind of identity for herself resonates in two scenes from her acting career, in which she is either too Chinese or not Chinese enough. During an audition for a bit part as a waitress in a soap opera episode, Jade is asked to deliver her lines with a fabricated Chinese accent. In another audition, this time for a Hong Kong film shooting on location in

Vancouver, Jade is chastized in Cantonese by the producer -- played by Shum herself -- because she can't read the Chinese script. "You can't read Chinese? But you were born in Hong Kong! Are you really Chinese?" Jade's weak, almost inaudible "Yes" sounds more like a question than an answer.

A second distinguishing element of the film is that the conflict isn't simply intergenerational. The Hong Kong producer for whom Jade isn't Chinese enough is, like Jade, a young woman. A more significant character, however, is Ah Hong, a boyhood friend of Quo who is visiting Vancouver; Jade's father is especially concerned about putting up a good-Chinese-family front during Ah Hong's stay. Chia-chi Wu (1998) writes:

In contrast to Li's father, Ah Hong, the "Chinese Chinese" fresh off the flight from China, is already speaking fluent English and acquired certain western mannerisms. He has learned to speak English in China and obviously adopts a more tolerant attitude toward Jade's individuality. He also has an "illicit" family that can not be acknowledged by Li's father's moral values. Implied in this contrast between Ah Hong and the father is a critique of some Asian American [sic] families which are more chauvinistically nationalist than people back "home" (p. 10).

It is Ah Hong who approves of Jade's decision to move out at the end of the film, undermining the simple, and simplistic, dichotomy between Western liberalism and Asian traditionalism (p. 2).

Taken together, these indigenous films particularize and diversify British Columbia. They render the province a distinct historical, political, social and cultural entity, but one which nonetheless remains intimately connected to its neighbouring states.

If these films erect both material and symbolic boundaries around the province, those boundaries remain permeable and tenuous; the central social relationships which motivate these narratives transcend national, racial, cultural and generational frontiers, and at the same time call those borders into question. British Columbia's indigenous cinema is a site of contestation, where film-makers and audiences can work through the various meanings this place evokes for the people who make their lives there.

Conclusion:

The way film-makers represent British Columbia as place can be read in at least three ways. Perhaps the most obvious reading is simply to deny the signifying power of the province's various cinematic guises. Movie settings, after all, are fictionalized spatial-temporal constructs, and the transformation of the film location is part of cinema's artifice. Like a stage or an actor, the location is dressed up to play a particular role, to play a part, which bears no necessary relationship to the actual location.

The problem with this argument is that, while it may hold for individual films, it ignores the larger pattern. That is, foreign films almost always transform British Columbia into an American place, almost always reducing the region to a sociologically empty stage, devoid of the cultural or historical significance that would allow British Columbia to play itself. Such a consistent pattern of denial suggests there are larger, structural forces at play, and points to Hollywood's hegemony in the commercial film industry. It is Hollywood, in other words, which sets the agenda in the business of location production.

Given Hollywood's hegemony, a second reading would situate British Columbia's film industry within a media imperialism thesis. In this view, British Columbia is part of Hollywood's program of Manifest Destiny. In light of Hollywood's long-established dominance of the distribution and exhibition sectors continentally, Hollywood has appropriated British Columbia as part of its continentalization -- even globalization -- of commercial film production.

While there is much to be said for this view, it remains unsatisfactory. As discussed in Chapters Three and Four, the government of British Columbia took the initiative in inviting Hollywood to use its locations, and Victoria was under no illusion that Hollywood would be interested in filming local stories. To this day, in fact, the B.C. Film Commission promotes the province's ability to play Anywhere, U.S.A. and encourages non-resident producers to "Bend me, shape me ..."

In addition, as noted in Chapters Two and Four, the province has always defined cinema in industrial rather than cultural terms, and the film industry replicates any number of other resource-extraction industries in the province by providing the primary natural and human resources for products which are ultimately finished elsewhere.

The media imperialism argument also overlooks the view that Hollywood's presence in British Columbia has in some ways *enabled* a local cinema to emerge. The location production industry has encouraged the development of film industry services and personnel, and provides the kind of steady training, employment and income that a small, indigenous cinema could not provide, but nonetheless benefits from. Rather than moving to Toronto or Los Angeles like many of their predecessors, B.C. film-makers can

remain at home, assured that they can find steady work. While Hollywood provides most of the employment, foreign producers at the same time provide indigenous film-makers with a pool of skilled labour from which to draw.

What I want to outline in the concluding chapter of the thesis is a more nuanced reading, one which perceives in the cinematic representation of British Columbia a deconstruction of boundaries, a representational pattern which consistently calls into question cultural, political and economic borders which have been imposed historically upon the physical geography of North America. In a period of globalization, such a reading sets culture in opposition to nature: the sociohistorical constituents of place such as politics, economics and culture against the physical geographic elements of place.

Notes:

¹Vancouver-based companies have performed post-production work on such TV series as *Poltergeist*, *Outer Limits*, *Millenium*, *The X-Files* and *Highlander* (Edwards, 1997a). The B.C. Film Commission now draws specific attention to Vancouver's post-production capabilities in its advertisements (see *Playback*, March 10, 1997, p. 26).

² The BCFC's budget for 1996-97 was \$893,000, down from \$950,000 in 1995-96 (Walshe, 1997, p. 18).

³The Florida Film Commissioners Association, for example, has 25 member commissions. Besides Toronto, Ontario has film commissions in the Durham and Niagara regions, as well as the town of Huntsville. British Columbia has film offices in Burnaby, Prince George, Victoria and Kamloops.

⁴Peter Mitchell, director of the B.C. Film Commission, estimates that between 60 and 70 per cent of the Hollywood producers working in British Columbia are repeat customers (Mitchell, 1997).

⁵It is important to understand that the currency-exchange rate is a managed economic variable. Because it plays a key role in all sectors of the Canadian economy -- more than 80 per cent of Canada's trade is with the United States -- the federal government manages the rate through the acquisition and sale of international currency reserves and through the formulation of monetary policy to serve exchange-rate objectives. If the B.C. film industry is sensitive to exchange-rate fluctuations, so is British Columbia's forestry industry, which is highly dependent on export sales. In a study of B.C. as a low-cost location for American audiovisual production, Catherine Walshe (1997) concluded that even with the Canadian and American currencies at par, Vancouver's costs of production would remain less than 95 per cent of comparable costs in Los Angeles (p. 46).

The exchange rate results from international transactions which create a supply of, and a demand for, Canadian dollars in the foreign-exchange market. Transactions that create a supply of Canadian dollars include the importation of goods and services, travel by Canadians abroad, Canadian foreign investment, foreign borrowing in Canada, and interest and dividend payments to foreign investors. Transactions that create a demand for Canadian dollars include the export of goods and services, foreign visits to Canada, income from foreign investments and foreign investment in Canada (Dobson, 1980). Vogt *et al.* (1993) explain: "When a country's currency appreciates, its export industries find it harder to compete in world markets. At the same time, industries that face import competition find it difficult to compete in domestic markets. When a country's currency depreciates, in contrast, export and import-competing industries boom, but industries that rely on imported energy or imported raw materials suffer" (p. 661).

⁶Through a public-private partnership between the B.C. government and MGM Worldwide Television, the Bridge Studios opened two new sound stages in May, 1997. Bridge Studios is a provincial crown corporation operated through the B.C. Pavilion Corporation and the Ministry of Small, Business, Recreation and Culture. Victoria provided \$1.5 million and MGM contributed \$3.5 million in a pre-lease agreement. MGM, which shoots the television series *Poltergeist* and *Outer Limits* in Vancouver for Showtime, plans to use the expanded space for its *Stargate* series (Edwards, 1997c). Two other studio projects destined for Vancouver, Terminal City Studios and False Creek Flats, fell through. The Vancouver accounting firm Ellis Foster has undertaken a study of British Columbia's studio economy in the context of growing demand on the province's inadequate studio resources (Edwards, 1998b).

⁷There are structural reasons for the industry's concentration in Vancouver. First, that is where the ancillary services required by film shoots are located, including hotels, equipment rentals, film processing labs, etc. But secondly, labour agreements require higher wages for shoots outside of the "grid," which is the Vancouver shooting zone bounded by Sunset Marina in West Vancouver to the north, the U.S. border to the south, 168th Avenue in Surrey to the east, and the waterfront to the west (Hiltz, 1997).

⁸The promotional package I received from the B.C. Film Commission in June, 1997 contained:

- the 1997 *Reel West Digest*, a 368-page services directory for audiovisual production in western Canada;
- a 30-page locations brochure entitled *The British Columbia Shooting Gallery*;
- the 1997 *B.C. Film Commission Production and Budget Guide*, a detailed outline of cost breakdowns for film-related services, as well as government regulations, a sunrise/sunset chart, a temperature/precipitation chart and a metric conversion guide;
- a 1997 *Travel Guide* and road map from Tourism British Columbia.

⁹Frequent use of this idiom can be found in the Hollywood trade publication *Variety*. In *Variety*, a studio head is a “prexy,” executives who leave for another company “ankle,” a film reporting strong box-office returns is described as “socko,” and television networks are “webs.”

¹⁰Ken MacIntyre (1996) has published a thorough guide to Hollywood North, which lists all the films shot in British Columbia and describes their locations. This section makes extensive use of MacIntyre’s work.

¹¹I want to credit Maurice Charland for bringing this point to my attention.

¹²Interprovincial co-productions and international treaty co-productions are exempted from this provision.

¹³Gerald Mast (1986) describes *The Great Train Robbery* as “almost a little textbook on ‘How to Rob a Train’ -- first you tie up the telegraph operator so he can’t send a warning, then you climb aboard the train when it stops for water, then you unhook the locomotive from the passenger cars so the passengers can’t escape, and so forth. Many of the earliest moral fears about the movies arose from their ability to teach audiences how to perform daring crimes in precise and clear detail” (p. 37).

¹⁴These highly autobiographical stories also speak to Sandy Wilson’s own questions about life as a film-maker on the two sides of the international fence. Acknowledging that she often wonders whether Los Angeles might afford her greater career opportunities, Wilson told an interviewer: “I guess I’m still crazy enough to think we can make movies here. It’s very tough but this is where my community is, this is where I draw my strength from. And I think we are always just on the brink of fulfilling the promise in the Canadian film industry” (in Mitchell, 1991, p. 75).

¹⁵Chia-chi Wu (1998) argues that *Double Happiness* adopts a very Western, even Orientalist, view of the Li family, beginning with Jade’s opening monologue in which she asserts “her own otherness from her family while highlighting her family’s ‘otherness’ from the white family” (p. 2). “As an ‘ethnic’ film, while talking to us and eliciting our

identification, Jade's direct address is used to introduce her point-of-view at her own family, as someone from 'their' culture and a cultural informant who can talk in 'our' language. As Jade says, 'I want to tell you about my family,' her perspective is mobilized to stand in for the camera's gaze at the ethnic culture" (p.5).

Chapter Six

Locating the British Columbia Film Industry

Scholars who have engaged with the phenomenon of globalization from a number of disciplinary perspectives maintain that globalization has reconfigured our senses of space and place. They underline, further, the significant role the mass media play in the complex process of how we imagine and construct ideas of place, as well as the related notions of community, culture, society, nation and identity. Far from rendering place irrelevant or inconsequential, however, such scholarship encourages a radical reconceptualization of place in the context of intensified global social relations. Kevin Robins (1997) writes: "Globalization pulls cultures in different, contradictory, and often conflictual ways. It is about the 'de-territorialization' of culture, but it also involves cultural 're-territorialization.' It is about the increasing mobility of culture, but also about new cultural fixities" (p. 33).

The introductory chapter of this thesis asserted that the British Columbia feature-film industry could not be understood within the conventional national cinema frame, which conceives of films as products of a national culture. Such a prescriptive mode of analysis was rejected in favour of assessing British Columbia's cinema on its own terms. British Columbia's dramatic cinema, however, does not lend itself to ready classification -- given its relatively recent emergence, given the predominance of foreign service production, and given its limited corpus of indigenous films. Furthermore, because this cinema is constituted by both non-resident and local producers -- with the added

complication that local film workers are heavily involved in the production of foreign films -- it is in fact defined by a complex interface between transnational and regional/local regimes of film production. As was noted in the preceding chapter, even British Columbia's indigenous films construct distinct notions of place and imagine community in divergent ways.

This chapter explores the question of what kind of 'place' the B.C. film industry belongs to. Following a review of the theoretical literature pertaining to globalization, the chapter posits British Columbia as a particularly suitable candidate for Doreen Massey's proposed reconceptualization of place as "meeting place" or "intersection." Globalization has intensified social relations across space and through time and has thus altered the way we experience and imagine place, the way we define community and the way we constitute identity. The communications media are heavily implicated in these transformations, as they bind space and time, and further, as they enable new ways of being and belonging through the formation of new media ecologies. Massey's "global sense of place," which configures place as a locus upon which a constellation of local, regional, national and international social relations intersect and interweave (Massey, 1991, 1992, 1995), is critical to situating the B.C. film industry.

The transnational flows of people, capital, commodities, information and images we associate with globalization have a long history in British Columbia, and this is especially true of British Columbia's largest city, Vancouver, where the film industry is centred. Rob Wilson and Wimal Dissanayake (1996), in fact, cite Vancouver as one example of the "mingled processing zones and 'global cities' of crosshatched and circular

flow” which have resulted from globalization (p. 2). If ‘place’ is reconceptualized in this way, it becomes possible to understand the relationship between British Columbia as place and both the non-resident and indigenous branches of its dramatic cinema.

Yet the decided imbalance in British Columbia between the transnational and local regimes of film production should not be overlooked. As a way of concluding the thesis, then, this chapter subsequently considers the extent to which the British Columbia film industry operates on the same terms as the province’s traditional resource-extraction industries and reflects upon the inherent vulnerability this analogy implies.

Globalization:

The term globalization refers to the current period of world history, which is characterized by the compression of time and space. It is a period in which social relations extend further than ever before, with greater frequency, immediacy and facility. More specifically, globalization refers to the increased mobility of people, capital, commodities, information and images associated with the post-industrial stage of capitalism, the development of increasingly rapid and far-ranging communication and transportation technologies, and people’s improved access to these technologies.

Globalization has increased and facilitated intercultural contact across an array of social sites, from the workplace to the supermarket, from the bus stop to the living room.¹

The term ‘globalization’ is unfortunate because it suggests that *all* significant social relations now occur on a global scale. What the term more properly refers to, however, is an intensified *interrelation* between social activity on local and global scales,

rather than their opposition (Massey & Jess, 1995, p. 226). Rob Wilson (1996) applies the more useful term “global/local interface” to describe globalization (p. 318). Massey (1992) describes this interface as follows:

Each geographical ‘place’ in the world is being realigned in relation to the new global realities, their roles within the wider whole are being reassigned, their boundaries dissolve as they are increasingly crossed by everything from investment flows, to cultural influences, to satellite TV networks. Even the different geographical scales become less easy to separate -- rather they constitute each other: the global the local, and vice versa (p. 6).

She adds: “Conceptualized in terms of the geography of social relations, what is happening is that the social relations which constitute a locality increasingly stretch beyond its borders; less and less of these relations are contained within the place itself” (p. 7).

Of course, international migration is not new, nor is the mobility of capital or the global circulation of cultural products. What *is* new about globalization is its intensity: the expanded reach and the immediacy of contemporary social relations. Migration, whether regional, *intranational* or *international*, whether voluntary or forced, has become a more common experience. Russell King (1995) notes: “Nowadays, in the western world, only a minority of people are born, live their entire lives and die in the same rural community or urban neighbourhood” (p. 7). King has remarked a trend to an increasing diversity of “migrant source countries” and a change in the “push” and “pull” factors of migration. There is a greater emphasis on “push pressures” in developing countries, where poverty, overcrowding, political instability and environmental degradation have reached intolerable levels, and where people have acquired at least some knowledge of

living conditions in the industrialized world. As a consequence, migrants from the margins have moved to the centres of economic and political power. At the same time, “pull pressures” have changed. The decline in manufacturing has reduced the need for traditional migrant labourers, while the growth of the service sector has increased the demand for highly skilled workers, resulting in what King calls “a new breed of executive nomads who, whilst quantitatively much less important than the mass labour migrations of the past, nevertheless wield enormous influence over the functioning of the global economy” (pp. 22-24).

The increased mobility of capital, of course, is not unrelated to the issue of migration. David Morley and Kevin Robins (1995) describe capital as “hypermobile and hyperflexible, tending towards deterritorialisation and delocalisation” (p. 30). Corporations are becoming *transnational*. They are less rooted to their “home” territories than ever before, seeking greater productivity and improved access to international markets wherever these advantages can be found. Arif Dirlik (1996) describes transnational capital as a “medium” which links “a network of urban formations, without a clearly definable center, whose links to one another are far stronger than their relationships to their immediate hinterlands” (p. 29). This network, Dirlik adds, allows capitalism to penetrate new areas, so that “for the first time in the history of capitalism, the capitalist mode of production appears as an authentically global abstraction, divorced from its historically specific origins in Europe.” For the first time, that is, “non-European capitalist societies make their own claims on the history of capitalism” (p. 30). In the economic realm, Morley and Robins insist globalization “is about the organisation of

production and the exploitation of markets on a world scale” (1995, p. 109).

Nowhere has capital been more successful at penetrating world markets than in the cultural sphere. Morley and Robins (1995) argue that two key aspects of the new spatial dynamics of globalization are, first, technological and market shifts leading to the emergence of “global image industries,” and, second, the development of local audiovisual production and distribution networks (pp. 1-2). The authors refer to a “new media order” in which the overriding logic of the new media corporations is to get their product to the largest possible number of consumers (p. 11). But if, as Stuart Hall (1995) notes, satellite television is the epitome of transnational forms of mass communication (p. 27), “the most profound cultural revolution has come about as a consequence of the margins coming into representation.”

The emergence of new subjects, new genders, new ethnicities, new regions, new communities, hitherto excluded from the major forms of cultural representation, unable to locate themselves except as decentered or subaltern, have acquired through struggle, sometimes in very marginalized ways, the means to speak for themselves for the first time (p. 34).

Thus, within the global mediascape, space has been won by story-tellers and image-makers to assert their particularity.

Media images also serve as a reminder of how far our social relations stretch, and the extent to which those relations are technologically mediated. Morley and Robins (1995) observe:

The screen is a powerful metaphor for our times: it symbolizes how we exist in the world, our contradictory condition of engagement and disengagement. Increasingly, we confront moral issues through the screen, and the screen confronts us with increasing numbers of moral dilemmas.

At the same time, however, it screens us from those dilemmas. It is through the screen that we disavow or deny our human implication in moral realities (p. 141).

The Problem of Place:

The perpetual flows of people, capital, goods, services and images which characterize globalization carry significant implications for how we experience and how we imagine place, for how we define community, and for how we constitute identity. Globalization renders actual borders more porous and metaphorical boundaries passé. Doreen Massey (1991) asks: "How, in the face of all this movement and intermixing, can we retain any sense of a local place and its particularity?" (p. 24).

Globalization has not *caused* place to lose meaning so much as it has intensified struggles over the meaning of place and thereby *exposed* the extent to which 'place' is a social construction. Places are vulnerable to reification, the perception that they are something other than products of human activity. Places have no natural boundaries, nor are they in any way naturally confined in scale. If places have boundaries at all -- and many do -- these boundaries have been drawn by social actors. As Massey (1991) notes: "Geographers have long been exercised by the problem of defining regions, and this question of 'definition' has almost always been reduced to the issue of drawing lines around a place" (p. 28).

As noted above, the various flows we associate with globalization are not new. What globalization has done, however, is both to increase the traffic -- human, material, electronic, etc. -- across some borders, and to reconfigure others. Thus, for example, the

free-trade agreement between Canada and the United States was an attempt to facilitate trade across the border which divides the two countries. Although the legal boundary remains, the meaning of the border has changed, at least as far as trade relations are concerned. Satellite television, on the other hand, ignores terrestrial boundaries altogether, and is confined instead by satellite “footprints,” which mark the limits of a satellite’s technological reach.

The heightened permeability of borders has been met, among some, by the desire for a more rooted sense of place. Scholars are in some disagreement as to whether relatively isolated, cohesive and homogeneous communities ever existed, or if they did, how far back in history we need to go to find them. Anthony Giddens (1990), for example, assesses globalization’s impact on place in terms of a before-and-after scenario. In pre-modern societies, Giddens argues, space and place largely coincided and social life was dominated by “presence.” But, “modernity increasingly tears space away from place by fostering relations between ‘absent’ others, locationally distant from any given situation of face-to-face interaction.” Place thereby becomes increasingly “phantasmagoric.” “What structures the locale is not simply that which is present on the scene; the ‘visible form’ of the locale conceals the distanced relations which determine its nature” (pp. 18-19).

Massey (1992), however, rejects inherited notions of a “singular, fixed and static” identity of place by arguing that “‘places’ have for centuries been more complex locations where numerous different, and frequently conflicting, communities intersected.” She maintains that “it has for long been the exception rather than the rule that place could be

simply equated with community and by that means provide a stable basis for identity” (p. 8). The identity of a place “does not derive from some internalized history. It derives, in large part, precisely from the specificity of its interactions with ‘the outside’” (p. 13).

If there is disagreement as to the genesis of the relationship between space and place, there is consensus that place can no longer be thought of as a simple ‘enclosure’ for community or identity or culture. Morley and Robins (1995) write: “The global-local nexus is associated with new relations between space and place, fixity and mobility, centre and periphery, ‘real’ and ‘virtual’ space, ‘inside’ and ‘outside,’ frontier and territory. This, inevitably, has implications for both individual and collective identities and for the meaning and coherence of community” (p. 121).

Gillian Rose (1995) notes that place has been a privileged component of identity formation. “Identity is how we make sense of ourselves, and geographers, anthropologists and sociologists, among others, have argued that the meanings given to a place may be so strong that they become a central part of the identity of people experiencing them” (p. 88). Places, and the experiences we associate with places, both as individuals and as members of a group, inform memory and our sense of belonging. This sense of belonging is critical to understanding the relationship between identity and a particular locale. “One way in which identity is connected to a particular place is by a feeling that you belong to that place” (p. 89). We might, therefore, detect a very different sense of belonging between native residents of a place and migrants. Migrants such as refugees and exiles, who have not moved of their own free will, may feel little sense of *appartenance* in their new place of residence (p. 96). Rose argues:

Increasing flows of ideas, commodities, information and people are constantly challenging senses of place and identity which perceive themselves as stable and fixed. The increasing interdependence between places means that, for many academics at least, places must be seen as having permeable boundaries across which things are always moving. Identities, too, more and more often involve experiences of migration and cultural changing and mixing (p. 116).

Culture is another means by which identities of place are constructed and sustained. Stuart Hall (1995) argues that we tend to imagine cultures as “placed” in two ways. First, we associate place with a specific location where social relationships have developed over time. Second, place “establishes symbolic boundaries around a culture, marking off those who belong from those who do not” (pp. 177-181).

... physical settlement, continuity of occupation, the long-lasting effects on ways of life arising from the shaping influence of location and physical environment, coupled with the idea that these cultural influences have been exercised amongst a population which is settled and deeply interrelated through marriage and kinship relations, are meanings which we closely associate with the idea of culture and which provide powerful ways of conceptualizing what ‘culture’ is, how it works, and how it is transmitted and preserved (p. 181).

At the same time, Hall argues: “There is a strong tendency to ‘landscape’ cultural identities, to give them an imagined place or ‘home,’ whose characteristics echo or mirror the characteristics of the identity in question” (p. 182).

Our sense of place is really part of our cultural systems of meaning. We usually think about or imagine cultures as ‘placed’ -- landscaped, even if only in the mind. This helps to give shape and to give a foundation to our identities. However, the ways in which culture, place and identity are imagined and conceptualized are increasingly untenable in light of the historical and contemporary evidence (p. 186).

If one impact of globalization has been the diminution of ‘place’ as the basis for

identity and/or culture, postmodern thinking and improved networks of transportation and communication facilitate the imagination of communities based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, class, etc. Proximity, in other words, is not a necessary element of identity formation. Morley and Robins (1995) write: "Places are no longer the clear supports of our identity" (p. 87). Hall (1995), in fact, offers the concept of the diaspora as an alternative framework for imagining community. Members of a diasporic community "belong to more than one world, speak more than one language (literally and metaphorically), inhabit more than one identity, have more than one home" (p. 206). A diaspora "cuts across the traditional boundaries of the nation-state, provides linkages across the borders of national communities, and highlights connections which intersect -- and thus disrupt and unsettle -- our hitherto settled conceptions of culture, place and identity" (p. 207). Hall adds: "Because it is spatially located, but imagined as belonging not to one but to several different places, the *diaspora* idea actively contests the ways in which *place* has been traditionally inserted into the story of *culture* and *identity*. It therefore forges a new relationship between the three key terms -- culture, identity and place." The diaspora approach, Hall concludes, places greater emphasis on *routes* of interconnection than on roots (p. 207).

If culture and identity are not confined to a particular place, it follows that any one place is not confined to a single culture or identity. This has precipitated localized struggles over immigration, language, urban development, architecture and foreign investment. Mike Featherstone (1996) remarks that "cultural differences once maintained between places now exist within them." For example: "The unwillingness of migrants

to passively inculcate the dominant cultural mythology of the nation or locality raises issues of multiculturalism and the fragmentation of identity” (p. 66). Massey (1995) argues: “The way in which we define ‘places,’ and the particular character of individual places, can be important in issues varying from battles over development and construction to questions of which social groups have rights to live where” (p. 48).

Identities of place are always the subject of dispute. Often they are achieved through the construction of ‘Others,’ which creates a sense of community insiders and outsiders (Rose, 1995, pp. 104-105). Or, claims to a specific identity may be based on a particular reading of history. Jess and Massey (1995) write: “In this sense, what is being named or interpreted, is not just a space or place, but a place as it has existed through time: what one might think of as an *envelope of space-time*” (p. 134). Such contestation occurs, not as an occasional battle, but as a continual process involving a range of geographical scales (p. 172).

The conventional container of identity and culture which has come under greatest challenge from the re-imagining of community has been the nation-state. Questions of citizenship and questions of identity have been increasingly dissociated (Morley & Robins, 1995, p. 19). The emergence of trade blocs in Europe, Asia and North America, and the prevalence of both international and subnational cultural networks have undermined the primacy of the nation-state in contemporary imaginings of community, identity and culture. Wilson and Dissanayake (1996) note: “The nation-state, in effect, having been shaped into an ‘imagined community’ of coherent, modern identity through warfare, religion, blood, patriotic symbology, and language, is being undone by this fast

implosion of heteroglossic interface of the global with the local: what we would here diversely theorize as the *global/local* nexus" (p. 3).

The Place of the Media in Society:

The communications media have their own role to play in 'dis-placing' and 're-placing' community, identity and culture, given that, historically, the media have been important tools in constructing accepted notions of community. To be more precise, five specific roles can be ascribed to the media in how we imagine community: first, they are the media of *encounter*, putting us 'in touch' with one another via mail, telephone, e-mail, fax; second, they are the media of *governance*, enabling the central administration of vast spaces and dispersed places; third, the media *represent* community by depicting actuality and by creating fictionalized "sociological landscapes;" fourth, the media *construct* communities of audiences, based on diverse criteria ranging from physical proximity to shared tastes in popular music; and fifth, they create *rituals* of readership and spectatorship through which readers and spectators imagine themselves as part of a communal audience.

While face-to-face interaction remains part of social relations in even the most globalized of environments -- on the street, in the park, at work, at school, at public meetings, at the corner store -- proximity no longer binds us to community. Communications technologies like the cellular telephone, fax machine and personal computer bind social spaces and enable people to maintain regular and frequent 'contact.' This is particularly so as these technologies have become more accessible in terms of

cost, ease of use and availability, and as these media have invaded the private sphere of the home. The instantaneousness with which technologically mediated conversations can be held approximates face-to-face communication. As the boosters of the digital age delight in telling us (e.g., Negroponte, 1995), such media *enable* us to conduct social relations over great distances, and their increasing sophistication minimizes the obstacles implied by physical separation.

Similarly, as Harold Innis argues, communications media enable the centralized governance of a political community on the scale of the modern nation-state and the centralized administration of a transnational corporation of intercontinental range. Both national forms of governance and global forms of capitalism require efficient means of communication to: establish a coherent agenda; disseminate instructions and information; monitor the activities of remote departments; and receive reports from local managers in the field. This is a relationship of power in which an authoritative body exercises control over social space and the social order (see Drache, 1995, pp. xlv-xlvi).

The third role the media play in how we imagine community is through representation. They create what Benedict Anderson (1989) calls a “sociological landscape” or “socoscape” in which their narratives are set (pp. 35-36). As Anderson’s terminology indicates, these settings are both peopled and bounded. If, historically, the 18th-century novel and newspaper taught people to imagine community on the scale of the nation, contemporary socioscapes present to us communities which are imagined in any number of ways. Who populates these settings and on what basis their boundaries are drawn either reinforce conventional notions of community or propose new social

horizons.

Fourth, the media also construct communities out of audiences and markets. The newspaper provides a particularly good example, in that newspapers are designed to address various kinds of community. They may serve a community of geographical proximity -- the *Vancouver Sun* on a metropolitan scale, the *East Ender* on a neighbourhood scale. They may serve a particular community contained within a locale, such as *Le Soleil* for Vancouver's francophone community, or *Sing Tao*, for Vancouver's Chinese community. Or they might serve a community bound by common interest in computers (*Vancouver Computes*), cinema (*Reel West*), environmental issues (*B.C. Environmental Report*), business (*Equity*) or alternative music (*Loop*). All of these communities are plural and can therefore be further distinguished; most subscribers to Vancouver's two daily newspapers will be Vancouver residents, but they will be distinguished on the basis of various demographic criteria. This, of course, is how newspapers operate as commercial enterprises; they assemble audiences to sell to advertisers (Smythe, 1982, pp. 25-28). Broadcasting and film are good examples of how the Canadian state has attempted to construct an imagined community on a national scale.

And finally, the media produce widely-shared rituals of readership and spectatorship. This takes its most literal form in cinema spectatorship, in which a group of people gather at the same time and place to watch a film, and thus literally form an audience as community, if only for a couple of hours (Shohat & Stam, 1996, pp. 153-155).

These mediations of community have both symbolic and material dimensions.

Anderson (1989) puts forward a particularly strong case for the central role the imagination plays in the formation of community. Anderson maintains that “all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined” (p. 15). This is especially the case since the 18th century, when community became imaginable through media (p. 20). The novel and the newspaper, for example, “provided the technical means for ‘re-presenting’ the *kind* of imagined community that is the nation” (p. 30). Anderson describes the nation as an imagined community “because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (p. 15).

The 18th-century novel rendered imaginable such communion by offering the reader an “omniscient” view of the “sociological landscape” through which its characters moved simultaneously. Anderson writes: “The idea of a sociological organism moving calendrically through homogeneous, empty time is a precise analogue of the idea of the nation, which also is conceived as a solid community moving steadily down (or up) history” (pp. 30-31).

The newspaper links its readers in two ways. The first is what Anderson calls the “calendrical coincidence” of seemingly unrelated stories juxtaposed on the newspaper page. “The date at the top of the newspaper, the single most important emblem on it, provides the essential connection -- the steady onward clocking of homogeneous, empty time.” The newspaper, that is, adopts a novelistic format in which the reader imagines a

whole world of simultaneous social activity (p. 37).

The second imagined linkage stems from the shared ritual of daily newspaper readership. Because a newspaper quickly becomes obsolete -- if not within hours, then certainly with the publication of the next day's edition -- we can imagine a "mass ceremony" of its consumption. As Anderson puts it: "We know that particular morning and evening editions will overwhelmingly be consumed between this hour and that, only on this day, not that." While each individual reads the newspaper privately and silently, "each communicant is well aware that the ceremony he [sic] performs is being replicated simultaneously by thousands (or millions) or others of whose existence he is confident, yet of whose identity he has not the slightest notion" (pp. 38-39).

While Anderson made the 18th-century novel and newspaper his case studies -- because they were the first media to enable such imagining -- he notes that "advances in communications technology, especially radio and television, give print allies unavailable a century ago." Broadcasting, for instance, includes illiterates within the imagined community (p. 123). Taking up Anderson's argument, Mike Featherstone (1996) insists that cinema "facilitates this process even better, as film provides an instantiation and immediacy which are relatively independent of the long learning process and institutional and other supports necessary to be able to assimilate knowledge through books" (pp. 53-54).

Ella Shohat and Robert Stam (1996) maintain that cinema is particularly well-placed for encouraging the imagination of nation for two additional reasons. First, cinema inherited the social role of the 19th-century realist novel.

Just as nationalist literary fictions inscribe onto a multitude of events the notion of a linear, comprehensible destiny, so films arrange events and nations in a temporal narrative that moves toward fulfillment, and thus shape thinking about historical time and national histories. Narrative models in film are not simply reflective microcosms of historical processes; they are also experiential grids or templates through which history can be written and national identity created (pp. 153-154).

Secondly, while novels are read in solitude, film is viewed in “a gregarious space” and thus cinema can play “a more assertive role in fostering group identities.” Shohat and Stam write: “The cinema’s institutional ritual of gathering a community -- spectators who share a region, language, and culture -- homologizes, in a sense, the symbolic gathering of the nation” (p. 155).

Anderson’s thesis, of course, is not without its critics. Dana Polan (1996), for example, expresses concern that Anderson encourages a binary opposition between localism as “the realm of the lived, of the physical, of the grit and grime of day-to-day existence” and globalism as “the realm of the abstract, of an irreal circulation (of economy, of signs)” (p. 257). Polan, in a study which explores the way recent American movies negotiate globalism through the cross-cultural alliances of their central characters, insists that globalism must be seen as embodied. “Globalism is not an abstraction but a concrete activity whose mode of being has its effect on the local body. Even if it is represented in abstract terms, globalism’s mode is embodied, and embodiment occurs locally” (p. 258). In films such as *Mr. Baseball* and *Iron Maze*, for example, Polan remarks a number of globalist motifs which inform the lives of their central characters: cross-border travel, an emphasis on service occupations, the representation of human interaction as mediated forms of communication, plots that concern the mediation

between the various subcultures of the global economy, and “the directing of narrative movement toward end-of-story glimpses of new postsubject forms of agency” (pp. 261-263).

Related to Polan’s argument is the concern that the cultural sphere is over-privileged in discussions about senses of space and place. Michael Schudson (1994), for example, argues that societies are held together by several different mechanisms of integration, such as territory, kinship relations, economic links and political structures. “A sense of community is moored in *some* concrete, observable features. But which? The contribution of the imagination is to deliver one or another (or sometimes several) of these possible groupings to the individual as the primary basis for personal identity and the establishment of extra-familial allegiances” (p. 65).

Arjun Appadurai (1993) upholds a central role for the imagination in contemporary society, but he brings Anderson’s thesis up to date by arguing that globalization creates “uncertain landscapes” characterized by disjuncture. If Anderson concentrated on the nation as imagined community, Appadurai remarks not only much less cohesive, but rival, formations. Appadurai advocates the replacement of the centre-periphery model to describe global relations, a model which clings to national formations and which foregrounds tensions between forces of homogenization (i.e., globalization) and forces of heterogenization (localization). “The complexity of the current global economy has to do with certain fundamental disjunctures between economy, culture and politics which we have only begun to theorize.” Appadurai proposes a conceptual framework for the exploration of these disjunctures by studying the relationship among

“five dimensions of global cultural flow:” ethnoscapes, technoscapes, finanscapes, mediascapes and ideoscapes. “These landscapes ... are the building blocks of what (extending Benedict Anderson) I would like to call *imagined worlds*, that is, the multiple worlds which are constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe.” These “scapes” are fluid, irregular and “deeply perspectival constructs, inflected by the historical, linguistic and political situatedness of different sorts of actors,” from nation-states and multinational corporations to neighbourhoods, families and individuals (pp. 275-276).

By “ethnoscape,” Appadurai refers to “the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live,” including tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles and guest workers. “Technoscape” refers to “the global configuration of technology” which permits high-speed transfers -- of information, images, capital, goods, people -- across boundaries. A “finanscape” is “the disposition of global capital,” its patterns of fiscal and investment flow. The term “mediascape” refers *both* to the global distribution of media technologies *and* to the images of the world these media create. Finally, an “ideoscape” is a *particular* set of political images which speak to issues of state power (pp. 276-279).

Appadurai’s “scapes” are not merely ways to *imagine* globalization’s diverse flows, but they are pertinent to how social actors conduct daily life, and thereby attain materiality. These flows affect the physical experiences of people’s lives in terms of where they live, where they work, who they work for, who their friends are, and how they constitute family. They are, in other words, embodied at the local level. At the same time, paradoxically, they deterritorialize social relations and render cultural forms

“fractal” and “overlapping.” Appadurai hypothesizes that “the relationship of these various flows to one another, as they constellate into particular events and social forms, will be radically context-dependent” (pp. 291-292).

One of the first scholars to recognize this material dimension, of course, was Harold Innis. As Jody Berland (1997) points out: “His principal contribution to the history and theory of culture is his insistence on the central role of communication and transportation technologies in materially mediating economic, administrative, cultural, and intellectual life” (p. 56). Innis argued that, throughout history, the physical characteristics of the predominant media of communication in a particular society contained clues about that society’s relative emphasis on time or space, on, in other words, that society’s dynastic or imperial ambitions. Innis (1984) writes: “A medium of communication has an important influence on the dissemination of knowledge over space and over time and it becomes necessary to study its characteristics in order to appraise its influence in its cultural setting.” The relative emphasis on time or space, Innis maintains, “will imply a bias of significance to the culture in which it is embedded” (p. 33).

A Global Sense of Place:

Doreen Massey (1991) seeks to redefine ‘place’ in light of the complex flows that characterize the global/local interface and which have been surveyed briefly in this chapter. Massey conceives of place as an intersection or meeting place “constructed out of a particular constellation of social relations, meeting and weaving together at a particular locus.”

Instead ... of thinking of places as areas with boundaries around, they can be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings, but where a large proportion of these relations, experiences and understandings are constructed on a far larger scale than what we happen to define for that moment as the place itself, whether that be a street, or a region, or even a construct.

Such a formulation entails an “extroverted” sense of place, a sense of place which “integrates in a positive way the global and the local.” It is as well a dynamic rather than fixed sense of place, defined as it is by relations which remain fluid (pp. 28-29). Massey (1992) summarizes:

In one sense or another most places have been ‘meeting places’; even their ‘original inhabitants’ usually came from somewhere else. This does not mean that the past is irrelevant to the identity of place. It simply means that there is no internally produced, essential past. The identity of place, just as Hall argues in relation to cultural identity, is always and continuously being produced. Instead of looking back with nostalgia to some identity of place which it is assumed already exists, the past has to be constructed (p. 14).

Massey’s reformulation of place, which moves us away from the notion of place as enclosure to the idea of place as meeting ground or intersection, is a useful way to understand British Columbia as a place, and, more to the point, offers us a new way to locate British Columbia’s feature-film industry. If British Columbia is not the container for the culture and identity of its people, then the province need not be seen as the container of its film industry, but rather as the place where both local and transnational cultural and industrial forces converge and interact.

Massey’s “global sense of place” has a particular resonance in the specific case of British Columbia because the province’s history has been defined for more than a century

by the flows of people, capital, commodities and images which characterize globalization. British Columbia's population is extremely diverse and more than half of its people today are migrants. If British Columbia's earliest immigrants came from Great Britain in the colonial period, they were very quickly joined by Chinese miners and railway workers, Japanese fishers, French-Canadian forestry and mill-workers, and refugees from Russia and India. British Columbia's place names -- Victoria, New Westminster, Lillooet, Ucluelet, Galiano, Juan de Fuca, Quesnel, Maillardville -- offer some testimony to the origins of its people, although the absence of Asian place names remains a strong signal that their cohabitation has not always been a happy one. Today, one-third of greater Vancouver's population is of Asian descent, with the Chinese alone accounting for almost 20 per cent of the city's 1.81 million inhabitants (Kaplan, 1998, p. 52).

British Columbia's political relations have always taken place over great distances. In the colonial period, British Columbia's governors answered to London. Political relations with Ottawa are a constant source of friction today, and the recent four-way spat over the west-coast salmon fishery involving Ottawa, Washington, Victoria and Juneau, Alaska, is only the most recent manifestation of western alienation within Canada.

As an extractor and processor of natural resources, British Columbia has always been a trading province, shipping raw and semi-processed materials to central Canada, the United States, Europe and Asia in return for manufactured goods. Today, British Columbia's export markets are more widely distributed than any other Canadian province; while its biggest customers are the United States and Japan, in 1995 B.C. exported commodities to more than 150 countries (BC Stats, 1995). Tourism has become

since the 1980s one of the province's largest and most important industries, responsible for a record \$8.5 billion in 1997 (Tourism British Columbia, 1998). Of course, tourism and natural resource industries do not always complement one another, creating within the economy a site of considerable tension over British Columbia's sense of place (see Belshaw & Mitchell, 1996, p. 330).

Canada, of course, is one of the countries in the world most open to cultural imports, and British Columbia is no exception. This is particularly the case in the feature-film sector where foreign (primarily Hollywood) films account for between 94 and 97 per cent of screen time in Canadian movie theatres.³ The flow of cultural images has been decidedly one-way in British Columbia where, until recently, the only Canadian films British Columbians could see were from Ontario and Quebec. Even in television, where local producers have the benefit of screen quotas provided under Canadian-content regulations, dramatic programming produced in British Columbia -- e.g., *The Beachcombers*, *Neon Rider* -- is clearly the exception to the central Canadian rule.

British Columbia's largest city, Vancouver, suits particularly well Massey's formulation. Paul Delany (1994) writes: "The rapid change and growth of this city have always been the product of external forces: Vancouver has been discovered, developed -- colonised, some would say -- by global migrations and shifts of capital" (p. 1). Vancouver is the destination of choice for migrants to British Columbia -- approximately 85 per cent of all B.C. immigrants settle in the Greater Vancouver area (BC Stats, 1996) -- and the city has been the principal financial beneficiary of those recent immigrants who have qualified for entry in the independent economic classes. Vancouver has a distinct,

services-oriented economy within the larger provincial economy, providing the crucial link between the resource industries of the B.C. Interior and international export markets (Davis, 1993; Shearer, 1993-94).

Culturally, Vancouver is very much an intersection for influences from North and South America, Europe and Asia. If for much of its history Vancouver has tried to deny the significance of the non-European presence in its midst, in the 1990s its ethnic diversity has become a source of celebration. Aboriginal artists like Bill Reid and Roy Vickers, and Asian-Canadian artists like Paul Wong, Evelyn Lau, Wayson Choy and Mina Shum have won mainstream recognition as B.C. or Vancouver artists.

Contrasting the city with inland centres of political power like Beijing, Paris, Berlin, Vienna and Moscow, Delany (1994) describes Vancouver as a “city of the edge,” like Venice, New York, San Francisco, Hong Kong and Shanghai, cities which “illustrate the ecological principle that the greatest variety of life-forms will be found at the boundary between different habitats.” Of Vancouver specifically, Delany writes: “Lacking a major administrative or political function, its reason for being is to be situated where four zones intersect: the Western Canadian hinterland, the U.S. and Mexican West Coast, the North Coast up to Alaska, and the Pacific Rim” (p. 19).

While the global flows lend Vancouver its social, economic and cultural vibrancy, they also make it a difficult city to ‘place,’ at least in conventional terms. Delany (1994) notes that Vancouver has recently produced three best-selling authors -- Douglas Coupland, William Gibson and Nick Bantock -- who write “location-independent” literature (p. 6). Controversies surrounding Asian immigration (see Mitchell, 1996; Abu-

Laban, 1997) and the Eurocentric design of the Library Square complex (see Haden, 1995) testify to the contested nature of Vancouver's sense of place.

The British Columbia feature-film industry, based as it is in Vancouver, is subject to these same flows. While its promoters seek to set the west coast's film industry against a picturesque backdrop of seaside and mountains -- with a derivative "Hollywood North" sign overlooking Vancouver from the North Shore mountains (see MacIntyre, 1996) -- we are better served in our understanding of this cinema by situating it where British Columbia's particular flows of people, capital, commodities and images merge and intersect.

Being and Belonging:

This thesis has rejected the national cinema frame as a way of understanding the emergence since the late 1970s of a feature-film industry in British Columbia. It has instead taken to heart Tom O'Regan's argument that particular cinemas must be considered on their own terms. The thesis also extends O'Regan's observation by insisting that place, too, needs to be considered in terms of its own particularities, not simply as a precisely-bounded enclosure but, following Doreen Massey, as a meeting ground whose identity is constructed as a complex weave of regional, national and transnational social, political and economic relations. The thesis thus portrays the feature-film industry in British Columbia as the product of: a distinct history of film-making on the west coast; a distinct political-economic relationship to the commercial film industry in the United States and the dramatic cinema based in central Canada; a

particular perception of cinema by the provincial government in Victoria; and the diverse imaginings of British Columbia's place in the world by the film-makers working there.

Three of the central qualities which characterize the B.C. feature-film industry today have been defining British Columbia cinema for most of this century. First, foreign producers have been visiting British Columbia to shoot films since the turn of the century, attracted by the province's natural beauty and the variety of its landscapes. Second, the provincial government has assumed a central role as promoter, patron and producer in B.C. cinema since at least 1908. And third, Victoria's active engagement in B.C. film production has granted the province a principal role in defining the medium. Historically, that is, the B.C. government has perceived cinema as a medium to: attract immigrants, capital investment and tourists; encourage tourism by British Columbians within their own province; advertise its industrial products around the world; and promote public education pertaining to health, safety and conservation issues. Victoria's interest in *feature* film-making in the 1970s was not a conceptual departure from this history, but a recognition that cinema could become a capital- and labour-intensive industry in its own right.

The opportunity for British Columbia to become a major film production centre in the 1970s arose as Hollywood began to externalize production and as the emergent Canadian film industry concentrated its production and distribution activities in central Canada. The breakdown of the "studio system" in Hollywood following the 1948 Paramount Decision, the arrival of television as a rival entertainment medium, and the trend to suburbanization compelled a restructuring of the commercial film industry in the

United States. Externalized production and location shooting were part of the Hollywood studios' strategy to reduce both the risks and the costs associated with film-making, and British Columbia was one of the places where cost savings could be realized. Such "runaway" production became the principal activity of film-makers on the west coast, even though Canada's own dramatic cinema had been launched with the establishment of the Canadian Film Development Corporation in the late 1960s. The Canadian cinema remained centred in Ontario and Quebec, where Canada's television industries and financial institutions were based. Vancouver's relative proximity to Los Angeles proved to be a structural advantage when Hollywood began to externalize production -- particularly in the 1970s when the exchange rate favoured Canadian locations -- but Vancouver's distance from Toronto and Montreal was a clear disadvantage to Vancouver film-makers' participation in Canada's indigenous cinema.

The economic opportunity that foreign location production represented was well-suited to Victoria's industrial perception of cinema and its long-term objective of expanding and diversifying the province's recession-prone, resource-based economy. When Victoria began to encourage film-making in the province through the promotional efforts of the B.C. Film Commission, it was strictly an economic development initiative designed to attract foreign capital and create local jobs. Even when the provincial government began to provide film-makers with financial assistance in producing indigenous films, the industrial perception of cinema prevailed.

If Victoria's interest in promoting cinema as a medium of regional industrial development set British Columbia apart from the cultural preoccupations of the Ontario

and Quebec governments, federal film policy encouraged competition rather than collaboration among Canada's principal film-making provinces. Ottawa's "location-independent" funding policies favoured Toronto and Montreal film-makers who were in close proximity to the head offices of Canada's television networks, film distributors, financial institutions and the funding agencies themselves. Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia have more recently extended their rivalry to foreign location production. The film policy sphere not only sets British Columbia apart as a distinct film industry within Canada, but as a competitor to Ontario and Quebec both *intra-* and *internationally*.

The cinematic depiction of British Columbia as place is complicated by the interface between distinct transnational and regional/local regimes of film production. If foreign producers consistently continentalize British Columbia, rendering North America and the United States of America consonant in the signifier 'America,' indigenous films tend to particularize and diversify British Columbia. They render the province a distinct historical, political, social and cultural entity, even if its boundaries remain permeable and tenuous; the central social relationships which motivate these films transcend national, racial, cultural and generational frontiers, and at the same time call these borders into question. British Columbia's indigenous cinema is a site of contestation over meanings of place, echoing struggles over the region's sense of place in the political, economic and social realms as the province comes to terms with its roles in Canada, North America and the Pacific Rim.

Yet if the British Columbia film industry is distinguished by its particular relationship to place, by the way the feature cinema produced on the west coast *belongs* to

British Columbia, it is also distinguished by the vulnerability inherent to this relationship. That is, the industry remains overly dependent on a highly mobile and highly competitive sector of the industry: foreign location production.

The film industry is, technically, part of a service sector which has become increasingly important to the British Columbia economy in the post-war period, and which has largely replaced the resource sector as the province's primary generator of jobs and output.⁴ But the film industry more closely resembles the economic model of resource extraction. It is an industry devoted primarily to the execution of film projects conceived, financed and completed elsewhere, films which are subsequently imported back into British Columbia for commercial consumption. British Columbia supplies both natural and human resources -- i.e., scenery and, predominantly, below-the-line labour -- to footloose Hollywood film companies, but the important creative elements of story and character remain rooted elsewhere.

While the spending patterns of foreign film companies in recent years may suggest otherwise, British Columbia's feature-film industry depends on the provision of those elements of film production for which Hollywood producers can shop all over the world. If media globalization is the best way to understand the emergence over the past 20 years of a feature-film industry in British Columbia, it also underscores the fundamentally tenuous relationship between this cinema and this place.

Notes:

¹The phenomenon of globalization, of course, should not be totalized, as its effects are not evenly felt, as Massey (1991) makes clear. "Air travel might enable businessmen to buzz across the oceans, but the concurrent decline in shipping has only increased the isolation of many communities." We need to consider, in other words, who enjoys mobility under globalization and who doesn't, who initiates such flows and who doesn't. "For different social groups, and different individuals, are placed in very distinct ways in relation to these flows and interconnections" (p. 25).

²To my knowledge, no such study has been conducted. Tim Hiltz of the British Columbia Council of Film Unions estimates that local film workers comprise 97 or 98 per cent of the crews for foreign film and television service productions. This share would be slightly lower for high-budget Hollywood feature films, for which directors prefer to work with their own established teams of six to eight people (Hiltz, personal communication, June 3, 1997).

³While statistics relating to the share of screen time occupied by Canadian films in commercial theatres are commonly cited in scholarly articles and the popular media, Quebec is the only jurisdiction in Canada to keep such data. National figures are derived from Statistics Canada data which report distributors' earnings from Canadian films, but, of course, do not take into account differences between provinces or between urban, suburban and rural theatres.

⁴As of 1991, the service industries accounted for 75 per cent of the provincial work force, compared to the resource industries' six per cent (Howlett & Brownsey, 1996, pp. 18, 348). As early as 1961, the service industries accounted for 60 per cent of the province's gross domestic product, and approximately 70 per cent by 1991 (Belshaw & Mitchell, 1996, p. 331).

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